

Tomas Nilson, *Framgång och vår herre. Industriellt företagande, social struktur och karriärmönster i två svenska städer: Borås och Örebro 1890-1920*, Avhandlingar från Historiska institutionen i Göteborg 41 (Göteborg 2004). 321 pages. Written in Swedish with an English summary (Success and our Lord. Industrial entrepreneurship, social structure and Career Patterns in two Swedish towns: Borås and Örebro 1890-1920). ISBN 91-88614-51-4; ISSN 1100-6781.

During the defining period of industrialization in Sweden, 1890-1920, two groups of Swedish entrepreneurs active in Borås and Örebro constitute the objects of study in this thesis. The focus is a comparison on the social structure and life styles of these entrepreneurial groups, as well as their career patterns and the economic hierarchies in the groups.

Two hypotheses were put forward in this thesis – the first one that Borås was essentially “a closed society” concerning recruitment and careers – the second one was that Örebro represented an essentially “open society”.

The social structure in each entrepreneurial group – seen primarily in terms of geographic and social origin, marital patterns, and levels of education – showed both similarities and differences along the lines of these two hypotheses.

The study also tested which variables influenced the economic strata among the entrepreneurs. Certain variables seemed to cause few fluctuations while others – such as social origins, growing up in an entrepreneurial environment, having a father-in-law who was or had been an entrepreneur or upward social mobility through marriage – showed results that indicate that they evidently did exert palpable influence.

Not surprisingly, those entrepreneurs who had an entrepreneurial legacy had a greater chance to attain a higher level of economic success.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from a comparative perspective is that recruitment and career opportunities vary by region and that this is to a large extent dependent on historical circumstances.

**KEYWORDS:** entrepreneurs, social structure, social mobility, career patterns, industrialism, economic success, business history, life style