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RETOURMIGRATIE IN EEN PLATTELANDS SAMENLEVING TIJDENS DE INDUSTRIËLE REVOLUTIE

Het land van Herve (België) 1846-1900¹

Return-Migrations in a Rural Society during the Industrial Revolution. The Pays de Herve (Belgium) 1846-1900

The aim of this article is to understand return migrants in the Pays de Herve. The first result was unexpected: farmers were least likely to return. A second important result emerges from the multivariate analysis: family ties represent the most important explanatory variable of return-migrations. In other words, the larger the household they left, the greater the number of potential relatives living in the village, the greater the chances for the out-migrants to return. The same was true if they left their parents in the village, i.e., if they had the opportunity to find them again upon their return. In other words, return-migrants had important family ties. Third, a medium-term analysis showed that the stability of the return-migrants was relative. Only the youngest, those who returned to the village before age of 15, had a real chance to remain in the locality.