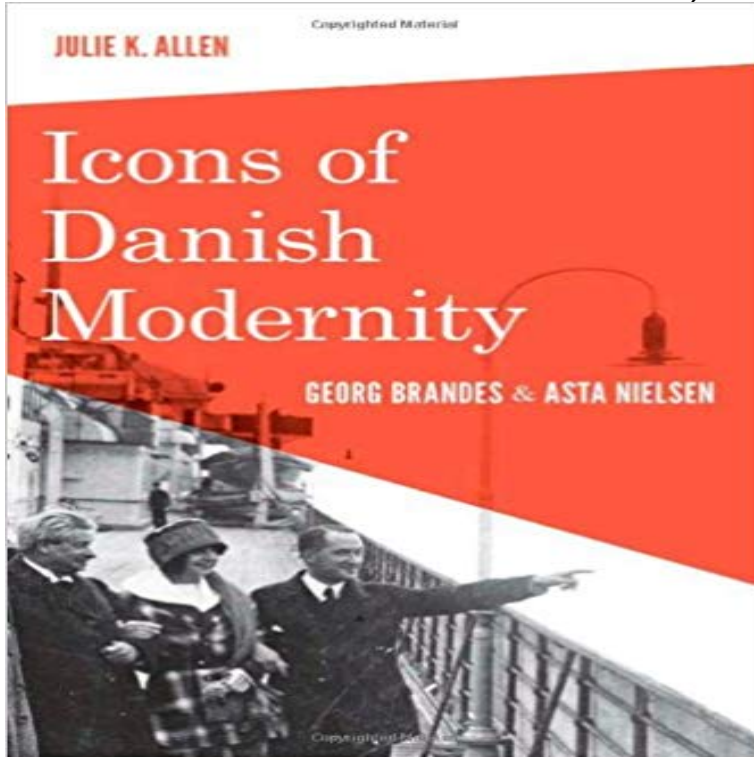


Icons of Danish Modernity: Georg Brandes and Asta Nielsen (New Directions in Scandinavian Studies)



Julie Allen utilizes the lives and friendship of the Danish literary critic George Brandes (1842-1927) and the silent film star Asta Nielsen (1881-1972) to explore questions of culture and national identity in early twentieth-century Denmark. Danish culture and politics were influenced in this period by the country's deeply ambivalent relationship with Germany. Brandes and Nielsen, both of whom lived and worked in Germany for significant periods of time, were seen as dangerously cosmopolitan by the Danish public, even while they served as international cultural ambassadors for the very society that rejected them during their lifetimes. Allen argues that they were the prototypical representatives of a socially liberal and culturally modern Danishness (Danskhed) that Denmark itself only gradually (and later) grew into. This lively study brings its central characters to life while offering an original, thought-provoking analysis of the origins and permutations of Danish modernism and Danish national identity--issues that continue to be significant in today's multi-ethnic Denmark. *Icons of Danish Modernity* is a book about the uneasy waves that arise when celebrities take on national symbolism, and the beginnings of this formula in the early twentieth century.

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