



# Posta Stamps

Faroe Islands

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Three new stamp issues:

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# Søren Aabye Kierkegaard 1813 - 2013



FO 764

Test proof

*The 5th of May 2013 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of the world famous Danish theologian and philosopher, Søren Aabye Kierkegaard. As Kierkegaard also had a great influence on the Faroese people and their religious convictions, we are celebrating this 200th anniversary in a joint issue with Post Danmark.*

Søren Kierkegaard experienced both the Church and the Moravian Brethren during his childhood. Despite becoming an opponent of churches and congregations later in life, Kierkegaard played a key role in Faroese church history, serving as a source of inspiration to Victor Danielsen's clash with the Church of the Faroe Islands.

Søren Kierkegaard strongly opposed many of the predominant ideas of his time, yet it was also an era characterised by its break with inherited beliefs in areas ranging from politics and religion to science and philosophy.

A revolutionary political spirit spread across Europe and in 1849 Denmark became a constitutional monarchy. The Danish constitution did not fall from the heavens, but was a result of the ideal from the 1700s that every person is born equal and free. The Church, faith, God and the bible were under fire; Ludwig Feuerbach's proclamation in 1841 that God is a product of man's ideas paved the way for the intellectual youth of Germany, and George Elliot was quick to translate Feuerbach to English.

In 1844, Arthur Schopenhauer wrote that the world is driven by an increasingly insatiable desire, which is what makes man an unhappy and

suffering creature. The growing trend of European individualisation had been clearly established. Some years later, Danes could read the young writer Frederik Dreier's socialist ideas and confrontation with religious conservatism, in which priests were lambasted by Dreier's sharp pen; Drier's critique was followed shortly by a sarcastic thrashing of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and the state-authorised clergy by Kierkegaard.

A review of Kierkegaard's works is a journey through European intellectual history – a journey that also points towards the future emergence of modern existentialism. One of Kierkegaard's core ideas is that man is a loner, an individual that must break from the ignorant and anonymous rabble. He had nothing but contempt for epigones, people who imitate others' words and deeds. When Kierkegaard died in November 1855 at the age of 42, worn down by controversy and mentally demanding work, he had made his message heard beyond Denmark that it is futile to hide behind a mask of biblical or state authorised faith, fine titles and bishops robes, because man's relationship with God is a matter between the individual and God. Kierkegaard, the once avid churchgoer, had become a fierce opponent of all forms of religious congregations.

The last half of the 1800s saw sweeping social changes in the Faroe Islands. Free trade and the fishing industry replaced monopoly trade and a peasant and class society, but the National Church remained virtually unchallenged by other religious institutions and beliefs. There were some challenges, however. In 1865, the



Statue of S. A. Kierkegaard  
Photo: Scanpix

Plymouth Brethren sent William Sloan from the Shetland Islands to do missionary work in the Faroe Islands. Sloan's preaching was simple and straightforward: No salvation without a personal belief in Jesus Christ. A few years before the turn of the twentieth century, the Danish Inner Mission arrived in the Faroe Islands. The aim of the Inner Mission was to bring Christianity back to the modern secular society by reforming the Church. Thus the ground was laid for Faroese cultural criticism and a deeper critique of the Church of the Faroe Islands.

It was not until long after Kierkegaard's death that he first caused a stir in the Faroe Islands. And when it finally happened, it was not as a philosopher, but as a critic of the Church. Kierkegaard's criticism was disseminated by Victor Danielsen, who attended the teacher training college in Thorshavn from 1911-1914; in the autumn of 1913, Danielsen experienced a deep spiritual crisis in his search for God.

Victor Danielsen sought spiritual guidance from Inner Mission, but quickly realised that the Church could not possibly be reformed; instead, it must be rejected because the Church

and priests lived a lie, in which their living did not come from the spirit, but from a state-paid salary.

During the years 1914-1916, Victor Danielsen wrote many letters to the editor in the Faroese newspapers, harshly attacking the Church and its culture, which in his view was a road to perdition. He saw the Church as rotting in a misguided perception of the existence of Christian culture. Victor Danielsen had a sharp and focused pen. Kierkegaard's "Church Storm" emerged clearly in Danielsen's letters to the editor, which were often a direct copy both in form and content of Kierkegaard's work.

Victor Danielsen also accepted the consequences of his conclusions and refused to work as a teacher, as he would not teach in accordance with the Church's Lutheran doctrine. Danielsen could not accept infant baptism, which he viewed as unbiblical and therefore not applicable. In 1916 he was baptised and became active as one of the spiritual leaders of the Plymouth Brethren in the Faroes, living a very productive life as a bible translator, song and hymn writer, and author.

*Ólavur Rasmussen*

# Europa 2013

## - Postal Vehicles



### A loyal Japanese member of the postal service

The strangest thing is that the writer of these words is the same age as a long-standing and loyal Japanese member of the Faroese postal service. The Japanese referred to here is a "Suzuki".

Anyone with the slightest knowledge of cars knows that Suzuki is a Japanese car manufacturer. Suzuki began making cars back in 1937, but it was in the year of my birth, 1968, that Suzuki began production of the vehicle that would become of great importance for many car owners around the world, including the Faroese postal service – the first Suzuki jeep. Suzuki's first jeep was called "Suzuki Jimny". This Jimny model was produced until the mid-70s. The next generation of Suzuki jeeps, the SJ 410, was introduced in 1982, followed by the SJ 413 in 1983. However, the model Suzuki began producing in 1985 became very visible in the Faroese landscape. At the time, rural postmen in particular used cars in their work – for the same reasons they do today. The more remote postal routes in Tórshavn and Hoyvík were so-called "car routes".

The moped routes used the Puch Maxi, which at the time was manufactured in Austria. Unfortunately, production of Puch Maxi mopeds stopped in the 1990s. The Puch Maxi was a very reliable moped. A Puch Maxi was not going to win any races, but it did what it needed to do and the manual transmission made it much easier to

manage on the slippery roads than the automatic transmission on the Italian Scarabeo scooters that came later in the nineties. The Italian scooters were faster, but they were not as good on slippery winter roads.

There were also some walking routes around the Faroe Islands. For example, most routes in Klaksvík were walking routes. In Tórshavn, the routes closest to the post office in the city centre were walking routes. Some walking routes were in villages. The best known of these was between Bøur and Gásadalur, where the postman walked across the fell with the mail three times a week.

Many moped routes were converted to car routes because of the severe hurricanes in the winter of 1988-89. The Marknagils route in Tórshavn was originally a moped route, but it was converted to a car route after the postal service lost two mopeds in the hurricane. It was this route that became my first car route. The Suzuki cars had a good car radio. A woman from Klaksvík, who still lives by Marknagilsvegin, said to me with a smile the first time I stopped in front of her house with the postal jeep: "It is like hearing the ice cream truck in the summer in Denmark, because it also always plays loud music." It was probably a little hint not to wake up her baby sleeping in the pram outside.



Heri Simonsen and the Suzuki jeep  
Photo: Per á Hædd

Using this link: [http://www.youtube.com/all\\_comments?v=lqM8iyj8bZI](http://www.youtube.com/all_comments?v=lqM8iyj8bZI) you can see a short video clip on YouTube with a now former rural postman who comes out of a house in Oyndarfjørður after a good cup of coffee and discovers that his postal car has been stolen. A short while later, a local man from Oyndarfjørður comes driving by in the postal car. The video clip was posted on YouTube as a thank you to the rural postman for 30 years of loyal service.

This same rural postman was once reprimanded for using the postal car to get to church on time. He defended himself by saying that it should also be permitted to use it for church services, but that excuse was not accepted.

Another rural postman in Suðurstreymoy was once bitten by a dog when he got out of the postal car. The elderly woman who owned the dog was very upset and said to the postman: "It's eight years old and has never bitten anyone." After thinking for a moment, the postman replied: "That's nothing! I'm 46 and I've never

bitten anyone either!"

Later, Suzuki introduced other models, but the memories of the little 1985 Suzuki Samurai are especially dear to those of us who previously worked at Postverk Føroya.

*Heri Simonsen*

***Since the theme of this year's Europe issue is current postal vehicles, the two cars depicted on the stamps are newer cars that are used by the postal service today. The two cars are: a FIAT DUBLÓ MAX from 2012 (FO 765) and a Scania R420 from 2007 (FO 766).***





Test proof

# The brown rat and the housemouse

## Brown Rat

*Rattus norvegicus*

The brown rat is larger than the black rat and the male is larger than the female. An adult brown rat weighs around 200-400 g and is approx. 21-29 cm long, with a tail length of approx. 17-23 cm. The fur is an even dark brown colour and lighter on the stomach. The head is pointed and the eyes are small. The ears are short and covered in hair.

The brown rat is also called the water rat. It originates from Asia and China and came to most of Europe in 1727, when it swam in large numbers over the River Volga. It had already arrived in Denmark in 1716, when the Emperor, Peter the Great, visited Denmark by ship. From Denmark, it was easy for the rat to spread northwards to Norway, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. The rat came to the Faroe Islands on the Norwegian ship, The King of Prussia. The ship was on its way to Dublin, when it ran aground on the island of Lewis in Scotland. The shipwreck was driven north to Hvalba on Suðuroy in May 1768. The first rats arrived on the Faroe Islands via the wreck and had already found their way to Tórshavn by 1769. The brown rat is found on the larger islands only.

The rat is found everywhere, both in built-up areas and further afield; any place where it can find enough food. It is omnivorous and does not refrain from eating mice, eggs and baby birds, young hares and carrion. The rat generally stays in the same place, and if it finds sufficient foodstuffs, it will hoard for harder times.

The rat is a nocturnal animal. It is a good climber and moves around buildings, and can also find its way to the bird cliffs, especially to puffin holes. It can destroy the nests of Manx shearwaters and storm petrels completely. It lives in individual territories made up of one male and a number of females with young.

The female rat is fertile for 22 days, and mates 3-4 times a year, each litter giving approx. 6-12 young. Newborn rats are naked and blind, and reach sexual maturity at three months old. There are often many litters from the same warren, i.e. many rats in the same hole. The average life expectancy for a rat is about 1.5 years.

Attempts have been made to exterminate the rat population in all areas it is found, as they are seen as a source of disease among both people and livestock. It moves around all over the place and causes considerable damage: on the Faroe Islands, the rat has almost wiped out a number of bird species found on the bird cliffs. On those islands where rats are found, some species, such as the Atlantic puffin and the Manx shearwater (Manx puffin), have almost completely disappeared.

There are regulations concerning rat removal, which Faroese municipalities must comply with.



Black rats  
Artist: Edward Fuglø

### **The House Mouse** ***Mus domesticus***

The house mouse is grey/grey-brown and a little lighter on the stomach. The body is approx. 7.5-10.3 cm long; the tail is 7.2-10.2 cm long. The mouse weighs approx. 12-28 g. and has a somewhat distinctive smell; it can be this smell that draws your attention to the fact a mouse is close at hand, and is caused by the mouse marking its territory with urine.

The house mouse originates from Asia and was brought west by man. The Faroese mouse is part of the species West mouse (*Mus domesticus*), which is also found in Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Italy, Spain and Greece. One can thus assume that the Faroese mouse came to the Faroe Islands with the Irish monks, who were the first settlers on the islands. The first written mention of the mouse here dates from 1592, but in all likelihood it had already been seen on the Faroe Islands, when the first Norse Landnam settlers came here on their way to Iceland and Greenland.

In the North Atlantic, the mouse is clearly attached to people. It lives outside in the summer, but comes inside in the autumn. On the Faroes it is only found on individual islands, and on some of the islands where

there are no rats, it can find its way to the bird cliffs during the summer.

Mice are not fastidious eaters, and consume what they can find from seeds, insects and leftover human food, though they prefer corn and corn products. They can survive without water, and thus live well in granaries and pantries. In houses, they can do considerable damage to food and furniture, being adept gnawers.

Mice can climb all over the house. They live here, where there is plenty of food and materials with which to build nests, during the frostier weather, hiding food away for harder times when it is in short supply. The mouse is a mating animal, with the female building the nest which the male visits during mating season.

Mice can reproduce all year round and can theoretically give birth to ten litters a year, with 3-6 young in each litter. The young reach sexual maturity when they are one month old. Attempts are made to control the rodent population everywhere mice are found, generally with mouse traps and poison.

*Extract from the book "Villini súgdjór í Útnorðri" (Wild Mammals in Western Scandinavia) by Dorete Bloch and Edward Fuglø (1999).*

# New Stamp Issues 4 March and 29 April 2013



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Artist:  
Engraver:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Postal use:

**Søren Aabye Kierkegaard**  
04.03.2013  
1 x 35,00 DKK  
FO 764  
31,25 x 35,50 mm  
N. Chr. Kierkegaard  
Bertil Skov Jørgensen  
Offset / intaglio  
Posten Frimärken, Sweden  
Large letters inland, 251 - 500 gr



\* also available as selfadhesives stamps in booklet of eight



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Photo:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Postal use:

**Europa 2013 - Postal vehicles**  
29.04.2013  
7,00 og 12,50 DKK  
FO 765-766  
30 x 40 mm  
Fotostudio  
Offset  
OesD, Austria  
Small letters inland and to Europe, 0-50 g



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Artist:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Postal use:

**The brown rat and the house mouse**  
29.04.2013  
11,00 og 12,50DKK  
FO 767-768  
42 x 28 mm  
Edward Fuglø  
Offset  
Cartor Security Printing, France  
Large letters, inland 0-50 g, and small letters to Europe 0-50 g

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