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# **THE DANISH LECTURERS ABROAD: SOME HISTORY OF A REMARKABLE EFFORT OF CULTURAL PROMOTION**

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**A**s the turbulence of World War II was nearing its end, L.L. Hammerich, Professor of Germanic Philology at the University of Copenhagen, and Chairman of the Lecturers Committee since its commission by the Danish Ministry of Education in 1937, had the foresight to - and undoubtedly felt the need to - document the sparse history of his nation's achievements within international education and provide a vision of cultural cooperation for a more constructive future. He wrote the following:

*Danish Lecturers Abroad*

*and Foreign Lecturers in Denmark.*

*Preface*

*Even though the war isn't over and even though the immense destruction - as Widespread as never before in Europe since the destruction of the Roman empire - will cause most countries to still need ample time before there will be room for anything but the most necessary work of rebuilding, it is, however, well-founded that we in Denmark have begun considering the continuation and development of that effort of spreading the knowledge of Denmark abroad which because of the long term narrowing or cutting of connections is more required than ever before. Since I for more than twenty years have had a lot to do with this work, and, particularly, since I for the past seven years have been a member of (and Chairman of) the Ministry of Education commissioned committee for the processing of cases regarding the Danish Lecturers Abroad (the Lecturers Committee), I have thought it useful to bring together some of my thoughts regarding this topic into the following considerations. These are being presented to only a limited circle of people who are presumed interested in the matter; not in any way must these thoughts be mentioned in public and should in all be treated as confidential.[1]*

*Copenhagen December 1944*

*L.L. Hammerich*

*Professor at University of Copenhagen*

At the turn of the millennium, a good 54 years later, it is hard to see the need for any secrecy regarding the visions in Hammerich's 20-page document. Yet we live in a different world now, not little forged by the insights and foresights of men such as Hammerich who, in a social-technological sense, worked just a few years before the frontier of the new age--an age in which multifaceted educational cooperation across borders as a commonplace and highly institutionalized business not only involves cultural exchange agreements between governments but is an essential element in the continuous development of any university.

Hammerich's immediate role in the grand international effort of educational cooperation to come was to nurture the Danish Lecturers Abroad program as a tool for the advancement of higher education in Denmark and for the obviously parallel and fruitful purpose of cultural promotion. It is the intention of this article to present some history of the Lecturers Abroad program, with a particular discussion of the Lecturer's role as being either scholar or cultural representative. At the same time, this is a story that allows a peek into a segment of Danish governmental administration that, apart from the differences of opinion between itself and its supporters and adversaries in the higher administration of the nation's universities, on the whole has displayed a remarkable sensitivity in its decision making. Finally, the view will be put forth that, in the Lecturers Abroad program, both Danish universities and the Danish government have largely untapped resources that, with the proper management and support, could accomplish many more of those particular goals that lie within the spheres of interest of both public entities.

## The International Conference

Hammerich's concern for "the cutting of connections" was soon mirrored internationally in a meeting of university representatives from approximately 30 countries, August 2-13, 1948, in Utrecht, Holland, organized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). The conference undertook the general aims of defining the role of the university internationally, as well as comparing models and problems, and setting standards for the most important aspects of university life, such as academic freedom, pedagogy, research, finances, and international cooperation. In his opening address, UNESCO Director Dr. Julian Huxley stated the background for the conference. Huxley's address, as summarized in the conference report by the Danish delegation,[2] voiced UNESCO's feeling that "until now nothing seriously had been done to support international cooperation between universities despite the fact that for UNESCO's general purpose it was of the utmost importance to support and extend such cooperation, in part because the universities play an increasingly dominant role in the cultural life, both internationally and nationally, in part because the problems of universities in the most different parts of the world precisely in these years offer so many similarities, and in part because universities in young countries and in colonies are in the midst of an explosive development and that consequently there is a special need for cooperation between the old university-countries and the new."

While the varied cultural attitudes and traditions of university organization caused differences of opinion on many central issues, e.g. on government funding, on whether or not to establish an "International University Association," and on elitist versus more generally inclusive university systems, the Danish delegation found it astonishing that the problems actually were similar worldwide: "It was especially strange to learn about the similarity of problems with which universities all over the world have to deal." These included "keeping up with the enormous increase in numbers of students," "maintaining a certain standard of general education while balancing the need for specialization," and "securing professors sufficient time for scholarly work," to mention a few areas of worldwide commonality. It is remarkable how tenacious these issues are, as we still face them today, locally, nationally, and internationally. On the issue of international education, the conference declared the importance of providing opportunities for faculty and student exchange. In particular, the Danish delegation noted the conference's consensus on the necessity for a faculty member not to lose his/her seniority while working abroad. Regarding student exchange, participants declared that the respective authorities should "(1) exercise the greatest care in the selection process, and among other things make sure that the chosen students have knowledge of the language, history and culture of the country to which they are traveling, (2) find teaching and research centers that suit them the best, (3) provide all possible assistance in relation to passport and expenses, (4) and make sure the student is covered by health care insurance in the country in which the student is studying." Furthermore, "students ought, before they are enrolled in an institution of higher learning, to have proof that they really have knowledge of at least one foreign language."

Overwhelmed by the magnitude of tasks concerning the establishment of international cooperation and standards, the conference concluded by declaring itself "preparatory" and by emphasizing that it was of the far greatest importance "that the normal work of universities take place in the proper free and international spirit and thereby indirectly further international understanding and cooperation." The Danish delegation ends its report on "results and impressions" by strongly encouraging Danish institutions of higher learning to discuss the issues

raised by the conference so that Denmark would be prepared to participate in the coming necessary development of international education.

One might argue that the destruction of the world had cleaned the slate. L. L. Hammerich's thoughts on the Danish Lecturers Abroad (which shall be dealt with more extensively later) resurfaced in the above illustrated international community--a community of nations with the most commendable international intentions, albeit nations that were, at the same time, cautiously suspicious of anything having the slightest air of ideological scheming that might threaten the just-salvaged national sovereignties. The idea was to weld together nations into a bridge of educational cooperation for common prosperity and advancement--if indeed not to leap ahead with determination into a new promising future of the edifying ideals of man's scientific study.

## Lecturers Abroad Before World War II

In Denmark, where physical distances are limited, where the culture is profoundly homogeneous (even considering the obvious social strata and regional differences), and where there are relatively few institutions, the issue of authority--or competence--assumes an extra edge, as a crucial element for players in the game of educational administration and development. Most educational advances are made on the battlefield of interests between educational institutions and the powerful, central, politically governed Ministry of Education, which is in Copenhagen and is administered by career civil servants.

In 1936 the College of the Humanities at the University of Copenhagen established an ad hoc committee to oversee the university's interests in lecturerships abroad; without it foreign universities had no official venue for their cooperation with the University of Copenhagen. According to a document by Professor Louis Hjelmslev, the establishment of this committee only legitimized "a practice which in agreement with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had been in place for a long time." [3] However, the university did not consider this arrangement sufficiently "official," undoubtedly a reflection of the Danish universities' dependency upon their political and administrative superior, the Ministry. "The governing body at the University of Copenhagen felt it to be questionable that the College's lecturers committee should lead unofficial negotiations regarding Danish lecturerships abroad." Consequently, the Ministry of Education commissioned the Lecturers Abroad Committee in June 1937 to attend to "the interests connected to the Danish Lecturers Abroad," headed by Chairman L. L. Hammerich, Professor at the University of Copenhagen. Hammerich, by the way, continued to chair the still functioning ad hoc College committee. On the one hand this seemed a sensible solution, enabling close contact between the major interested parties; on the other, perhaps, it promised a conflict of interest. The dual role certainly was to cause some interesting frictions between two prominent professors (see "Defining the Content").

The following discussion of the growth and development of the Lecturers Abroad Program rests largely on the previously mentioned document (see footnote 1), Hammerich 1944, and on an even more thorough report by Hammerich, "Kulturel Forbindelse mellem Danmark og en Række andre Lande" [Cultural Connections between Denmark and a Number of Other Countries], based on files from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and the University of Copenhagen, dated April 13, 1938. He writes: "[These remarks] . . . do not pretend to be complete but seek to provide a certain overview of different sides to the issue of Denmark's cultural connections to foreign countries."

Denmark's commitment to lecturers abroad, which would increase administratively and financially, began rather sporadically. As early as 1907, K. Neuhaus, a Dane who had a degree in Germanic Philology from the University of Copenhagen as well as a German doctorate, had succeeded on his own initiative in obtaining a position at Berlin University. The aftermath of WWI created much sentiment in the Nordic countries for Nordic cooperation among universities. Oslo University presented other Nordic universities with the idea that each ought to have professorships dedicated to the other Nordic languages and cultures, to be held by native speakers. The Danish reception was quite cool. The University of Copenhagen already had a professorship in Nordic Philology, held by a Dane, who also taught Swedish, and who occasionally gave lectures on the Norwegian

language issue. The university was of the general opinion that foreign lecturers in Denmark ought to be paid by their respective governments. In addition, Neuhaus had undermined confidence in the idea of sending Danish professors abroad by undertaking political activities that did not reflect well on Denmark.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Copenhagen “certainly wished to discourage that expenses for foreign lecturers came in the way of other desires of the University.”

However, shortly after WWI, outside of Copenhagen, interest in cooperative initiatives among European peoples was considerable, and this created possibilities for industrious individuals to make connections abroad on their own. Some went to Kiel, Germany, and Poznan-Warszawa and Krakow in Poland. Soon private Danish initiatives managed to establish Danish lecturerships in London and Paris. The lecturership in London was paid for in part by funds collected privately among Danes in England, into the Queen Alexandra Foundation. Another part was paid by the Danish government, which required that the lecturer maintain an Office of Study Information. The lecturer in Paris was entirely paid by Denmark, also for the maintenance of an Office of Study Information.

Problems regarding funding for the lecturership in Kiel were satisfactorily resolved by developing a model in which the two involved universities, Kiel and Copenhagen, shared financial responsibilities. In 1936 this arrangement became the official, so-called “model of reciprocity” according to which the salary paid by the foreign hiring university was supported by a Danish contribution, and, not least important, lecturers were selected by the then commissioned government Lecturers Committee. This model was the basis for cooperation for the first time when the lecturership in Berlin was established in 1926. Soon all lecturerships in Germany, and those in Amsterdam, Rome, Prague, Warszawa, and Lund followed this model, as did the Polish, German and English lecturerships in Copenhagen and Aarhus (the two only Danish universities in those days).

Hammerich notes to his great pleasure, “during the 1930s within the College of Philosophy at the University of Copenhagen opinions were raised that all foreign lecturers there ought to be paid by Danish government funds entirely. This, in other words, was precisely the opposite of what the College had supported in 1919” (see above). Cultural policies of certain foreign countries had caused the new point of view, and it was an understandable viewpoint considering the situation in the 1930s.

Later, the same issue of Denmark’s partial versus complete payment was thoroughly debated for different reasons. Hammerich’s 1944 predictions prove to be right on the money when he anticipates the two most heated points of contention in the late 1980s to early 1990s: “There can be no doubt that the principle of reciprocity also after this war will strongly manifest itself (. . .) when there is the desire to establish a position of Danish Lecturer or any other cultural emissary in a foreign country. . .” [my italics].

In 1938, however, Denmark supported the following lecturerships abroad with state funds: Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Berlin, Greifswald, Hamburg, Cologne-Bonn, London, Cambridge, Paris, Warszawa, Prague, Rome. Others were in the making or re-making. The following constitutes a brief overview of the early history of these and some other relations.<sup>5</sup>

In Sweden, during the years 1916-20, Professor Brøndum-Nielsen, encouraged and paid from the Swedish side, had given lectures in the Danish language at the university in Uppsala, and this effort paved the way for the establishment of a lecturership there in 1922, funded entirely by the Swedish government. His Swedish connections brought about the establishment of another lecturership in Stockholm in 1930. The Stockholm lecturer was required to give lectures at the universities of Gothenburg and Lund, as well as other schools all over Sweden. The lecturer was paid SEK 5.500 plus travel expenses. No connections to Norway and Finland existed. Very few Danish students were in Norway and vice versa. Hammerich writes somewhat sentimentally: “The old, close connection to Norway is for the time being, academically, not as pronounced as the connection to Sweden; there has not been any talk of the exchange of lecturers.” No Norwegians were employed at the two Danish universities, and only one Danish professor of engineering worked in Norway. Finland was considered, by and large, to be outside the linguistic union of Scandinavia, despite its Swedish-speaking minority, even

though culturally it was considered part of the Nordic countries. In Iceland an appropriation of DKK 8.000 was granted by the Danish government in 1922 for a Danish lecturership at Reykjavik University to strengthen the ties between the two countries since Iceland "had become more independent." Professor of Philosophy at Aarhus, K. Kortsen, filled this position until 1927 when the arrangement ceased to exist; however, it was replaced by regular visitors that Denmark sent to Reykjavik for talks on Danish subjects.

Germany had posed a much greater challenge and commitment from the Danish side. A private German initiative by a professor at the University of Kiel and the Danish Dr. H. Skalberg had managed, without any official assistance from Denmark, to establish a Danish lecturership in Kiel in 1922 for Dr. Skalberg. He held the position until 1936, and was from 1924 onwards was paid 5.500 Goldmarks annually (with an addition for wife and child), which was later increased to DM 7.100 an amount that included a "seniority addition." During these years the Ministry of Education, the Carlsberg Foundation and the Rask-Ørsted Foundation added some irregular financial support. After Skalberg's departure the lecturership was not filled, although a local Dane provided some teaching in the Danish language. Skalberg also managed to collect an honorarium (2400 Goldmarks) for teaching at Hamburg University, an effort that never became intensive and was eventually (in the 1930s) limited to only one hour every other week. On November 1, 1936, however, Hamburg University established a lecturership funded by the German government. As previously mentioned, the lecturership at Berlin University became the first to be cofunded by Denmark and the partner-university/government, and the selection of candidates was decided between the partners according to a "Dreierliste" of the top three candidates, which had been prepared by the Lecturers Committee with the advice of the universities in Copenhagen and Aarhus. The Municipal University of Cologne and the State University of Bonn (40 minutes apart by rail) established an "extraordinary" lecturership. The lecturer was paid only 200 Marks a month, but obtained some support from the Danish Consul General in Cologne. It was hardly a financially enviable position, as has been the case with others since. Another extraordinary lecturership was set up by Greifswald University, which housed a Nordic Institute. The agreement and selection process took place according to the Berlin model. Rostock University expressed interest in receiving a Danish lecturer but was not able to provide its share of the funds for the position.

In Austria, the University of Wien had, on a number of occasions, (1922, 1925, 1930) approached Denmark through official diplomatic channels in Vienna about the possibility of setting up a position, and this led to some negotiations between university professors in Copenhagen and in Vienna, which only resulted in the one-year appointment of Magister Hjejle from October 1, 1931-March 31, 1932. Despite Austrian wishes for his continuation, money could not be found, and the lecturership was terminated.

Switzerland was considered to be a German speaking country with a mixture of French and Italian speaking populations, closely allied to those three great cultures but in itself not an obvious partner for cultural cooperation.<sup>6</sup>

In England ("The British Empire"), the University College, London, had a Danish lecturership funded by the Queen Alexandra Foundation since 1918, as mentioned before, and the lecturer there was expected to give lectures at Cambridge University every Friday during the Trimesters "for an honorarium of 10 Guineas per weekly visit." Soon the Danish government took over full funding while maintaining the requirement that the lecturer manage the Office for Study Information.

At the same time, 1921-22, the Danish parliament appropriated funds for a lecturership at the Sorbonne, in Paris, France, again in connection with an Office for Study Information, but the DKK 17.000 appropriation was included in the budget for the University of Copenhagen. The university's original fears of losing money for other academic obligations proved solid.

The fate of Danish in Holland was sporadic to say the least. In Amsterdam the professor of Germanic and Nordic Philology, Dr. R.C. Boer, had been particularly interested in Danish, and both he and his successor, Mrs. Dr. Boer, gave popular classes and lectures on Danish, supported by the Danish Society in Holland. Due to this interest the Ministry of Education and the University of Copenhagen provided--but did not fund--a

lecturer, Magister Børge, who, however, left the position a year later due to lack of funding and some differences of opinion between him and Mrs. Dr. Boer. Skillfully though, he obtained a position with the state university in Utrecht, where he gave lectures from October 1933 until spring 1935, while at the same time being busy with the previously mentioned, poorly paid, lecturership in Cologne-Bonn! After 1935 he had to devote himself entirely to the German lecturership.<sup>7</sup> The situation in Belgium was even more sporadic, and Hammerich dryly notes that “any substantial cultural community between Belgium as a whole and Denmark does not exist.”

On their own initiatives a Miss Stemann and a Mr. Fenneberg obtained positions in Poland in the early-to-mid 1920s in Poznan and Warszawa, but in 1936 Dr. Folmer Wisti from Aarhus University was supported by the Ministry of Education for a lecturership in Krakow. There were no connections to the Baltic states: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Lithuanian was occasionally taught by the Danish professor of comparative linguistics in Copenhagen. In various ways the three countries had scattered connections to the Nordic community, which undoubtedly were in their interest to pursue, as they faced pressure from their directly neighboring cultures, especially the German and the Russian. In 1938 Hammerich ominously stated that Lithuanians “are probably the people of the three that lag behind the most, although it is clear that also they have worked skillfully and energetically since their liberation.”

In Czechoslovakia Danish had been taught at the university in Prague by Danish students receiving the Danish stipend there. Magister R. Dirkinck-Holmfeld managed, after his studies there, to be accepted as Danish Lecturer by the Czechs; he eventually achieved recognition and some funding from the Ministry of Education.

In Italy, the Danish and Italian governments officially approved Magister Knud Ferlov in

the winter of 1937-38, and he began his lecturership at the Instituto Germanico in Rome, funded according to the Berlin model. In contrast, there was no teaching of Danish in Spain before WWII, despite the fact that the Spanish government had funded a lecturer of Spanish in 1937, Dr. Bratli, in Copenhagen. While the University of Copenhagen was most satisfied with Dr. Bratli’s professional competence, the Spanish government withheld his pay due to his use of “revolutionary material” in his classes, which had been reported by a student.

Before WWII, no official educational cooperation between Denmark and the United States of America had taken place. The Danish consul in Honolulu had requested an exchange of home economics teachers, but this suggestion was rejected due to “differences in language and methods” between home economics in the U.S. and in Danish schools. Interestingly, here and in previously mentioned cases, the guiding principle for cooperation on exchange seemed to be similarity rather than the currently heralded principle, difference. The notion of multiculturalism had not yet set in, and soon the world would take nationalism to its radical ends. Two important factors determined the Danish-American relationship. Danish emigration to the U.S.A. had created Danish communities, which Denmark supported in various ways. Certainly, academic cooperation ought to have been part of this effort, even though it was expected that the Danish groups eventually would be amalgamated into American society. The Danes recognized that America was one of the leading nations in science, which made cooperation a must. However, the distance to America made exchange of lecturers, professors or students impractical, and in addition there was “financial distance,” as differences in the organization of universities were considered an obstacle that inhibited further development. The American system of independent states and a separate federal government definitely caused some confusion. For similar reasons of distance there were no connections to Japan, though there had been some talk of them.

When considering this early history of the Lecturers Abroad Program, it is amazing how often these official agreements between national and international universities, eventually involving the highest authorities, happened in combination with purely individual, sometimes accidental, connections and desires. Gradually, through an extensive web of grapevines and deals struck in corridors, these concords received the official stamp, then sparkled perhaps for a relatively short period of time, then burnt out because of relatively accidental reasons--sometimes financial, sometimes political. This is often still the case. Yet, since the early days, much has happened in the way of expanding the number of lecturerships.

## Lecturers Abroad after World War II

The postwar period witnessed what was initially a relatively cautious Danish participation in international educational exchange; this attitude, however, changed during the increasing financial security of the postwar decades, especially since the late 1960s. By 1951 the number of Danish Lecturers Abroad had not increased but the distribution had changed somewhat. By the late 1980s, however, quite an explosion occurred in the number of lecturerships, as can be seen from the following chart.

This overview is derived from quite randomly chosen annual or periodical reports made by the Lecturers Committee to the Ministry of Education. Its purpose is simply to provide an overview of the total number of lecturerships, as some have stayed while others have come and gone, during the period 1938-1994. The 1938 column lists the lecturerships in the order entered in the earliest Ministry documents. The cities are obviously locations of universities. Comparing each column with that on its right shows which lecturerships were established during intervening years. For example, the lecturership in Firenze was established sometime between 1968 and 1972 (It is not the intention here to provide an exact history of each lecturership).

### Danish Lecturers Abroad 1938-1994.

**1938:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Berlin, Greifswald, Hamburg, Cologne-Bonn, London, Cambridge, Paris, Warszawa, Prague, Rome = **14**

**1951:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, London, Cambridge, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Newcastle, Wien, Groningen = **14**

**1956:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Berlin, London, Cambridge, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Newcastle, Wien, Bonn, Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy = **18**

**1968:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Wien, Bonn, Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy, Bergen, Poitiers, Poznan = **17**

**1972:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Hamburg, Prague, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Wien, Bonn, Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy, Bergen, Poitiers, Poznan, Lyon, Firenze, Munster = **22**

**1987:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Greifswald, Hamburg, Prague, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Wien, Bonn, Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy, Bergen, Poznan, Lyon, Firenze, Munster, Frankfurt, Munich, Basel, Edinburgh, Fairbanks, Austin, Minneapolis, Pullman, Moscow = **31**

**1994:** Uppsala, Stockholm, Lund, Gothenburg, Prague, Paris, Rome, Oslo, Reykjavik, Kiel, Wien, Bonn, Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy, Bergen, Poznan, Lyon, Firenze, Munster, Frankfurt, Munich, Basel, Edinburgh, Austin, Pullman, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Burnaby (Canada), Tartu (Estonia), Riga (Lathvia), Vilnius (Lithuania), Viterno (Italy), Milan, Gdansk, Santiago de Compostela, Budapest, Lille = **38**

As time went on, Danish financial arrangements for lecturerships became increasingly varied, depending upon the interests and level of participation of the host institution or country. The above overview contains some lecturerships fully funded by the host institution/country (e.g. most Swedish and German lecturerships), some that are fully funded by Denmark (e.g. some French lecturerships), and some that receive a considerable or a minor supplement from Denmark. Some supplements go directly to the lecturer; some, directly to the host institution. In addition, the 1994 list contains the list of lecturers who were appointed directly by the Lecturers Committee, and others who received support from the Ministry of Education but who were not hired by the Lecturers Committee. As kaleidoscopic as the situation regarding lecturer arrangements was originally, it certainly has not

become simpler since. Moreover, ever since the very beginning of the program, the term “lecturer” (in Danish “lektor,” indicating a certain level of seniority and permanent employment in the Danish educational system) in the context of “Danish Lecturers Abroad” has always been merely ornamental in nature, as the title has never had any practical or actual reference to placement within the official Danish hierarchy of employment in the educational sector as it certainly does for those of title working within Denmark.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the post-war period, connections with the Swedish remained constant, and soon lecturerships in Bergen and Oslo were established. Denmark’s academic connection to Iceland eventually was strengthened by establishing two lecturers in Reykjavik. In England, the teaching of Danish topics in London proceeded until 1968, then continued independent of Denmark’s assistance at the University College. The lecturership at Sorbonne is one of the oldest, and since the 1950s quite an expansion has taken place on the French front, with lecturers in Strasbourg, Caen, Nancy, Poitiers, Lyon and Lille. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 triggered significant Danish interest in the Baltic states, and lecturerships in Riga, Vilnius and Tartu soon followed. The lecturership in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, is a good example of a situation in which the local university had a Danish program in place, and the Ministry considered it worthy of both receiving materials, such as newspapers, and receiving monetary support.

After the war, relations with Germany were, of course, particularly sensitive. Before the war, L.L. Hammerich had nurtured relations and, during the war, he had undertaken the sad task of quietly disengaging them with as little danger as possible to the lecturers. During WWII, Danish lecturers were in a precarious position. At the outset of Germany’s occupation of Denmark, the German authorities asked that some German documents be translated into Danish. The lecturers refused. In Denmark, during the war, Hammerich and the Lecturers Committee had to exhibit great caution in a particular case in which a Mr. Madsen, who held degrees in German and Danish Philology from the University of Copenhagen, and who had been employed in Germany as a professor teaching Danish to German administrators, persistently sought one of the Danish lecturerships in Germany. He was obviously qualified and had solid letters of reference from teaching positions in Denmark. However, other reference checks, as well as Hammerich’s personal sensitivity, caused the committee to delicately keep him at bay. Shortly after the war, he was proven to be a strong Nazi sympathizer. Due to the importance of this huge neighbor to the south, relations were eventually reestablished, of course, first in Kiel, the area closest to Denmark, then in Bonn, and subsequently in Munster, Frankfurt am Main, Munich and Greifswald. Soon Basel, in Switzerland, was to follow.

Until fairly recently, the American situation had been haunted by geographic distance. It took more than three decades after WWII before lecturerships were implemented in Minneapolis, Fairbanks, Austin and at Washington State University in Pullman. In 1947, Danish Ambassador Kauffmann had noted the alarming fact that there were no Danish professors at institutions of higher learning in America, only Norwegian, Swedish and Icelandic professors. This deficiency was discussed in the Lecturers Committee, which agreed that something had to be done and proposed that the Committee “investigate the possibilities for Denmark to further the establishment of the teaching of Danish language and literature at American universities,” but more importantly, “take the initiative to establish one or two American lecturerships at the Danish universities.”<sup>9</sup> The initial suggestion was that Danes studying at American universities might receive some support for giving lectures on Danish topics. Prior to this only one Dane, a Mr. Kjelds, trained as an elementary school teacher, had obtained a position teaching Danish at “Pennsylvania University” [sic]. During a summer vacation in Denmark, Mr. Kjelds met with the chairman of the Lecturers Committee, L.L. Hammerich, and received some assistance. In 1949, Hammerich traveled to the U.S to investigate conditions further. The committee’s 1950 report notes that New York was first thought to be the most obvious place for a lecturership, but it was not expected that Columbia would be interested since they already had a Swedish lecturer. They noted interest among students at Harvard, which was due to the presence of Professor P.M. Mitchell, known for his “interest in Holberg, Danish language and Icelandic sagas,” and who also was married to a Dane. But nothing happened for decades, a fact perhaps related to the somewhat odd hesitation displayed by the Lecturers Committee in the documents from the late 1940s. It writes: “Since the Committee so far only remains committed to the suggestion regarding ‘student-lecturers,’ the reason is, that it is considered difficult to establish actual lecturerships in the United States, since the cultural relations there are determined by the individual states and not by the government in



Washington.” The Committee, however, encouraged Danish lecturerships in America, but suggested that they be paid by the respective American universities themselves, adding: “The system with shared payment that has been implemented regarding several Danish lecturerships in Europe, appears to the Committee, off hand, to be less workable in connection with the United States.” Certainly, money in Denmark immediately after the war was a more scarce commodity than in America; still, it seems that the committee’s frame of mind was tuned to cooperation between national governments and that this inhibited understanding American society. The fact that the Lecturers Committee was a governmental unit quite simply prohibited its directly cooperating with regional entities such as American states, by which American universities were governed. On the other hand, the American government was not expected to conduct negotiations on educational agreements with a head master in Løgstør, either.

Contributing to the prolonged absence of Danish Lecturers Abroad in America was undoubtedly the already well-organized effort in the field of Scandinavian studies promoted by many university institutions in the U.S., notably the Scandinavian departments in Minneapolis, Madison, Berkeley, and Seattle. The financial difficulties faced by many American universities in the 1970s and 1980s, however, required that Denmark make a coordinated effort to assist those programs already in place and to nurture new ones. (Furthermore, developing Danish and Scandinavian studies in America might also have been--and still may be--a way of counteracting the increasing dominance of the European Union, occurring in practically every facet of Danish social life, not least the educational.) In Fairbanks, the arctic research program and the “Danish House” called for support. The development of Washington State University’s lecturership well established the course of an individual’s pursuing of the matter of obtaining support from the Ministry of Education to maintain a Danish program.<sup>10</sup>

Currently, the Ministry of Education cooperates with approximately 60 universities worldwide (with a dozen positions in the making) on positions that more or less fall within the category of “lecturer abroad.” Yet, there are differences in degree of cooperation. A little more than a third of these receive significant financial support. These lecturers are ultimately chosen by the universities abroad, with the Lecturers Committee preparing a list of the top candidates. The Lecturers Committee’s role is principally advisory. The committee consists of members from major Danish institutions of higher learning whose expertise covers the fields of Scandinavian, Anglo-American, Latin, Slavic, and Germanic studies. In addition, representatives from the Ministries of Education, Culture and Foreign Affairs sit on the committee. The advantage is that applications for the positions no longer must be sent to separate university committees for review and advice; instead, the top candidates are directly selected by the Lecturers Committee itself.

Another third of the lecturer abroad positions receive assistance from the Lecturers Committee only during the selection process. The final third consists of universities that fund the position themselves and select the lecturer, often a local person, but which receive either minor amounts of financial support or simply Danish newspapers and journals, such as the Danish Literary Magazine. Obviously, the field of “Danish abroad,” with the involvement of the Danish Ministry of Education, covers many different types of employment, from part-time temporary jobs to full time employment with a benefits package.

Since 1994, the interest of foreign universities in obtaining a Danish lecturer has grown significantly, causing the Ministry and the Lecturers Committee to investigate different models of cooperation. One such is the “traveling lecturer,” who, over a three-year period, spends one year at a time at three different universities. This model has been implemented successfully in the U.S.A. The multitude of arrangements continuously developing does, of course, make it difficult to obtain precise numbers of Lecturer Abroad Programs (even for the Ministry itself). Originally, the typical lecturer was employed for a three-year term, often extended to another three years. Nowadays, only approximately a third of the total number of lecturers abroad follow this model. While the situations are diversely organized, the nature of business in academic international cooperation warrants flexibility, both in terms of job description and funding. Ideally, of course, Denmark could and should do more to recognize the positions officially and should secure lecturers a formal connection to that home job market to which nearly all will return after fruitful and productive years in their nation’s service.

## Defining the Content

L. L. Hammerich's 1944 document, "Danish Lecturers Abroad and Foreign Lecturers in Denmark," is a surprisingly visionary reflection on the general purpose behind the Lecturers program, and, more specifically, on the definition of the Lecturers' positions. The significant discussions that took place in the late 1980s are in fact treated within his document. He immediately emphasizes that the general background for such programs were that "several states recognized their advantage in engaging in a certain amount of cultural propaganda." The advantages inherent in the reciprocal effort of sending and receiving lecturers lie in the continuous development of the nation's relations to other countries which directly is to the benefit of the nation itself, an effort in which the university is a key player. He writes: "Yes, the center and hearth of culture is the university, whose efforts aren't perhaps conspicuous, but constant, and the same may be said about the work of the lecturers at the universities. Rarely can they boast of huge numbers but they create living cells of love for what is 'Danish.' Those who have been students of the Danish Lecturers Abroad will take an interest in Denmark, buy Danish literature, will try to visit Denmark, and will seek and keep Danish connections. But the Lecturers also have a specific importance for Danish science. . . . If we set a high standard for the Danish Lecturers Abroad, we will also receive scientists as foreign lecturers who will bring inspiration and fruitful cooperation to Danish scientists and scholars. . . . The Danish universities cannot renounce the direct and indirect enrichment that the Lecturer institution brings with it, in addition to the educational work on Danish culture which is the foremost result of the accomplishments of the Danish Lecturers Abroad."

One might argue, perhaps, that in our rich multimedia world where information and correspondence travel as fast as lightning, where universities are comfortable hiring foreigners in essential teaching and administrative positions, a world which culturally often emphasizes the corporate over the national, and in which culture is a highly decentralized venture open to anyone's pleasure and participation - that in such a world Hammerich's words have a certain archaic ring. This is undoubtedly true. The cultivation of universities, the acquisition of knowledge of foreign cultures, and development of relations between nations no longer depend upon a formalistic set of agreements, as was the case in "simpler" days. Then, in terms of the information we had, cultures were fewer. Then, our own culture was more homogeneous which made for fewer jobs and even fewer candidates who, adorned with the appropriate qualifications, could be led into the select pool of applicants. Essentially, this was the issue at stake in 1989, when the Ministry, apparently under pressure to expand the number of lecturerships and at the same time apparently experiencing financial cuts from the political leadership, suggested a different method of financing lecturerships. At that point, a group of lecturerships, particularly some in France and central and Eastern Europe, swallowed a disproportionate amount of funds. These lecturers were paid according to Danish standards (i.e. as if they were hired by a Danish university), while living and working abroad, where the cost of living most likely was much lower, let alone their rate of taxation (It was said that the lecturer in Prague had accumulated DKK 1.000.000 in her bank account in Denmark due to the fact that, in addition to the full "Danish pay" paid in DKK, the lecturer's Czech portion of her salary was sufficient for living expenses in Prague). The situation forced the ministry to either (a) retain only a limited number of select lecturerships paid according to "Danish standards," or (b) change the funding method for those and other lecturerships. The latter choice, of course, implemented a less attractive financial situation for those lecturerships; however, this in turn would open up a larger number of lecturerships, perhaps even provide for establishing some new ones.

Surely, one would wish that all lecturerships, regardless of placement, would receive wages and benefits according to Danish standards, and that every position from day one would accumulate seniority directly applicable to the Danish employment system, instead of the issue being subject to the unfairness of tradition. Is it a more worthy task and more conducive to the expansion of Danish culture to teach the Danish language and literature at the Sorbonne and in Vienna than in Tartu or in Fairbanks?<sup>11</sup> If an increase in the politically determined budget of the Lecturers Abroad program was not a realistic expectation, a choice had to be made.

Intertwined with this discussion came the issue of whether the lecturers abroad were scholars or cultural representatives. Obviously, some institutions, but far from all, had particular expectations regarding the scholarly training of the lecturer. Other positions instead emphasized language teaching paired with efforts as Danish representative in the midst of the foreign culture. The emphasis depended upon the particular academic program and the local needs of each university. One can imagine the fierce debates on the pros and cons of each funding scheme. The lecturers<sup>12</sup> were spectators to decisions being made at the highest levels of the Ministry. A

“standardization” (which is hardly standardized) was introduced and is currently in effect: the ministry pays a fairly fixed amount of support, given in addition to the local wages, which enables (some) lecturers to earn wages somewhat akin to the Danish level. For most lecturers abroad, however, wages have not actually kept pace with those in Denmark; furthermore, the lecturer takes a considerable financial risk, not least in terms of retirement savings, when embarking upon the adventure abroad. The situation is complicated by the fact that some positions have a built-in system for retirement savings, while others do not. It does not seem to be an impossible task to remedy such unfairness, given funds and good will. Obviously, the financial situation has translated into fears of being unable to attract enough sufficiently qualified candidates for the positions. Hammerich’s original call for “setting high standards” certainly would seem to include the guarantee, at a minimum, of social security as it is practiced in the home culture.

As the history of the Lecturers Abroad program has demonstrated, the standardization method, which came under heavy fire in the late 1980s and onwards, was hardly a new one. In fact, it stems from 1926, the first attempt to coordinate the Lecturers Abroad Program. For historical purposes, it is remarkable how much the situation in the 1990s resembles that of the 1930s when it comes to differences in salary and working conditions between lecturers working at home and abroad.

In his 1944 document Hammerich continues to outline the types of engagement between cultures that the lecturer mediates. Being a cultural representative is inherent in teaching language, literature and history. In addition the lecturer may facilitate foreign lecturers coming to Denmark to lecture temporarily, or perhaps initiate study tours. Hammerich knows very well where the dog is buried, so to speak: “It will be paramount that more funding is made available than this Committee so far has had at its disposal; if that happens there is no doubt that study tours and summer courses are a particularly good way of providing productive support for the work of the Danish Lecturers Abroad as well as for an expansion of the general knowledge of Danish culture abroad.” The lecturer is not supposed to be a walking encyclopedia of knowledge about Danish culture, but certainly should be able to assist in acquiring such information-- that is what makes a “good Danish Lecturer Abroad (or cultural emissary of any kind).”

Not everybody involved with administration of the lecturers program had Hammerich’s foresight and wit. Later chairman of the Lecturers Committee and internationally famous linguist, Dr. Louis Hjelmslev, Professor at the University of Copenhagen, meticulously outlined his dissatisfaction with Hammerich’s leadership in a 14-page document (dated October 27, 1947). He felt that “an authority which correctly belongs to the university had been appropriated by the State’s Lecturers Committee.” The essence of his rather long-winded attack simply boils down to his criticism that the selection process for some of the lecturer positions was too expedient. More intriguing, however, is the famous linguistic scholar’s inadvertent disclosure that he lacked understanding of both cultural development and the teaching of a foreign language, as he voiced his opposition to employing foreign lecturers at the University of Copenhagen. In general, he deplored the tendency to establish lecturerships “all over the world” and declared: “After considerable thought it is my personal viewpoint that the university should be interested in as few lecturerships as at all possible.” Lecturerships are the results of temporary political interests, he writes, and continues: “it is questionable if the teaching the lecturer provides is as scientifically satisfactory as the one a professor would be able to provide.” He worries that the scientific level will suffer: “Quality is replaced by quantity, and everyone is pleased that now the language is being taught 6 hours a week every semester, when previously 2 hours a week e.g. every fourth year would do.” In particular, he’s thinking of fields such as, “Finnish or Polish or other ‘secondary’ languages and cultures.” If this doesn’t have a direct bearing upon his concerns for the fate of Danish abroad, certainly his following statements do: “Let me add that I have never understood the argument that it is of the greatest importance for students to hear the language pronounced by a native speaker. This argument seems to be a pure anachronism in a time when radio broadcasts and gramophone courses are open to anyone. . . . By the way, one might refer to the fact that the current generation of university teachers of philology in this country indeed phonetically has received a remarkably fine schooling.” No wonder, perhaps, that it took decades to expand the number of lecturerships.

Obviously, emphasis on the inescapable role of Danish Lecturers Abroad as cultural emissary has been pronounced since the very beginning of the program, although Hammerich was keenly aware at the same time

that the lecturer's work takes place within a university institution, and that conversely, "cultural emissaries at a foreign university are university lecturers and must submit to the general conditions for university work. The task of a university is first and foremost research and teaching at the scientific level." The key component of his viewpoint is the university's being society's central cultural institution and being a vivacious forum for the interaction of cultures in lectures, teaching, and scholarship. In practice, of course, many universities themselves define the role for the lecturer, by, for example, affording the lecturer little time for scholarship by assigning too heavy teaching loads. It is most important that expectations be debated and stipulated before the lecturer accepts the position. Again, the workable equation seems to be flexibility. Without entering into too much of a high-brow/low-brow definition of culture, Hammerich's assertion that the university is the "hearth of culture" appears most civilized and certainly a productive ground for the continuing development of the Lecturers Abroad Program.

Finally, Hammerich takes care to connect the efforts of the lecturers to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, so that the two may be of assistance to each other: "It has proved most fortunate that from now on care is taken to establish regular connections between our Foreign Service and the Danish Lecturers Abroad." He emphasizes the support Lecturers may obtain from the experienced Foreign Service, but one can surely imagine that the Foreign Service might utilize the lecturer's experience more often than has been the case until recently. Sternly, however, Hammerich stipulates that the lecturers should never have to advertise Danish businesses, saying, "common propaganda for Danish business life is incompatible with university activities." Instead he concludes on a grander scale, calling for cooperation among the Nordic countries instead of the ineffective if not destructive competition they so often resort to. "It is not presumptuous to claim that we, the peoples of the Nordic countries, really have something important to bring to foreign nations, something which as a whole very well may compete with what the greatest nations on earth have delivered. That goes for science but also for literature and art and not least social construction and the populous-democratic culture."

Most inspirational, --albeit politically and administratively challenging.

## **Envisioning the Future**

The Danish Lecturers Abroad Program constitutes a remarkable set of connections between Denmark and the rest of the world. Each lecturer is a highly trained professional, and is uniquely characterized by his or her particular academic interests. Nearly all are native speakers, and they bring their culture, in the most profound sense, directly into the foreign culture, enabling it to experience firsthand the wisdoms and expressions of what is particularly Danish. The involvement of the Lecturers Committee, composed of outstanding professors, scholars and administrators from the Danish universities and assisted by government officials representing three ministries, in particular the Ministry of Education, ensures that those cultural education efforts are supported and nurtured by a multifaceted entity of cultural representation that indeed does bestow a quality guarantee.

The current Lecturers Committee, chaired by Dr. Finn Hauberg Mortensen, Odense University, and consisting of Dr. Karl Heinz Westarb of Aarhus University, Dr. Lene Waage Petersen of University of Copenhagen, Dr. Per Durst Andersen of Copenhagen Business School, and Dr. Klaus Bohnen of Aalborg University, are in the process of defining a strategy for the future. Of cardinal importance will be requesting the increased funding needed to solve the previously discussed problems regarding insufficient financial rewards for the lecturers, and also continuing to cultivate the lecturerships with book collections and support for events arranged by the lecturers that involve visiting authors and scholars. In addition, to maintain continuous interest from abroad, new lecturerships must be established. Increased coordination of the efforts regarding the export of Danish culture by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Danish Cultural Institute, and the Danish Literary Information Center also constitutes an area for development. The globalisation of the world makes it paramount that a unique culture the size of the Danish, profoundly defined by its unusual language and its intellectual and artistic traditions, remains astutely committed to maintaining its cultural presence abroad.

The present-day committee will continue to deal with its own makeup, a source of contention from the outset

being the relationship between those representing the Ministry of Education and those representing the universities. While it makes sense that the universities desire autonomy and authority over the appointment of lecturers, the ministry lends a certain exterior dynamism, a competing force, to the administrative process, due to its different institutional culture and not least to its function as the central authority for all Danish institutions of higher learning. At the heart of the reason for continuing this particular administrative set-up lies the fact that nobody employed in Danish universities who is in their right mind would consider supporting the notion of separating the universities from the central government. That symbiosis is a fundamental and unavoidable expression of Danish culture, and it insures the existence of many a program and secures education a position in the forefront of society, which is not the case elsewhere, for example in America. The direct connection to governmental administration also, despite its current shortcomings, has the potential of providing the Lecturers Abroad program with the prestige in academia and the funding it rightly deserves.

Last year, 1997, was the Lecturers Committee's 60th anniversary. It was not celebrated. The Lecturers Abroad Program has made a distinct contribution to the Danes, the universities, and the Ministry of Education by taking their nation's image worldwide. This accomplishment deserves much pride, much development, and much celebration.

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I wish to express my gratitude to the Danish ministry of Education for their encouragement and support in this endeavor, in particular to Dinah Bechshøft, Office Supervisor ("Fuldmægtig), who knowledgeably, skillfully and kindly administers the program from the Copenhagen command center; to Niels Borger, Archivist, whose vast knowledge of and historical interest in the ministry archives was most inspirational; and to Jean Rørvig, Head of Section ("Kontorchef"), who as chief of office firmly guided the program through some turbulent times. In addition, my father, Finn Andersen, was most helpful in obtaining background information.

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1 L. L. Hammerich "Danske Lektorer i Udlandet og fremmede lektorer i Danmark," Copenhagen, December 1944. My translations from Danish to English, here and in the following, are of selected documents from the Danish Ministry of Education Archives, L.U.I. Journals no. 1, 2-19, 21, 23, 24, 33, 34.

2 Report by the Danish delegation, Professor Carsten Høeg, University of Copenhagen, Professor Jacob Nielsen, Denmark's Technical University, Professor Andreas Blinkenberg, Aarhus University, Professor Aksel Milthers, The Royal Veterinary Academy. Aarhus and Copenhagen 1948.

3 Document by Professor Louis Hjelmslev, Professor at University of Copenhagen to the 'Faculty of Philosophy' (later: College of the Humanities), dated October 27, 1947.

4 Hammerich (1944) carefully notes about him in: "Danish authorities were not quite comfortable about his activities, a probably not unfounded suspicion that his work to a certain degree was political in a, for Denmark, undesirable way." This remark seems to be the only one of a delicate nature requiring confidentiality in H.'s 1944 document. It also, however, emphasizes the "official representative nature" of the position of "lecturer abroad," as viewed from Denmark, regardless of the fact that such official recognition has been a point of contention, as will be discussed later. Despite the many developments in the field since the 1930s, and the social changes that have occurred internationally, and in Danish society, reflected in both universities and government, such a nationalistic perspective, will undoubtedly continue to play an unspoken part in what some might argue is entirely an academic, educational affair.

5 For the purpose of this article only issues related to the Danish Lecturers Abroad will be examined, although many of the researched files, including Hammerich's documents also describe other aspects of Denmark's history of international cultural/educational activities, i.e. foreign lecturers at Danish universities, student exchanges and stipends, study tours, etc.

6 It might be argued here that Hammerich's distinct linguistic training may have obscured his view on 'culture' as he tends to be chiefly concerned with the language(s) spoken. Hindsight is worth gold, of course. He writes about Switzerland: "Confessionally most people are Calvinists or Catholics. Considering geography and history, one must admit that there doesn't seem to be grounds for any particular cooperation in the cultural field between Denmark and Switzerland. And such cooperation has not been attempted."

7 Describing the Dutch cultural hemisphere, Hammerich delivers the following cultural assessment and piece of curious information: "Since the Dutch in South Africa are in opposition to the English, and often feel some insecurity towards the Dutch in Holland (of a similar kind that Norwegians feel towards Danes), and do not wish cultural support from the Germans, they have occasionally sought a certain connection to the Scandinavian peoples. (As a curiosity it can be mentioned that "Dengang jeg drog afsted" [popular Danish song: 'When I departed'] has been adapted into Afrikaans to become an anti-English battle song.")

8 The closest American term for 'lektor' would be 'associate professor.' Currently, the multitude of employment arrangements together with the pronounced lack of uniformity of working conditions have indeed served to suspend any notion of purposefulness of the title. The confusion is, of course, that the title for Danes in general lends a certain academic 'ambiance' and assurance, which for the individual 'lecturer abroad' holding it isn't delivered by the Danish state. Cynically speaking, and in principle, from the point of view of the ministerial administration of the Danish Lecturers Abroad, the international world of academic employment is a sort of no man's land into which you venture and from which you return in the same original shape you had when you left. Hopefully, the human face of the Ministry will make up for the organizational deficiencies and translate into not only moral but practical support for the returning lecturer. Therefore, the title 'lecturer abroad' currently serves only to designate a widely scattered group of Danes working abroad teaching their culture to foreigners, more or less supported by the Danish Ministry of Education.

9 Letter from the Lecturers Committee to ambassador Kauffmann, dated 26. February 1948.

10 Dr. V.N. Bhatia, director of the Honors Program and of the Office of International Education at WSU until 1994, had for years been sending an impressive number of students to Denmark on study abroad programs, and he managed to obtain financial support from the Ministry for a lecturer position at WSU. The author of this article was the first lecturer to come directly from Denmark to fill this position, beginning in 1987. Prior to this Danish had been taught for several years by teachers/students assisted by DIS, Denmark's International Study Program, in Copenhagen, the major recipient of American students in Denmark.

11 Of course, it is.

12 The group meets every summer for a formal annual meeting with the Lecturers Committee and representatives from the three ministries, in connection with a week-long seminar of talks by scholars, authors, and poets (funded by the Ministry).

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