

IBSEN, SCANDINAVIA AND THE MAKING OF A WORLD DRAMA

Henrik Ibsen's drama is the most prominent and lasting contribution of the cultural surge seen in Scandinavian literature in the later nineteenth century. When he made his debut in Norway in 1850, the nation's literary presence was negligible, yet by 1890 Ibsen had become one of Europe's most famous authors. Contrary to the standard narrative of his move from restrictive provincial origins to liberating European exile, Narve Fulsås and Tore Rem show how Ibsen's trajectory was preconditioned on his continued embeddedness in Scandinavian society and culture, and that he experienced great success in his home markets. *Ibsen, Scandinavia and the Making of a World Drama* traces how Ibsen's works first travelled outside Scandinavia and studies the mechanisms of his appropriation in Germany, Britain and France. Engaging with theories of book dissemination and world literature, and re-assessing the emergence of 'peripheral' literary nations, this book provides new perspectives on the work of this major figure of European literature and theatre.

NARVE FULSÅS is Professor of Modern History at the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway, where his work focuses on Norwegian cultural and intellectual history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He has edited Ibsen's letters for the new critical edition, *Henrik Ibsens skrifter* (2005–2010), and is chief editor of the journal *Historisk tidsskrift*.

TORE REM is Professor of British Literature at the University of Oslo. He has been head of the board of the Centre for Ibsen Studies and has published on Victorian literature, book history and the early English-language appropriations of Ibsen. He is editor of the new Ibsen editions in the Penguin Classics series.

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NARVE FULSÅS

University of Tromsø

TORE REM

University of Oslo



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Acknowledgements

The end of the nineteenth century experienced what may be called a Scandinavian moment in world literature. This moment's most prominent feature and lasting contribution were the plays of Henrik Ibsen. When Ibsen made his literary debut in Norway in 1850, the nation's literature was negligible. By 1890, he had become one of the most famous authors of Europe and made Nordic literature a marketing brand. How was such an extraordinary trajectory possible?

Our contribution to answering that question has emerged from our involvements in two large publishing projects, namely the new critical edition of Ibsen's complete works, *Henrik Ibsens skrifter* (HIS) and the new *Penguin Classics Ibsen* edition. It has been completed within the research project 'The Scandinavian Moment in World Literature', supported by the Norwegian Research Council and UiT The Arctic University of Norway, and is, more generally, indebted to our long-time work within reception studies, book history, intellectual history and world literature and drama.

Shorter parts of this book rework and expand materials previously published elsewhere. These include Narve Fulsås' articles 'The dramatization of history and the prose of bourgeois life', *Nordlit*, no. 34 (2015), 83–93 (Chapter 2), 'Ibsen misrepresented: Canonization, oblivion, and the need for history', *Ibsen Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2011), 3–20 (Chapter 5) and *Innledning til brevene: Forfatterrett og utgivelsespolitikk – 1890-årene: Det tyske markedet*, www.ibsen.uio.no/brev (Chapter 7).

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Note on the Text

Quoting Ibsen in English necessarily involves the use of a number of different editions. For Ibsen's plays, two editions have been particularly important. For Ibsen's *early* plays, we have (mostly) used *The Oxford Ibsen* (1960–77), edited by James W. McFarlane. For Ibsen's *contemporary* plays, we have, where available, quoted the *New Penguin Classics* edition (3 vols., 2014–), edited by Tore Rem. We have also adopted the Penguin edition's new English title *Pillars of the Community* for the play usually called *The Pillars of Society*, unless the reference is to an English translation or production with that last title.

Of Ibsen's *letters*, just a small selection of those considered most important are translated. When a letter already exists in English translation, we have quoted it from the two main editions: *Letters and Speeches*, trans. Evert Sprinchorn (1965) and *Letters of Henrik Ibsen*, trans. John Nilsen Laurvik and Mary Morison (1908). Otherwise, the footnotes will only give the addressee and date of the letter, and often having 'with comment(s)' added, referring to the critical and commented edition of Ibsen's letters in *Henrik Ibsens skrifter* vols. 12–15, ed. Narve Fulsås (2005–10), digital edition: www.ibsen.uio.no/brev. In these cases, translations are ours. To those able to navigate Norwegian, the comments will provide additional references to those listed in the bibliography.

Other translations into English are also ours, unless otherwise stated.

In the nineteenth century the name of the Norwegian capital was 'Christiania', gradually replaced by 'Kristiania' from the 1870s before becoming Oslo in 1925. We have opted for consistently using Kristiania for the capital while alternating according to the institutions' own practices for institutional names, like *Christiania Theater*, where the old spelling was preserved until the theatre was closed down in 1899 and replaced by *Nationaltheatret*.

Chronology

1828–1843: Skien

1828, 20 March: Born

1843–1850: Grimstad

1850, 12 April: *Catiline* (*Catilina*) published

1850–1851: Kristiania (Oslo)

1850, 26 September: *The Burial Mound* (*Kjæmpehøien*) performed
 (published January–February 1854)

1851, 1 and 8 June: *Norma, or: The Love of a Politician* (*Norma eller en Politikers Kjærlighed*) published

1851–1857: Bergen

1853, 2 January: *St John's Night* (*Sancthansnatten*) performed
 (published 1909)

1855, 2 January: *Lady Inger* (*Fru Inger til Østeraad*) performed
 (published May–August 1857)

1856, 2 January: *The Feast at Solhoug* (*Gildet paa Solhoug*)
 performed (published 19 March 1856)

1857, 2 January: *Olaf Liljekrans* performed (published 1902)

1857–1864: Kristiania (Oslo)

1858, 25 April: *The Vikings at Helgeland* (*Hærmændene paa Helgeland*) published

1860, January: The poem 'On the Heights' ('Paa Vidderne')
 published

1862, 23 February: The poem 'Terje Vigen' published

1862, 31 December: *Love's Comedy* (*Kjærlighedens Komædie*)
 published

1863, October: *The Pretenders* (*Kongs-Emnerne*) published

1864–1868: Rome

- 1866, 15 March: *Brand* published
 1867, 14 November: *Peer Gynt* published

1868–1875: Dresden

- 1869, 31 September: *The League of Youth (De unges Forbund)* published
 1871, 3 May: *Poems (Digte)* published
 1873, 17 October: *Emperor and Galilean (Kejser og Galilæer)* published

1875–1878: Munich

- 1877, 11 October: *Pillars of the Community (Samfundets støtter)* published

1878–1879: Rome and Amalfi**1879–1880: Munich**

- 1879, 4 December: *A Doll's House (Et dukkehjem)* published

1880–1885: Rome

- 1881, 13 December: *Ghosts (Gengangere)* published
 1882, 28 November: *An Enemy of the People (En folkefiende)* published
 1884, 11 November: *The Wild Duck (Vildanden)* published

1885–1891: Munich

- 1886, 23 November: *Rosmersholm* published
 1888, 28 November: *The Lady from the Sea (Fruen fra havet)* published
 1890, 16 December: *Hedda Gabler* published

1891–1906: Kristiania (Oslo)

- 1892, 12 December: *The Master Builder (Bygmester Solness)* published
 1894, 11 December: *Little Eyolf (Lille Eyolf)* published
 1896, 15 December: *John Gabriel Borkman* published
 1899, 19 December: *When We Dead Awaken (Når vi døde vågner)* published
 1898–1900: *Collected works (Samlede værker)* vols. 1–9 published
 1906, 23 May: Dies

For a detailed chronology, see Ståle Dingstad and Aina Nøding: 'Tidstavle 1828–1906', in Narve Fulsås, ed., *Biografisk leksikon til Ibsens brev – med tidstavle*. Acta Ibseniana X–2013 (Oslo: Centre for Ibsen Studies, 2013), 483–555.

Abbreviations

BL:	British Library, London
NLN:	National Library of Norway [Nasjonalbiblioteket], Oslo
NLS:	National Library of Sweden [Kungliga biblioteket], Stockholm
PRO:	Public Record Office, London
RDL:	The Royal Danish Library [Det Kongelige Bibliotek], Copenhagen
VAM:	Victoria and Albert Museum, London