COURSE IN DANISH CULTURE

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Course in Danish Culture is a course in English for international students offered each semester. The course deals with different aspects of Danish Culture such as literature, mythology, history, film, music, architecture, painting, the welfare state, and national identity. The course is a unique combination of lectures and excursions, which include an excursion to Louisiana, one of the most famous museums of modern art in the world, and to Frederiksborg Castle, the most spectacular castle in northern Europe.
**Location:** University of Copenhagen, KUA1, Emil Holms Kanal 4, room 23-0-49. Room for lecture 8 and the following film screening on November 1st is to be announced later.

**Time:** Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m. First lecture is September 6th and last lecture is December 13th. Lecture 8 on November 1st lasts from 1-4 p.m. The lecture is followed by a film screening from 4 p.m. to approximately 6 p.m. Furthermore, there will be 3 excursions on the following Sundays: September 23rd, October 7th, and October 14th. In total fourteen lectures and four study events.

**Director:** The course is organised by The Saxo Institute. The director is Per Methner Rasmussen, The Saxo-Institute, University of Copenhagen, Karen Blixens Plads 8, 12-3-10.

**Lecturers:**
- Peter Christensen, The Saxo Institute
- Bo Fritzboëger, The Saxo Institute
- Lars Gemzøe, Danish Culture Courses
- Anne Jespersen, Department of Media, Cognition and Communication
- Rasmus Kjaerboe, assistant curator at Ribe Kunstmuseum
- Jan Aage Rasmussen, Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics
- Kristine Ringsager, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies
- Ed Romein, DIS – Study Abroad in Scandinavia
- Bettina Sejbjerg Sommer, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies

**Assistants:** There will be two teaching assistants from Danish Culture Courses assisting with practical matters at the course.

**Website:** [www.danishculturecourses.ku.dk](http://www.danishculturecourses.ku.dk)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/danishculturecourses](http://www.facebook.com/danishculturecourses)

**E-mail:** dcc@hum.ku.dk

**Registration:** In order to register you have to fill in the registration form from our website, fill it in electronically and send it to dcc@hum.ku.dk from your KU-mail. The deadline is October 4th 2018. The course is only offered to international students enrolled at the University of Copenhagen through IU&S (International Education & Grants) or through Open University: [www.aabentuniversitet.hum.ku.dk](http://www.aabentuniversitet.hum.ku.dk)

Exchange students are expected to take on a full course load of 30 ECTS each semester. It can however be difficult to sign up for precisely 30 ECTS. Therefore the University of Copenhagen has approved a minimum and maximum range of 22.5 ECTS and 35 ECTS per semester. If you exceed that, you have to withdraw from one of your courses in order to sign up for Danish Culture Course. Once you have room for the amount
of ECTS of the exam form you wish to sign up for, please fill in a DCC registration form and send it to dcc@hum.ku.dk from your KU-mail, and we will make sure you will be enrolled in the course. The DCC deadline for changes and new registrations is October 4th 2018.

Examination: When you register for the Course in Danish Culture you are automatically signed up for the exam. You can choose between the following:

**Danish Culture Course 1 - HDCB01001E**: Active participation in a minimum of 80% of the classes and excursions (7.5 ECTS). That means that you must participate in at least 14 of the 18 lectures and excursions/study events.

**Danish Culture Course 2 - HDCB01011E**: Set written take-home assignment of 8-10 standard pages (7.5 ECTS).

**Danish Culture Course 1 + Danish Culture Course 2**: Active participation in a minimum of 80% of the classes and excursions/study events and a set written take-home assignment of 8-10 standard pages (15 ECTS).

**Danish Culture Course 3 - HDCB01021E**: Free written take-home assignment of 15-20 standard pages (15 ECTS). You cannot obtain more than 15 ECTS. If in doubt between Danish Culture Course 1 and Danish Culture Course 2, choose both. You can always withdraw from the exam, as long as you do it before the deadline on October 4th 2018.

The written assignment must be uploaded in Digital Exam no later than December 20th at 12 p.m. (noon).

After evaluation of the exam the grade or result is automatically added to your transcript and reported to your home university by IUS (International Education & Grants). The grade will be published on KU-net Self Service four weeks after deadline for submission of exam paper.

**Literature**: Your personal syllabus is two binders unless otherwise arranged. The binders will be sold at Publikom in room 11A-0-02 at KUA2. It will contain all the relevant texts. A collection of pertinent books are available in the reference library. These books are only to be studied in the library, cf. list of books, which you can find in the Absalon room. The location is Saxo Knowledge Centre 13B 2nd floor at KUA2.

**Important dates**:

**October 4th**: Deadline for registration, change of exams and withdrawal.

**November 29th**: Topic/question for the set take-home assignment will be announced online in Digital Exam.

**December 13th**: End-of-term celebration.

**December 20th**: Deadline for submission of exam papers at 12 p.m. (noon) in Digital Exam.
**SCHEDULE**

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The programme is subject to alteration.
PROGRAMME

Lecture 1:  
Danish History I: From the Viking Age to Absolutism  
(Sep. 6th)  
A broad overview of Denmark’s history from the Ice Age to the Age of the French Revolution. Special emphasis will be on (1) the Viking Age, a key formative period in Danish (and Scandinavian) history when the remote Northern lands were integrated into mainstream European culture and Denmark emerged as a unified state. Second, the lecture will focus on how Denmark – in the wake of the life-and-death struggle against Sweden – became an absolutist monarchy. Two centuries of absolutism saw decisive changes in Danish society, from the standardisation of laws to the great agrarian reforms beginning in the 1780s (and making Denmark proof against revolution).

Expected reading: 22-33 in binder II and from page 40-70 in binder II (Peter Christensen)

Lecture 2:  
Danish Literature and Mythology in the Pagan Period  
(Sep. 13th)  
Viking Age religion and ethos are reflected foremost in a series of poems and prose tales from medieval Iceland. Together with inscriptions, archaeological finds and outsiders’ descriptions they form a sketchy but coherent image of a Viking culture and religion, strongly emphasizing the social status of leaders and coherence of the community as well as the agricultural fertility. The lecture will also provide a glimpse of the unique literary traditions of the Norsemen.

Expected reading: Binder pp. 34-39 in binder II (Bettina Sejbjerg Sommer)

Lecture 3:  
Danish Architecture  
(Sep. 20th)  
The lecture will cover the most important city expansions and planning ideas illustrated with examples of the urban architecture. The first part describes the early settlement and the founding of Copenhagen followed by the new town planning of the 16th century dominated by renaissance ideas and the city development inside new moats and ramparts that remained the city limits to beyond the middle of the 19th century. The second part describes the major development followed by the expansion of the city outside the old moats and ramparts. This period was influenced by central European ideas of city building. After the Second World War the iconic Finger Plan was giving new directions for the expansion of the city based on public transit. The booming years of the 1950s and 60s and the new mobility of the automobile gave birth to the expansion of city in open land and dominated by single-family
housing and new large multi storey or low-rise housing estates. The ideas were based on Modern Movement and were linked with the growing middle classes and the new service industries. The recent post-industrial period has changed the city rapidly based on the effects of globalization with new city districts built mostly on former industrial land. The increase in population and new housing as well as new industries now takes place inside the city’s central districts. Major results are the development of the urban waterfronts and the new town of the Ørestad. Climate change is the new factor, which is changing the ideas of planning and design of Copenhagen in this Century.

*Expected reading: Binder pp. 1-22 in binder I. (Lars Gemzøe)*

**Excursion:** Copenhagen City Walk
(Sep. 23rd)
We meet at Frue Plads at 9:45 a.m. The City Walk will take 2 hours and ends at Amalienborg Square and the changing of the guards.

**Lecture 4:** Danish History II: The Emergence of Democratic Denmark
(Sep. 27th)
The lecture will present an outline of Danish history from the mid-1800s to World War II. Main emphasis will be on (1) the rise of the independent farmers and the transformation of Danish agriculture in response to the demands of the European markets and (2) the political and social consequences of industrialisation and the formation of the working class. This period also saw the solution to the national issue in Denmark, from the loss - in the traumatic year 1864 - of Southern Jutland and its partial recovery in 1920.

*Expected reading: Binder pp. 46-62 and from page 105-129 in binder I (Peter Christensen)*

**Lecture 5:** Danish Art
(Oct. 4th)
It is impossible to tell a complete story of Danish art in just two hours. Instead, the lecture introduces just four ‘pivots’ around a discussion of what Danish visual art is, and what it can tell us. The four ‘pivots’ are: Mediaeval wall painting, The Golden Age (1800-1850), The Avant-Garde and World War One, and the CoBrA-movement. Two of these pivots are also presented in your readings. But why spend time on the visual arts? I find several reasons: Many of us think that art gives insight into past societies and their ideas. But art also offers different experiences and opportunities to learn and grow as a human being than the written word. It is as a dialogue between knowledge and experience, that I will talk about art in Denmark. There will also be time for a few digressions along the way: on Viking Art, the quiet interiors of Vilhelm Hammershøi, and the
genius of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art. Additionally, the lecture briefly touches upon books, museums, websites and other places to find more knowledge and inspiration.

Dorthe Aagesen, “Art Metropolis for a Day – Copenhagen During World War I” in Hubert van den Berg et al (eds.), *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1900-1925* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012)
(Rasmus Kjærboe)

**Excursions:**

**Louisiana**
* (Oct. 7th)
We meet at KUA, at the intersection between Njalsgade and Karen Blixens Vej at 11:15 a.m. Remember to bring your own lunch.

**Lecture 6:**

**Danish Music**
*(Oct. 11th)*
From folk ballads through Carl Nielsen to modern day hip hop. Music is often believed to be a metaphor for expressing affiliations, ethnicities and nationalism, and accordingly it is prominent in both official discourse and in common speech as an important marker of identity. Furthermore music is generally considered an activity, which can further integration and cultural understanding between peoples. In Denmark, music has been in dialogue with neighboring cultures for as long as we can trace back, and in recent times the presence of global and medialized music has merged with local Danish sounds and tunes and resulted in a new musical exchange. The lecture will address this exchange through examples from both historical and present day music and at the same time question the idea of an imminent Danishness in music.

*Expected online reading: Danish music*, Carsten Wulff, pp. 279-284
(Kristine Ringsager)

**Excursion:**

**Frederiksborg Castle:**
*(Oct. 14th)*
We meet at KUA, at the intersection between Njalsgade and Karen Blixens Vej at 9:45 a.m. Remember to bring your own lunch.
Lecture 7: 
(Oct. 25th)
Danish Literature I
The aim of this first lecture is to give a survey over the history of Danish Literature, its development and relations to literary, philosophical and cultural currents in the rest of Europe up to the beginning of the 19th century. Our journey through the History of Danish Literature will have its point of departure in the playwright, historian and professor at the University of Copenhagen Ludvig Holberg and will end with writers such as Ewald, Baggesen and Oehlenschläger.

Expected reading: Binder pp. 1-21 in binder II.
(Jan Aage Rasmussen)

Lecture 8: 
(Nov. 1st)
Danish Cinema (This lecture will last until 4 p.m.)
The lecture aims to present a comprehensive history of the Danish cinema with a focus on international and domestic successes. Examples from a number of important films will be shown during the lecture. Danish film was an international force to be reckoned with up to World War I. The war, however, and later the coming of sound, de-internationalized Danish film. Nevertheless, Denmark remained a strong film producing country, but now catering primarily to a domestic audience.
In recent years, Lars von Trier and the Dogma 95 movement, as well as directors like Susanne Bier, Lone Scherfig and Nicolas Winding Refn have helped to put Denmark back on the cinematographic world map.

Expected reading: p. 63-90 in binder I.
(Anne Jespersen)

Study Event: 
(Nov. 1st)
Showing of Film (room is to be announced)
The screening of the film will start immediately after the lecture.

Lecture 9: 
(Nov. 8th)
Danish Literature II
From the Modern Breakthrough till and including the last decades of the 20th century, it seems that Danish Literature has been oscillating between realism on the one hand and modernism and avant-gardism on the other. This second and final lecture of Danish Literature will form an introduction to poets, novelists and storytellers, representative of both currents.
In focus will be Johannes V. Jensen, Martin Andersen Nexø, Hans Kirk, Karen Blixen, Martin A. Hansen, Klaus Rifbjerg, Per Højholt and Inger Christensen. As representatives of the last two decades of the 20th century and of the so-called 'postmodernism' poets and novelists such as Søren Ulrik Thomsen, Peter Høeg, Christina Hesselholt, Solvej Balle and Kirsten Hamann will be introduced and discussed. The first decade...
of the 21st century has proven that the same two mainstreams in Danish Literature still co-exist: Realism and avant-gardism. As examples novelists such as Jakob Ejersbo, Erling Jepsen, Naja Marie Aidt, Katrine Marie Guldager, Helle Helle and Josefine Klougart will be introduced.

*Expected reading:* Binder I pp. 23-43: A History of Danish Literature, Sven H. Rossel
(Jan Aage Rasmussen)

**Lecture 10:** Danish History III: Denmark and Europe
(Nov. 15th)
An outline of developments since World War II. Emphasis will be on the end of Denmark’s traditional neutrality (NATO) and, of course, Denmark’s relations with the EU. Recent issues such as immigration will be discussed as well.

*Expected online reading:* Knud J.V. Jespersen: A History of Denmark pp. 170-186; Denmark, compiles by Editors of the Danish National Encyclopedia 2. Ed. Henrik Sebro and Judy Skov Larsen, pp. 473-482 (Peter Christensen)

**Lecture 11:** The Danish Culture of Eating – past & present
(Nov 22nd)
In the first part of the lecture we will delve down the gut of Danish history to explore the connection of food and the Danish society. From the early Vikings through to the Middle Ages and from the Renaissance to the tumultuous 19th century we will explore the temptations and tribulations of the people in the Nordic feeding themselves and the way it shaped them and the world around them. The second part of the lecture will be devoted to the recent blossoming of a vibrant Nordic culinary culture, the discovery of an edible surrounding and a renewed interest in the old Nordic foodways as an attempt to think food differently.

Lecture 12: Danish Approaches to Sustainable Development  
(Nov. 29th)  
The modern world faces a range of critical environmental problems. The problems are more or less the same everywhere, but they can be addressed in different ways. This lecture will focus on how they are already being countered in a Danish context. So, looking at the environment as a socio-material network encompassing man, we will examine the multiple meanings of “sustainable development”; consider different ways in which to engage in such a transition; identify different actors and interests; and discuss foreseeable outcomes of different kinds of action, as well as non-action.

*Expected online reading: Thinking about the Environmental History of Scotland and Denmark since 1600,* T.C. Smout (the link will be available on Absalon).  
(Bo Fritzbøger)

Lecture 13: The Danish Welfare Model  
(Dec. 6th)  
Emphasis will be on the formation of the distinctive Danish welfare state model and how it differs from other models of welfare models. Also, it will be discussed how the Danish welfare state has responded to the challenges of the last decades, including immigration and the so-called “globalization”.

*Expected reading: Binder pp I. 91-104.*  
(Peter Christensen)

Lecture 14: Summary: The Danish Model and Danish Identity  
(Dec. 13th)  
This lecture will provide an overview of what is frequently said to be the main characteristics of Danish society and culture. The lecture will put these characteristics into a broader European perspective and ask to what extent they actually can be considered specifically Danish and not just variations of European mainstream culture.  
(Peter Christensen)
ADDRESSES

Danish Culture Courses

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