News and progress

Elin Súsanna Jacobsen

Rúsdrekka – siðir og ósiðir

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Rúsdrekka – siðir og ósiðir er ein lýsing av, hvønn týdning rúsdrekka hevur havt í Føroyum í mentanarligum, samfelagsligum og handilsligum høpi, serliga síðan miðju 19. øld og fram til okkara tíð.

Heimildartilfarið er løgtingstíðindi, bløð, tíðarrit, hagtøl, skjøl og innsavningartilfar um føroyska fólkamentan; úrslit av skipaðum kanningum um rúsdrekkanýtslu. Rúsdrekkasiðir eru harumframt lýstir út frá siðsøguligum tilfari, fagurbókmentum og samrøðum við uml. 30 fólk í ymsum aldri.

Greitt er frá fyrimyndum og valmøguleikum, ið føroyingar hava havt, tá ið lóggevast skuldi um rúsdrekkasølu, heruppií tí luti, sum ymsir fráhaldsfelagsskapir hava havt í rúsdrekkapolitikki.

Heildarnýtslan av rúsdrekka í Føroyum tykist hava gingið upp og niður: Eftir rættiliga bráðan vøkstur um miðju 19. øld vísa atkomilig hagtøl minking fyri og eftir aldarskiftið, og síðan var heildarnýtslan eftir innflutningstølum at døma rættiliga óbroytt heilt fram til 1960árini, tá ið hon aftur fór at vaksa.

Flestu heimildir eru samdar um, at fyrr í hesi øldini var »góðtikin« rúsdrekkanýtsla

The aim of this reatise is to examine and describe the part played by alcohol in Faroese society, especially from the middle of the 19th century to the present day.

The study is based on written sources, in which the public debate figures, statistics etc. as well as literature describing Faroese traditional life, supplemented by some 30 interviews. The collection of material was based on the principle that there is interaction between possibilities and limitations set by variations in the market supplies, measures to regulate consumption, ideological trends and living conditions, and that these factors influence habits, standards and attitudes to alcohol, and can thus be seen as a cultural process.

In the previous century, an increasing and excessive consumption of alcohol was seen as a widespread problem, calling for measures to regulate the sales of alcohol, voiced especially by the temperance societies. The outcome of a prolonged debate was an act according to which all local trade of alcohol was dependent on the support of 25% of all men and women aged over 25 in the district. The result of a

meira tíðarbundin enn nøgdarbundin: rúsdrekka var avmarkað til vertskap, høgtíðir og siðbundin gildi, sum fylgdu arbeiðsárinum í búnaðarsamfelagnum.

Tað er framvegis sjálvsfatan føroyinga, at teir drekka sjáldan, men nógv í senn. Alla hesa øldini hevur verið ført fram, at lógarbannið fyri rúsdrekkahandli í Føroyum hevur elvt til hetta drykkjumynstur, sum tó eisini tykist at hava verið galdandi í eldri tíðum. – Umframt tað hava vit í Føroyum havt upp á seg nógv fráhaldsfólk, men hesin partur hevur verið minkandi tey seinastu ártíggjuni.

Gongdin tey seinastu árini hevur verið, at drykkju- og vertskapssiðir líkjast meira teimum í grannalondunum enn tí, sum var vanligt fyrr í hesi øldini. Hetta skiftið fellur saman við skiftinum til ídnaðarsamfelag og tí harav fylgjandi spjaðingini í arbeiðsbýti og kunnleikakrøvum. – Høvini at drekka eru vorðin fleiri og margfaldari, úrvalið av drekkasløgum størri, og harvið møguleikarnir at nýta sínar drykkjuvanar sum symbol fyri lívsstíl og samleika. Á tann hátt endurspegla rúsdrekkasiðirnir økt fjølbroytni í lívsumstøðum og lívslag.

plebescite in November 1907 showed that in no island there was sufficient support to permit the sale or serving of alcohol, and right up to 1992 this main principle of prohibiting any local trade with alcohol has been valid i Faroese legislation.

The increase in alcohol consumption, which seems to have peaked in the 1860s, was followed by a marked decrease, especially around the turn of the century. Import statistics show that the mean consumption has been stable and relatively low in the Faroe Islands from the beginning of this century and right up to the 1960s.

Both written and oral sources agree that in the old times the consumption of alcohol was confined to a few annual celebrations. Although after the turn of the century agriculture had lost its importance as the main industry and was replaced by deep-sea fishing, there was no change in the annunal cycle of festivities and the rythm of (heavy) drinking.

Since the Second World War the Faroese society has experienced great changes towards industrialisation and modernisation. The rate at which modernisation affects society varies, even in a small society like that of the Faroe Islands. In recent times we have witnessed an increased division of labour and hence the need for a wider range of qualifications.

Differentiation of economic circumstances and ways of life are reflected in differentiation in drinking habits, which may be viewed as personal markers of identity. Since the 1960s the import figures have shown a continuous incease in the average consumption of alcohol, and the variation

in Faroese drinking habits is considerably greater than it appears to have been before and immediately after the Second World War. A better understanding of standards and attitudes to alcohol is obtained by setting them in a wider context of changing economic, social and cultural conditions in the period under review.

August G. Wang

Suicidal behaviour in a low-incidence population.
A Study of the Faroe Islanders

Doktararitgerð frá Psykiatrisku deild, Odense Universitetshospitali og Psykiatrisku deild, Landssjúkrahúsinum, Tórshavn. Doctoral Dissertion from Department of Psychiatry, Odense University Hospital , Denmark and Dep. of Psychiatry, General Hospital, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands.

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Í sekstiárunum var eins og ein bylgja av sjálvmorðsatferð í vesturheiminum. Bæði sjálvmorðsroyndir og sjálvmorð øktust í tali. Henda bylgjan helt á til fram í áttatiárini, er síðan linkað nakað. Flestu kanningar av hesum fyribrigdi eru gjørdar í stórum býarøkjum í útheiminum og serliga har slík atferð hevur verið meira vanlig.

Føroyar hava verið roknaðar sum eitt lágsjálvmorðsøki. Tó hava granskaðar gjørt vart við, at fleiri sjálvmorð vóru í sjeytiárunum, soleiðis at hendan vesturlendska bylgjan kanska var komin higar.

Ritgerðin snýr seg bæði um sjálvmorðsroyndir og sjálvmorð umframt at onnur hugtøk, so sum euthanasi (samkennsludráp) verða umrødd. Søguligt yvirlit um sjálvmorðsatferð í vesturheiminum, norðanlondum og Føroyum er inngangur til kanningarnar. Sjálvar kanningarnar eru ætlaðar at lýsa slíka atferð í eini broyting-

From the sixties a wave of suicidal behaviour was recognized in the western world.Both suicide and attempted suicide was increasing.Most studies of this phenomena have been performed in cities.

Faroe Islands are a group of islands in North Atlantic with only 45.000 inhabitants. The islands have been considered a low-incidence area on suicidal behaviour.Hovewer, in the seventies, the suicidal wave seemed to have reached this outpost of european culture.

The present study comrises both suicide an attempted suicide and the aim is to elucidate suicidal behaviour on the islands as such in a period of increase both also to add to our knowledge about suicidal behaviour in general.

Attempted suicide has been studied 1960-82 and for this form of sucidal be-

artíð, men samstundis at ríka sjálvmorðsgranskingina sum heild við tilfari úr Føroyum sum eitt lágsjálvmorðsøki.

Sjálvmorðsroyndir eru kannaðar 1960-82 og síðan eisini gjørd eftirkanning eftir sjálvmorðsroyndir 1960-84.
Sjálvmorð eru kannaði 1945-1982.
Í øllum førum er fyrst umfatandi umrøða av kanningarhættum og teirra dygd.

Úrslitini vísa, at Føroyar hava verið eitt lágsjálvmorðsøki í mong ár. Hinvegin, at í 1970-unum er ein vøkstur í talinum av árligum sjálvmorðsroyndum og sjálvmorðum, og at gongdin í báðum førum er eins, meðan hesir báðir tættir innan sjálvmorðsatferð eru rættuliga ymiskir í eyðkennum annars. So gott sum øll eyðkenni, sum eru funnin í Europa annars, ganga aftur í Føroyum, og sannast má, at tá ein finnur hesi eyðkenni enntá í útjaðaranum á Europu, má hugsast, at hetta eru rættuliga ítøkilig og grundleggjandi eyðkenni fyri slíka atferð.

Títtleikin- incidensurin – er í Føroyum, eisini eftir vøksturin í 1970-unum, lágur. Fyri sjálvmorðsroyndir um 40 árliga fyri hvørjar 100.000 íbúgvar. Og fyri sjálvmorð um 7 árliga fyri hvørjar 100.000 íbúgvar. Eisini er áhugavert, at afturfall til sjálvmorðsatferð eftir sjálvmorðsroynd er so sjáldsamt og hjá teimum flestu bert innan fyri 3-4 ár.

Úrslitini kunnu vera ein partur av lýsing av sjálvmorðsatferð í Europu sum heild og nýtast til tilvísing sum eitt lágsjálvmorðsøki.

Eisini verður tikið við tað neyðuga í at viðurkenna hesi viðurskifti og her heima at seta tiltøk í verk samfelagsliga og viðgerðarliga, sum kunnu verða fyribyrgjandi.

haviour a follow-up study has been performed.
Suicide has been studied 1945-82.
For all parts of the study, there are extensive discussions about the methods employed and there validity.

The results indicate, that the Faroes have indeed been a low-incidence area for many years. Hovewer, in the seventies, there is an increase in both attempted suicide and suicide. The increase is paralell, but otherwise caractheristics for these forms of suicidal behaviour are rather different. Same characteristics, that have been observed in Europe, are by and large found on the Faroes. To find such collective characteristics in this fringe of Europe can indicate, that they must bee considered rather robust parts of these forms of behaviour.

Incidence is, even after some increase, rather low on the Faroes. Attempted suicide about 4o pr.100.000 pr.year and suicide about 7 pr. 100.000 pr. year. Interesting is the obeservation, that relapse behaviour for attempted suicide also is on a low level and for the majority lasting mostly about 3-4 years.

Results from these studies can serve as indications about basal parts of European suicidal behaviour and as such as a reference study for studies in high-incidence areas.

It is concluded, that recognition of these forms of behaviour is necessary. Some preventive measures are needed on a sociological level as well as on clinical level.