Kierkegaard in Copenhagen

July 4 – August 9, 2019

This seminar studies the life and work of Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), the so-called father of existentialism. Kierkegaard began his journey as a philosopher by saying: “What I really need is to get clear about what I must do, not what I must know, except insofar as knowledge must precede every act. What matters is to find a purpose . . . to find a truth which is truth for me, to find the idea for which I am willing to live and die.”

We will follow in Kierkegaard’s footsteps, both figuratively and literally, walking the streets of Copenhagen and asking, “what is our purpose?” Kierkegaard found his purpose in fighting against intellectual imperialism — first of “the scientific worldview”, and then of institutionalized religion. We will investigate why Kierkegaard believed that these movements — which many people see as forces for the good — are destructive of our humanity. And we’ll ask ourselves whether Kierkegaard can help you find that idea for which you would be willing to live and die.

The seminar, led by Professor Hans Halvorson, will take place in Kierkegaard’s beloved city, Copenhagen.

Further details are available on the website of the Office for International Programs. Follow links for Study Abroad, Explore Programs, then scroll down and click on ‘Princeton summer programs’. Or email Professor Halvorson (hhalvors@), T.A. Brendan Kolb (bkolb@), or Francesca Schenker (fs12@) from the OIP. Funding is available.