

Margot Højfors Hong, *Ölänningar över haven. Utvandring från Öland 1840–1930 – bakgrund; forløpp, effekter*. Studia Historica Upsaliensia 143. Uppsala – Almqvist & Wiksell – 1986. 276 s; S.kr. 165,-.

Ten years after the large emigration history project of the Uppsala University was officially closed with the publication of a final status report presenting the essence of most projects in shorter articles, and nine years after the last study by Holger Wester appeared, a late-comer suddenly turned up last year (1986) in the form of M. Højfors Hong's (MHH) study of emigration from Öland. The ten years of retrospection have not provoked any break with the cliometric paradigm of the older studies. We meet with the methods and theories developed under Sune Åkerman's dynamic leadership with some inspiration from American cliometrics and the French demography in the Annales tradition. That is certainly no disadvantage. Few quantitative studies have reached such methodological perfection – and MHH is no exception. But the question remains whether a more eclectic approach turning to the levels of individual emigrants and their responses to structural changes could not have benefited the work. We dive down to the parish level, but generally the study moves around at a rather high level of abstraction, mainly analyzing overall structural changes. MHH's remark that "what concerns the emotional reality (of emigration) the quantitative source material is uncommunicative" and then "basta" is quite typical of the attitude of the Uppsala historians to non-quantitative sources.

MHH's competently researched book consists of seven case studies, four of which deal with demographic conditions, including migration movements; one with the occupational structure; one with the transport sector; and the last and most original with the effects of emigration for Öland. First we are presented with the classical example of a rural society that could not absorb the surplus that arose with the demographical transition. The only significant alternative, carving the famous @land chalk stone, was originally part of the farming activities. Later some industrialization followed without any particularly positive effects for the occupational situation. Emigration was somewhat retarded in the northern part as more out-parcelling took place there than in the south. The maps of parish migration intensity, however, might seem to show an east-west division as well. Migrants from the west went to the mainland, those from the east first took up sailing, some migrated to Denmark and Germany, and from c.1870 left for the U.S. in great numbers. Typically they selected a few specific destinations in the U.S. coast states.

MHH has discovered the till now unknown archives of the Kalmar emigration agent, Fogelberg, whose emigrants had not been registered in the official records, though this was compulsory. It should be added here that among the main achievements of the book is the demonstration that 38% more than those registered in the "flyttningsregistre" (official records of moves in and out of parishes) actually emigrated. MHH has traced the origin of the contract takers, who were mainly "ölänningar" and persons from the neighboring parts of Kalmar Lan. This is hardly surprising information. It also seems evident that a local main agent (Fogelberg) was the most energetic advertiser among the agents in two local newspapers.

A simple display of age-pyramids is very illustrative of the stagnating effects that the migration of a large part of the young productive and reproductive ages caused. The pyramids develop into more cylinder-like figures; the birth rate declines, the death rate increases contrary to the general Swedish trend. A certain immigration from the mainland compensated the losses. A more positive effect was the remittances of money to Öland. Much more came back to Öland

than went abroad. What was the America-money used for? MHH suggests support for family members – sometimes to pay their tickets to America – money of returning emigrants, and just touches on the repayment of travel loans. I would imagine the last possibility quite important. Nothing would be sweeter to a self-made man than to pay off his debts, thereby demonstrating the progress he has accomplished. On the question whether returning emigrants had any influence on the technologization of agriculture, MHH is wisely cautious, but then also not very informative.

The last point is indicative of a tendency not to examine the questions in depth. This is a pity, because methods and design have been done meticulously. But let not such a weakness give the impression that this is not an important contribution to our understanding of the migration processes.

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