

Four stalks of sugarcane are arranged diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. The stalks are green with visible nodes and have been cut at the ends, showing the white, fibrous interior. The background is plain white.

# A Sweet Deal?

How Shipments Data From The Danish West Indies Can Inform Our  
Understanding Of How The Danes Viewed The Islands

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@Representing History Through Data | 10<sup>th</sup> December 2016



# Questions

- What can the shipments data tell us about what economic role the islands played for Danes?
- Does other information in the archive gives us an insight into how Danes at home viewed the islands? How did they mentally/culturally represent the islands?



# Parallels of Extraction?

## Juice from cane, sugar from Danish West Indies





DIE INSEL  
SAINTECROIX

mit den Namen der Plan-  
tagen die beständig sind.

\*Plantage mit einer Zuckermühle.

1767.



Eine deutsche Meile

*Paul Kuffner sc. Norimbergae*



# Primary Data Analysis

- 5162 unique ships from the Danish Toll Data between 1635 and 1857
- 12978 lines in the commodities record
- Data Clean-up (Excel and OpenRefine)

- ☒ Deels Westindisk sukker og rom
- ☒ Deels Westindiske sukker og rom
- ☒ Deels Westindske sukker og rom
- ☒ Elon sukker
- ☒ Fremmed sukker
- ☒ Gansk raat sukker
- ☒ Havareret sukker
- ☒ Hvit sukker
- ☒ Indenlands sukker
- ☒ Kaffe bomuld sukker fustik huder Madera Viin med meere
- ☒ Kaffe og sukker
- ☒ Kaffe sukker bomuld fustik hude viin roe ollie med meere
- ☒ Kaffe sukker og rum m. m.
- ☒ Ladning sukker
- ☒ Ladning sukker caffe og rum m.m.
- ☒ Raa sukker
- ☒ Raae sukker
- ☒ Raae sukker etc
- ☒ Raaf sukker

Some examples of ship cargo/commodities with sugar

- ☒ Sucker og st. domingo toback
- ☒ Sucker og toback
- ☒ Sucker og tobak
- ☒ Sucker og uld
- ☒ Sucker og videere
- ☒ Sucker og videre
- ☒ Sucker og vidre
- ☒ Sucker og viider
- ☒ Sucker og viidere
- ☒ Sucker og viidere fri
- ☒ Sucker og viidre
- ☒ Sucker og viin
- ☒ Sucker og viin m. m.
- ☒ Sucker p
- ☒ Sucker p p

Some examples of port of departure

- ☒ Cap Haiti
- ☒ Cap Hayti
- ☒ Cap Haytie
- ☒ Cap Haytien
- ☒ Cap. Hartion
- ☒ Cap. Hayty
- ☒ Cape Haitien eller St. Domingo
- ☐ Cap. Haytien

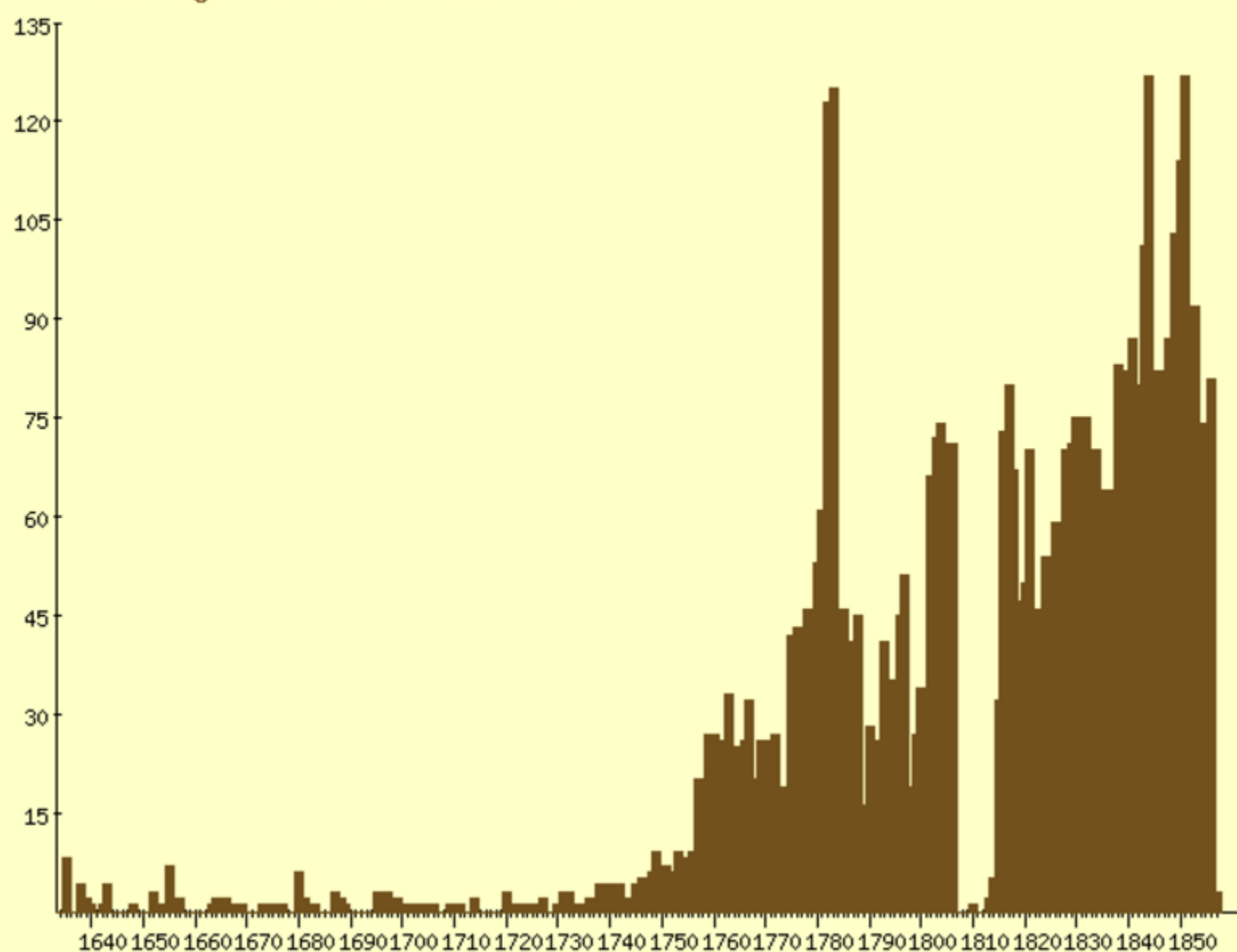
- ☐ Spanien
- ☒ St. Barthelemy
- ☒ St. Barthelome
- ☒ St. Barthelomy
- ☒ St. Bartholeme
- ☒ St. Bartholemy
- ☒ St. Bartholomæus
- ☒ St. Bartholome
- ☒ St. Bartholomen
- ☒ St. Bartholomeo
- ☒ St. Bartholomeus
- ☒ St. Bartholomew
- ☒ St. Bartholomey
- ☒ St. Bartholomy
- ☒ St. Christoffer

Advanced search results with standard geonames, values West-Indies ; number of passages: 5.213

Year # Passages

1635	8
1638	4
1639	2
1640	1
1642	1
1643	4
1648	1
1652	3
1653	1
1655	7
1656	1
1657	2
1663	1
1664	2
1666	2
1667	1
1669	1
1673	1
1674	1
1675	1
1677	1
1680	6
1681	2
1683	1
1687	3
1688	2
1689	1
1695	3
1697	3
1699	2
1700	1
1701	1

# Passages / Year from 1634 to 1857

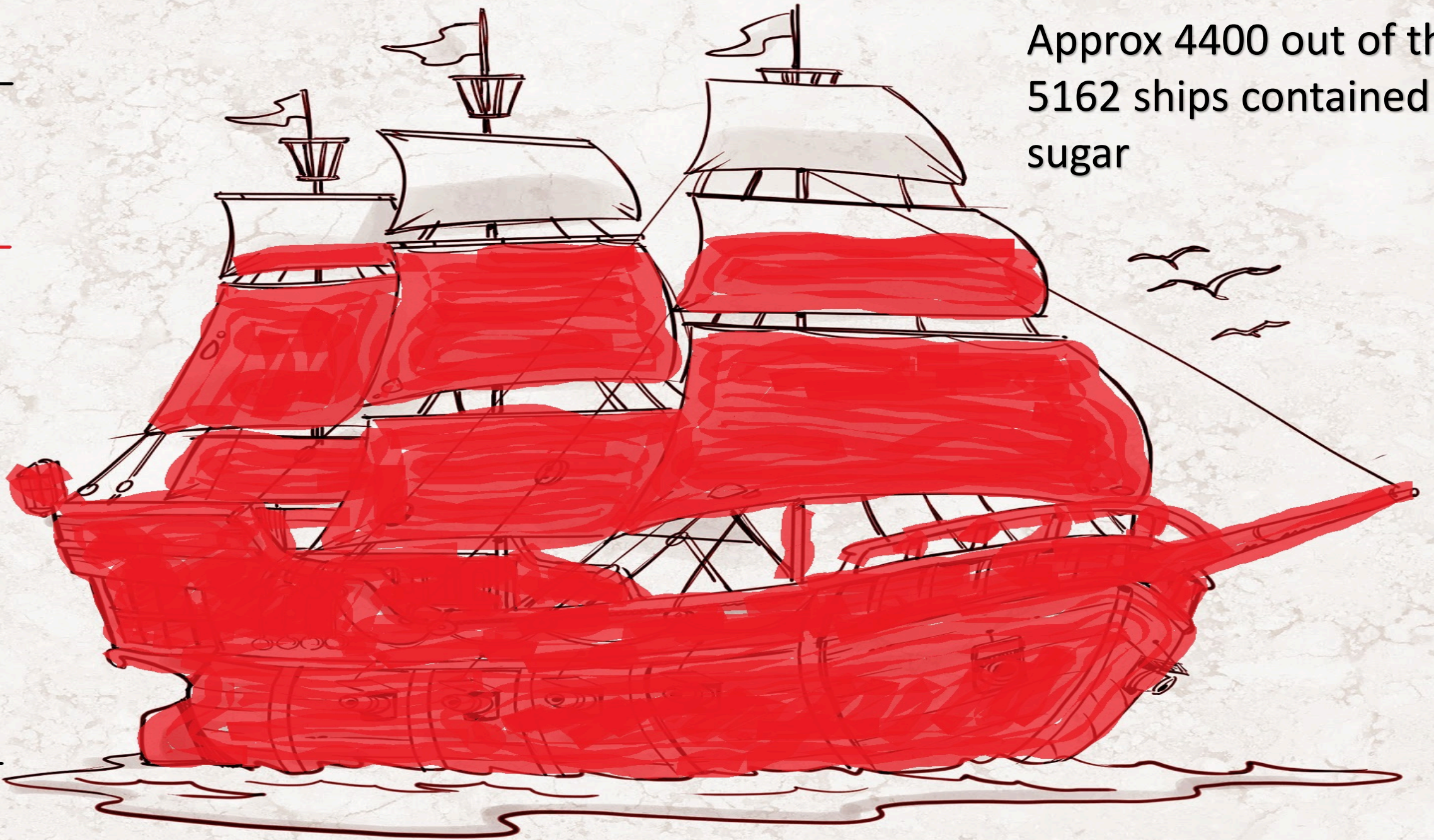


--Tableau Visualization--

Approx 4400 out of the  
5162 ships contained  
sugar

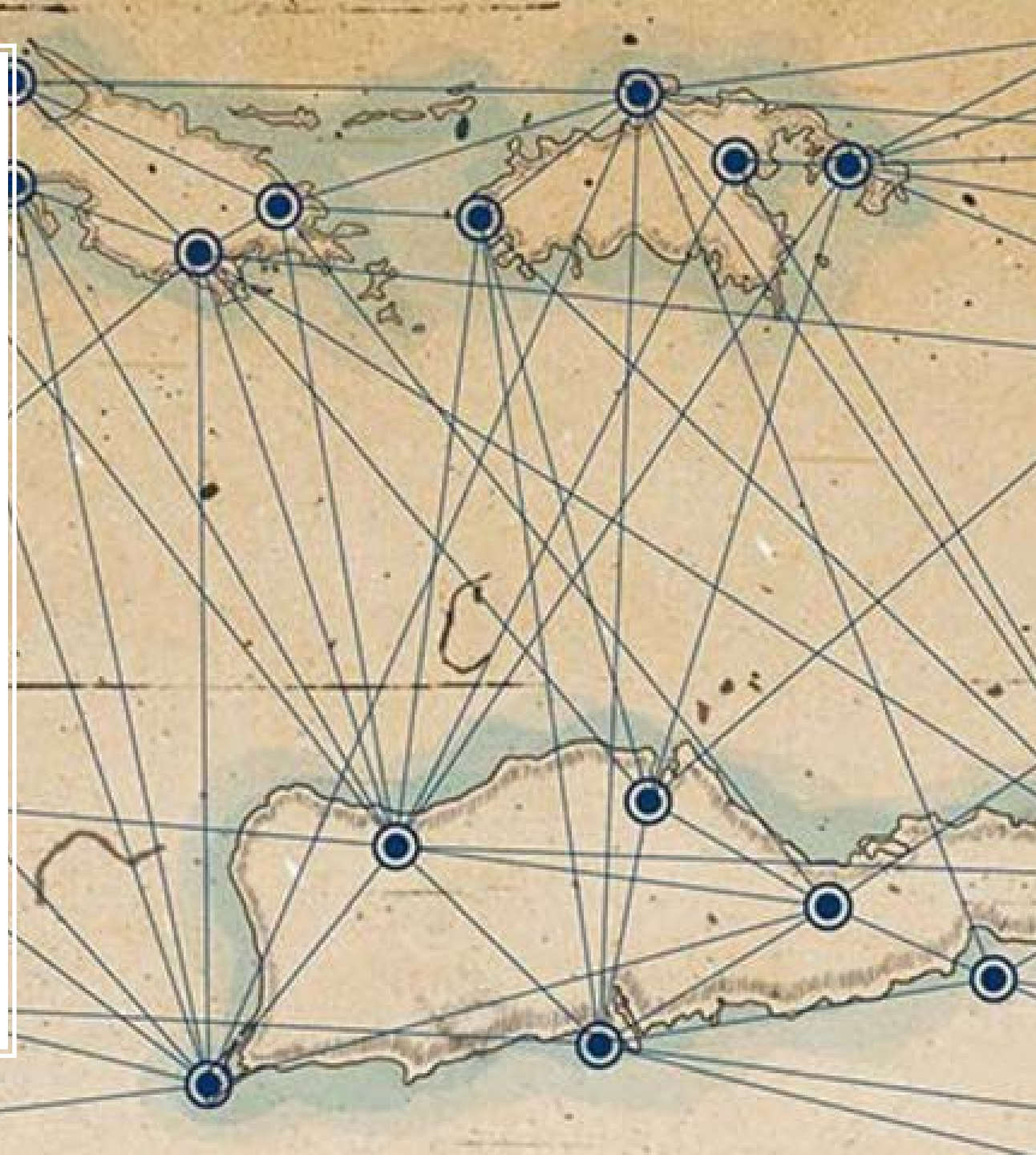
15 %

85 %



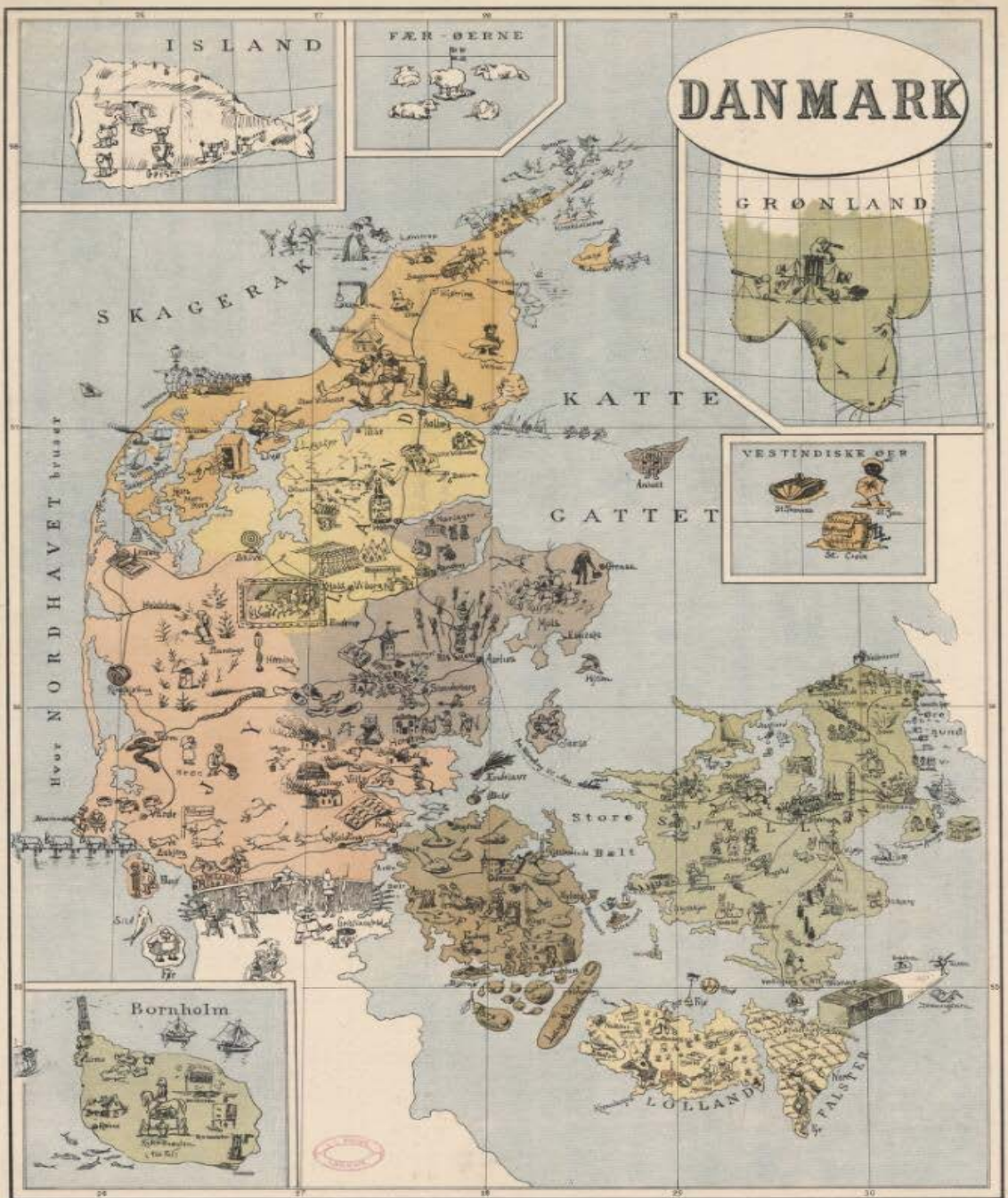
# Problems Representing History Through Data

- Shipments are numerical or economical, missing stories
- I relied on what I know about extractive states elsewhere, continuing impacts today
- Limited in extrapolating what Danes thought. Would need further evidence, this is a sketch/hypothesis based on the economic data
- Pictures can be dangerous



## Toffs and toughs





# Gustave Fischer



Carl Christian  
Frederik Jacob  
Thomsen



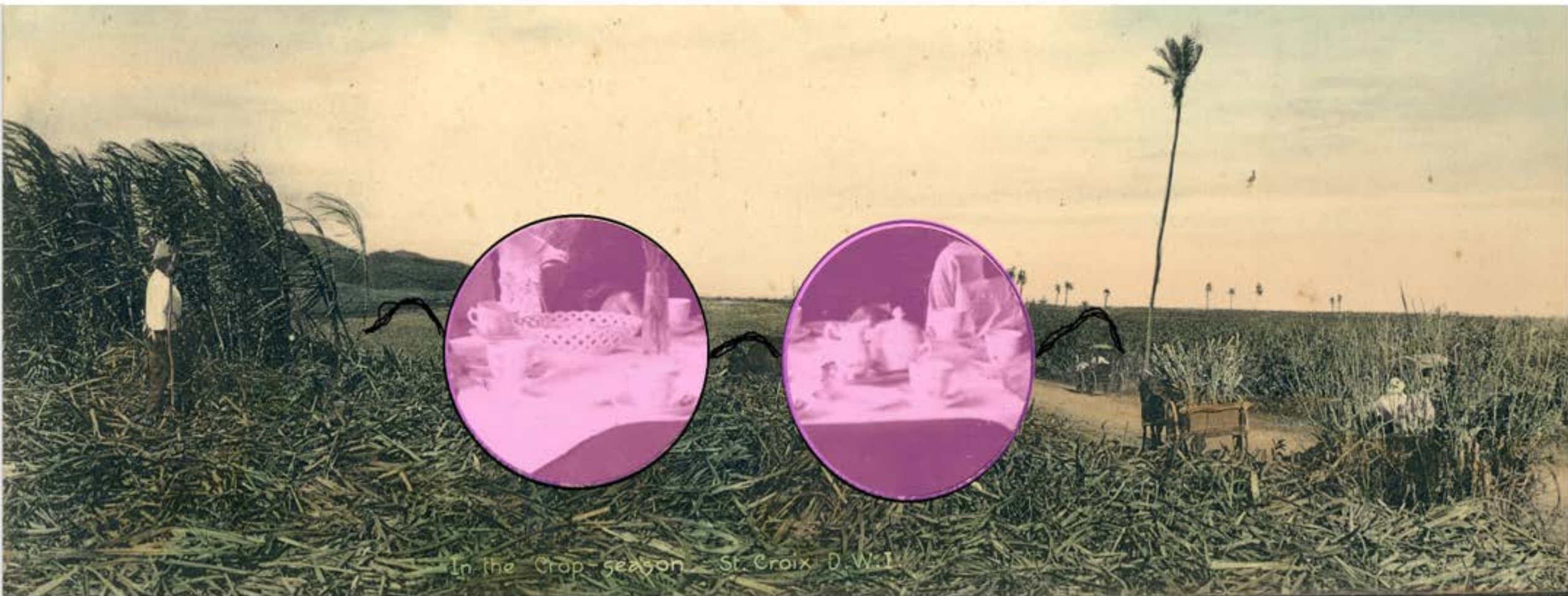
Hilestrom  
(Swedish)





In the Crop-season - St. Croix D.W.I.





In the Crop-season - St. Croix D.W.I.



