

In recent years Media Studies have focussed the 19th century for research on the theoretical and conceptual foundations of today's electronic media. The 19th century not only brought a boom of new media technology, as photography, cinematography, gramophone and telephone made their appearance. The new media also had an effect on contemporary scientific, public and aesthetic discourses. It is therefore obvious that Media Studies added new accents to the study of August Strindberg, as a number of publications on Strindberg's experiments with different media such as painting, music, photography and the *laterna magica* demonstrate.

The essays which make up this volume were originally delivered at the 15th International Strindberg Conference on »Strindberg and His Media«, organized by the Nordeuropa-Institut in Berlin in September 2001. The aim of the conference was to further a debate on Strindberg and his media, which only recently has turned from an interest in Strindberg's use of contemporary media for his aesthetic and scientific experiments to their functions and discursive constructions as they are reflected in his writings. As the contributions in this volume demonstrate, Strindberg's occupation with the media of his time is closely linked to the modern crises of identity, masculinity, language, representation and perception. Thus Strindberg's writings can be regarded as an interface between media discourses and other social, scientific and aesthetic discourses.

In her introductory essay to this book *Annegret Heitmann* discusses the »concept of »medium« both from an historical perspective and from the viewpoint of today's academic discourse. Reading Strindberg's play *Fördringsägare* (1888; *The Creditors*) along the lines of major paradigms in contemporary media studies, Heitmann shows that the play can be regarded as a »meta-drama which addresses the problem of communication and stages the act of reception«.

The problem of communication that Heitmann points at was enforced by new technologies of writing and speech like graphophone and telephone which, according to *Ulf Olsson*, seemed to »destabilize the identity of self and other«. In this context Strindberg's writings can be regarded as an attempt to subvert the disciplinary regime these new media were a part of. *Anne-Bitt Gerecke* connects the problem of identity to the concept

of the »author« in Strindberg's work. His self representation as an author in a collection of photographs from Gersau and the »death« of the author-figure in *Spöksöneten* (1907; *The Ghost Sonata*) are variations of Strindberg's reflections on the problematic status of the subject in modernity. Like Gerecke, *Annie Bourguignon* draws a line from the crisis of identity to the concept of the author. Breaking with »poetry« in favour of journalistic writing in *Bland franska bönder* (1886; *Among French Farmers*) Strindberg tries to redefine his position as an author, while at the same time obscuring the differences between reportage and fiction.

Anna Cavallin and *Ulrike Peters* connect the crisis of identity to contemporary gender discourses. Cavallin's topic is the discourse on the New Woman in some of Strindberg's narratives from the 1880s. She asks, how this discourse is represented in Strindberg's writings and what happens to the women in his texts when they are confronted with publicity in the media? In Strindberg's narratives, women's claim for authorship is an ambivalent topic. In fact, as Peters argues, in the 1880s »literary writing as a male activity became problematic« for Strindberg, which led him for some time to concentrate on scientific writing. In *Fadren* (1887; *The Father*) the problem of literary writing is dramatized as male and female characters struggle for dominance in the symbolic order.

Writing for Strindberg was also and especially an economic problem. Analysing the changing relationship between Strindberg and his publishers, *Elena Balzamo* demonstrates how economic and private sphere increasingly intermingle, turning Strindberg into a public person.

Section three of this book focuses on the stage, the medium of some of Strindberg's most radical aesthetic innovations. *Marianne Streisand* discusses Strindberg's theatre aesthetics as formulated in his »Preface« to *Fröken Julie* (1888; *Miss Julie*) in the context of contemporary discourses on intimacy. While Streisand is interested in the effect of Strindberg's aesthetics on the conceptualization of early twentieth century theatre, *Barbara Steene* and *Barbara Lide* discuss Strindberg's influence on theatre aesthetics in the second half of the century. Looking at Ingmar Bergman's obsession with Strindberg throughout his career as a director for film and theatre, Steene notes the changes in Bergman's approach to Strindberg. Lide takes a closer look at Max Lundqvist's adaptations of Strindberg's novel *En dåres försvarstal* (1887-1888; *A Madman's Defence*) for stage and radio, demonstrating in which way the body of the actor/speaker is involved in the adaptation of a text for different dramatic media.

From a more general perspective of the stage as medium *Egil Törnqvist* focuses on the particular status of the drama text as both ›drama text‹ and ›performance text‹ which he illustrates in his reading of *Fröken Julie*. Being received by both reader and spectator, Törnqvist argues, the drama text turns into an intermediary product. Its reception becomes an even more complex problem if translation is included in the discussion, as *Eivor Martinus* illustrates, exemplifying the linguistic, cultural, aesthetic but also economic problems of translating Strindberg for the stage in England and the USA.

In section four *Göran Söderström* and *Grischka Petri* take a closer look at Strindberg's paintings. While Söderström concentrates on the relationship between Strindberg and Adolf Paul to investigate into the origin of a number of mysterious paintings which were discovered during the preparation of the great Strindberg exhibition in Stockholm in 2000, Grischka Petri analyses the symbolic content of some of Strindberg's paintings, concluding that their symbolism can be regarded as a specific iconography representing Strindberg's epistemological project.

Strindberg's fascination with visual media as reflected in his writings is the object of *Roger Marmus* and *Jan Balbierz*. Marmus shows that Strindberg in his reportage *Bland franska bönder* is preoccupied with perception: travelling through France by train, Strindberg's issue is to capture his impressions of a landscape in motion. Examining Strindberg's scientific writings of the 1890s and his experiments with photography, Balbierz shows that photography for Strindberg is part of a bigger scientific project questioning the possibilities of representation and speculating about the laws of nature.

The last section of this book concentrates on intermediality and intertextuality in Strindberg's writings. According to *Jørgen Stender Clausen* the programmatic idea of a ›Gesamtkunstwerk‹ in Strindberg's ›Preface‹ to *Fröken Julie* can also be referred to as ›multimedia work‹. In *Spöksönan* (1907; *Ghost sonata*) references to contemporary media such as telephone, telegraph, newspaper but also music and painting are embedded into an allegorical play in which the overt ›atmosphere of chaos and ruin‹ is undermined by a carnivalesque pretext. Taking a different angle *Joachim Grage* concentrates on intermediality between music and literature in the *Kammarspel* (*Chamber plays*). The underlying aesthetic concept in these plays, Grage argues, is a musical one. Music enhances theatricality at a time when language for Strindberg seemed inadequate. The turn to a

musical aesthetics is also part of Strindberg's self fashioning as an artist, as the *Kammarspel* function as part of an aging artist's strategy to stage art as a transcendental experience and the artist as »poeta vates«. In his self-fashioning as an aging artist, Strindberg not only referred to Beethoven but also to Goethe, as *Piotr Bukowski* demonstrates. Admiring Goethe for his thorough knowledge of the world, Strindberg would regard the German writer as an epistemic and personal authority who would legitimate his alchemistic discourse. *Henk van der Liet* takes up another sort of intertextual references. He examines what happens to a text when it is transposed into another medium. Comparing Strindberg's one-act play *Paria* (1889; *Pariah*) to Ola Hanssons novella *En Paria* (1889; *A Pariah*) that Strindberg's play was adapted from, van der Liet demonstrates that with the change of media there is also a change in the relationship between text and reader.

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