

English abstract

Miettinen, Riikka & Viitaniemi, Ella (eds), *Reunamailla. Tilattomat Länsi-Suomen maaseudulla 1600–1800*, Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, Historiallisia tutkimuksia 278.

(Title in English: On the Fringes: The Landless in Rural Western Finland, 1600–1800)

This anthology discusses the significance, activities, and position of the landless in early modern (ca. 1600–1800) rural western Finland, a group that formed a significant proportion of the population. The ‘landless’ are defined here as those who had neither the right to possess land nor the rights and obligations of peasant freeholders; also, they lacked clear membership of such a taxed estate unit (*hemman*). The book covers four major themes: the significance and position of the landless as a workforce, the early modern categorization of the diverse landless population, access to land in practice, and social mobility and landlessness as a situation in one’s life course. The chapters present the various groups and sub-groups of the landless and semi-landless, including the administrative and institutional frameworks and basic information, like numbers and position in the society and local social hierarchies.

In addition to outlining earlier scholarship on the topic, the introduction presents the definitions, context, and development of the

landless population in early modern rural western Finland as a part of the Swedish Kingdom.

The first section focuses on the 'core' of the landless in the countryside. Jorma Wilmi discusses the numbers and significance of rural farmhands and maids, as well as the opportunities such people had for social mobility through marriage in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Merja Uotila explores the position and social hierarchy of rural artisans. In his chapter, Heikki Vuorimies writes about the agency and subsidiary trades of soldiers residing in the eighteenth-century countryside. In turn, Sofia Gustafsson examines the versatile agency and sources of livelihood of soldiers' wives and widows.

The second section focuses on the landless at the bottom of the local hierarchies. Riikka Miettinen examines the categorization, classification, and activities of *inhyses*, a mixed group of landless labourers and dependants. Panu Pulma focuses on vagrancy in the eighteenth century, while Riikka Miettinen's second chapter concerns the disabled and their conditions and categorizations in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The third section focuses on the opportunities available for land use and farming. Petri Talvitie discusses the effects of the Great Partition on the landless, and the use of land and common resources by such people, while Ella Viitaniemi examines the role of crofters and other tenants during the rise of utilitarian thinking in the economic and agricultural politics of the eighteenth century.

The fourth and final section of the book focuses on social mobility. Ella Viitaniemi's second chapter considers the survival and strategies of the lower-ranking clergy and their families in the late eighteenth-century countryside. Tiina Miettinen follows the life courses and downward social mobility of children born out of wedlock and in hierarchically mismatched relationships in Tavastia at the end of the eighteenth century. Similarly, Ulla Koskinen focuses on downward social mobility, in particular on the role of aggression in losing land rights among the local peasant elites in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Satakunta.