

# Denmark's culture: women's rights, education and family



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Culture is one of those rare inheritances that a follower receives from his/her ancestors. It determines beliefs, perception, and morality. Those values shape a man's identity making him dependant and loyal to those principals. Every culture has its own history and traditions, which makes the world a place with variety types of people. The cultures are represented by its followers allowing them to be strict and bias towards its constitution and moral behaviors without the followers a culture could disappear joining the anthology of the dead cultures. Denmark has a culture with recognized principles and values that specializes them over traditions. They have their own point of views and ways of dealing with traditional aspects of life such as customs, education, marriage, family life, as well as women's rights.

Denmark, being a small country in northern Europe it is rich with customs and traditions. Food, Festivals, Music, and Religion are important aspects in the customs of Denmark. The Danish people believe that meals are important for the families to be together and not just for filling their need. (Pateman 113). The main food which the Danes usually eat is bread for their breakfast and they have many different types of bread in which they eat some are crusty and some are cold toasted. (Pateman 114). Although in the summer the Danes usually go to the park to get sunshine as sometimes during the winter they never get sunshine, their meal usually are meatballs which are made of pork, this is the most common meal in Denmark. (Pateman 115). On the other hand, there are only two main drinks in Denmark which are coffee and beer; these are the main two which the Danes drink throughout the year. They also have a traditional beer for them only which is made by mainly potato which is called Snaps which is served usually

served cold. (Pateman 116-117). The Danes celebrate many days during a year of which some are Religious and others which are important events. The Danes like other Christian countries celebrate Christmas and Easter. The celebration of Christmas starts from the beginning of December up to New Year, although the main part starts at December 23 which the Danes decorate their home with hearts and other religious items. The Danish families' celebrate Christmas Eve together and they also have a special dinner which is made of rice pudding. Although the importance of Easter is no longer there in Denmark, holiday is given to them which the Danes go and visit families and friends in exchange of Easter eggs to children. (Pateman 108-110). Other important events which the Danes celebrate during the year are the Queen's birthday, Liberation Day, Copenhagen Carnival, alongside Fastelvn. These are the main days in which the Danes celebrate throughout the year. During the queen's birthday, it is a national holiday for the Danes from work and school which they gather outside the queen's palace and hear its speech and ends with cheers from the crowd. Although in Liberation Day's night the people put candles on their windows to celebrate the day in which they were liberated from Germany on world war two, which the Danes still celebrate it today because this day means a lot to the old Danes who lived during world war two. Copenhagen Carnival is a carnival day which celebrates throughout Copenhagen; people wear new costumes and party on the street for the whole day. Lastly, Fastelvn is a special event which is held at the end of February where children play a game using sticks to hit a barrel which is filled up with gifts. Although it seems to be a fun event it has a history, because for a long time they used to place a cat and hit it until it dies. (Robert 106-107). The Danes enjoy nearly all types

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of music, but mainly pop music. They also have festivals each year, but the main festival they have is named Rolkside Festival, it is the hugest music festival in northern Europe. In this festival musicians from all around the world come to play on the stage. (What would Roskilde Festival be without partners? 1).

Education in Denmark is compulsory for people aged seven up to people aged 16. When the teenagers reach their age to 16 they can choose to continue school or stop. There are also two types of school which are common in Denmark which are government and private schools.

Government schools are free schools which they have from grade one up to grade nine. The Danes who choose to go to them are to stay with the same teacher for nine full years. The classes in government schools do not change and the students are together for the full nine years. Due to the government having up to ninth grade the people have to then go to a secondary school, being that people in ninth grade are usually 15 years old and that the compulsory age to go to school is from seven to 16. People who pass ninth grade are usually smart students who go to secondary school to continue school. Although some who are not ready are the students which do not get good grades stay for an extra year when they are 16 and then they are free to do what they want either go to secondary school for three years or stop. (Pateman 60-61). Similarly, most private schools have up to ninth grade only. The education in the private school is a little better than the government's free school, although approximately 16% only of the students in Denmark go to private schools. However, government still helps private school and is not out of the equation, they subsidize them by giving them

some money to help them improve their teaching facilities and have better teachers. Yet, they are not responsible for anything that happens to the student, the student's parents are held responsible for everything according to the teaching standards or anything similar to that. (Hansen 1). Finally, the universities in Denmark are good universities which people come to study in from around the world. Although, in Denmark, there are only five main universities those universities can teach many subjects in both English and mainly in Danish. For example the university of Copenhagen which is the first university to be built in Denmark and the second in Scandinavia which is still there standing for more than a half of a millennium, it teaches not only the main subjects such as Math, English, and Danish, it teaches subjects such as music, business, and even social studies.( Pateman 61). In Denmark, there is also adult education, which is that adults that are working can have evening lessons. This type of education is popular in Denmark as by now it can be considered as part of their culture. This type of education helps the Danes in many ways, they can possibly learn a new language which most people usually learn German or French. There are also Danes who study subjects which they might be interested in such as social science which might help them in their future in case they would want to switch jobs.

Marriage in Denmark is not as popular, the average Danish man usually marries at the age of 33 and the woman usually marries at the age of 30, being that the legal age for marriage is 18.( The Ceremony 1) The reason behind this is that in Denmark it is being advised by the parents of the bride and the groom to live together for some time, to see if the relationship is going to work in a good way. However, also after the couple get to have a

long relationship before marriage, the divorce rate in Denmark is high. Studies show that the divorce rate is half the marriage rate, which is really high. In Denmark there are two different types of marriage, one of them is the traditional marriage which the church marriage. This type of marriage is similar to the marriage that happens to other Christian countries the bride wears a long white dress and the groom wear a suit, and the bride is escorted by her father. The only difference is that frequently if there is a close female friend can escort the bride, and at the end as the couple leave, the guests usually raise the Denmark flag.( Pateman 64-65) The other way which the couple can marry each other is the civil wedding which is a wedding taking place at any place that the authority in charge of the marriage allows to, it can be held in a town or even a forest. Meanwhile, Danish women who get married are allowed to change their last name, which most of them do not change their name as they are expected to divorce, and if they do want to change their last name they would have to do it before the marriage officially takes place due to a document form should be proposed first.( The Ceremony 1).

Family life is an important aspect to the culture of Denmark, the Danes are unlike the other neighbouring countries when it comes to families. In neighboring countries like Germany and Belgium their social life is based around pubs and usually being outside the home. In Denmark their social life is mainly at home, the Danes take care of their home and a major amount of the income they would get usually is used to improve the facilities at their home. (Pateman 66). The Danish life is usually based around work and family for adults and school and family for the children who are being balanced

equally by the people in there. The Danes usually travel or during holidays or go to a summer house. Summer house is popular in Denmark, which many Danes go to with their family and friends. (Steed 1). Also due to Denmark government focus in improving family life, families get to have many benefits. The government takes control of giving the child if a family has one an allowance, the government gives extra allowance to the number of children the family has, and also the families also get to have free birth. (The Ceremony 1). Houses are not cheap in Denmark, but having a family helps because if a couple just married and are not able to afford a house, they are given an apartment by the government to use until they can manage to buy a home for themselves. (Pateman 66). The Danes usually consider their country the best country in the world not only due to the free education, but mainly due to the importance of family life which has been shown when Denmark and the Danes won the ranking of having the most amused people in the world. (Lundberg 1).

Women rights are not affected as much in Denmark, and it can be said that they have nearly the same rights as the men. Studies show that women in Denmark work the same as men and have the right to vote and elect themselves. Denmark is one of the few countries which now have women at the parliament with a high rate at over 30%. Saying this, the women do not have all the rights as men, they still have to do the home work alongside men having the better jobs in society and a higher wage, but they still have as many rights as the men. The reason behind women having a lot of rights goes back to 1915 when there was a movement which made them have a huge part in the politics.(Pateman 62-63). After 1915, the women started

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getting rights they first had the right to vote and then right for opportunities same as the men. The women then started getting more rights after the Second World War when the economy was going down which lead to the need for women to work. This was the start of women being allowed to work and started the increasing rate of them working in Denmark, which at that time was mainly in labor market. (Larsen 1). Going back to working women, the Danish women have a high working rate just over 70% of them do work, which is slightly lower than the one of men which is approximately 75%, which shows that Denmark is a fair country and the women in Denmark's rights are not affected and are close to have the same rights as the men in Denmark.(Housing-Denmark 1).

Denmark has certainly earned the right to have a culture as big as it has now. The customs and traditions, education, marriage, family life, along with women rights are one of the most important aspects of culture which makes Denmark have a big culture as it is now. They celebrate many days which means to them a lot such as Christmas. The education is free in government school which is definitely which makes it one of the most intelligent countries in the world. Marriage that they have even though the divorce rate is high, what they do in marriage make them unique, as well as the family life which is important for them. Lastly, women's rights in Denmark are not affected which is why it is a fashionable society.

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