

## Enclosures and Agricultural growth in 19th century Sweden

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Enclosures implied processes of privatization of land held in common and used in collaboration by villagers, the redistribution and consolidation of open-field splintered ownership and the enclosing of the consolidated privately owned and individually used farm units. Mostly, older historiography took the importance of enclosures for the modernization of agriculture for granted: Enclosures let loose fettered entrepreneurship and paved the way for land clearance, the introduction of intensive crop-rotations, and more efficient land use. Lately these propositions have been scrutinized in several research projects and the conclusions have been mixed. This panel aims at discussing the relation between enclosure and agricultural growth. It shall deal with its role in the massive 19th century land clearance, but also more directly with its influence on productivity and growth. It recognizes the varied timing of enclosures – the process lingered on for a century – and how different categories of landowners and other agents acted to make use of the enclosure legislation of 1827, which – uniquely for Sweden – created options for any one single landowning villager to force the dissolution of village community and the creation of new land ownership and land management rules upon fellow landowners in the village.

### *Skifte och växelbruk i östra Mellansverige*

Maja Lundqvist, Uppsala University

Övergången till växelbruk är tillsammans med skifte kanske den faktor som både i engelsk och svensk litteratur främst lyfts fram som slutet på de traditionella odlingsystemen och med dem de praktiker och arbetssätt varmed man brukade jorden historiskt. Forskare har inte sällan kopplat samman dessa två och utgått från att med skifte följde en övergång till växelbruk, där den skånska utvecklingen ofta har fått stå som modell. Det har framstått som ett naturligt steg i den omvandlings- och moderniseringsprocess som redan påbörjats med skiftet.

Det har emellertid varit svårt att kartlägga övergången då få material utöver lantmäteriets kartmaterial erbjuder en inblick i odlingsystemen i stor skala på bynivå. Ändå har det genom tidigare forskning konstaterats att övergången till växelbruk, liksom skiftesprocessen, var både långdragen och oregelbunden i många regioner, inte minst i Uppsala län.

Syftet med denna text är att försöka få en bild av kopplingen mellan skifte och växelbruket i Uppsala län. Jag kommer utifrån detta syfte att undersöka huruvida ett större antal byar som antingen genomgick skifte tidigt (innan 1850) eller sent (efter 1865) har övergått till växelbruk under perioden 1879-1889. Frågor som skall diskuteras är om det var någon skillnad i övergången till växelbruk mellan de två grupperna av tidigt eller sent skiftade byar, samt om det är något som urskiljer de byar som övergått till växelbruk under dessa år i form av topografi, mantalsstorlek eller antal ägare.

*Enclosures and land productivity change. Evidence from East-central Sweden 1845-1865.*

Marja Erikson, Uppsala University  
Viktor Persarvet, Uppsala University  
Mats Morell, Uppsala University

This paper analyses the impact of enclosures on land productivity. It is presupposed, that land prices per farm unit of equitable size (öresland and/or mantal, reflect productivity. Higher prices on enclosed rather than not enclosed farms, are supposed to reflect a higher productivity of those enclosed. Part of the price increase is related to land clearance, i.e. intensification through the transformation of meadows to arable so that an örsland or 1 mantal of enclosed land simply holds more arable than non-enclosed land. We will have to consider, however, a rather large difference in the size of arable land per mantal and per öresland, and that this differential rises over time. Additionally, variation in soil quality has to be considered, Finally, parish level data reflecting changes in land use systems makes it possible to discuss the mechanisms whereby productivity might have changed due to enclosures. Data is fetched from ca 5000 land price notations found in the hundred court registers in Västmanland County and from on line registers showing which of the villages were enclosed and when. An econometric analysis relating price differentials with enclosures will be performed and we will work with several time lags between the fulfilling of enclosure acts and the dating of the price formation in each particular case.

*Agricultural Production in Uppsala and Västmanland Counties circa 1770-1920*

Mats Morell, Uppsala University  
Marja Erikson, Uppsala University

This paper presents results from a project exploring the development of agricultural production in the Uppsala and Västmanland counties during the era comprising “the agricultural revolution”. Using land survey material (all enclosure acts from storskifte, enskifte and laga skifte up to 1890), primary material for agricultural statistics, descriptions to the economic maps, contemporary topographic literature, probate inventories and earlier studies based foremost on probate inventories, we estimate the growth of arable land, the growth of the sown land, the acreage of land used for different crops and the output from arable and meadow land including the output of animal products. Finally, we explore the evolution from two-field agriculture into modern crop rotations.

The results point at an acceleration in land clearance from around 1810-20, reaching top growth levels of arable land around 1850-1870. Up to the mid 19th century, growth of field products primarily concerned cereals and potatoes for human consumption. From the mid-19th century there is an evident strong transfer in land use towards fodder production.

Whether measured in calories or in fixed prices (using a newly constructed agricultural product price index) there was a standstill from the around 1770 to circa 1810. From then on, growth was slightly above 1 per cent per annum. The share of total production stemming from animal products fell until the mid-19th century but grew from then on.

Growth is explained by intensification and change of land use, and thus increased land productivity. Although the agricultural population remained almost the same, intensification

and concentration on purely agricultural work tasks may have implied that labor inputs grew. The influence of enclosure, technology and market conditions is discussed.

*Did enclosures boost agricultural production? A comparative discussion on the Swedish, Danish and English reforms*

Lars Nyström, University of Gothenburg

England, Sweden and Denmark all passed through radical enclosure reforms in the 18th and 19th century. Traditionally these reforms have been identified as path breakers for modernization, agricultural improvements and economic growth. Lately this interpretation has been challenged by findings indicating that the gains from the reforms were often rather small. This paper argues that the outcome of enclosure reforms was highly depended on the institutional framework. In Sweden enclosures were easily achieved: one landowner could in fact enforce a reform against the will of all the neighbors. In this way enclosures that were not yet generally considered economically viable were stimulated. In contrast the English institutional framework ensured that the landed interest came out as winners – the question here is whether the gains came from increased production or from a social redistribution of the agrarian income. In Denmark enclosures possibly boosted production; but an equally important factor behind their rapid advance was that the reform was almost imposed by the state on large land owners as a way to retain some control over land and rents during the emancipative landbo-reform movement.

*Forests and enclosures: the case of Gamla Norberg*

Hedvig Widmalm, Uppsala University

This paper focuses on the role forests played in the Swedish enclosure reforms of the early- to mid-19th century. It is a part of the project “Institutional change and rural economic growth. Enclosures, land prices and population growth 1810-1880.” For this project, data has been collected showing how prices of land in the province of Västmanland changed during a period when enclosure legislation was implemented. One goal with this is to examine whether the enclosures affected the price of land. If they did and the prices rose, this could show that the enclosures were a rational investment, an institutional reform that made agriculture more efficient, made the soil yield more and become more valuable. As of yet, the result of this investigation is inconclusive. The prices might have risen in the longer run, but the question is why farmers invested in implementing costly reforms when the economic effects would only be apparent decades later.

As a way of tackling this question, I look closer at one of the districts within the region, Gamla Norberg. Gamla Norberg is a part of Bergslagen, an old conglomeration of mines and metal works in western Mid-Sweden. Because of this, many landowners in the area worked with mining and smelting, keeping smelting huts on their own plots of land. Access to wood had always been crucial as source for charcoal fuel in this metal production, from fire setting in the mines to smelting and refining metals. For this reason, forests in Bergslagen had to be carefully managed so as not to be over-exploited. In the records of land sales for Gamla Norberg, access to forests is often mentioned along with the size of the land. On maps of Gamla Norberg from

the early 18th century, the surrounding woods are divided up in a particular system of enclosures, and the local Mine inspectors' records on forest management reveal how the forests were owned and divided up by villages of the region. When enclosure legislation began to be implemented in the 1820s, the reforms effects on access and ownership of forests became a source of contention in Gamla Norberg. Through studying these conflicts of ownership, this paper aims to show how the specific social and geographical conditions of this region affected the implementation of enclosure legislation in the 19th century.