

SAS2A - 19th Century Scandinavian Literature

Syllabus Fall 2017

Bergen June 1, 2017

Course instructor: Associate Professor Anders M. Gullestad (anders.gullestad@uib.no)

Office: Room 420 (the HF-building)

Office hours: TBA

Student advisor: Signe Nilssen (signe.nilssen@uib.no, room 431)

Lectures: Fridays 12.15-14, Room: 217, HF (except Aug. 30 and Sept. 6: room 371, HF)

ECTS: 15

Language of instruction: English

Course unit level: Bachelor

Grading scale: A-F

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

When he first issued his passionate call for a socially engaged literature in 1871, the Danish literary critic Georg Brandes came to fundamentally affect several generations of Scandinavian authors. In SAS2A, we will read and discuss major works by a number of the authors writing in the wake of what Brandes termed “the modern breakthrough,” including Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Amalie Skram, J.P. Jacobsen, and Knut Hamsun. In particular, the course will focus on how these writers of the late 19th century came to address questions of gender, sexuality, and morality through their writings.

NOVELS AND PLAYS:

Henrik Ibsen: *The Pillars of the Community* and *The Wild Duck*. In: *Hedda Gabler and Other Plays*, translated by Una Ellis-Fermor, Penguin Classics

Amalie Skram: *Constance Ring*, translated by Judith Messick and Katherine Hanson, Northwestern University Press

Victoria Benedictsson: *Money*, translated by Sarah Death, Norvik Press.

Knut Hamsun: *Hunger*, translated by Sverre Lyngstad, intro by Jo Nesbø, afterword by Paul Auster, Canongate

August Strindberg: *Miss Julie* and *A Dream Play*. In: *Strindberg: Five Plays*, translated by Harry G. Carlson, University of California Press

These books are all for sale at the university bookstore, Akademika. You are welcome to use other editions of these works instead of those listed above, but please be aware that many of the older translations of Ibsen, Strindberg and Hamsun are very outdated.

FOLK TALES, FAIRY TALES AND SHORT STORIES:

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe: “The Ash Lad who Had an Eating Match with the Troll” and “The Ash Lad and the Good Helpers”. In: *Norwegian Folk Tales*. New York: Pantheon, 1960, pp. 81-83, 170-177. Available from [Litteraturkiosken.uib.no](http://litteraturkiosken.uib.no).

H.C. Andersen: “The Nightingale” [1844] and “The Shadow” [1847]. In: *Stories and Tales*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 329-338, 376-388. Available from [Litteraturkiosken.uib.no](http://litteraturkiosken.uib.no).

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson: “The Father” [1860], from *Great Short Stories of the World*, ed. Barrett H. Clark and Maxim Lieber. London: Spring Books, 1964, pp. 776-779. Available from [Litteraturkiosken.uib.no](http://litteraturkiosken.uib.no).

Arne Garborg: “Youth” [1884], from *WITS 2*, 1986, pp. 27-41. Available from [Litteraturkiosken.uib.no](http://litteraturkiosken.uib.no).

J.P. Jacobsen: “Mogens” [1872]. Available from <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/6765/6765-h/6765-h.htm>

ARTICLES AND THEORETICAL TEXTS:

Georg Brandes, "Introduction" [1871], from *Main Currents in the Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 1, 8 pages. The text will be made available as a PDF from Mitt UiB.

Knut Hamsun, "From the Unconscious Life of the Mind" [1890], in *Knut Hamsun: Transgression and Worlding*, eds. Ståle Dingstad *et al.* Trondheim: Tapir, 2011, pp. 281-289. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Pat Shaw: "The Norwegian Folk Tales and their Illustrations," from *Norwegian Folk Tales*. New York: Pantheon, 1960, pp. 5-8. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Elias Bredsdorff: "Moralists versus Immoralists: The Great Battle in Scandinavian Literature in the 1880s." *Scandinavica: International Journal of Scandinavian Studies* 6.1 (1969): 91-111. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Bjørn Hemmer: "Ibsen and the Realistic Problem Drama". In: *The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*, ed. James McFarlane. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 68-88.

James McFarlane, texts from the chapter "Norwegian Literature 1860-1910," from *A History of Norwegian Literature*, ed. Harald S. Næss. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993, pp. 107-140, 147-159, 184-194. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

P.M. Mitchell, "Hans Christian Andersen" and texts from the chapter "The 'Breakthrough,'" from *A History of Danish Literature*. New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1958, pp. 150-160, 173-185. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Franco Moretti, "Ibsen and the Spirit of Capitalism." In *The Bourgeois: Between History and Literature*. London: Verso, 2014, pp. 169-187. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Janet Garton, "Amalie Skram," from *Norwegian Women's Writing 1850-1990*. London: Athlone, 1993, pp. 46-66. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Evert Sprinchorn, "The Greater Naturalism" and "Tragic Ends and Means," from *Strindberg as Dramatist*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1982, pp. 22-50. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

Leonard Moss, "Strindberg's Nietzschean Dream Play." *Mosaic* 12:1 (1978): pp. 119-129.

Available for free through UiB: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1300033125?pq-origsite=gscholar>

Atle Kittang, "Knut Hamsun's *Sult*: Psychological Deep Structures and Metapoetic Plot," from *Facets of European Modernism*, ed. Janet Garton. Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1985, pp. 295-308. Available from Litteraturkiosken.uib.no.

A few shorter texts may be added to the syllabus. If so, they will be made available in class.

EXAMS:

There will be a final exam consisting of two parts. The first part is a 7-day take-home exam, counting for 2/3s of the final grade, where you write an essay on a given topic. The second, counting for 1/3s of the final grade, is an oral exam covering the entire course material. Please remember to sign up for the exam early in the semester.

Take-home exam: November 14-21.

Oral exam: week 49 or 50

SCHEDULE:

Week 34

August 23: Introduction and practical information, historical background on the Scandinavian countries

Week 35

August 30: Scandinavian literature prior to "the modern breakthrough"

Assigned texts: Folk tales by Asbjørnsen & Moe; Shaw: "The Norwegian Folk Tales and their Illustrations"; fairy tales by Andersen; Mitchell on Andersen (pp. 150-160); Bjørnson: "The Father"; McFarlane on Bjørnson (pp. 130-140)

Week 36

September 6: Georg Brandes and "the modern breakthrough"

Assigned texts: Brandes: "Introduction"; Mitchell: "The 'Breakthrough'" (pp. 173-178); Garborg: "Youth"; McFarlane on Garborg (pp. 155-159); Bredsdorff: "Moralists versus Immoralists"

Week 37

September 13: The modern breakthrough in Danish literature: J.P. Jacobsen

Assigned texts: Jacobsen: "Mogens"; Mitchell on Jacobsen (pp. 181-185)

Week 38

September 20: The modern breakthrough in Norwegian literature: Henrik Ibsen I

Assigned texts: Ibsen: *The Pillars of the Community*; McFarlane on Ibsen (pp. 113-130); Hemmer: "Ibsen and the Realistic Problem Drama"

Week 39

September 27: The modern breakthrough in Norwegian literature: Henrik Ibsen II

Assigned texts: Ibsen: *The Wild Duck*; McFarlane on Ibsen (pp. 113-130); Moretti: "Ibsen and the Spirit of Capitalism"

Week 40

October 4: The modern breakthrough in Norwegian literature: Amalie Skram

Assigned texts: Skram: *Constance Ring*; Garton: "Amalie Skram"

Week 41

Study week. No lecture

Week 42

October 18: The modern breakthrough in Swedish literature: August Strindberg

Assigned texts: Strindberg: *Miss Julie*; Sprinchorn: "The Greater Naturalism" and "Tragic Ends and Means"

Week 43

October 25: The modern breakthrough in Swedish literature: Victoria Benedictsson

Assigned texts: Benedictsson: *Money*; Death: "Translator's Afterword"

Week 44

November 1: The reaction against the modern breakthrough: Knut Hamsun I

Assigned texts: Hamsun: *Hunger* and "From the Unconscious Life of the Mind"; McFarlane on Hamsun (pp. 184-194); Kittang: "Knut Hamsun's *Sult*"

Week 45

November 8: The reaction against the modern breakthrough: Strindberg after the Inferno crisis

Assigned texts: Strindberg: *A Dream Play*; Moss: "Strindberg's Nietzschean Dream Play"

Week 46

November 15: Summary