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| Drachmann, Holger Henrik Herholdt (1846-1908) |
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| Holger Drachmann was a Danish writer and painter, active in the period of the Modern Breakthrough in Scandinavia (1870s-1890s). He was influenced by Georg Brandes and his radical ideas but later moved towards more national conservative trends. He was a prominent public figure of his time as well as a very productive and versatile author. His works range from realistic and impressionistic poems, novels and travel accounts to national romantic dramas and historical melodramas. A number of his songs have become embedded in the Danish popular tradition.  Born in Copenhagen, he was the son of physician Andreas Georg Drachmann. He entered the Academy of Fine Arts and started a career as a marine painter. Although he abandoned this path in favour of literature in 1870, he continued to paint. He is particularly remembered for his seascapes of Bornholm and Skagen, where he settled in 1904. His interest for the sea and maritime life had a direct influence on his literary works, as shown for instance by his poetry collection *Sange ved Havet* (1875). |
| File: Drachmann.jpg  Figure 1 Portrait of Holger Drachmann (1888)  Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holger_Drachmann.jpg>  Holger Drachmann was a Danish writer and painter, active in the period of the Modern Breakthrough in Scandinavia (1870s-1890s). He was influenced by Georg Brandes and his radical ideas but later moved towards more national conservative trends. He was a prominent public figure of his time as well as a very productive and versatile author. His works range from realistic and impressionistic poems, novels and travel accounts to national romantic dramas and historical melodramas. A number of his songs have become embedded in the Danish popular tradition.  Born in Copenhagen, he was the son of physician Andreas Georg Drachmann. He entered the Academy of Fine Arts and started a career as a marine painter. Although he abandoned this path in favour of literature in 1870, he continued to paint. He is particularly remembered for his seascapes of Bornholm and Skagen, where he settled in 1904. His interest for the sea and maritime life had a direct influence on his literary works, as shown for instance by his poetry collection *Sange ved Havet* (1875).  Drachmann initially embraced political radicalism and came under the influence of Georg Brandes, who called for a socially engaged literature able to make problems a matter of debate. His social concerns and realism come forth in his early poetry collections: *Digte* (1872) and *Dæmpede melodier* (1875). In the 1880s Drachmann distanced himself from Brandes and his radical ideals and temporarily moved towards more national conservative views as he started to focus on the representation of Danish folk life and national feelings.  Drachmann continued to write poetry – *Sangenes Bog* (1889) and *Den Hellige Ild* (1899) are among his later collections – but also devoted himself to other genres. His dramatic production is characterised by the interplay between dramatic action and music. His fairy tale-inspired operetta *Der var engang* (1885) became a big success as did his translation of Byron’s *Don Juan* (1880, 1902).  Drachmann’s characters are defined by restlessness as they struggle to take control of their life*.* This emerges in his first novel, *En overkomplet* (1876), but also in his later works. Love triangles are at the centre of his *Tannhäuser* (1877) and of his most famous novel *Forskrevet* (1890), in which he gives modern impressionistic representations of life in Copenhagen.  Drachmann married three times and had a number of muses in his life. He considered himself a free spirit and was contemptuous of petit-bourgeoisie morality. He travelled to several European countries, including Scotland, England, Italy, Spain, Germany, Holland and Belgium, and wrote several travel books, examples of which are *Med Kul og Kridt* (1872) and *Skyggebilleder* (1882). He died in 1908 in Hornbæk but is buried in Grenen, near Skagen.  File: Grenen.jpg  Figure 2 A photograph of one of Drachmann's marine paintings (*Grenen* from 1907, today exhibited at Skagen Museum)  Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Havet_i_opr%C3%B8r._Skagens_Gren_(Holger_Drachmann).jpg> Collected Works: *Samlede poetiske skrifter* (1906-1909, Collected Poems), 12 volumes List of Works: *Digte* (1872)  *Med Kul og Kridt* (1872)  *Dæmpede Melodier* (1875)  *Sange ved Havet* (1875)  *En overkomplet* (1876)  *Tannhäuser* (1877)  *Skyggebilleder* (1883)  *Der var Engang* (1885)  *Sangenes Bog* (1889)  *Forskrevet* (1890)  *Melodramaer* (1894)  *Den helligeIld* (1899) |
| Further reading:  (Bernth)  (Busk-Jensen)  (Kristensen) |