Bulletin of the *Transilvania* University of Braşov
Series IV: Philology and Cultural Studies • Vol. 10 (59) No. 1 – 2017

The origin of the first *Dracula* adaptation

Hans Corneel DE ROOS[1]

Over the past few years, early serializations and translations of Dracula have become a major research topic in Gothic studies. The Icelandic version, Makt myrkranna, for decades believed to be the first translation of Dracula, recently turned out to be based on a still earlier Swedish adaptation, Mörkrets makter. This paper establishes that Mörkrets makter was serialized in two distinct forms, one maintaining the epistolary form throughout the novel, one abandoning it after the Transylvanian part. How Dracula came to Sweden and whether Bram Stoker gave his permission for the Swedish serializations – or even actively helped shape them– still is an open question. This article identifies Anders Albert Andersson-Edenberg as the Swedish translator/editorand traces some of the metaphors used in Mörkrets makter back to his earlier writings for Svenska Familj-Journalen.

Keywords*: Dracula, Makt myrkranna, Mörkrets makter, Sweden, Andersson-Edenberg*

1. Introduction: Early editions, serializations and translations of *Dracula*

Bram Stoker's vampire novel *Dracula* was released on 26 May 1897 with his British publisher Archibald Constable and Company, London-Westminster (McAlduff, 2012). Although it was generally believed that the book received only mixed reviews, documentary research by *Dracula* Scholar John E. Browning has demonstrated that the book received mostly positive critiques in the British and international press (Browning, 2012 *Critical Feast*). Until recently, studies on the publication and reception of *Dracula* have focused on the English-language book editions, such as the first prints produced by Constable (with or without advertisements in the back), the Hutchinson Colonial Library series, the American editions (starting in 1899 with the Doubleday and McClure edition) and the abridged version, created by Bram Stoker himself (published by Constable in 1901).

The first serialization of *Dracula* officially authorized by Bram Stoker's widow Florence appeared in the magazine *Argosy: The Word's Best Short Stories* (London, 1926), introduced by Florence's comments: "It is now being serialized for the first time [...] I have willingly given my permission to the Editor to publish it in serial form" (Miller 2009, 284).

[1] Independent literature researcher, social scientist, photographer, Munich, info@hansderoos.com.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

But already in an advertisement in *The New York Times* of 7 October 1899, Doubleday and McClure had stated that *Dracula* had "much success in England, and as a serial in America." To find the actual shape of this serialization, however, turned out to be a "maddening elusive" task. (Skal 2004, 68). As indicated by Elizabeth Miller, the serialization of *Dracula* has been a "problem that has nagged *Dracula* scholars for decades" (Browning, 2012 *Forgotten Writings*, xviii).

Only in 2012, the discovery of the first U.S. newspaper serialization of *Dracula* by Stoker biographer David Skal was announced: it had been published under the title *Dracula: A Strong Story of the Vampire* in the *Charlotte Daily Observer*, Charlotte, North Carolina in weekly installments, the first episode appearing on 16 July 1899, the last on 10 December 1899. Almost simultaneously, John Browning established that *Dracula* also had been serialized under the title *The Vampire* in the morning and Sunday editions of *The Boston Advertiser* of May 1921 (Browning, 2012 *Forgotten Writings*, 9). Moreover, the book appeared in daily episodes in *The Washington Times*, Washington D.C., from 13 September 1917 till 21 January 1918.

Translations of *Dracula* have been listed in *Dracula* bibliographies since decades (e.g. Hughes, 1997; Miller, 2009; Browning and Picart, 2011), but a systematic study of such foreign editions, such as presented by *Dracula* scholar and book hunter Simone Berni from Pisa in his book *Dracula by Bram Stoker – The Mystery of the Early Editions* (Berni, 2016) is fairly recent. As Berni indicates, the first known translation of Stoker's famous story was published in Hungary. Berni managed to identify the registration copy of the book publication in *Országos Széchényi Könyvtár*, the Széchényi National Library in Budapest, listed as *Drakula: Harker Jonathan naplója* (Berni, 2015).

Tickled by Berni's accomplishment, I started searching for the preceding newspaper serialization Berrni had mentioned. As I found out, the name of the newspaper was not ***Magyar*** *Hírlap*, as my Italian colleague had assumed (Berni 2016, 32), but ***Budapesti*** *Hírlap*. By searching the Hungarian newspaper archives, I was able to unearthen the actual installments, starting on 1 January 1898; the last episode appeared on 29 March 1898. Chief Editor and publisher of *Budapesti Hírlap* was Jenő Rákosi (1842-1929), who also translated *Dracula* to Hungarian. By re-translating some text samples to English, I established that it almost verbally followed Stoker's original text, with only some minor deviations (De Roos, 2016).

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)



Regény-Csarnok.

DRAKULA

Angol regény.

Irta: **Bram Stoker.**

Harker Jonathan naplója.

(Gyorsírásból fejezte).

I.

Május 3. Beszterce. Münchenből 8 óra 35 perckor indultam este. Bécsbe másnap reggel érkeztem; 6 óra 36 perckor kellett volna érkeznem, de a vonatunk egy órát késett.

Budapest csodálatos egy helynek látszott, ha a kevésből, a mit a vonatról és rövid sétám alatt láttam, itélhetek. Nem mertem nagyon messzire menni az állomástól, mert hogy késön is érkeztünk, meg nem bíztam egészen az indulás pontosságában sem. A benyomásom az volt, hogy elhagytuk nyugatot és keleten vagyunk, a nyugati hidak egyik legremekjebbén, a mely itt a hatalmasan széles és mély Dunát fogja át, keresztül a hajdani török uralom tradiciói közé jutottunk.

Figure 1. *Budapesti Hírlap*, 1 January 1898, p. 12, with the start of the Hungarian serialization of *Dracula*

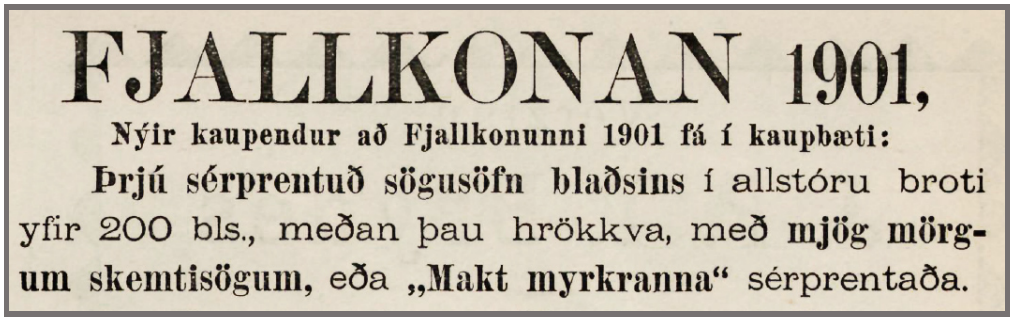
Makt myrkranna – the Icelandic version of *Dracula*

Already by the end of 2013, I had started studying an early foreign edition of *Dracula*, that – prior to the discovery of the Hungarian translation – had been believed to have constituted the first-ever transcription to a foreign language: *Makt myrkranna*, published by Nokkrir Prentarar as a book edition in Reykjavik in 1901. The preface to this Icelandic book had been published by Richard Dalby in 1986, in an English translation created by Joel H. Emerson (Dalby, 1986). Since then, this little text had caused quite some commotion among *Dracula* experts, as it contained a reference to the infamous Whitechapel murders by Jack the Ripper – although *Dracula* did not contain any clear reference to these homicides; it does not even describe a coherent "series of crimes" that might have caused "repugnance with the public," as mentioned in the translation by Emerson.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

The focus of the essay I was reworking around Christmas 2013, however, was not the Ripper link, but the preface's statement that all events reported in *Makt myrkranna* would have been factual; this claim occurs in the preface at least three times. To make sure that my own analysis would be in tune with the Icelandic source text, I tried to get hold of the original text of the foreword; while doing so, I also unearthed the rest of the Icelandic text, and found out that well before the book publication of August 1901, the novel had been serialized in the Reykjavik newspaper *Fjallkonan*, owned, published and edited by Valdimar Ásmundsson (1852-1901) (De Roos, 2014).

Over a period of three years, I translated and researched the Icelandic version, which turned out to be a radical modification of *Dracula*, not an abridged translation of the same, as assumed by Dalby. My annotated translation was published as *Powers of Darkness – The Lost Version of Dracula*, released by Overlook Press, New York on 7 February 2017.


FJALLKONAN 1901,

Nýir kaupendur að Fjallkonunni 1901 fá í kaupbæti:

Þrjú sérprentuð sögusöfn blaðsins í allstóru broti yfir 200 bls., meðan þau hrökkva, með mjög mörgum skemtisögum, eða „Makt myrkranna“ sérprentaða.

Figure 2. *Fjallkonan* of 13 April 1901, announcing a separate reprint of *Makt myrkranna*

2. Did Bram Stoker and Valdimar Ásmundsson cooperate?

In his foreword to this book, Bram's great-grand-nephew Dacre Stoker stated: "The translation of *Makt Myrkranna* and the uncertainty about the text's origins present more than enough fodder for another generation to wonder and speculate about."

Since the start of 2014, trying to find the source text Valdimar had worked from had turned out to be Sisiphys work indeed. To keep track of all possible clues, I created a 70-page internal research paper, without actually finding any letters Stoker and Ásmundsson might have exchanged – not to speak of an English-language manuscript, or a publishing contract. Any hypothesis about a possible cooperation between the Irish novelist and the Icelandic newspaper publisher/translator thus had to be deduced from clues in the text itself – such as an intriguing match between Stoker's early, unpublished notes for *Dracula* and similar plot elements surprisingly resurfacing in *Makt myrkranna***.** Other suspicions were

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

based on the peculiar surnames of some of the new characters featured in the Icelandic text (Barrington, Tellet, Varkony, Mary), on the novel's fascinating subplot (seemingly derived from the marriage of Napoleon I and Josephine de Beauharnais), and on text elements from the preface pointing to Stoker rather than Ásmundsson. Although I found enough candidates who might have established a contact between London and Reykjavik (Hall Caine, Frederic W. H. Meyers, Professor Willard Fiske, Mark Twain, Jón Stefánsson, Dr. Frederick James Furnivall, and others), written proof in the form of correspondence or diary entries was impossible to come by.

3. The Swedish connection

The solution to this riddle, that – according to the quoted assessment – might keep *Dracula* scholars busy for years, maybe even decades to come, arrived much quicker than expected, and in the end turned out to be surprisingly simple.

After returning from a trip to Asia on 2 March 2017, I found an email sent by Rickard Berghorn, who introduced himself as a Swedish publisher and editor of fantastic fiction. Alerted by the international publicity around my book, Berghorn had noted that the title of the Icelandic text I had translated was identical to that of a Swedish story he had come across in 2016: both *Makt myrkranna* and *Mörkrets makter* mean "Powers of Darkness." Consequently, Berghorn suspected that the Icelandic version must have been based on the Swedish one, serialized in the Stockholm newspapers *Dagen* and *Aftonbladet*, the first installment in *Dagen* appearing on 10 June 1899. Both newspapers were owned by the same holding company and had their Editor-in-Chief in common: Harald Sohlman (1858-1927). As the installments Berghorn had managed to get hold of altogether contained *more* text than Stoker's *Dracula*, Berghorn assumed that *Makt myrkranna* must have been a strongly abridged translation of these episodes. Significant, in Berghorn's eyes, was that the Swedish version – unlike *Makt myrkranna* – after the section dealing with Harker's adventures in Transylvania continued the epistolary format that always has been considered one of *Dracula*'s most outstanding characteristics.

4. Checking the validity of Rickard Berghorn's claim

Prompted to check the validity of Berghorn's astonishing claim, I ordered my own scan copy of the text of *Mörkrets makter* still the same day. When this file arrived on 8 March 2017, however, a first comparison showed me that the 264 pages of text I had in front of me contained *less* words than *Dracula* (106,000 versus 160,000). Moreover, in the later sections it had the same conventional narrative form I already knew from *Makt myrkranna*, with an almost identical chapter structure.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

I learned that *Mörkrets makter* had been serialized *three* different times altogether: In the daily newspaper *Dagen*, 10 June 1899 - 7 February 1900

- In the bi-weekly magazine *Aftonbladets Halfvecko-upplaga*, 16 August 1899 - 31 March 1900
- In the weekly magazine *Tip-Top*, nr. 40-52 1916, nr. 1-52 1917, nr .1-4 1918.

After expanding my comparative notes and checking my word count once more, on 11 March I explained my findings to Berghorn, suggesting that perhaps, we had been working from different text versions. This indeed turned out to be the case: while my Swedish colleague had started from the serialization in *Dagen*, from my side I had managed to obtain a shorter version, that now proved to be the true matrix of the Icelandic text. Judging from the numerous literal translations from the Swedish and the identical chapter titles, Ásmundsson must have worked from "my" text, instead of from the collection of installments Berghorn had managed to locate.

In *Aftonbladet* of 31 July 1899 (also placed in *Dagens Nyheter* of 1, 2, 3 and 4 August 1899, and in *Svenska Dagbladet* of 3 August 1899), I had found an advertisement promising new readers of *Dagen* a reprint copy (*separattryck*) of the installments published in *Dagen* so far (De Roos, 2017). In *Göteborgs Aftonbladet* of 25 September 1899, I found a similar advertisement, promising a reprint of the episodes printed in *Aftonbladet* up till 1 October 1899. My first working hypothesis thus was that such reprint versions may have contained a shortened text – such as shown in the scan I had received from the Swedish Royal Library on 8 March.



Figure 3. *Göteborgs Aftonbladet* of 25 September 1899, offering a reprint of *Mörkrets makter*

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

5. Two different Swedish serializations

On closer inspection, however, this scenario seemed not very logical. For what reason would the *Aftonbladet* newspaper group produce and release a reprint version that was *shorter* than the installments already published? Properly speaking, such a shortened version could not even be called a "reprint". The more logical scenario: At least one of the three serializations must have appeared in the short form right away.

Both from the *Dagen* and from the *Tip-Top* serialization, I had already seen samples of the pages following the Transylvanian section. Thanks to exchanging files with Berghorn, I possessed a digitization of 19 pages from the *Dagen* serialization, starting at page 196. Because these images had been derived from rather old, fuzzy microfiches, Berghorn had also procured photo reproductions made of the *Tip-Top* serialization; on 11 March 2017, he traded the post-Transylvanian pages from "his" *Tip-Top* version against the post-Transylvanian pages from "my" 264-page version.

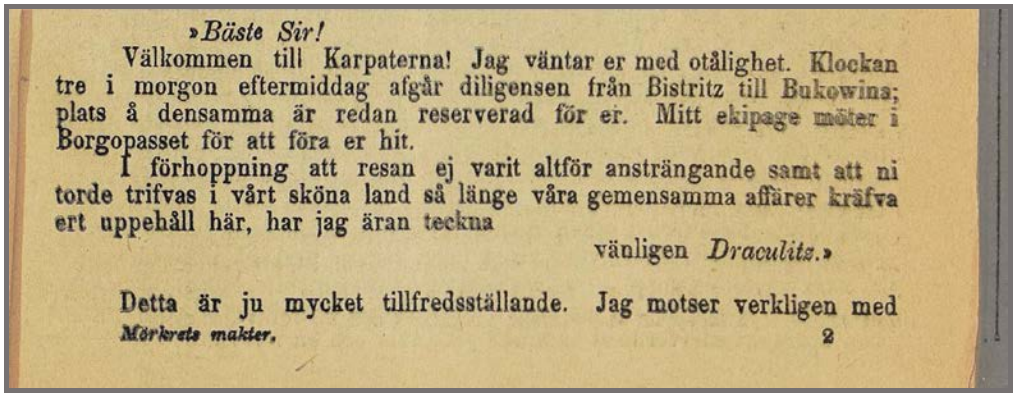
Judging from some random text samples, the *Dagen* and the *Tip-Top* serialization contained the same text at the start of the Whitby episode, although the *Tip-Top* serialization used two columns per pages, versus one column in *Dagen*: obviously, the text had been typeset anew. Both serializations continued the epistolary form after the Transylvanian part. The only serialization neither of us had access to was the *Aftonbladet* version.

Due to my contact with the Swedish Royal Library in Stockholm, I managed to have new sample scans made, both from the *Dagen* and the *Aftonbladet* version.

6. Morphological comparison of the three serializations

High-resolution sample scans from the *Dagen* installments evidenced that the text of the first episodes was identical with the text I already knew from the scanned 264-page version. To be more precise: the first pages of the *Dagen* serialization seemed to have been printed *from the very same printing form* as the first pages of the 264-page version, as can be seen from comparing various typographical details. With the help of Photoshop, I managed to rubbersheet some sample pages, the result confirming my first impression.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)



»*Bäste Sir!*
Välkommen till Karpaterna! Jag väntar er med otålighet. Klockan tre i morgon eftermiddag afgår diligensen från Bistritz till Bukowina; plats å densamma är redan reserverad för er. Mitt ekipage möter i Borgopasset för att föra er hit.
I förhoppning att resan ej varit altför ansträngande samt att ni torde trifvas i vårt sköna land så länge våra gemensamma affärer kräfva ert uppehåll här, har jag äran teckna
vänligen *Draculitz.*»

Detta är ju mycket tillfredsställande. Jag motser verkligen med
Mörkrets makter. 2

Figure 4. Fragment of page 5 of the *Dagen* serialization compared to page 5 of the 264-page scan received on 8 March 2017. Rubbersheeting method: two-step warp transformation in PhotoShop, *Dagen* serialization = bottom layer, 264-page scan = top layer with 50% transparency. After this two-step correction for distortions in the paper and in the reproduction, this fragment shows a perfect match.

At the same time, sample scans made from the *Aftonbladet* serialization showed that *both* the first *and* the last pages of the *Aftonbladet* serialization must have been printed from the same print form as the corresponding pages of the 264-page version. The *Aftonbladet* serialization thus indeed was the postulated shorter serialization ("missing link"), deviating from the extended serializations in *Dagen* and *Tip-Top*.

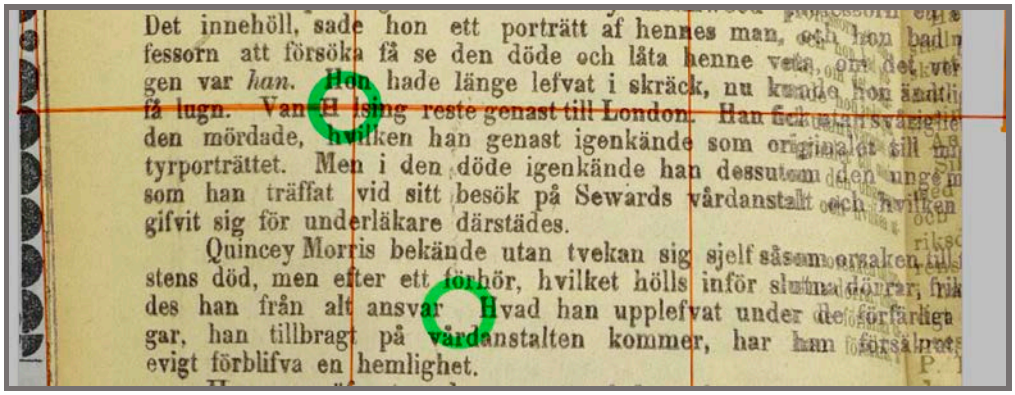


»*Bäste Sir!*
Välkommen till Karpaterna! Jag väntar er med otålighet. Klockan tre i morgon eftermiddag afgår diligensen från Bistritz till Bukowina; plats å densamma är redan reserverad för er. Mitt ekipage möter i Borgopasset för att föra er hit.
I förhoppning att resan ej varit altför ansträngande samt att ni torde trifvas i vårt sköna land så länge våra gemensamma affärer kräfva ert uppehåll här, har jag äran teckna
vänligen *Draculitz.*»

Detta är ju mycket tillfredsställande. Jag motser verkligen med
Mörkrets makter. 2

Figure 5. Fragment of page 5 of the *Aftonbladet* serialization compared to page 5 of the 264-page scan received on 8 March 2017. Rubbersheeting method: two-step warp transformation in PhotoShop, 264-page scan = bottom layer, *Aftonbladet* serialization = top layer with 50% transparency. This fragment also shows a perfect match; both the *Dagen* and the *Aftonbladet* serialization seem to have been printed from the same printing form as the 264-page scan I received on 8 March 2017.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)


Det innehöll, sade hon ett porträtt af hennes man, och hon badd
fessorn att försöka få se den döde och låta henne veta, om det ver
gen var *han*. Hon hade länge lefvat i skräck, nu kunde hon åtmin
få lugn. Van Helsing reste genast till London. Han fick
den mördade, hvilken han genast igenkände som originalet till
tyrporträttet. Men i den döde igenkände han dessutom den unge m
som han träffat vid sitt besök på Sewards vårdanstalt och hvilken
gifvit sig för underläkare därstädes.

Quincey Morris bekände utan tvekan sig sjelf såsom orsaken till
stens död, men efter ett förhör, hvilket hölls inför slutna dörrar, fri
des han från alt ansvar. Hvad han upplefvat under de förfärlig
gar, han tillbragt på vårdanstalten kommer, har han försmått
evigt förblifva en hemlighet.

Figure 6. Fragment of page 264 of the *Aftonbladet* serialization compared to page 264 of the 264-page scan received on 8 March 2017. Rubbersheeting method: one-step warp transformation in PhotoShop, 264-page scan = bottom layer, *Aftonbladet* serialization = top layer with 50% transparency. The orange lines represent the warping pattern. This fragment also shows a perfect match; the typographical errors are identical.

In the *Dagen* serialization, as seen on the microfiche reproductions, the Transylvanian section ends (and the Whitby section starts) on page 196, just like in "my" 264-page version. But while in *Dagen*, the epistolary format is continued with a *letter* from Vilma Murray to Lucy Western of 9 May, the 264-page version commences with a *chapter* on Lucy Western, told by an omniscient narrator.

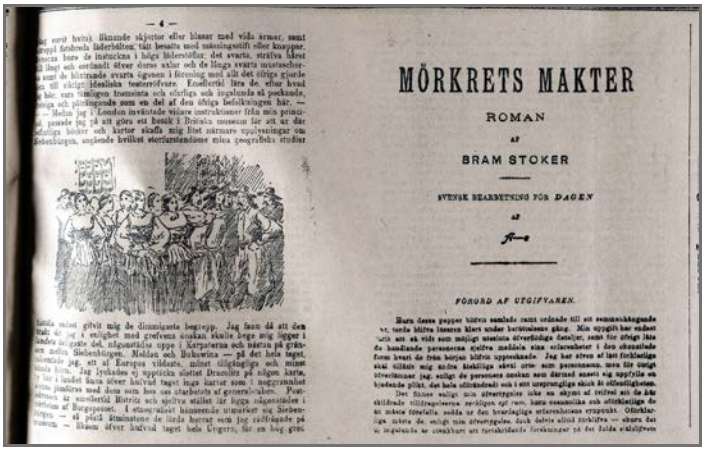
8. Provisory conclusions on the format of the three serializations

From these materials, I draw the following provisory conclusions:

1. *Mörkrets makter* was serialized in *two* different formats, of different length:
   a) The "extended version" in *Dagen* and later (with a new two-column typesetting) in *Tip-Top*.
   b) The "compact version" in *Aftonbladet*, dropping the epistolary format on the middle of page 196, at the end of the Transylvanian section.
2. In *Dagen* and in *Aftonbladet*, the Transylvanian parts were identical; they were even printed from the same printing form, that was used for the 264-page scan as well. Only at page 196, the formats started to differ: While *Dagen* continued in diary form here, *Aftonbladet* switched to the more compact conventional narrative, with chapters instead of diary entries.
3. This 264-page version sent to me on 8 March may either have been a separate reprint (*separattryck*) of the *Aftonbladet* serialization, as offered in the advertisement in *Göteborgs Aftonbladet*, or it may have been compiled by hand

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

from loose copies of *Aftonbladet*. As we can see at least from the *Dagen* reproductions, this installment was laid out in such a way that the clippings could be folded into neat little sections.



MÖRKRETS MAKTER

ROMAN

AF

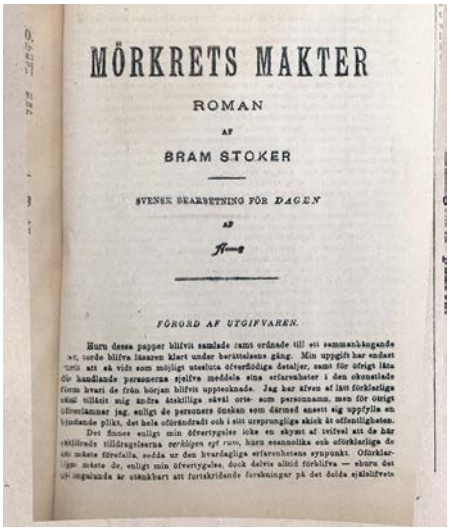
BRAM STOKER

SVENSK BEARBETNING FÖR *DAGEN*

AF

FÖRORD AF UTGIFVAREN.

Figure 7. Page 4 and 1 of the *Dagen* serialization, with pages 2 and 3 at the backside.



MÖRKRETS MAKTER

ROMAN

AF

BRAM STOKER

SVENSK BEARBETNING FÖR *DAGEN*

AF

FÖRORD AF UTGIFVAREN.

Figure 8. *Dagen* serialization compared to *Aftonbladet* serialization, title page and start of the preface

4. We may assume that Valdimar Ásmundsson either used the bi-weekly issues of *Aftonbladet* as a source, or a reprint based on them. It would not be the first time that Valdimar copied content from *Aftonbladet* – one of the leading Swedish

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

newspapers around 1900; both *Fjallkonan* and *Aftonbladet* supported Liberalism (although with quite different accents). An article in *Fjallkonan* of 6 July 1898, page 102, with the title *Stórveldi og smáríki (Great powers and small countries),* discusses the balance of powers between larger and smaller countries, concluding that the larger entities in the end will prevail against the smaller ones: "How are 10 million Scandinavians to fight war against 50 million Germans, or 130 million Russians?"? As the source of the article, *Fjallkonan* mentions *Aftonbladet*.

9. The identity of the anonymous translator/editor of *Mörkrets makter*

Although this morphological comparison may contribute to a consistent and plausible theory about the actual text Valdimar translated to Icelandic – hereby condensing the text still more – other mysteries surrounding these early northern adaptations of *Dracula* still need an answer.

The questions I already worked out regarding the Icelandic version have not lost their validity; they now must be transposed to the Swedish texts. We do not know with certainty whether Stoker actually contributed to the Swedish publications, or at least gave his permission for them. Sweden ratified the Berne Convention only in 1904, so that the first two serializations would not have offended against international copyright law; the *encore* in *Tip-Top* in 1916 however, would have required Stoker's consent. For an overview of these questions, I refer to my updated introduction essay that will appear in the second edition of *Powers of Darkness.*

In order to answer such questions, the first necessary step was to identify the Swedish translator/editor, who in all three serializations only is presented under his pseudonym, "A-e." As far as I could check, no Swedish scholar ever published on this charming little riddle, so that I felt compelled to tackle it myself.

After analyzing dozens of articles from the Swedish newspaper archives, I concluded that the person in question must have been Anders Albert Andersson-Edenberg (1834-1913), who by 1899 already had obtained the status of a highly-respected senior journalist. In 1874, he had co-founded *Publicistenklubben* as a national association of journalists and photographers; in this quality, he cooperated with Alfred Sohlman during the years preceding the publication of *Mörkrets makter*. For his literary work, travel reports, poetry, stage play translations and political columns, he used a large number of pseudonyms, including, among others, "A.-E." and "A.E." – along with other combinations of letters from his name with hyphens.

Furthermore, I believe that while working on *Mörkrets makter*, Andersson-Edenberg recurred to information, insights and metaphors that we can trace back, among others, to articles and poems he wrote or edited for *Svenska Familj-Journalen*. He started writing for this monthly magazine as early as 1867, while he still was the editorial secretary of *Dagens Nyheter*. From 1873 on, he belonged to

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

the *Journalen*'s regular staff; in 1877, he became its Chief Editor (*redaktör*) – a position he would hold till 1887, when the publication of *Svenska Familj-Journalen* was discontinued.

For details, I refer to the two interviews recently conducted with me by Adrien Party from Lyon for the online magazine www.vampirisme.com (interview of 27 March 2017), and by Kathinka Stel from Amsterdam for the Dutch literary magazine *T'is Fris* (www.tisfris.jimdo.com, issue of 1 April 2017) respectively.

10. Recent research on the backgrounds of *Mörkrets makter*

For the sake of this article, I merely add the newest *trouvailles* here – the result of further research I conducted in the first half of April 2017:

Transylvania: Andersson-Edenberg may have derived detailed knowledge about Transylvania from an extensive article titled "Siebenbürgen," containing, among others, a description of local costumes: *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1871, pp. 247ff.

Tatra Mountains: *Mörkrets makter* mentioning of wolves, coming from the Tatra Mountains, may have had its basis in an article on the High Tatra, with a further description of Slovak costumes: "Höga Tatra och befolkningen i dess grannskap," in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1868, pp. 74ff.

Portrait gallery: The concept of adding a portrait gallery to Castle Dracula, allowing the Count to introduce his family members to Harker, may have been inspired by the article series "Ett fosterländskt Bildergalleri," appearing in *Svenska Familj-Journalen* from 1869 on, continuing till 1885 at least.

Flower metaphor: A specific mentioning of the flower that blossoms in summer but dies in winter (a metaphor used by the Count while explaining the laws of life and love to Harker) can be found in Andersson-Edenberg's article "Sista resan" (The Last Trip), *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1872, pp. 360ff.

Gold rules the world: This specific statement, used by the Count, was perhaps derived from Andersson-Edersson's article "Våra dagars guldmakeri," in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1869, pp. 170ff, listing numerous proverbs about the uncanny power of this precious metal.

Vampire sucking the blood of an entire city or country: In the article "Snapphanarne" by Herm. H-g. in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1879, issue 6, pp. 173ff, we find the phrase "Många minnen har häfden bevarat från denna tid, då kriget i sin gräsligaste gestalt, likt en giftig vampyr, sög de skånska landskapens hjerteblod." ("Many memories have been preserved from this time, when the war in its direst shape was sucking Sweden's heart blood like a poisonous vampire.") This more or less matches Harker's statement about the London fog, acting "like a terrible vampire, sucking the power and the life-

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

juice from the people, poisoning the children's blood and lungs, bringing endless diseases."

Ethnography: In its description of the primitive, dark-skinned adepts of the Count, *Mörkrets makter* specifically mentions Bushmen, Papuas, Fuegians and "Tschutscher" (Chuckchi people). Already in its first year, 1867, *Svenska Familj-Journalen*'s featured an article praising the Museum of Ethnography in Copenhagen and its display of artefacts from Bushmen and Kaffir culture: "Några dagar i Köpenhamn. Reseminnen – Husaby" by Claës Johan Ljungström, in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1867, p. 236. Over a period of 20 years, *Svenska Familj-Journalen* featured numerous illustrated ethnographical studies.

Preciosa: Next to *Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber (1776-1826), the Whitby section of the extended version of *Mörkrets makter* refers to *Preciosa*, another romantic opera by Weber that Anderson-Edenberg had discussed in his article on the composer in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1872, pp. 207ff.

Robinson: After Harker's reference to the story of Robinson Crusoe in Part I of *Mörkrets makter*, the extended version in Part II uses the name "Robinson" in the conversations with Mr. Swales and assigns the name "Elise Bobinson" (perhaps a typographical error, or a rhyme) to Lucy's housemaid. In *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, Andersson-Edenberg published both on Defoe's famous book (1873, pp. 39f) *and* on the life of Defoe himself (1880, pp. 168 ff.).

Valkyrie from the Bavarian Highlands: In the extended version, Vilma meets a nurse at the hospital near Castle Dracula and describes her as a "true Valkyrie from the Bavarian highlands." This strange typification may have its roots in *Svenska Familj-Journalen* of the year 1876: It contained both an illustrated article about the Walhalla Temple near Donaustauf, Bavaria, 420 meters above sea level (p. 168f.), and a poem by Anderson-Edenberg, titled *Valkyrian* (p. 312f.).

Cagliostro: Comparing Marquis Caroman Rubiano (an alias for Count Dracula) to the alchemist and self-styled physician Cagliostro may have been inspired by an extensive article on Cagliostro in *Svenska Familj-Journalen*, 1882, p. 433ff.

Although any well-educated Swedish author would have been able to find alternative sources for the metaphors used in *Mörkrets makter*, it is the *whole body* of these parallels – the near-dozen I already listed in the mentioned interviews included – that makes it seem probable that Andersson-Edenberg indeed was the person using the pseudonym "A-e": Which *other* Swedish professional writer, we must ask ourselves, might have possessed the fluent pen, the romantic attitude, the mastery of foreign languages, the ready-at-hand knowledge about romantic operas, ruined castles, exotic tribes and antique goddesses alike, plus the necessary weight and authority in Stockholm's press circles and the personal contact with Chief-Editor Harald Sohlman, all needed to qualify for the task at hand?

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

As I also found out, Andersson-Edenberg was the driving force behind *Svenska Medborgarans*; he acquired a share in this newspaper in November 1873 and made it the voice of *Lantmannapartiet*, the political party of farmers and landowners in Sweden; in May 1877, he disposed of his share again. This information adds to his image as an influential public person – a man who might prefer to use a pseudonym while turning Stoker's vampire novel into a story with heightened erotic, political, psychiatric alchemist and mystic connotations.

11. August Strindberg as a "mad scientist"

À propos psychiatry, alchemy and mystics: Both at *Svenska Medborgarans* and at *Dagens Nyheter* (Sweden's largest newspaper during the 1860s and 70s, equally supporting the cause of *Lantmannapartiet*), Andersson-Edenberg was a senior colleague to the young journalist August Strindberg (1849-1912), who over the following decades developed into Sweden's most successful, though controversial author. In the 1880s and 90s, Strindberg was fascinated by psychiatry, sociology, evolution theory, mysticism and alchemy; he personally performed chemical experiments, trying to prove that certain elements could be "transmutated" to each other. He even attempted to create gold from iron and sulphur, one day resulting in the formation of iron pyrite, generally known as "fool's gold." Strindberg, however, believed to have created real gold and thus have found the answer to the classical quest of alchemy. From Autumn 1894 till the end of 1896, he experienced a severe mental crisis, leading to paranoid hallucinations, as described in his autobiographical work *Inferno*, published in 1897.

Future research on the backgrounds of *Mörkrets makter* should certainly look into a possible link between Strindberg's life, work, ideas and spleens on the one hand, the characters of Harker, Count Dracula and Van Helsing as portrayed in *Mörkrets makter* on the other hand – not to speak of the blonde vampire girl.

12. Conclusions and perspective

Over the past six weeks, more information about the early Swedish version(s) of *Dracula* has come to light than in the first 118 years since its first publication. Still, many important questions need our attention.

As for the source text Valdimar Ásmundsson used to create his Icelandic rendering, we may safely conclude that he translated either the bi-weekly installments as published in *Aftonbladet*, or the identical text made available to readers of *Aftonbladet* as a bonus present in the form of a bundled reprint (*separattryck*).

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

The question how *Dracula* came to Sweden and whether Stoker was personally involved in the creation of *Mörkrets makter* still is an open question. The similarities between Stoker's early notes and matching plot elements featured in *Mörkrets makter* pose a riddle and a challenge; the same applies for the names of various new characters and elements from the preface suggesting Stoker's personal participation.

My suggestion that the Swedish translator/editor must have been Anders Albert Andersson-Edenberg, on the other hand, opens up a whole new range of possibilities how this early adaptation of *Dracula* may have been rooted in Swedish journalistic practice of the three preceding decades – which includes the broad knowledge men such as Andersson-Edenberg had of English, French, Italian, German, Austrian and East-European culture, not to forget their keen interest in ethnographical studies, physical and chemical experiments, biology and botany, esoteric cults and "psychical research." Having quite other ambitions, skills and resources than Valdimar Ásmundsson, the idea that Andersson-Edenberg reshaped *Dracula* single-handedly at least cannot be discarded as easily as the speculative scenario it replaces: that everything that distinguished *Makt myrkranna* from *Dracula* might have been the work of Valdimar Ásmundsson alone.

Further research will be needed to get a more complete image. Next to the possible reference to Strindberg already mentioned, the International Press Congress (*4me Congrès international de la Presse*) that took place in Stockholm in 1897, the year of *Dracula*'s publication, would need thorough attention. Another important issue would be the personal connection between Sohlman and Andersson-Edenberg, and the latter's difficult personal situation in 1899-1900, when first his wife Gabriella ("Gella"), then his young daughter Agnes died. Still another intriguing question is whether the serialization in *Tip-Top*, ending only in 1918, possibly could have influenced the 1924 stage adaptation of *Dracula* by Hamilton Deane.

References

Berni, Simone. 2014 *Dracula di Bram Stoker – Il mistero delle prime edizioni.* Macerata: Bibliohaus.

Berni, Simone. 2015. "Dracula, di Bram Stoker – Il mistero dell'edizione ungherese del 1898." *Cultora,* 4 July 2015, online at: http://www.cultora.it/dracula-di-bram-stoker-il-mistero-delledizione-ungherese-del-1898/.

Berni, Simone. 2016. *Dracula by Bram Stoker – The Mystery of the Early Editions.* Translation by Stefano Bigliardi. Macerata: Bibliohaus.

Browning, John Edgar, and Caroline Joan Picart. 2011. *Dracula in Visual Media.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co.

Browning, John E. 2012. *Bram Stoker's Dracula: The Critical Feast, An Annotated Reference of Early Reviews & Reactions, 1897-1913.* Berkeley, California: Apocryphile Press.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)

Browning, John E. (ed). 2012. *Bram Stoker's Forgotten Writings.* New York: Palgrave.

Dalby, Richard (ed.). 1986. *A Bram Stoker Omnibus*. London: Foulsham.

De Roos, Hans Corneel. 2014. "*Makt Myrkranna* – Mother of all Dracula Modifications?" *Letter from Castle Dracula* of 3 February 2014.

De Roos, Hans Corneel. 2016. ""Buda-Pesth seems a wonderful place" How a Hungarian newspaperman produced Dracula's very first translation and serialisation." *Letter from Castle Dracula* of 30 June 2016.

De Roos, Hans Corneel. 2016. *Powers of Darkness – The Lost Version of Dracula.* (with a foreword by Dacre Stoker and an afterword by John Edgar Browning). New York: Overlook Publishing.

De Roos, Hans Corneel. 2017. "*Mörkrets makter*: The True Source of Valdimar Ásmundssons *Makt myrkranna?*" *Children of the Night Dracula Congress Bulletin* of 6 March 2017.

Hughes, William. 1997. *Bram Stoker (Abraham Stoker), 1847-1912, A Bibliography.* Victorian Research Guide 25. University of Queensland, Australia.

McAlduff, Paul S. 2012. "The Publication of Dracula." *Journal of Dracula Studies*, Volume 14.

Miller, Elizabeth (ed). 2009. *Bram Stoker's Dracula – A Documentary Journey into Vampire Country and the Dracula Phenomenon*. New York: Pegasus Books.

Skal, David J. 2004. *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of Dracula from Novel to Stage to Screen.* Revised edition. New York: Faber & Faber.

BDD-A27309 © 2017 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.34 (2026-11-13 09:32:45 UTC)