

FORSKERPRAKTIK 2024

Projekt 2

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Project head line:	Learn the secret underlying messages about how we want to remember our past and define ourselves in Museums.
Field of research or institute:	Institut for Tværkulturelle og Regionale Studier
Language:	Engelsk (Svensk).
Courses/gymnasiefag in high school related to your subject:	Social sciences, History, Danish
Short resume of the project purpose – what are the students going to learn and do:	<p>Together we will visit two or three museums (Immigrantmuseet, Frihedsmuseet, and possibly Dansk Jødisk Museum) and discuss what stories they tell visitors about what it means to be Danish. We will read museum studies texts about “narrative museums” and visit museum exhibitions and meet for discussions.</p> <p>Did you know that museums tell stories? Not just in the museum text that tells us what to think and know about objects, but the entire museum as such speaks secret underlying messages about how we—as a culture and society—want to remember our past and define ourselves.</p> <p>What objects are selected and what order they are presented in can make a world of difference. In my research I have studied the Polish context but in my future work I will investigate greater European issues and this is where you can come in and help!</p>
Further description:	<p>Museum studies, or museology, is a broad, cross-disciplinary field of study comprising research into theoretical and practical questions about cultural heritage, natural heritage and art and their institutions, particularly museums and their significance and role in society. Museum studies cover theories and concepts from art, history, ethnic studies, archaeology and anthropology.</p> <p>What can we do with such a wide ranging field? We can ask questions such as what is the role of the curator in the museum? Or: how much liberty should we give to a visitor to interpret a museum on his or her own? Is a museum a straight line where the visitor walks from A to B or does it invite the</p>

visitor to dance their way around objects and stories on their own?

In my previous research I have studied a number of museums in Poland and how they “tell stories” about the past in ways that influence visitors today to think about what it means to be Polish. For instance, I have found that visitors of the Warsaw Uprising Museum are given a very direct and organized story about Polish patriotism, whereas the visitors to the Emigration museum in Gdynia are told that anybody can be Polish, they don’t even have to live in Poland!

In this project I invite students to think about a few Danish museums from these points of view. What do two (or three if opened on time) Copenhagen museums tell us about Danishness? What are traits that are uniquely Danish? What is Danish history like? And can you become Danish if you aren’t born here?

We will visit Immigrantmuseet outside of Copenhagen, which is dedicated to some of the greatest movements of peoples into Denmark. At the museum we can learn about various refugee waves, even the stories of all the new Ukrainians who are arriving in Denmark right now. Together we will try to investigate what the museum teaches us about these immigrants? Are they Danes? “New Danes” or do they persist as “immigrants” years after their arrival? Is the museum meant to inform the Danish public about our new neighbors and how to welcome them, or is it rather intended at teaching new immigrant groups how to fit in in their new society?

At the Frihedsmuseum in Copenhagen we are told a story of Danish history, World War II history in particular. We learn about Danish resistance and what it meant to be a hero. But do these stories influence how the visitors think of themselves as they leave? Are they leaving influenced by the stories the museum has told them, believing that they are also heroes, or that they could be heroes under the right circumstances?