



History of Denmark

By Peter Schroeder

From Peasant Society
to modern democracy

Denmark around 1850

- Approximately 1,5 mill. people
- 80% live in the countryside
- Farming most common occupation



The political system

- The king rules! (absolute monarchy)
- No critics allowed (censorship)
- No political parties
- No public participation



The liberal bourgeoisie

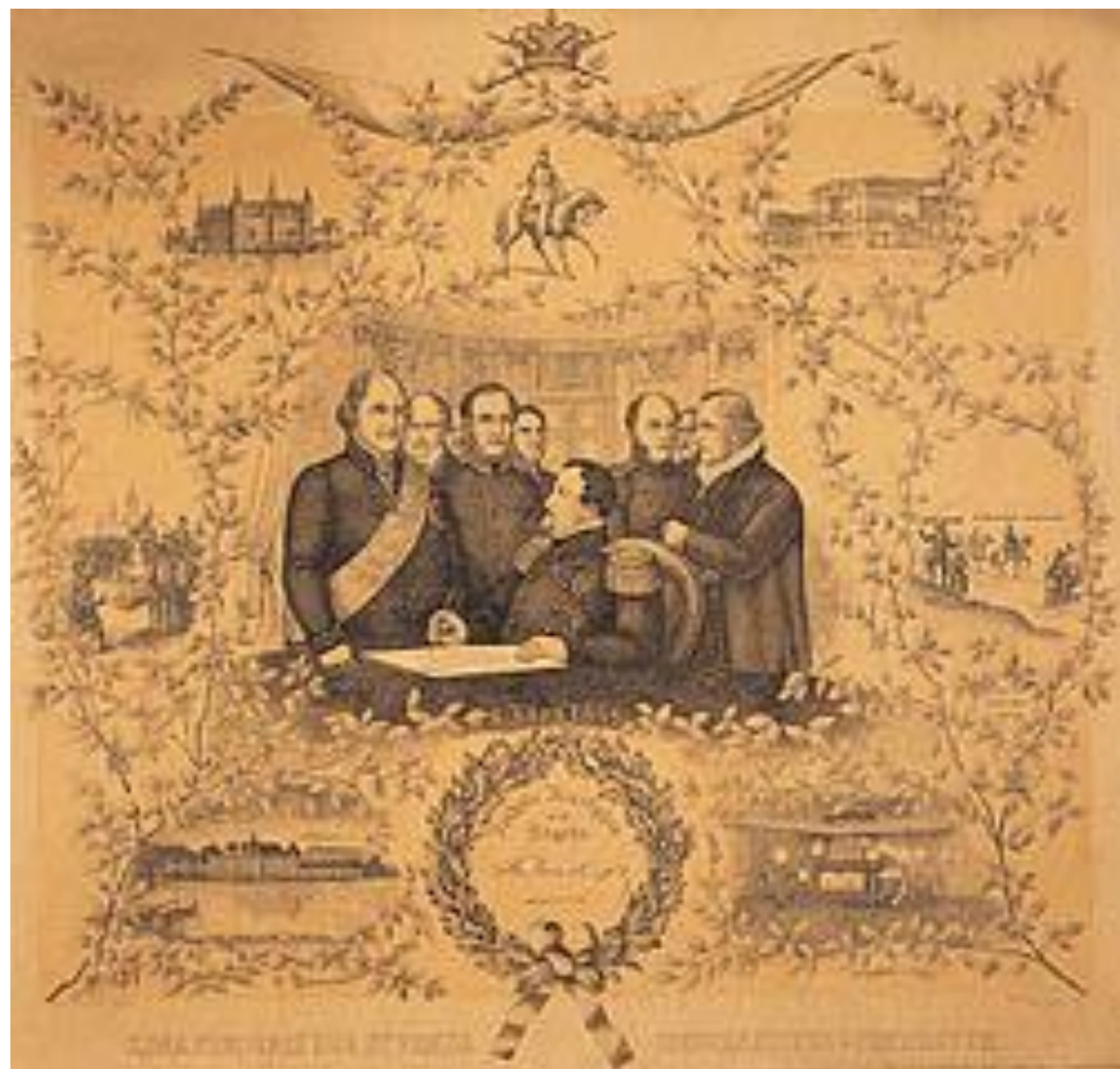
- Located in Copenhagen
- Influenced by European revolutions
- ‘We want democracy now!’



Constitution June 5. 1849

- Basic civil rights
- Parliament
- Free elections
- Political parties
- Democratic control





The Danish Democracy

- Two political parties (later three):
 - 'Højre' (= 'right') – conservatives – rich people in towns
 - 'Venstre' (= 'left') – liberals – peasants and people in the countryside
 - socialdemocrats - workers

vote

- Who could vote:
 - men beyond 30 years of age

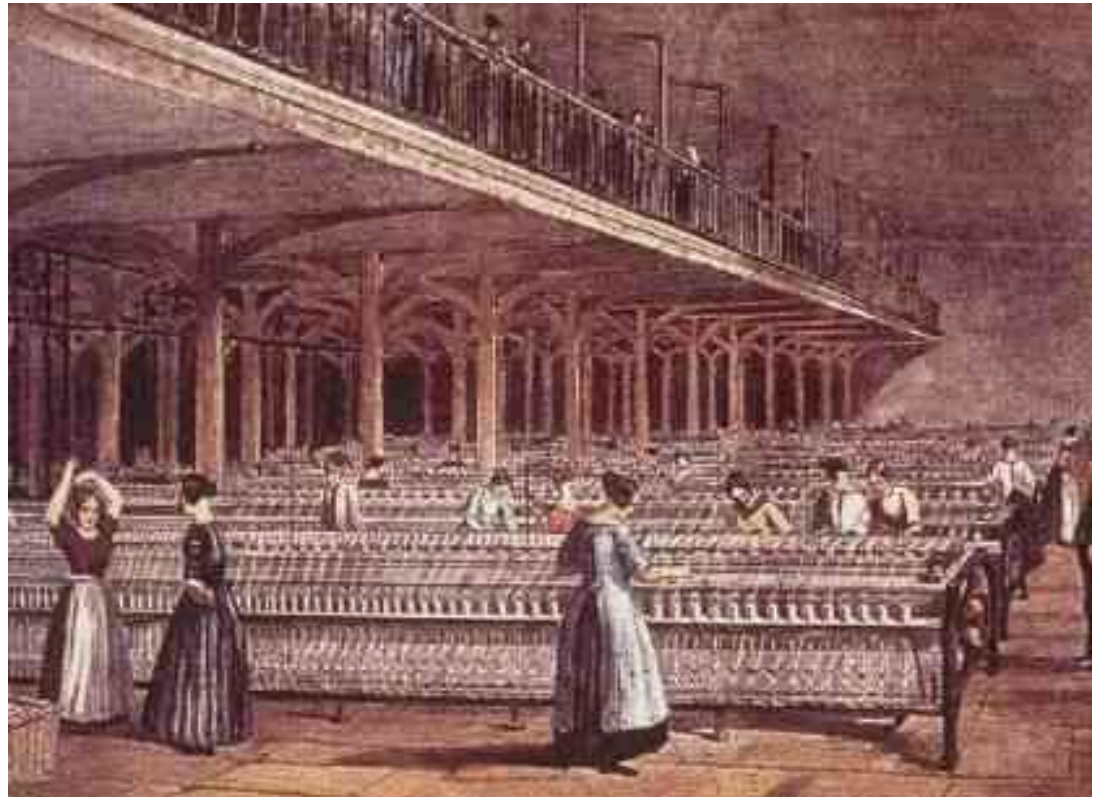
who could not:

- women
- - servants
- poor people
- the insane
- the criminals



Economic development

- Upcoming of industrialism
- Production of industrial goods for agriculture
- Urbanization
- Working class



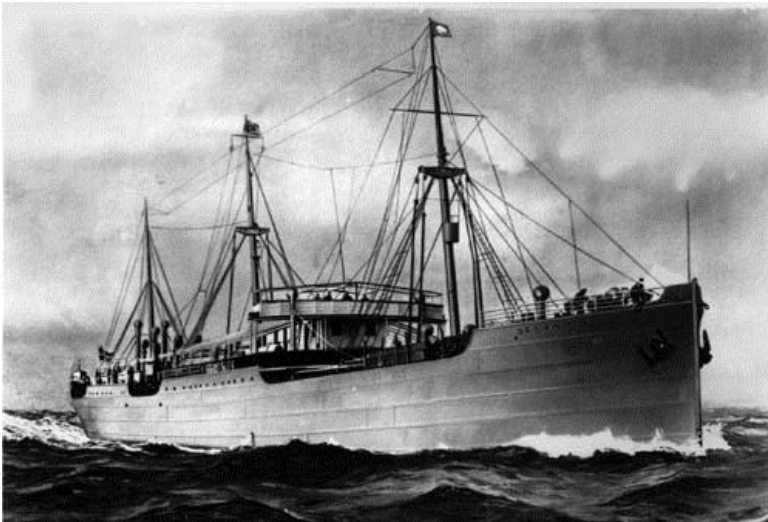
Danish industries

- Industrial boom around 1890-1914
- Small companies (less than 20 employees)
- First of all in Copenhagen



Products

- Food products: beer, tobacco, sugar
- Cement, cable
- Machinery for farming
- ships



Urbanization

- Unemployment in the countryside
- Lack of workers in town industries
- Better wages in industry
- => people move from country to town



Working class



The workers

- Poor wages
- 14 hours workingday
- Bad apartments
- Hard lives



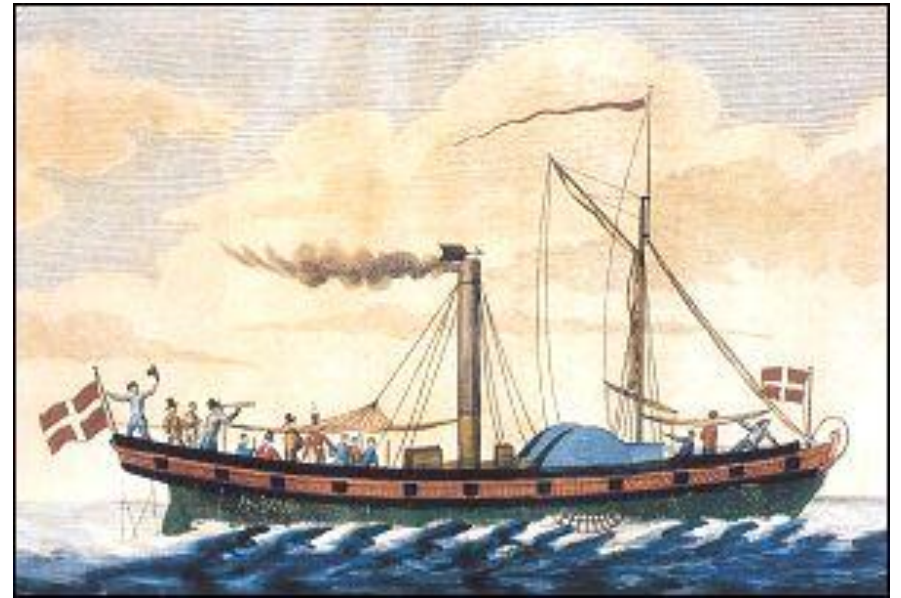
Good times in agriculture

- 1830-75: 'Sale of grain' period:
peasants make good money – export of grain
and live animals



Crisis...

- 1875: agricultural crisis: fall in prices on grain: Russian & American grain on European market



New ideas in agriculture

- Danish peasants must reconsider:
- New products
- From vegetable to animal farming:
butter and bacon to the british market
- More emphasis on processed products
- But how?
- Processing needs machinery

The co-operative movement

- Must have their own dairys and bacon factorys
- Finansiering? – we have no money!
- No banks will lend the peasants the money
- Solution: The co-operative movement



Principles of co-operative movement

- One man - one vote
 - Open membership
 - No large investment (corporation)
 - Common liability – 'one for all and all for one'
 - Share of profit
-
- First example of economic democracy i world history!

Co-operative dairies

- 1882: first co-operative dairy

- 1887: first co-operative bacon factory



- Later: wholesale society, banks, housing co-operative

results

- Prosperous, rich farmers
- Export boom: the british market



The Danish model

What is special about the Danish model?

- No hard antagonisms
- Better negotiate than revolt
- Trade is the key to wealth