

Chapter Title: Introduction: August Strindberg's Occult Diary

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Book Title: August Strindberg: The Occult Diary

Book Subtitle: Paris 1896 – Stockholm 1908

Book Author(s): August Strindberg, Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams and Anders Hallengren

Book Editor(s): Per Stam, Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams, Gunnel Engwall

Published by: Stockholm University Press. (2022)

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv348f8r5.4>

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Introduction: August Strindberg's Occult Diary

Per Stam

August Strindberg (1849–1912) was an extraordinarily prolific writer whose collected works encompass no fewer than 72 volumes of drama, prose and poetry as well as 22 volumes of letters.¹ In this extensive literary production, *The Occult Diary* occupies a unique and central position.

Strindberg kept the diary from February 1896, when he moved into the Hotel Orfila in Paris, until the summer of 1908 in Stockholm, when he definitively broke off contact with his third wife, Harriet Bosse, and moved into a new apartment at Drottninggatan 85. He himself referred to his diary from this period as his Occult Diary and used it to help him decipher the world as he experienced it. He read and reread his own notations, adding new interpretations and deleting others. He also drew on the diary as material for creative expression, transforming isolated events and observations into groundbreaking works of literature. Although it is a deeply personal document, Strindberg considered publishing the diary as part of his autobiographical writings. It is published here in its entirety in English translation for the first time.

The Occult Diary is a key resource for international Strindberg scholars and theater professionals and more broadly for scholars focusing on drama, theater history, stage performance, and literary currents at the turn of the previous century. Readers will find several different ways to approach the text. The diary initiates the reader into the writer's inner world during a crucial transitional period in his personal and literary life. It documents his readings and observations and gives important clues and information about an ongoing process of artistic reorientation. Strindberg was exploring new ways of looking at, interpreting and writing about nature, science, art, the occult, and his fellow human beings. Diary entries reveal in detail his increasing focus on introspection and subjectivity and his proclivity for abstracting his personal experiences into universal symbols. In keeping with this tendency, his literary works became more reflective and associative. His post-1896 dramas broke with the conventions of realism and traditional dramatic structure dating back to Aristotle; instead Strindberg focused on finding ways to portray complex inner struggles in dramatic form. In doing so, he opened up new possibilities for what could be portrayed on stage, making him a precursor of theatrical expressionism and a seminal figure in the evolution of modern drama.

The notations in the diary recorded both the ordinary and the strange and provided material for creative works like *Inferno* (1897) and *Legends* (1898). Strindberg also commented on when, how and why he wrote these novels, the drama *A Dream Play* (1902), and other works. The diary gives a deeper understanding of Strindberg's oeuvre, biography and psychology, although the reader must tread cautiously in these last matters. When Strindberg played with the idea of publishing the diary, it was planned to supplement his autobiographical novels and his letters, but the diary is also a work of art. It can be read as an experimental montage of press clippings, drawings, photographs, objects from nature and text.

The diary was published in the original language in 2012 in a three-volume critical edition in *August Strindbergs Samlade Verk* ('The Collected Works of August Strindberg') (SV 59:1, typeset text; SV 59:2, facsimile of the original; SV 60, commentary).² An open access digital edition also became available the same year.³ This English translation follows the text and layout of the Swedish edition.⁴

The original diary consists of 282 loose folio pages that Strindberg, somewhat inconsistently, paginated 1–302, as well as a red outer cover, an inner cover, a parchment cover and a title page. Most of the text appears on one side of the page, written in black ink, but the author has also used a lead pencil and colored pencils. About 80 pages have explanatory material on the reverse side; the remaining reverse sides are blank. Taken together, the diary encompasses 578 pages.

A first draft of the English translation was made by Karin Petherick (1929–2009), University College London, who together with Göran Stockenström (1936–2020), University of Minnesota, edited the Swedish critical edition. Anders Hallengren, Stockholm University, in consultation with Michael Stevens, revised and edited the translation in 2007–2008. A thorough critical revision was undertaken by Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams in 2016.⁵

Diary entries 1896–1908

When Strindberg, at age 47, began keeping a diary he was a successful but also controversial writer both in his native Sweden and internationally. His published works included, among many other titles, his breakthrough novel, *The Red Room* (1879), the short story collections *Getting Married I* and *II* (1884, 1886) – a caustic description of Holy Communion in the first volume led to his prosecution (and acquittal) for blasphemy – as well as the naturalistic dramas *The Father* (1887), *Miss Julie* (1888) and *Creditors* (1890). He had also written a four-volume fictionalized autobiography, *The Son of a Servant* (1886–1887, 1909)⁶ and two additional novels, *The People of Hemsö* (1887) and *By the Open Sea* (1890).

In the diary, Strindberg described his life in Paris, in Lund in southern Sweden and in Stockholm, but also in the Stockholm archipelago, Austria and Belgium.

By the time he began keeping the diary he was geographically separated from his second wife, Frida Uhl (1872–1943), the mother of his daughter Kerstin (1894–1956). In the autumn of 1896, when Strindberg traveled to Klam in Austria to visit his wife and daughter, Frida had left; in her absence he spent time with Kerstin and his in-laws. Strindberg never saw his wife again. Though the marriage ended, Frida and Kerstin are often mentioned in the diary.

The diary also describes his marriage to Harriet Bosse (1878–1961) and the birth of their daughter Anne-Marie (1902–2007) as well as his partnership with the actor August Falck to found the Intimate Theater, a small, experimental stage in Stockholm that performed Strindberg's plays.

During the period when Strindberg kept a diary he published a long list of literary works, among them the novels *Inferno* (1897), *Legends* (1898) and *Gothic Rooms* (1904); the dramas *To Damascus I–III* (1898–1901), *The Dance of Death* (1901) and *A Dream Play* (1902); several historical dramas (from 1899); four chamber plays (1907–1908), including *The Ghost Sonata* (1907); the roman à clef *Black Banners* (1907); and two books of philosophical reflection that repudiate accepted scientific truths, *A Blue Book I and II* (1907, 1908).

In the diary Strindberg comments on his contacts with publishers and translators, theaters and directors, his friendships and conflicts with authors such as Stanislaw Przybyszewski, Dagny Juel, Marcel Réja, Gustaf af Geijerstam and Emil Kléen; with artists, including Paul Gauguin, Edvard Munch, Richard Bergh and Karl Nordström; with occultists like Dr. Papus and Paul Sédir and alchemists such as François Jollivet-Castelot and C. Théodore Tiffereau.⁷

The main thrust of the diary, however, is not an account of external events. Instead it offers unparalleled insight into Strindberg's inner world of dreams, conjectures and fantasies. An outgrowth of his so-called Inferno crisis, *The Occult Diary* provides unique testimony to his intellectual and spiritual reorientation in the mid-1890s. The entries reveal his attempt to come to grips with an existential crisis that evolved into an interpretation of everyday reality according to ethical and religious categories.

In the years immediately preceding the diary, Strindberg had produced several works merging science and philosophy, *Antibarbarus* (1894), *Sylva Sylvarum* (1896) and *Jardin des Plantes* (1896), in part to criticize established scientific doctrine and in part to offer his own view of how the world was configured.⁸ He also wrote a number of essays about human psychology and contemporary culture that he called 'Vivisections' (1894). His examination of the mysteries of creation, which initially had a materialist orientation, where empirical experiments were interwoven with philosophical speculation, led him to the conclusion that behind the creation there was a creator. This conversion took place in 1895–1896. In his investigation Strindberg took note of similarities, analogies and correspondences in nature. Diary entries initially followed this pattern of

observation,⁹ and consequently the diary has been described as “a laboratory notebook.”¹⁰ It nevertheless has a pronounced focus on the individual human being August Strindberg and his fate in the universe.

Strindberg initially referred to his entries as a diary of “Strange Coincidences and Inexplicable Events”¹¹ and a diary of dreams.¹² The diarist seems to be drawn into a cosmic drama where everything he observed, perceived and experienced bore witness to hidden connections and contained messages intended only for him.

“If you wish to get to know the invisible, observe the Visible with an open gaze (Talmud.)” wrote Strindberg on the diary’s title page. Everything was seen as part of a greater cosmic order. Observing patterns that could be discerned in the world around us also revealed the transcendental world. In his diary, Strindberg made note of natural catastrophes from all around the globe, astronomical observations of Capella, Orion’s Belt and novas. He also sketched cloud formations he could see from his window. He often wrote about finding a playing card in the street and seeing letters of the alphabet formed by tree twigs, but above all he discovered numbers and sums in various connections – on scraps of paper, on street signs, on bicycles and buses. He wrote down these signposts and then tried to interpret them. “What does it mean?” he repeatedly asked himself in the diary.¹³ For guidance he consulted the Bible, opening it at random, books of prophecy and occult literature. Beginning in autumn 1896, he turned to the writings of the Swedish mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg for help. The attempts to interpret were nevertheless Strindberg’s own, albeit guided by the various sources he consulted.

In later portions of the diary Strindberg described his marriage to Harriet Bosse, from falling in love to marriage in 1901, their daughter, their divorce, after which intimate relations continued until the final break in spring–summer 1908, when Bosse married the actor Gunnar Wingård. At that point Strindberg’s diary entries ceased, and he moved from his apartment at Karlavägen 40 to Drottninggatan 85. He was then 59 years old.

Strindberg’s thoughts about publishing the diary

The title

For a long time, Strindberg used the short term ‘Diary’, in the manuscript itself (on the outer cover, the parchment cover, the title page and in the text of the diary) and in letters to friends, as well as in the autobiographical novels *Inferno* and *Legends*, for which the diary was a source. The novels mention the narrator’s diary and suggest that the reader examine it: “The reader who is inclined to consider that this book is a work of imagination is invited to consult the diary [...] of which the above is merely a version, composed of extracts expanded and rearranged,” Strindberg wrote in *Inferno*.¹⁴ Although in many ways this was a rhetorical device, it served as an invitation of sorts.

The term ‘occult’ was not applied until early in the new century, sometimes with a lower-case initial letter (1904, 1907). Only when Strindberg offered the diary to his publisher, Bonniers, as guarantee for a loan (1907–1908) was the designation ‘Occult Diary’ established, with both initial letters capitalized. Probably this is when Strindberg changed the title on the outer red cover from ‘Diary’ to ‘Occult Diary’. Since the author treated the diary as a commodity, a literary work, there was cause to give it a name, and the name became a title: *The Occult Diary*.

Publish or conceal?

Strindberg seems to have kept a diary for some time without a thought to publication, but at a later juncture he started considering that option. He wanted the diary to be made available in a context that would do it justice: for the right person who would understand, for his family, perhaps for the Swedenborg Congregation in Stockholm or simply as a complement to his autobiographical writings. At the same time, he worried that the intimate material in the diary would give rise to indignation and be misunderstood, that readers would not understand the occult and spiritual contents of the diary.

Strindberg gave several different responses concerning the possible publication of the diary and where the manuscript should be kept after his death. Two conflicting attitudes can be discerned in his instructions: the desire to publish the diary, or the opposite, to keep its contents concealed.

A closer look at Strindberg’s comments about the diary is in order.

Strindberg’s statements while keeping the diary

Strindberg commented on the diary in writing on a number of occasions.

Instructions about the posthumous disposition of the diary are given at the bottom of the title page: “After my death this diary passes to Torsten Hedlund or Professor Axel Herrlin of Lund or to both! They are the only ones who understand it.” These instructions have been amended twice.

The theosophist Torsten Hedlund gave Strindberg encouragement and economic support and was an important discussion partner by letter from 1894 to 1896. In the summer of 1896 Strindberg wrote a series of eight consecutively paginated letters to Hedlund.¹⁵ A number of the very brief entries in the diary during this period were expanded in these so-called manuscript letters, which Strindberg later drew on in *Inferno*. Strindberg broke off the correspondence, which was sometimes quite intense, in November 1896, believing that Hedlund wanted to control him and sit in judgment. “Your craving for power, your egoism, your prophet’s megalomania are the grossest I have ever come across!” he wrote in his final letter.¹⁶ Presumably Hedlund was removed as caretaker of the diary shortly thereafter.

Strindberg spent time with the philosopher Axel Herrlin while visiting Lund toward the end of the 1890s. Both were interested in occultism and spiritual questions. Herrlin's name was probably crossed out when Strindberg departed from Lund in 1899 to settle in Stockholm, his home town.

On the parchment cover the word 'Diary' is followed by the instruction, latter crossed out, "to be deposited after my death with Professor Axel Herrlin in Lund in order subsequently to be the property of my children." A date, difficult to discern, is also provided: "Lund 19 June 1899." Most likely this is when the directions involving Herrlin were crossed out: it is the day before Strindberg moved to Stockholm.

In an unsent letter from 1901 to his brother, Axel Strindberg, prompted by a marital crisis when Strindberg seems to have been considering suicide, he specified his last wishes. Concerning the diary, he writes, "To him [Axel Strindberg] I also give my Diary, which should always remain in the family."¹⁷

Just a few years later, however, Strindberg placed the diary next to his letters in a planned edition of autobiographical writings to be published after his death. The autobiographical documents were intended to round out his life story:

The Son of a Servant.
(to be published after my death
in a single volume with this title.)

The Son of a Servant
Time of Ferment
In the Red Room
Fourth Part of The Son of a Servant [The Author]
(manuscript with Bonniers)
A Madman's Defense [...]
The letter collection "He and She" (with Al. Bonnier)
The Quarantine Master's Second Story [...]

Inferno
Legends
Alone

Collected letters
The Occult Diary¹⁸

In 1904 Strindberg sent an identical list to his German translator Emil Schering with the instructions, "If I die soon, will you collect the following works in *one volume* and publish them under the title 'The Son of a Servant': [...]. This is the only monument I desire: a black wooden cross and my story!"¹⁹ In a letter to his

Swedish publisher, Karl Otto Bonnier, Strindberg included a similar list of works that should be included in “*The Son of a Servant. / One Human Fate 1849–19.*” – without, however, mentioning the letters or the diary.²⁰

In October 1907, when Strindberg needed money to pay the first installment of rent for the Intimate Theater, he promised the diary to Bonniers Publishing House as collateral in return for a loan of 2000 crowns:

Since you have acquired my prose works anyway, and particularly the *Biographica*, I am now forced to offer you my greatest *œuvre posthume*. My ‘*Occult Diary*’, kept since the Hôtel Orfila in Paris 1896, thus in its 11th year. It comprises 548 octavo pages (274 large folio).

But this is an *affaire de confiance* and *confiance*, with confidence and in confidence. Since it is still in progress and continues to grow, you must have such confidence in me as to allow me to retain the Diary in my care, while an attestation that the same is your property is enclosed.

As regards publication, well, that will have to be after my death, but all the wonderful things I’ve experienced are there, intimate things, but with the names often spelt in Greek...

It will create problems afterwards...

In the letter Strindberg emphasizes that this is a matter of financial assistance in a desperate situation, because otherwise “the bailiffs will be in”. He continues, “This is thus a request for help rather than business!”²¹ Strindberg received the 2000-crown loan.

But he also retained the right to redeem the diary for the same sum, which he did as soon as he was able, in January–February 1908, in return for a promise of other works to come. During the entire time the diary served as collateral it remained in his home on Karlavägen. “You may naturally see the Diary here,” he wrote in the letter to Bonnier.

The arrangement with Bonniers generated comments on the red outer cover of the manuscript: “This Diary belongs to the Publishing house of Albert Bonnier by virtue of a contract of sale of 22nd October 1907; but with the option for me to repossess it for 2000 Crowns.” This was crossed out when Strindberg had paid that sum. Instead he wrote, “Canceled by enclosed letter from Bonnier 1 February 1908.”

The story is complicated by instructions on the outer cover, dated March 1908:

This Diary must never be published! This is my last will! Which must be obeyed!

It may remain with the heir who is most worthy of keeping it! And never given out on loan! Might be deposited with the Swedenborg Congregation! (The New Church.)

7 March 1908.

August Strindberg.

In these instructions Strindberg mentions the Swedenborg Congregation in Stockholm as a possible repository for the diary. It appears that while he specified that the diary should not be published, he simultaneously toyed with the idea that readers with the proper knowledge could turn to it as a religious confessional.

By the summer of 1908, when Strindberg had ceased making new entries in the diary, he seems also to have ceased adding commentary to earlier entries. He placed the diary in a newly-purchased archive box that was stored in a cabinet, along with other manuscripts on a wide variety of subjects, including literature, science, the history of language and the occult. Wilhelm Carlheim-Gyllensköld's sketch of the archive holdings, made after Strindberg's death, reveals that the Occult Diary was placed at the heart of the collection.²²

Negotiations with the publisher, 1911

In 1911, when Strindberg was negotiating with Bonniers about the publication of his collected works,²³ he stressed that only "works *already* in print" should be included, not unpublished material: "Thus Letters, Diaries and Manuscripts are *not* included."²⁴ When he received a draft of a contract, he reacted strongly to its reference to unpublished manuscripts and the following day wrote to the publisher about the diary:

The "Occult Diary" is so extensive (1896–1908), so intimate, so Swedenborgian, terrifying and a danger to others' peace of mind that it must be burned or sealed. [...] "Unpublished manuscripts" should probably be excluded, and letters and the Occult Diary *must* be excluded!²⁵

Strindberg clearly had conflicting ideas about the disposition of the diary after his death. His heirs were left to deal with the ambivalence reflected in his instructions.

The Occult Diary after Strindberg's death

August Strindberg died on May 14, 1912. His relatives sealed the diary in 1913. The following year it was moved to the Nordic Museum, to which the heirs had donated his estate. In 1922 Strindberg's manuscripts, letters and the diary were deposited at the National Library of Sweden in Stockholm.

For many years access to the diary required permission from a representative of Strindberg's heirs as well as the national librarian, head of the library. Very few received permission, but transcriptions made in connection with inventories and scholarly investigations served as sources for research.

In 1915, Vilhelm Carlheim-Gyllensköld, who inventoried the estate at the behest of the family, urged publication of the diary, basing his argument in part on Strindberg's own notes (cited above). Gyllensköld arranged for a typed copy to be made.²⁶ The literary scholar Martin Lamm also had access to the diary in the early 1920s and transcribed excerpts, but other researchers, such as Torsten Eklund and Gunnar Brandell, could only consult excerpts and transcriptions while working on their dissertations (1948; 1950).

In 1962, 50 years after Strindberg's death, the diary became more accessible to researchers. Torsten Eklund published a volume of excerpts in 1963, focusing primarily on Strindberg's third marriage and including letters to and from his wife: *Ur Ockulta dagboken. Äktenskapet med Harriet Bosse*. The volume was translated into English by Mary Sandbach with the title *From an Occult Diary: Marriage with Harriet Bosse* (1965; new edition 1979). The first major work in literary studies that drew on an examination of the original manuscript of the diary was Göran Stockenström's dissertation, *Ismael i öknen. Strindberg som mystiker* ('Ishmael in the Desert. Strindberg as Mystic') (1972). Five years later, in 1977, the entire diary was published for the first time in a black and white facsimile edition.

Reading *The Occult Diary*

Despite his reservations and ambivalence, Strindberg himself repeatedly made plans for the diary to be published. He also intended that his letters be published, although not in the collected works. The letters eventually appeared in 22 massive volumes and a slimmer supplement.²⁷

The Occult Diary was included as a biographical document in the critical edition of Strindberg's collected works.²⁸ This publication, in 2012, was the first time the entire text appeared set in type. The hand-written manuscript that previously had been a challenge to read was now presented in an authoritative rendition.

In the original, Strindberg used Greek letters to camouflage names and sensitive material; the text was in Swedish but written in Greek letters. The published Swedish edition reproduced the Greek letters, but they were also transliterated into Swedish letters within boldface editorial square brackets to make the text easier to read. The presentation in the English translation of the diary follows the Swedish edition, retaining the Greek letters used for Swedish words but with an English translation within boldface square brackets.

One goal of both the Swedish and English editions has been to capture the process of writing the diary and its material presentation, with Strindberg's additions, markings and deletions on the pages. Thus the published versions reproduce

spelling errors and text that has been crossed out as well as additions and comments made with different pens. Newspaper articles, drawings and the like that were attached to diary pages are photographically reproduced.

The reason deleted material has been included is not to reveal secrets, but to provide the entire text of the document to the greatest extent possible. Doing so also offers insight into what prompted diary entries and how they changed over time. One example is the above-cited entry Strindberg made in October 1907, when the diary was offered to Bonniers as a loan guarantee, which he crossed out when the loan had been repaid. Including the excised text makes it possible to follow the entire course of events.

Some of the text concealed by broad strokes of the pen was brought to light by digital enhancement when the Swedish critical edition was prepared. Following the Swedish edition, the English translation reproduces as much information as current technology allows. The most extensive deletion occurred in the section about Strindberg's intimate relations with Harriet Bosse (p. 205 v.); portions of the text on this page are thoroughly crossed out with heavy strokes of ink or India ink.

Strindberg seems to have believed that Bosse and he had been singled out for some higher purpose and that their intimate relations also took place in another dimension. Strindberg could sense Bosse's presence even when she was away. As early as 1900 and 1901 he described their contact on the astral plane and their telepathic intercourse (p. 123 v. and p. 129). Many diary entries between 1901 and 1908 center on these perceptions. During the crisis in 1908, Strindberg suffered intense physical and spiritual pain, which he interpreted in terms of a perceived long-standing otherworldly union with Bosse. The passages on p. 205 v. that were crossed out are hardly sensational in relation to the text as a whole, but they shed light on Strindberg's perspective on and conjectures about man and woman more generally.

*

Research on Strindberg's diary and its connection to the Inferno crisis and his scientific-philosophical writing has employed several partially contradictory theoretical models.

One approach is to view the diary as a direct pipeline to the author's psyche. Entries about experiences and conjectures related to the paranormal can then – like the author's political writing, his frank treatment of sexuality and his interest in alchemy – be interpreted as signs of mental illness. Ulf Olsson has investigated this perspective, which dominated earlier Strindberg research, in *Jag blir galen. Strindberg, vansinnet och vetenskapen* ('I'm going crazy: Strindberg, madness and science') (2002).²⁹

Strindberg's descriptions of anxiety, torment and paranoia have been interpreted as if the author were a patient reclining on a psychiatrist's couch. In

his dissertation, *Strindbergs infernokris* (1950) (*Strindberg in Inferno*, 1974), Gunnar Brandell drew on the author's literary works, letters and excerpts from the diary to establish the dates of four episodes of psychosis that Strindberg supposedly suffered between 1894 and 1896. In a later biography, *Strindberg – ett författarliv* ('Strindberg: A writer's life') (1983), Brandell offered a more cautious interpretation of Strindberg's experiences.³⁰

Olof Lagercrantz proposed an opposing perspective in the biography *August Strindberg* (1979). As he sees it, the crisis of the 1890s, the scientific investigations and the diary are a conscious experiment on Strindberg's part to acquire experiences that could be utilized in literary works, the novel *Inferno* and writings that followed.³¹

In several studies, Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams has foregrounded Strindberg's connection to French occultism, which was in fashion during the 1890s, when he began keeping a diary. The diary is viewed as a collection of material intended for a study of the occult.³²

Many scholars have emphasized the close connection between Strindberg's 'Vivisections' essays, his scientific texts, his diary and his literary works during the 1890s, and also between the diary and *A Blue Book* ten years later.³³ This perspective is shared – despite varying points of departure – in interpretations by Gunnar Brandell (1950, 1983), Göran Stockenström (1972), Olof Lagercrantz (1979), Michael Robinson (1996), Ulf Olsson (1996) and Per Stam (2009). Texts that could be categorized as belonging to different genres are all part of Strindberg's process of reinventing himself. The diary can also be placed under the same umbrella. Seen this way, the primary importance of *The Occult Diary* would not be as a biographical document or psychological case study, but rather as an experimental text or a montage that includes drawings, photographs, newspaper articles and objects from nature.³⁴ In *Paradoxografi* ('Paradoxography') (2019), Ulf Olsson examines *The Occult Diary* as a material object, a montage of lists, clippings, drawings, photos – an experimental artistic text: "*The Occult Diary* explores practices that make the world readable and writable."³⁵

Regardless of perspectives chosen, this English translation of *The Occult Diary* unlocks new possibilities for those who do not have access to the original Swedish. By enabling a more nuanced understanding of Strindberg's inner life and working method during this period of profound reorientation, the diary may stimulate innovative ways of reading and interpreting his post-Inferno literary production.

*

How should we read *The Occult Diary*? We should remember that the entries were made over a period of twelve and a half years and not read too quickly. This is not a novel. Some entries are very brief and difficult to interpret, others contain carefully developed arguments. There is no fictional plot in the diary, but

there are entries about observations, dreams and flights of the imagination – and Strindberg’s interpretation of these entries.

Thus the reader is inexorably drawn into the interpretative process. Perhaps this is precisely what Strindberg desired. And perhaps these new editions in Swedish and English will help the diary find its ideal reader – today or tomorrow.³⁶

Translated by Rochelle Wright

Notes

1. August Strindberg, *Nationalupplagan av August Strindbergs Samlade Verk* [hereafter *August Strindbergs Samlade Verk*, or SV], Lars Dahlbäck (ed. in chief 1981–2008), Per Stam (ed. in chief 2009–2021), Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981–1985, Stockholm: Norstedts, 1986–2013; Litteraturbanken.se, 2007–2021.

August Strindberg, *August Strindbergs Brev* 1–22, Torsten Eklund (ed.) 1–15, Björn Meidal (ed.) 16–22, Stockholm: Bonniers, 1948–2001. See also note 27.

2. August Strindberg, *Ockulta Dagboken*, SV 59:1; *Ockulta Dagboken. Faksimil av handskriften*, SV 59:2; *Ockulta Dagboken. Kommentarer*, SV 60, Karin Petherick and Göran Stockenström (eds.), Per Stam (ed. in chief), Stockholm: Norstedts, 2012.

3. Digital publication of the diary, along with all other volumes in the critical edition, is open access at Litteraturbanken.se, <https://litteraturbanken.se/presentationer/specialomraden/SSV.html>.

4. Ilaria Tedde is responsible for the layout of the English-language edition, following Camilla Kretz’s layout of SV 59:1.

5. Petherick’s translation, begun before work on the critical edition was underway, was originally intended for an annotated English-language edition planned by Stockenström that never reached fruition. Revisions by Hallengren and Stevens were undertaken at the behest of the editors of the critical edition as the Swedish volumes of the diary were nearing completion. Petherick approved the undertaking and was able to read and comment on part of this version. After the publication of the Swedish edition and with access to the definitive Swedish text, Gavel Adams made a critical revision of the English translation in 2016, and in 2017–2018 a final review in consultation with Rochelle Wright and Per Stam.

6. All four volumes were completed by 1886, but the final installment was not published until 1909.

7. Stanislaw Przybyszewski (1868–1927), Polish author.

Dagny Juel Przybyszewska (1867–1901), Norwegian writer and artist muse, had a brief affair with Strindberg in Berlin in 1893; married Przybyszewski that same year; murdered by an admirer in Tblisi in 1901.

Marcel Réja [Paul Meunier] (1873–1957), poet, medical student, later psychiatrist; revised Strindberg’s original French text of *Inferno* and wrote an introduction for its publication in 1898.

Gustaf av Geijerstam (1858–1909), Swedish writer; between 1897 and 1902, head of literature division, Gernandt Publishing House.

Emil Kleen (1868–1903), Swedish poet and journalist.

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903), French painter, became acquainted with Strindberg in Paris; in 1895 Strindberg wrote a letter about his art that was published as the foreword to an auction catalogue.

Edvard Munch (1863–1944), Norwegian artist; made several portraits of Strindberg; Strindberg published an article on “L’exposition d’Edward Munch” (“Edvard Munch’s Exhibition”) in *La Revue blanche*, 1 June 1896.

Richard Bergh (1858–1919), Swedish artist.

Karl Nordström (1855–1923), Swedish artist.

Dr. Papus (or Papus) [Gerard Encausse] (1865–1916), medical doctor, French occultist writer; chairman of the Martinist Order’s Supreme Council; published the journal *L’Initiation*, where a number of articles by Strindberg on scientific and occult topics appeared in 1896–1897.

Paul Sédir [Yvon Le Loup] (1871–1926), French occultist.

François Jollivet-Castelot (1874–1937), French occultist and alchemist; in 1896 founded the journal *L’Hyperchimie*, where Strindberg was a contributor.

C. Théodore Tiffereau (1819–1909), French alchemist and photographer.

8. August Strindberg, *Naturvetenskapliga Skrifter I. Antibarbarus / Sylva Sylvarum / Jardin des Plantes*, SV 35, Per Stam (ed.), Stockholm: Norstedts, 2010; August Strindberg, *Naturvetenskapliga Skrifter II. Broschyren och uppsatser 1895–1902*, SV 36, Per Stam (ed.), Stockholm: Norstedts, 2003. Some of this material, including “Edvard Munch’s Exhibition,” pp. 167–169, is available in English translation: August Strindberg, *Selected Essays*, Michael Robinson (ed. and transl.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016 [1996].

9. Per Stam, “‘Världen för Sig och världen för Mig’. August Strindbergs *Naturvetenskapliga Skrifter* – en inledning,” *Strindbergiana. Tjugofjärde samlingen*, Per Stam (ed.), Stockholm: Atlantis, 2009, pp. 16–40; Per Stam, “‘Jag skulle gärna vilja bli troende igen...’ Strindbergs utveckling från ateist till mystiker under 1890-talet,” in Martin Hellström (ed.), *Tron är mitt lokalbatteri. Religion och religiositet i August Strindbergs liv och verk*, Skellefteå: Artos, 2012, pp. 25–43.

10. Sylvain Briens, “Paris, Laboratory of Modernity: Modernist Experimentation and August Strindberg’s Search for ‘the Equation’ in Paris,” in Anna Westerståhl Stenport (ed.), *The International Strindberg*, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2012, p. 114. See also Ulf Olsson, “Allegoriska drömmar, spelkort, kvistar: Ockulta Dagboken,” in *Paradoxografi. Strindbergs sena verk*, Stockholm: Bokförlaget Faethon, 2019, pp. 125–163.
11. August Strindberg, letter to Torsten Hedlund, 7 July 1896, in Michael Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press and London: Athlone Press, 1992, p. 569.
12. August Strindberg, letter to Torsten Hedlund, 30 June 1896, in Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, p. 559.
13. The sentence appears, with or without a question mark, on pp. 43, 130, 140, 141[a], 168, 195, 226, 251 v., 266, 277, 287 (twice), 288, 293, and 296.
14. August Strindberg, *Inferno and From an Occult Diary*, Torsten Eklund (ed.) and Mary Sandbach (transl.), Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1979, p. 274.
15. Strindberg’s manuscript letters to Hedlund are dated 6–22 July 1896. *August Strindbergs Brev 11*, Torsten Eklund (ed.), Stockholm: Bonniers, 1969, pp. 236–285; in part translated in Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, pp. 562–585.
16. August Strindberg, letter to Torsten Hedlund, 23 November 1896, in Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, p. 600.
17. August Strindberg, letter to Axel Strindberg, 16 September 1901, in *August Strindbergs Brev 14*, Torsten Eklund (ed.), Stockholm: Bonniers, 1974, p. 132.
18. National Library of Sweden, SgNM 1:1,20.
19. August Strindberg, letter to Emil Schering, 13 June 1904, in Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, p. 712.
20. August Strindberg, letter to Karl Otto Bonnier, 1 July 1904, in *August Strindbergs Brev 15*, Torsten Eklund (ed.), Stockholm: Bonniers, 1976, pp. 42–43.
21. August Strindberg, letter to Karl Otto Bonnier, 21 October 1907, in Robinson, *Strindberg’s Letters II*, pp. 751–752. The italics have been added in *Strindberg’s Letters*. Robinson’s translation of ‘förskrifning’ has been corrected; Strindberg did not provide a copy of the diary, but rather enclosed an attestation that it was the publisher’s property.
22. See *Ockulta Dagboken. Kommentarer*, SV 60, pp. 12–14 and Figure 2 (after p. 64).

23. The 55-volume *Samlade Skrifter*, John Landqvist (ed.), Stockholm: Bonniers, 1912–1920, was the standard edition of Strindberg's works until the critical edition was published: *August Strindbergs Samlade Verk*, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981–1985, Stockholm: Norstedts, 1986–2013.
24. August Strindberg, letter to Karl Otto Bonnier, 29 June 1911, in *August Strindbergs Brev* 20, Björn Meidal (ed.), Stockholm: Bonniers, 1996, p. 52.
25. August Strindberg, letter to Karl Otto Bonnier. 30 June 1911, in *August Strindbergs Brev* 20, pp. 52–53.
26. National Library of Sweden, SE S-HS SgKB. Carlheim-Gyllensköld:11:1–4.
27. August Strindberg, *August Strindbergs Brev* 1–22, Stockholm: Bonniers, 1948–2001; “August Strindbergs Brev – en efterslätter 2016,” Björn Meidal (ed.), *Strindbergiana. Trettioförsta samlingen*, 2016. All 23 volumes are available digitally in their entirety at Litteraturbanken.se. A selection in English translation may be found in *Strindberg's Letters* I and II, Michael Robinson (ed. and transl.), 1992.
28. Other previously unpublished material is also included in *Samlade Verk*, including “En Tvivlares Anteckningar” (intended for *In the Red Room*), SV 21; *He and She*, SV 22; and *Antibarbarus II*, SV 35.
29. Ulf Olsson, *Jag blir galen. Strindberg, vansinnet och vetenskapen*, Stockholm/Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 2002. See also Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams' summary of various interpretations of *Inferno* and the *Inferno* crisis in SV 37, 1994, pp. 330–332.
30. Gunnar Brandell, *Strindbergs Infernokris*, Stockholm: Bonniers, pp. 63–90, 222–230; Brandell, *Strindberg – ett författarliv. Tredje delen. Paris, till och från 1894–1898*, Stockholm: Alba, 1983, pp. 149–183.
31. Olof Lagercrantz, *August Strindberg*, Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1979, pp. 315–341; on the diary, pp. 326–336.
32. Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams, *The Generic Ambiguity of August Strindberg's "Inferno": Occult Novel and Autobiography*, Ann Arbor: U.M.I, 1990, pp. 70–74; Gavel Adams, “Strindberg som ockultismens Zola,” *Strindbergiana. Åttonde samlingen*, Hans-Göran Ekman (ed.), Stockholm: Atlantis, 1993, pp. 123–138.
33. On the diary and *A Blue Book*, see Stockenström, *Ockulta Dagboken. Kommentarer*, SV 60, pp. 42, 95, and Gunnar Ollén, comments in *En blå bok* I–IV, SV 65, p. 444, SV 66, pp. 1060–1063, SV 67, pp. 1530–1542.
34. Brandell, *Strindbergs Infernokris*, 1950; Brandell, *Strindberg – ett författarliv. Tredje delen*, 1983; Stockenström, *Ismael i öknen. Strindberg som*

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35. Ulf Olsson, *Paradoxografi. Strindbergs sena verk* (2019), p. 133.

36. The introduction to the English translation of *The Occult Diary*, intended for an international audience, is a revised and expanded version of the presentation of the Swedish edition: Per Stam, "August Strindbergs Ockulta Dagboken" (2013) and "'Denna Dagbok får aldrig tryckas!' Om att utge Strindbergs dagbok i Samlade Verk" (2014).

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