

Interview with Hans Corneel de Roos of 26 April 2017.

Dear Hans, our last interview was four weeks ago. Given your work speed, there should be some update by now?

A couple of things have come up, indeed. Last time, we talked about Anders Albert Andersson-Edenberg, as the man who probably translated and edited *Mörkrets makter*, the Swedish version of *Dracula*. It seems that my suspicion was correct. I have looked through the articles and poems that Andersson-Edenberg wrote or edited for *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, an illustrated monthly magazine. He contributed articles to this magazine since 1867; in 1874, he became a regular staff member, in 1877, he became its Chief-Editor. I found that many ideas and metaphors featured in *Mörkrets makter* can be traced back to these early texts.

Can you mention some examples?

There are almost too many! *Mörkrets makter* mentions *Der Freischutz* and *Preciosa*, two romantic operas by Carl Maria Weber that Anderson-Edersson wrote about in 1872. It also refers to Robinson Crusoe, to *Sleeping Beauty* by Perrault, to the alchemist Cagliostro, to the Tatra Mountains, to love and gold as the true rulers of this world – topics all dealt with in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*. The Count talks about the flower that blossoms in summer but dies in winter – exactly like Andersson-Edenberg did in “The Last Journey” (1872). Harker describes the London fog “like a terrible vampire, sucking the power and the life-juice from the people, poisoning the children’s blood and lungs, bringing endless diseases.” In *Svenska Familj-Journalen* of 1879, a certain “Herm. H-g” wrote: “Many memories have been preserved from this time, when the war in its direst shape was sucking Scania’s heart blood like a poisonous vampire.”

In the extended version of *Mörkrets makter*, Vilma (Mina) describes one of the nurses in the hospital near Castle Dracula as a “true Valkyrie from the Bavarian highlands.” This may have its roots in *Svenska Familj-Journalen* of the year 1876, containing an illustrated article about the Walhalla Temple near Donaustauf, Bavaria, 420 meters above sea level, and a poem by Andersson-Edenberg, titled *Valkyrian*.

You speak of an extended version?

In our first interview, I explained that there exist a longer version and a shorter version, of 264 pages only. The longer version was published in *Dagen* and later repeated in *Tip-Top*, in 1916-1918. Just before Easter, I received further scans from Stockholm. It now turns out that the 264-page version had been serialized in *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-upplaga*, a semi-weekly magazine belonging to the same newspaper group. I found out that both in *Dagen* and in *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-upplaga*, the Transylvanian part was identical – it was even printed from the same printing form, that also was used for the scanned version I had received before. Only at page 196, the formats start to diverge. The daily serialization in *Dagen* continues in the diary form while the semi-weekly episodes switch to a conventional story-telling format. The Icelandic version was based on the version in *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-upplaga*, not on the *Dagen* serialization. The 264-page version I received on 8 March may either have been assembled from the single installments, or it was a bonus reprint, using the same printing form once more.

Did either of you find out how *Dracula* came to Sweden in the first place?

I can only speak for myself – but I *do* have a theory now. As you may remember, both Andersson-Edenberg and Harald Sohlman, the Chief-Editor of the *Aftonbladet* group, were active in *Publicistklubben*, the national association of Swedish journalists. In *Aftonbladet* of 14 December 1896, we read how Sohlman with his committee had the task of preparing the “4me Congrès international de la Presse” planned to run 25-28 June 1897, during the General Art and Industrial Exhibition in Stockholm. My first suspicion was that British journalists might have introduced *Dracula* to Sohlman, or to Andersson-Edenberg, or to both. Stoker’s book had appeared just one month before, on 26 May, and it attracted quite a lot of attention in London. But I found out that the British journalists had not come to Stockholm at all. In 1896, the British Institute of Journalists had pulled out from the efforts to create a permanent international roof organization, as discussed at the first International Congress in Antwerpen in 1894 and at the second in Bordeaux in 1895. The constitution of the IUPA, the International Union of Press Associations, was finally adopted at the third International Congress in Budapest in 1896. But although the Brits had been standing at the very cradle of this idea, they now felt that the IUPA was too much dominated by continental initiative. They were too busy to travel to Stockholm anyway, because of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee.



So, this first suspicion ran empty?

Yes, but still it was very useful to dig out the details. Especially, I noticed that the Hungarians had a very strong presence in Stockholm. Today, our image of Hungary is troubled by 50 years of Cold War. But around 1900, Budapest was one of the most modern cities in the world. The third International Congress was held there in 1896, during the Millennium celebrations, and it was hosted by the Hungarian press association *Otthon*. The President of *Otthon* and of the third International Congress was Jenő Rákosi (1842-1928), the Chief Editor of *Budapesti Hírlap* (1883-1939), the most important

Hungarian newspaper. At the Stockholm Congress, he acted as a Vice-President and spoke at the opening and the closing ceremonies, among others. After the Congress, he remained in Sweden for some time. *Svenska Dagbladet* of 20 July reported that Rákosi, together with a group of French journalists, was to make an excursion to North Cape to admire the midnight sun. Jenő's brother Viktor, also in a leading position at *Budapesti Hírlap*, was in Stockholm as well. In June 1895, Viktor had spoken at an international meeting of journalists in Copenhagen. In 1896, *Dagens Nyheter* called him the "Hungarian Mark Twain." In September 1897, when Jenő Rákosi was decorated by Emperor Wilhelm of Germany, *Dagens Nyheter* called him "one of the most famous participants in the Press Congress." Harald Sohlman, on the other hand, representing the largest Swedish newspaper, also was a most prominent participant; both he and his brother Arvid were members of the local Organizing Committee. During the Congress, *Aftonbladet* published the *Edition de dépêches*, in French. In June 1896, during the International Congress in Budapest, Rákosi's association *Otthon* ("Home") had supported Stockholm's candidacy for the 1897 International Congress at the expense of Lissabon, pointing to the "literary interaction between Swedish and Hungarian authors that has developed over the last years." *Otthon* being the single largest press association in Europe, with 700 members, this vote may have been decisive. *Aftonbladet* of 17 June 1896 reported on this most welcome support. On 5 July, it quoted another message from Jenő Rákosi, who stated to look forward to visiting Stockholm. We may safely assume that Sohlman took the time to chat with the Rákosi's during the 1897 International Congress.

AFTONBLADET

Edition de dépêches.

Stockholm, Aftonbladets tryckeri, 1897.

Stockholm, Samedi 26 Juin 1897.

<p>Informations sur le Congrès.</p> <p>Après les séances des sections à 10 heures l'occasion est donnée de visiter l'Église de Riddarholmen, le mausolée des rois de Suède.</p> <p>A midi et demie on peut visiter le Musée national avec ses collections de peintures et de sculptures, pour la plupart modernes, et son Musée historique.</p> <p>A 2 heures aura lieu la deuxième séance plénière, à laquelle on continuera la discussion de l'ordre du jour, déjà mentionnée dans notre numéro d'hier.</p> <p>A cinq heures et demie: Dîner offert par la Direction de l'Exposition au restaurant Hasselbacken à Djurgården près l'Exposition.</p> <p>A neuf heures et demie: Grande fête dans le Vieux Stockholm à l'Exposition.</p> <p>Au cours de la soirée, des représentations seront données dans les deux théâtres qui sont des reproductions des scènes primitives du 17^e siècle; en outre, des scènes bouffonnes ou plaisantes de différentes espèces seront arrangées dans les rues où l'on fera également exécuter de la musique.</p> <p>Les discours à la fête d'hier.</p> <p>M. le grand Gouverneur de la Ville de Stockholm a prononcé le discours suivant:</p>	<p>instant pour instant sans attendre même qu'une personnalité plus autorisée puisse surgir.</p> <p>C'est donc au nom de la Presse internationale dont je suis le secrétaire que je lève mon verre en l'honneur de Monsieur le Grand Gouverneur.</p> <p>Après avoir acclamé ce matin l'auguste souverain qui a accueilli la Presse avec une si particulière bienveillance, après avoir salué en sa personne le pays lui-même, c'est un devoir à cette heure de porter ici la santé de Monsieur le Grand Gouverneur et, par lui, boire à la Ville de Stockholm dont la large hospitalité suscite une légitime reconnaissance. Cette reconnaissance s'étend à toutes les villes de Suède et c'est à vous, Monsieur le Grand Gouverneur, que la Presse du monde confie la mission de leur exprimer son inaltérable gratitude. A. Monsieur le Grand Gouverneur de Stockholm! A la Ville de Stockholm! Aux villes de Suède!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Notre nuit d'été.</p> <p>La vois-tu pour la première fois, étranger, notre nuit d'été, notre belle nuit d'été, parfumée, claire comme les blonds cheveux de nos femmes? Eh bien! L'aimes-tu, oui ou non, toi qui arrives des soirées chargées d'ombre du continent?</p> <p>Nous autres suédois, nous prodignons trop notre admiration à tout ce qui n'est pas de notre pays; c'est là un reproche qu'on nous adresse souvent! Peut-être</p>	<p>à Kiel. Sur l'ordre de l'empereur, hier déjà Miquel est également parti pour Kiel.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Le jubilé de la Reine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Londres, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>Le lord-mayor a aujourd'hui donné un grand déjeuner pour le prince et la princesse de Galles, les princes étrangers et les députations spéciales des pays étrangers. La santé de la Reine a été bue au milieu du plus grand enthousiasme. Le prince royal d'Italie et le duc d'Auerstedt répondirent au toast porté par le lord-mayor à ses hôtes étrangers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Le sort de la Thessalie.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Télégramme spécial à l'Aftonbladet.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Athènes, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>Le bruit court qu'un nombre limité de troupes turques resterait en Thessalie, jusqu'à ce que l'indemnité de guerre ait été payée par la Grèce.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">La Chambre française et le "scandale de Notre-Dame".</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Paris, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>Après une violente discussion la Chambre par 370 voix contre 80 a voté les crédits demandés par le Gouvernement pour couvrir les frais de la cérémonie à Notre-Dame en l'hon-</p>
<p>pays fût rouverte, et absolument nécessaire que le commerce de ces produits fût organisé.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Voyage du Président Faure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Télégramme spécial à l'Aftonbladet.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Petersbourg, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>«Novoje Vremja» communique la nouvelle à sensation suivante:</p> <p>Le Président Faure arrive à Pétersbourg le 20 Juillet (nouveau style) à bord du cuirassé Dupuy de Lome, escorté d'une suite peu nombreuse.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discours du Ministre de l'Instruction Publique en France.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Télégramme spécial à l'Aftonbladet.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Paris, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>A un banquet tenu à Versailles pour honorer la mémoire du Général Hoche, Mr Rambaud, Ministre de l'Instruction publique en France, a prononcé un discours dans lequel il fit ressortir l'opportunité d'une alliance entre tous les républicains. Il rappela aussi l'alliance franco-russe qui assure la paix en Europe et rétablit le calme en Orient.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">La proclamation de Sagasta.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Télégramme spécial à l'Aftonbladet.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Madrid, le 25 Juin.</i></p> <p>L'ancien président du Conseil, Sagasta, a publié une proclamation</p>		

And what does this add up to?

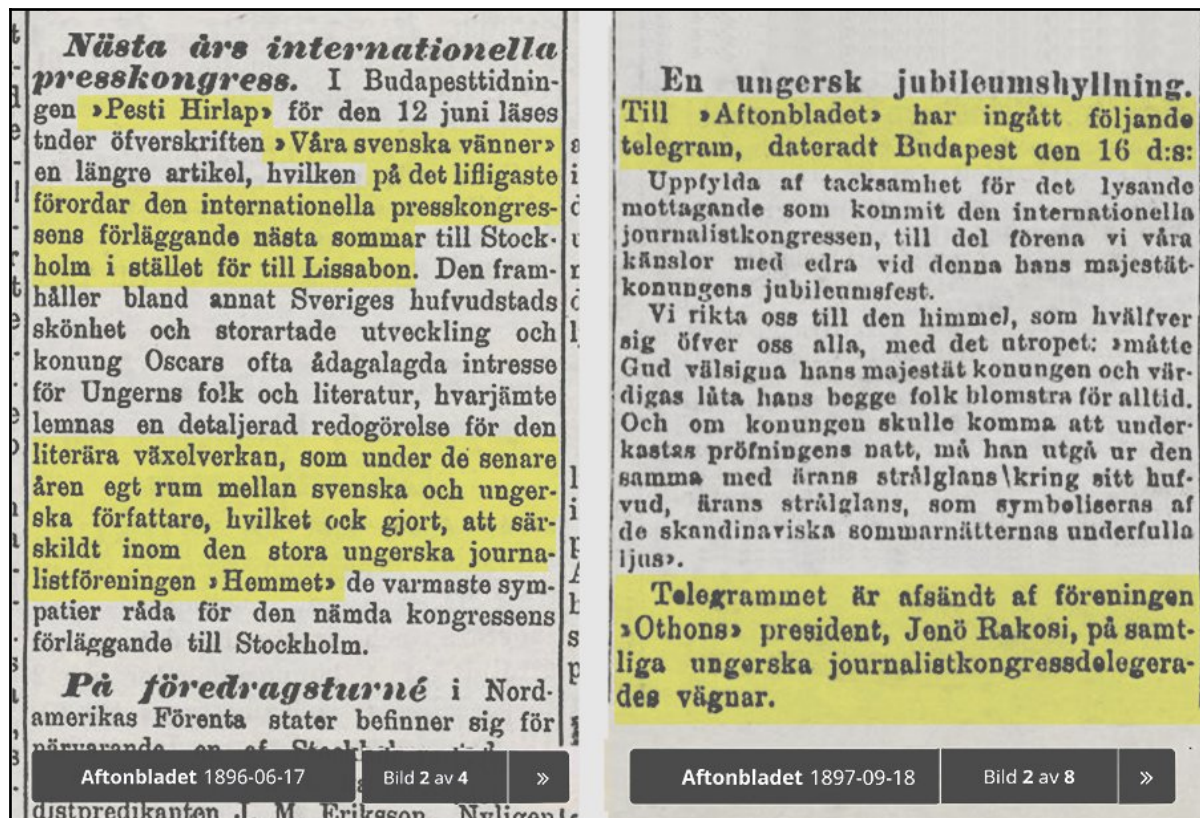
Jenő Rákosi was the very first ever to translate *Dracula* and to serialize it in *Budapesti Hírlap*, starting on 1 January 1898 already. Perhaps, Sohlman simply copied Rákosi's idea, just like Ásmundsson later copied Sohlman's idea. Sohlman and Rákosi had much in common: they were conservative Liberals and ardent nationalists. Rákosi was dreaming of a Great-Hungary, Sohlman did not want Norway to become independent from Sweden. In 1896, Rákosi founded a new newspaper, next to *Budapesti Hírlap*; he called it *Esti Ujság*. That means *Evenings News* – the same name as Sohlman's *Aftonbladet*.

Even more important is that Rákosi and Sohlman apparently remained in touch after the 1897 International Congress.



Is there any proof for that?

There are a few significant clues. First, on 18 September 1897, *Aftonbladet* published a telegram that Rákosi, in the name of his Hungarian press colleagues, had sent two days before, to congratulate King Oscar II of Sweden at his Silver Jubilee. As the telegram apparently had been sent to *Aftonbladet* instead of to the King himself, we may assume that Rákosi and Sohlman had a relationship of trust. On 6 November of the same year, *Aftonbladet* reported on a meeting of *Publicistklubben*, where another message from Jenő Rákosi had been received, thanking the Swedish association for hosting the Fourth Congress. On 2 March 1898, *Dagens Nyheter* reported on an issue of *La Presse Internationale*, to which Rákosi had contributed an article on the relationship between Sweden and Norway. Evidently, he was interested in this subject. And on 24 July 1899, *Aftonbladet* published an international protest against Russian censorship obstructing the Finnish press. Sohlman's name was the first under this article. Directly after his Danish colleagues, the leading Hungarian journalists were listed, *before* the English, American, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Belgian, Italian, Swiss, French, Austrian, German and Czech ones. Viktor Rákosi signed this protest on behalf of *Budapesti Hírlap*, together with Dr. Szor Beldi. We can conclude that, directly or indirectly, Sohlman still was in touch with the Rákosis at that time. Which is only logical, as the big European newspapers were constantly exchanging information with each other. In *Aftonbladet* of the 1890s, we find several news articles mentioning *Budapesti Hírlap* as their source, and the other way around. Newspaper copies were sent from Budapest to Stockholm, and vice versa, I guess, on a daily basis.



And where does this leave Bram Stoker's input?

That is hard to say. His name simply does not show up in the news – neither in Sweden, nor in Hungary, nor in Iceland. From the 1899 international appeal, we can see that Sohlman still was in touch with his British colleagues, although their association had not joined the IUPA. One of the signees was one J. B. Atkinson of the *Manchester Guardian*; in *Mörkrets makter*, “Atkinson” was the name of the English family Vilma lodged with in Budapest. And among the participants of the second International Congress in Bordeaux, in 1895, we find Jane Stoddart, the only journalist ever to conduct an interview on *Dracula* with Bram Stoker. Who knows if she perhaps passed the news about *Dracula* on to Rákosi, who had been at the Bordeaux Congress as well? But in *Budapesti Hirlap*, we find news about *Trilby*, about Henry Irving, Ellen Terry and the Lyceum Theatre productions, such as *Hamlet*, *Faust* and *Madame Sans-Gêne*; it mentions Sullivan and Comyns-Carr and Beerbohm-Tree, but not Stoker. On 31 December 1897, Rákosi introduced Stoker to his readers as an *American* writer, meaning that he was not really informed about him. Like before, trying to find out how *Dracula* came to Hungary, then to Sweden, then to Iceland, still is a matter of guesswork and intuition. But studying the way leading newspapers cooperated across Europe in the 1890's certainly is a valid starting point, as the first three foreign translations all were done by journalists, to be serialized in newspapers – the subsequent book publications were just byproducts, more or less.

You just sent us your article about an early American serialization of *Dracula* in the Chicago newspaper *Inter Ocean*, running from 7 May till 4 June 1899. You wrote that the miss-spelling “Western” in Lucy's name may have been copied in the Swedish adaptation. How does this fit together with the Hungarian connection?

In the announcements in *Inter Ocean* of early May 1899, we only find “Western,” while in the serialization itself, we find both “Westerna” (wrong spelling) and “Westenra” (correct spelling) next to each other, e.g. in the installments of 12 May and 16 May. Perhaps this Dutch name was simply too confusing for the American typographer. The *Charlotte Daily Observer* used “Westerna” throughout the text, but not “Western.” The Swedish version only used “Western.” For a Swedish typesetter, it should not have been too difficult to recognize “Westenra,” as Dutch and Swedish have much in common. But if Andersson-Edenberg had the *Inter Ocean* text in front of him, the spelling “Western” in the announcements might have confused him. Or he might have found it a clever idea to simplify the name for Swedish readers, once he had seen this variant in *Inter Ocean*. The plan to serialize one of Stoker’s novels was already announced in *Aftonbladet* in December 1898, however, more than four months before the *Inter Ocean* installments. In *Mörkrets makter*, different inputs may have come together: Rákosi’s early translation in *Budapesti Hírlap*, the miss-spelling of the Westenra name in *Inter Ocean*, and perhaps some form of communication with Stoker, recurring to his initial ideas for the plot as recorded in his preparatory notes. The fourth factor is the reservoir of references and metaphors already developed by Andersson-Edenberg since 1864, e.g. in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*. Each of these factors *could* have influenced *Mörkrets makter* – but for none of these effects, we have definitive proof. At least, these four possible scenarios are on the table now, with a good deal of background detail, within two months after I heard about the possible existence of a Swedish version. That is much more than I hoped for.

Hans, we thank you again for this interview.

REFERENCES:

- Various articles in the Swedish and the Hungarian press
- *Compte rendu des travaux du ... Congrès international de la presse* (Proceedings of the ... International Congress of the Press) for the years 1895-1899 (in French)
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