

Call for Papers, IASS 2027

**International Association for Scandinavian Studies
The City and the Country in Nordic Culture
Malmö University 4–7 August 2027**

The relationship between the city and the country has long been a key social issue, in Scandinavia as in many other parts of the world. Urbanisation has long been a dominant trend, but there are also many examples of a longing for the countryside or the periphery. At the same time, city and country have come to represent different, sometimes opposing or even antagonistic, lifestyles, living conditions and political attitudes.

These issues have attracted considerable attention in culture. Some key Nordic examples include Alf Prøysen's novel *Trost i taklampa* (1950, adapted for the stage and radio in 1952 and made into a film in 1955) about the 'flight from the countryside'; The Latin Kings' album *Välkommen till förorten* (1994), in which the new multicultural Sweden is described in terms of a tension between the urban centre and the periphery; Martin Andersen Nexø's *Pelle Erobreren* (1906–1910), which follows a journey from the countryside on Bornholm, via the market town of Rønne, to Kongens København; Esko Männikkö's photographs of men in the rural periphery of Finland; or Halldór Laxness's *Sjálfstætt fólk* (1934–1935), which dramatises the conflict between rural smallholder culture and urban centralisation.

Given the centrality of this theme in culture, it is not surprising that it has attracted considerable interest within the academic world as well. In recent years, this interest has also grown significantly. In addition to individual publications and projects, one might mention attempts to develop research in fields such as urban humanities or urban literary studies, for example those carried out within ALUS (Association for Literary Urban Studies) in Helsinki, at the Institute for Urban Research in Malmö, or at the TRANSITION research centre at the University of Copenhagen.

We welcome papers (15 minutes), as well as other forms of presentation (posters, roundtables, pecha kucha, etc.) that address the city and the country in Nordic culture. We would be delighted to receive presentations that address not only literary fiction but also other cultural expressions (visual arts, music, film, TV, architecture, etc.). Please feel free to propose thematic sessions (with invited participants). We prefer presentations in the Nordic languages, but English is accepted where justified.

Examples of possible topics/areas:

The exodus from, and return to, the countryside in art and literature.

The cultural and literary history of suburbs.

City and countryside in climate fiction.

Blue, green and urban humanities in Scandinavian studies.

Industrial landscapes in art and culture.

The aesthetics of regional dialects.

Centre and periphery as cultural coordinates.

Practical information

- Deadline for abstracts (max. 1 A4 page): 15 November 2026. Please send abstracts to iass2027@mau.se
- Notification of acceptance: February 2027
- A provisional programme, including information on the conference's cultural events, excursion and dinner, will be published on the conference website thereafter.
- Information on registration, fees and recommended accommodation will be published when the programme is released.
- The conference fee is provisionally set at 1,000 SEK (but may be reduced if we succeed in securing external funding).

We look forward to receiving your contributions and warmly welcome you to Malmö and IASS 2027!