

This Thesis provides a short analysis of theory, history, and practice of the so-called folkehjuskole (folk high schools) that represents a Danish contribution to pedagogy with worldwide importance. Those schools resulted from the social and cultural climate in Denmark as well as from the intellectual creativity of the churchman, philosopher, historian, member of parliament, and bard N.F.S. Grundtvig as well as of the pedagogue and organizer Ch. Kold. The first one was founded in 1844 in Rdding, North Schleswig. The political situation after the war between Prussia and Denmark and the need to improve the education and competence of rural youth to develop their farms provided an impetus for those schools as well. Those free schools were run on new principles, independently from the state school system, and influenced very positively the development and democratization of Danish society. After some time elapsed, similar schools were founded in the whole Scandinavia, to lesser extent in other European countries, in some Scandinavian and other communities in the USA, during the recent years in some developing countries. Lifelong education, supported by those schools, is providing inspiration for the contemporary European Union, as testified by the Grundtvig programme. The intellectual foundations, organization of those schools, personal experience during the author stay at two of those schools, and positive results as reflected in the pedagogical literature are described and analyzed. This Diploma Thesis points out also the possible merits of introducing this type of a school in the European educational system.