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The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of big economical and political changes in Norway.

At the beginning of the century Norway was still under the rule of the Danish king with the status of a Danish province since the reformation. On the European continent the Napoleonic wars had just started in 1799. During its course Sweden sided with Britain and Denmark sided with France after the bombardement of Copenhagen („Copenhagization“) and the „rape of the Danish fleet“ in 1807. Following the British set up a sea blockade around Denmark. This had drastic consequences for Norway which depended on Danish imports, therefore leading to crises and starvation. However, this also led to a separatist movement in Norway which was now basically independent from Danish rule.

After the defeat of the Napoleonic forces in the Battle of Leipzig, the treaty of Kiel was signed in January 1814. Denmark there ceded Norway to Sweden which caused an uprising in Norway in February.

The Union party supported the union with Sweden and feared being put back under the Danish rule. On the other hand, the Independence party led by the popular Danish prince Kristian Frederik thought it would be the right time for Norway to become independent.

At the National Assembly at Eidsvoll Manor in April 1814 this was highly debated.

In the end, a national constitution was established the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1814 and Kristian Frederik elected king of Norway. This lasted not very long as Sweden led by Karl Johan confirmed its rule after a short



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war in July 1814. However, the constitution was kept which was quite progressive at that time. It allowed all peasants owning land to vote and established a separation of powers into executive (with the Swedish king as head), legislative (the Storting) and ~~the~~ the judicative institutions.

~~With~~ Although these were major political changes in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the economy was still underdeveloped, based on agriculture at subsistence level with 93% peasants living on scattered farms throughout the country. Norway was in possession of valuable raw materials, namely fish (especially herring and cod), woods (for timber) and some minerals (silver ore in Kongsvold and copper in Roros). But Britain had put heavy import duties on Norwegian timber after the war so that Norway could not profit from its resources until the 1840s.

Then several changes occurred simultaneously: <sup>x</sup> Britain ~~lifted the~~ abolished the high taxes on timber and at the same time lifted the export ban on new machinery. Secondly, there was a drastic increase of demand for timber and fish throughout Europe. This caused the first wave of industrialisation: Textile industries and mechanical engineering workshops were established in Norway with using knowledge from abroad. At the same time, international trade exploded and caused the Golden age of shipping for Norway from 1850-1880. In the 1880s, new problems occurred: Fish grounds near the coast were exploited and timber production was less profitable than in other countries, leading to ~~an~~ a

<sup>x</sup>: Firstly,



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general decline of production. In addition, the invention of steam-powered ships ended the dominance of the Norwegian trading fleet which was the third-largest in the world in 1878. However, modernisation in Norway had been heavily promoted by the Norwegian government, for example the ~~creation~~ construction of railway lines in 1854 or the creation of a telegraph system and better road network in 1855. The solution for the problems came in form of new industries. Most important driver for this development was cheap electricity from hydro-electric power plants. Although prior development had created a trading bourgeoisie with money and willingness to invest in industries, foreign capital was needed to construct dams and buy large machinery. However, with the incentive of cheap water power, many new industries settled in Norway, especially in the fields of electro-metallurgy (like aluminium) and electro-chemicals (salpetre / fertilizers). In addition, whaling (unfortunately until over-exploitation) and wood-pulp mills were <sup>x</sup> prospering economy. These developments led to the second wave of industrialisation, beginning in 1890 and lasting until 1970. During this time, Norway achieved to step out of the European periphery and, against all odds, integrate into the European economy. The country was very successful in switching from a raw-material supplier to a manufacturing nation,<sup>2</sup> for example in the shifts from fishery to canning industry or from timber production to wood-pulp mills and later paper industry. Industrialisation during the 19<sup>th</sup> century changed Norway

<sup>x</sup>: beneficial for the      <sup>2</sup>: visible



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completely and left Norway with a strong and flourishing economy at the end of the century. In addition, the Storting gained political power especially after 1872. Consequently, parliamentarism was introduced in Norway in 1884, meaning ~~that~~ that the Storting was now in charge of appointing the government. This important political change further limited the power of the Swedish king in Norway, preparing the independence on 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1905. All in all it can be said that the 19<sup>th</sup> century with its major political and economical changes have had an immense influence ~~for~~ on the future development and are the reason for ~~today's~~ <sup>\*</sup> Norway in the world today.

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Religion in Norway has undergone several major changes in the past. It can be roughly divided into three periods: Pre-Christian, Christian and pluralistic Christian/multi-religion.

In the first phase of pre-Christian religion, which lasted until around 1000 AD, the Viking religion was dominating in Norway. The people believed that the world was created out of the giant Ymer who consisted of fire and ice. The world was seen as a flat disc with concentric areas in which people and gods lived. Several named and unnamed super-natural powers were believed to exist, for example the wise leader and warrior Odin or Thor, his son,

\* : the position of



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the strongest god with his mystical hammer, causing thunder and lightning when he was moving on his cart. In this society, the tribal leaders or chieftains were also seen as religious leaders. Religious practices were mainly rituals like sacrifices. People believed in the values of ~~straight~~ strength, power, honour and self-assertion. The Vikings first got in contact with Christianity during their plunderings and trade with other nations.

Christianity was later introduced by kings, partly by force and partly aligned to changing ideological forces. ~~It~~ From then on, mercy, humility, obedience and forgiveness were the main values promoted by the church. The Christian period had a great influence on the development of the country until today.

Most successful in ~~the~~ spreading Christianity in Norway was king Olav Haraldsson who was raised in England with Christian ideals and died in battle in 1030. He became very popular as Saint for miracles of healing in Nidaros (today's Trondheim), ironically more influential after his death than during lifetime.

It was also in Nidaros where the Nidarosdomen was built as symbol of Christianity and the first bishop of Norway was introduced in 1152.

The next radical change happened during the reformation period of Martin Luther in 1536/37. The Danish king Christian III then enforced the Lutheran denomination as state religion. This might have resulted from conviction but also had several practical advantages for the king: Firstly, he was now ~~and~~ also religious leader of the country and ~~not~~ independent from the Pope in Rome. The church had gained power,



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especially during the period from 1130 to 1217 when there was a constant struggle about succession of the kings, so that the king had to fear excommunication by the Pope as drastic consequence of not complying with the rules of the Vatican. Under Lutheran denomination the king was now completely independent and did not even have to be appointed/crowned by the Pope. In addition, this change also had economical benefits as there were no more taxes to be paid to Rome and all the wealth<sup>\*</sup> of the catholic church instantly was owned by the kings.

The reformation was followed by an orthodox period of strict Lutheran preaching during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century two new movements evolved: pietism and enlightenment. Although they had different opinions and approaches and were taken up by different parts of society, they both increased the influence of the church. For example the pietistically inspired<sup>2</sup> layman preacher Hans-Nielsen Hauge can be seen as a reason for the so-called "Bible belt" along the southern coast of Norway from Oslo to Bergen. Generally, religion has influenced the country in many ways: Of course music ~~and art~~ was influenced by liturgical songs and chorals and art by church decoration and paintings of saints. But the Lutheran denomination also played an important role ~~in~~ in the ~~deveto~~ introduction of the Danish language in Norway: Services were held in Danish and with the translation of the Bible into Danish and the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg this

<sup>\*</sup>: and land      <sup>2</sup>: movement of the



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language was brought to the public. In addition, School Ordinance in 1739 introduced compulsory education in reading and writing to everybody, also in Danish. Lastly, religion also led to a strong missionary movement to Asia and Africa.

The last phase of the religious development<sup>x</sup> in Norway started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. After 1845 also other Christian communities apart from the Lutheran state church were allowed and also Jews after the abolishment of the "Jew paragraph" in 1851. However, it took until 1969 for full religious freedom. Since then all religions are allowed to register as faith communities and are equally<sup>2</sup> supported by the state according to registered members (today around 240 NOK per member). This had led to a pluralistic Christian society with new ritual, charismatic and ecumenical movements and a large number of free churches accounting for 40% of<sup>3</sup> Christian activities in Norway today. Just recently the<sup>3</sup> position of the Lutheran denomination as state church<sup>4</sup> has been abolished in 2017 in a change of the constitution.

Today, privatisation and individualisation are characteristic for recent beliefs. In addition to this variety of Christian denominations, Norway can also be said to be<sup>1</sup> multi-religious society caused by immigration after the 1970s. Labor immigrants and refugees have contributed to the establishment of new

<sup>6</sup> : have a

<sup>3</sup> : all      <sup>4</sup> : written down in the constitution      <sup>5</sup> : special

<sup>x</sup> : towards a multi-religion society      <sup>2</sup> : financially



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religions in Norway. The majority<sup>x</sup> is muslim but there ~~is~~ are also significant numbers of Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Bahai's, accounting together for about 4% of the population.

This multi-religion society today is reflected also in religious education. Earlier, the subject of "World views"<sup>o</sup> was introduced as replacement for non-christian pupils. But since 1997 "Religion, World Views and Ethics" is a compulsory subject for all pupils, not promoting any special religion but teaching<sup>2</sup> the variety of ~~reg~~ religions that can be found today in Norway.

All in all it can be said that Norway has undergone several phases of religion within the last 2000 years, with Christianity the most influential of them for all parts of society but<sup>3</sup> tolerating and integrating other religious beliefs into a pluralistic Christian and multi-religion society.

<sup>x</sup>: of them

<sup>2</sup>: about

<sup>3</sup>: nowadays also