



Gyldendal Norsk Forlag 1956  
423 pages  
Original title: *Sangen om den røde rubin*  
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Rubicon, 1965

##### SHORT STORIES

The Rope Ladder (Taustigen), 1948  
I Don't Care, the Boy Said (Jeg er like glad, sa gutten), 1952  
Cross My Heart (Kors på halsen), 1958  
Largo, 1969

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## Agnar Mykle

# *The Song of the Red Ruby*

“The Ruby” – and the court case that followed its publication – makes up an important part of Norwegian post-war history. Agnar Mykle and the publisher of Gyldendal Harald Grieg were accused of publishing immoral and obscene material. On an order from the Oslo city court in 1957, the entire remaining printing of the book was confiscated, though Mykle and Grieg were acquitted. The year after, the confiscation itself was also overturned by the Supreme Court.

The story of the young Ask Burlefot's road through shame, defeats and triumphs towards a deeper and more honest understanding of himself, opened the eyes of an entire generation. The novel is an intense and vital bildungsroman, rich in youthful hubris and lust for life, but also with harrowing soul searching and self-contempt.

## Agnar Mykle

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Agnar Mykle (1915–1994) is one of the most celebrated and controversial authors in modern Norwegian literature. His most famous novel is *THE SONG OF THE RED RUBY*, which was confiscated on the city court's order in 1956 due to its allegedly obscene, sexually explicit content. The verdict was overturned the year after by the Supreme Court.

Born in Trondheim in 1915, Mykle worked for two years as a school teacher in North Norway, before moving to Bergen to study economics at the newly founded Norwegian School of Economics. In 1942 he married Jane.

Mykle had his first short story printed in a magazine in 1945, and made his debut three years later with the short story collection *The Rope Ladder*, which was well received. In the meantime he had studied puppetry in Paris together with Jane (they published a book on puppetry in 1954). Mykle was starting to gain fame, also for his newspaper writings.

