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Introductory remarks to paper presented 3 December 2010 at Yale

The paper you will read is the first one I have written within my new project on state administration and gendered strategies of survival in early modern Sweden. Based on preliminary studies of manuscript sources and on previous research, the paper identifies the ways in which wife, children and servants *could*, theoretically, contribute to the household economy (or marital economy) of lower civil servants in early modern Sweden. Thus, the paper does not provide huge statistical evidence (something early modernists rarely have at their disposal) but instead attempts to chisel out questions that can be answered and methods that may provide answers. In the introductory quotation from Weber, the most important sentence is the last one, pointing out that what is today thought of as 'rational bureaucracy' is the result of a protracted historical process. I am interested in whether and how this process affected gender relations.

Women could, in principle, be lower civil servants with letters of attorney of their own; there are at least some examples of this from seventeenth-century Sweden. Women could also 'inherit' the position as civil servant from their husbands; in these cases, the women might never have been appointed in the first place but the state accepted that they remained on duty until someone else (like a son) was available. As wives, finally, women could take part in the work of their husbands (the civil servants proper); this was probably the most common case but also the one about which we know least. Consequently, my paper is almost entirely devoted to this case.

This project forms part of a much larger research project called 'Gender and Work in early modern Sweden,' funded by the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, and headed by me. In this larger project, we (approximately ten scholars) try to cover not everything but major sectors of early modern society with a view to understanding *how* men and women supported themselves. We are also interested in *why* strategies of survival differed according to sex (which they did) and what *the effects* of these differences were, both with respect to people's living conditions and with respect to how society as a whole functioned (see last paragraph of the paper). We plan to write a joint volume, or possibly two, summarizing our results around 2014; in addition, each scholar will write articles and monographs presenting the results of his/her respective project.

Managing the junctions

State administration and gendered strategies of survival in early modern Sweden

Maria Ågren

Die moderne Behördenorganisation trennt grundsätzlich das Büro von der Privatbehausung. Denn sie scheidet überhaupt die Amtstätigkeit als gesonderten Bezirk von der privaten Lebenssphäre, die amtlichen Gelder und Mittel von dem Privatbesitz des Beamten. Dies ist ein Zustand, der überall erst Produkt einer langen Entwicklung ist.

Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* chapter IX

The problem

In early modern Europe, central states grew more muscular and market relations became ubiquitous. These two processes – state-building and commercialization – constitute the backdrops of most research into this period, and this study is no different. My focus, however, is neither on state-building nor on commercialization but rather on the consequences of state-building for people's ways of supporting themselves and for the gender division of labor in lower civil servant households.

We know that the expanding central states created many new job opportunities. Armies and navies were set up, ships built, castles and fortresses erected, existing roads improved, postal services constructed, and tax administration expanded. Clearly, this created a demand for soldiers, shipwrights, brick-layers, postmasters and bailiffs – to take but a few examples from the early modern Swedish state sector. Commerce also created new occupations: bankers, brokers, specialized tradesmen, and legal professionals. In Sweden, the iron industry and trade were particularly conspicuous in this respect.

Who were able to avail themselves of these new job opportunities? In England, they seem to have been more or less monopolized by "middling" men, who managed "the junctions between manufacturing, marketing, finance, long-distance transport, law and government, and civic and commercial activism."¹ By contrast, Margaret Hunt argues,

¹ Hunt 1996 p. 131

women were conspicuously unsuccessful in establishing themselves as managers of the new junctions. There were not many women financial brokers and probably even fewer women civil servants (if any). Women's work seems to have remained as it had been since the middle ages. Much of it was unpaid and took place inside the household. Remunerated work outside the household was mainly confined to nursing, domestic service, textile production, and preparing and selling of food and drink,² none of which was particularly well-paid or prestigious. While this remained the case for women, many men obviously benefitted from the new opportunities that presented themselves. One indicator of this process is the low number of female occupational titles that we find in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources. In England, there were approximately ten times more male occupational titles,³ suggesting a higher degree of specialization and, probably, that men had access to resources and channels of influence that made them more likely to benefit from the fact that there were now other ways of supporting oneself than just being a peasant. There is no reason to think that the situation was radically different in a country like Sweden.⁴

It is probably not an entirely futile endeavor to look for women civil servants in the early modern sources, particularly not if we have lower civil servants in mind. There are odd examples of women working as, for instance, customs accountants,⁵ and some studies suggesting that Swedish women could act as *de facto* civil servants after the death of their husbands.⁶ However, it may be even more important and rewarding to take a comprehensive view of the civil servant household and to ask what the division of labor looked like in such a household. How did men's access to new sources of income affect the marital economy?⁷ Was it perhaps the case that state-building transformed the way

² Hunt 1996 p. 129. See also Bennett 1988 for the observation that the history of women's work is a history "that stands still."

³ Hunt 1996 p. 130

⁴ In a small sample, I found that male occupational titles were more common than female ones in Sweden. Occupational titles were also much more common in urban than in rural areas, and they probably became more common in the eighteenth than in the seventeenth century.

⁵ Karonen 1995

⁶ Lundgren 1987

⁷ By "marital economy" I refer to the ways in which marital and economic relations were (and are) intertwined. The concept purports to show that economic life is gendered and that, historically, a married couple has formed the core of the basic economic unit, the household. See Erickson, "Introduction" in Ågren & Erickson 2005

some households functioned? What roles were assigned to wives, children, and servants in this context? How long did this process take?

Research on civil servants has been heavily influenced by the writings of Max Weber and his discussion about the defining characteristics of modern rational bureaucracy. In a rational bureaucracy, according to Weber, the civil servant works full time and has well-defined tasks clearly distinguishable from those of other civil servants. Furthermore, his job presupposes theoretical education and is predicated on the use of written documents. There is a clear hierarchy within the bureaucracy, and decision-making is based on general rules. For a bureaucracy of this type to work, it is clear that sufficient remuneration for civil servants' work is vital – otherwise, they cannot apply themselves full-time and wholeheartedly to their jobs – , as are old-age pensions – otherwise, civil servants will be tempted to sell their positions to someone younger, of whose skills the employer may know nothing.⁸

Weber's influence is unsurprising since a bureaucracy consists of people, and to the extent that we are talking about a state bureaucracy these people will of course be the civil servants. It is more surprising that so little research seems to have adopted a household perspective when discussing pre-modern bureaucracy.⁹ For instance, the phenomenon of inadequate salaries has often been linked to corruption. The argument is that a civil servant with insufficient salary (or dilatory payouts) will be tempted to accept bribes to survive. Alternatively, insufficient salaries have been regarded as the cause of low efficiency.¹⁰ The state could not count on the civil servants' full time, since their salaries were so low, but had to accept that they had various by-employments. But one could also ask whether insufficient salaries and dilatory payouts made the economic contributions of the wife and the rest of the household particularly vital. This question has not been given the attention it merits. Of course, one alternative need not exclude the other. It is possible that insufficient salaries tempted civil servants to take bribes, *and* caused them to look for by-employment, *and* made the work of the rest of the household

⁸ Weber 1922.

⁹ Frohnert studied marriage alliances among lower civil servants in a highly commendable way. He did not, however, problematize the role and economic contributions of wives. Frohnert 1993 chapter 3.

¹⁰ Maria Cavallin has shown that eighteenth-century peasants used this argument (low salaries causing corruption) in the political debates. She also mentions how the state had to accept absence from work because of the patently inadequate salaries of the civil servants in Stockholm. Cavallin 2003 p. 96, 109ff.

particularly important. My point is that we do not really know to what extent the last alternative was used.

It is clear from Weber's writings that he regarded modern bureaucracy as the product of a protracted historical process. As the opening quotation suggests, Weber realized that state administration has not always been clearly separated from the private sphere of civil servants, and that a strict demarcation line has not always been maintained between the exchequer's means and the civil servants' own means. Thus, Weber himself suggested that in a study of early modern civil servants a household perspective should be highly pertinent. An interesting question within such a study should be whether it was just the civil servants' own means that were often confounded with those of the state, or if the means of *their wives* were also drawn into this complex intermarriage of public and private. Another question is to what extent and under what forms wives, children and servants contributed to the civil servant household through their work.

Before addressing these particular questions more fully, I want to elaborate on the economically and socially ambiguous position of lower civil servants in early modern Sweden.

Lower civil servants were situated between the nobility and the peasantry, and, as already pointed out they formed part of the emerging middle class. Higher civil servants, by contrast, were members of the nobility or even the aristocracy. When regular civil servant positions were first introduced (in the late sixteenth century) it was the prerogative of the aristocracy to hold such positions,¹¹ and this remained the case throughout the early modern period, even though the prerogative was fiercely contested at times.¹²

It is important to keep the "noble origin" of civil service in mind. First, it probably explains why civil servants were expected to have a capital of their own and to be willing to advance money to their employer (the state) when necessary. The literature on civil servants is full of examples showing how from the very beginning the road to civil service was paved with generous credits to the state. When the latter proved unable to repay in cash, it had to resort instead to giving landed estates, positions in the civil

¹¹ Norrhem 1993 152f.

¹² Söderberg 1956 p. 125.

service and noble status to its creditors.¹³ As we shall see, lower civil servants from a more humble background would often find this expectation (to be the employer's small-scale bank) a great nuisance. Indeed, difficulties in being properly reimbursed and in having one's salary paid on time were the realities for many lower civil servants. The alleged remorselessness of sixteenth-century bailiffs has been explained in the light of inadequate or belated remuneration for their work. Since the bailiff was personally responsible to the king for delivering the taxes on time, he could not run the risk of having too little in his pocket on the day of reckoning. Consequently, bailiffs extracted everything they could from peasants with a view to being able to pay the king even in years of failed harvests.¹⁴ Thus, the expectation to be able to pay, no matter what the circumstances were, affected not only the civil servants but their taxpayers too.

Second, the noble background of civil service may explain the social ambitions of many civil servants. In other words, even if he did not belong to the nobility in the first place, joining the civil service could be one way of becoming a nobleman or, at least, to improve his income and social status. The literature on civil servants often stresses their interest in distinguishing themselves (in dress, in manner of speech) from "simple people",¹⁵ and Weber strongly emphasized the social esteem that comes with civil service. Studies by Sten Carlsson shows that it was common for noblewomen to marry "downwards" in the eighteenth century, and this often meant marrying a non-noble civil servant.¹⁶

As we shall see, many lower civil servants were so "low" that marrying a woman of noble origin must have been totally unimaginable. For instance, the town executioners were, strictly speaking, lower civil servants. But those who worked closer to the country governor could aspire to such a marriage. Their interest in distinguishing themselves from "simple people" – such as the peasantry – may therefore have involved gender ideals that differed from those of the majority in society. It may, for instance, have affected how they looked upon women's work, both inside and outside the household. If

¹³ Munthe 1941; Söderberg 1956 p. 72, 97; Norrhem 1993 p. 58, 63, 188; Frohnert 1993 p. 76f, 174, 197. See also ongoing work on women's claims to keep land donated by the state in the seventeenth century by Cristina Prytz, Uppsala university.

¹⁴ Hallenberg 2001

¹⁵ See for instance Villstrand 2009 p. 84, 90.

¹⁶ Carlsson 1973 Table 40.

the wife was born and bred a noblewoman, although perhaps not a very wealthy one, it probably affected what she, her relatives and her husband thought it appropriate for her to do. On the other hand, if the household economy was under pressure, would not this undermine ideals?

The local scene

We now move on to look at a group of lower civil servants in greater detail. The time is the late 1750s and the location the town of Örebro in the middle of Sweden, where many roads and waterways met to link the mining producing area north of Örebro to the ports in Stockholm and Gothenburg. I shall focus on lower civil servants in Örebro in this paper. This means excluding top civil servants within the regional civil administration (the county governors), the regional military administration (the generals) and the diocesan administration (the bishops). These belonged to the national elite and we already know a great deal about them. It also means excluding Stockholm with the central government institutions, the courts of appeal, and all the lower civil servants who were employed there.

On the other hand, I have included some who were employed in the town administration (the mayor, the town clerk, the town secretary, etc) since there were no clear boundaries between them and state-employed civil servants.¹⁷ I have also included people who had another main occupation (like peasants/farmers/burgers) but who performed certain salaried tasks for the town or the state,¹⁸ people who rented state or town offices, etc. The man who acted as "measurer" (Sw. *mätare*) in Örebro provides a good example in this context. Around 1760, his name was Gabriel Broman and he rented his office from the town, to which he was also bound by oath. In return for the rent, he

¹⁷ The mobility seems to have been high within this group which means that a person employed by a city/town one year could be employed by the state the next year. (An example of this was Aron Bergström who was employed as town clerk in Örebro in the early 1760s, and who later became bailiff in a district not far from Örebro.) Moreover, the central state interfered with appointments on the local level, for instance when it came to the mayors. (See Söderberg 1956 p. 118 on the introduction of "royal mayors"). Therefore, it seems less fruitful to insist on employment by the state as a defining characteristic. Instead, we should look upon these people as a new social group that took advantage of the fact that there was a demand for them.

¹⁸ A case in point would be the rural *länsmän* and *fjärdingsmän*. The former were increasingly identified as representatives of the state rather than peasants (definitely so after 1726) while the latter continued to be looked upon as peasants. Asker 2004 p. 144.

was allowed to charge a fee from everybody who needed to have their goods weighed or measured. A common characteristic of most of these men (who are listed in Table 1) was that they belonged to the untitled gentry (Sw. *ofrälse ståndsperson*) and/or to the middling sort.

State civil servants working on the regional level ranged from the governor's two closest men, the *landskamrer* (head clerk with financial responsibility) and the *landssekreterare* (in charge of all correspondence), down to the executioner. The two former were on a career track and probably aspired to some wealth and status (although perhaps not to nobility).¹⁹ They were also key figures in the region, linking information and resources from the region to the capital and in the other direction as well. Arguably, they were particularly important for the legitimacy of the state. In the seventeenth century, when the regional administrative bodies were set up headed by county governors, the king obliged the governors frequently to travel through their regions in order to hear complaints. In the eighteenth century, however, the governors travelled much less; instead, the subjects visited the office of the regional administration.²⁰ Here, they would probably not meet the governor himself but, more likely, the *landskamrer*, the *landssekreterare* and the other civil servants. The fact that these men lived in town from the end of the seventeenth century (something which had not always been the previously)²¹ was probably also conducive to trust and, as a consequence, to smooth relations between the state and its subjects.

The head clerk in Örebro had a stipulated income of 500 silver *daler* a year in the 1760s, to be compared with the executioner who earned merely 36 silver *daler* annually (but who received extra payment for every execution on a piece-rate basis).²² The common denominator of these two men was simply that they were both employed by the state and that, as a consequence, their salaries were itemized in the state budget for the region in question (Sw. *lön på stat*). This should have given them, and others who were in the same position, a certain degree of economic security. Moreover, the civil servants

¹⁹ Asker 2004 pp. 348-354 shows that clerks earned more than secretaries and that they were appointed by the Kammarkollegium (the exchequer) to which they were also directly responsible.

²⁰ Asker 2004 p. 344f; Asker 2007 p. 106f; Sörndal 1937 p. 67.

²¹ Asker 2004 p. 178f.

²² Örebro läns landskontor, E XII a: 1, Nerike och Wärmelands Höfdingedömes Ordinarie Stat för 1761 och följande år. ULA. Salaries for clerks and secretaries could vary from region to region. Asker 2004 p. 353.

within the regional administration received their salaries in kind, unlike their colleagues in Stockholm who received their salaries in cash and who were hard hit in times of inflation.²³

However, even those who did have their salaries itemized in the budget and who received their payment in kind could be hit by dilatory payouts. They only received their salaries on time (four times a year) if there was enough money in the state's coffers. Since there were always some taxpayers who were in arrears, the state was often unable to pay all its creditors, some of whom were its own employees. Therefore, even civil servants in the strict sense of the word would sometimes have to wait to be paid. In Örebro *län* in the eighteenth century, the ambition was clearly to avoid delayed payments of salaries, but it could not be avoided completely. Thus, *bergmästare* Bratt received his salary for the second quarter of 1744 in 1759, having waited, apparently, for fifteen years.

It has not been possible to ascertain, so far, how much a person like Gabriel Broman paid the town and how much he would normally receive. He did, however, lodge complaints with the magistrate on account of some people who did not know that they were supposed to pay him for having their goods weighed.²⁴ It would appear, then, that lower civil servants both in the strict and in the broader sense of the word were fairly similar in that their incomes were somewhat precarious. Once again, this makes the question about the contributions of their household members highly pertinent.

Five features of civil service

Studies of early modern households in general are often marred by the fact that the sources seldom tell us very much about the contributions of subordinated household members. This is a major reason for why we have insufficient knowledge about how women, children and servants contributed to the marital economy. The larger research programme,²⁵ of which this study forms part, sets out to overcome these difficulties. One strategy is to collect large amounts of information on people's time-use and to store the data in a way that allows for aggregation and data-sharing. Another strategy is to take the gender perspective seriously, that is to say, to think about what women did in *relation* to

²³ Cavallin 2003 p. 98 n 114, 156, 206, 226.

²⁴ Dombok 1759, 26 March, 30 July. ULA.

²⁵ www.gaw.uu.se

what men did, and vice versa. To be more concrete, this means that when we try to find information on how wives of civil servants used their time, we cannot look everywhere, indiscriminately, but have to focus on situations where it seems likely that we might find traces of wives' doings. In order to establish what these situations might be, we have to understand the conditions under which the husbands worked and, perhaps most of all, the structural problems inherent in civil service. These problems may give us a clue as to what the role of the wife (and the rest of the household) was. Consequently, this section will focus upon the situation of an early modern civil servant.

Lower civil servant work had five defining characteristics. These characteristics were: the fact that civil servants often had more duties than they could manage on an individual basis; the fact that some special skills were needed; the fact that a civil servant needed ready cash to carry out his job successfully; the often public nature of civil servant work; the individual responsibility of the civil servant, epitomized in the oath. In this section I will expand and exemplify on these five points, before entering (in the following section) on a discussion what this may have meant for the household's gender division of work.

The jobs of lower civil servants were time-consuming and demanding. Previous research attests that the civil administration was understaffed,²⁶ and complaints to this effect were frequently heard. For instance, one eighteenth-century bailiff and his secretary grumbled that "it is incomprehensible how [the state] can insist upon giving new tasks to those in charge of tax administration; even without such extra tasks, we are soon quelled under the burden of duties that require both assiduity and a sense of responsibility."²⁷ While this statement may be disregarded as biased, it is striking that the employers and "customers" too expressed awareness of strained situation of civil servants. Some examples will illustrate how difficult it was to find the time for all duties.

In 1756, for instance, the magistrate of Örebro decided that *mätare* (measurer) Gabriel Broman should be exhorted to employ some "reliable persons" to help him measure all Crown grain that was expected to arrive at the port this year. He should do this because, according to the magistrate, "he is unable to carry out this work all by

²⁶ Asker 2004 pp. 354-58. Several concrete examples are given in Frohnert 1993 p. 107, 123, 131, 146, 159.

²⁷ Frohnert 1993 p. 124.

himself" and "it is incumbent upon him to make sure that no embezzlement takes place."²⁸ Later the same year, it transpired that Broman had followed this advice (or order) and got himself an assistant, the church warden Debritz,²⁹ and one man servant.³⁰

Apparently, Broman was not exceptional. In the same year, the magistrate also complained about the merchant Gustaf Oÿman, who held the office of "boatswain clerk" (Sw. *båtsmanskassör*)³¹ and who had failed to deliver his accounts on time. Oÿman asked for respite, saying that the delay had been caused by his having "every day been occupied with receiving and marking" military equipment for the boatswains. Like Broman, he had too much to do and now, after eleven years in office, he had had enough and declared that he wanted to quit. The magistrate accepted his resignation and instead appointed Magnus Hansson, castle accountant, to take over the task.³²

Oÿman had been remiss when it came to paperwork. This was obviously a charge that could be leveled against many lower civil servants. Innumerable reminders were directed to bailiffs who failed to deliver their accounts on time. Threats of fines seem to have been of little avail.³³ In 1762, the town auditors in Örebro declared that they were unable to complete their control of the accounts for 1760, in spite of the fact that the town clerk Aron Bergström had delivered his books on time and in good order. But this was of little avail since a large number of former town clerks had left their accounts in a mess and in some cases even had a personal debt to the town. These claims went as far back as 1743, and among the persons mentioned in the auditors' report were both Gustaf Oÿman and Magnus Hansson.³⁴ The new town clerk Aron Bergström was obviously an energetic man, and the magistrate pleaded to the burgers that they grant him discharge, regardless of what his predecessors had done. Later, Bergström also received an extra remuneration of 30 daler silver for having been on time with his accounts.³⁵ This was a sizeable award, since the regular annual salary for a town clerk amounted to 70 daler silver.

²⁸ Dombok 1756, 3 July. ULA.

²⁹ Dombok 1756, 6 December. ULA.

³⁰ Dombok 1762, 21 April and 29 November. ULA.

³¹ Contrary to the rural parts of the country, the urban areas were exempt from conscription. In return, towns and cities had to support boatswains for the Admiralty. See Hedlund 1980 p. 64

³² Dombok 1756, 20 and 23 March, 7 April. ULA.

³³ See also Frohnert 1993 107, 151, 261.

³⁴ Dombok 1762, 15 February and 25 May. ULA.

³⁵ Dombok 1762, 25 May. ULA.

These examples show the town/the employer, represented by the magistrate, actively supervising the work of the local civil servants, suggesting that extra staff be employed and giving higher remuneration to those who managed to be on time. Moving to the central state level, we also find evidence suggesting that the employer knew that the civil servants had a hard time fulfilling their duties and that they needed assistance.

For instance, some civil servants were allotted extra money every year to be able to hire scribes. However, this was not always the case. It has been assumed, therefore, that some lower civil servants used a part of their salary to employ assistants, simply to be able to keep abreast of all paperwork.³⁶ This is probably correct. In Örebro, for instance, *lantränmästare* Broström had an accountant in 1756 and a scribe in 1761 (the latter living with him), none of whom were mentioned in the regional state budget. Broström, whose salary was 200 daler silver, must therefore have paid these men out of his own pocket. By contrast, his superior *landskamrer* Stilman had a salary of 500 daler silver and on top of this received an extra 100 daler to be able to employ a scribe.³⁷ The town secretary Johan Erik Bergström had a "scribe boy" living with him. Bergström probably needed this help. Apart from being the town secretary, he was also standing in for the mayor for two years, and he took on several other tasks as well.³⁸

But while it was necessary to work hard, as Aron Bergström obviously had done, it was not enough. One had to have certain skills too – the second feature on which I want to dwell. For some civil servants, theoretical knowledge of the sort that required university education was necessary whereas in others, practical experience was what counted most. For instance, Pär Frohnert has shown that while there were no special training requirements for eighteenth-century bailiffs, the fact that only men with experience were made bailiffs suggests the importance of experience and a certain tacit know-how.³⁹ In the case of *landskamrerer* (head clerks), on the other hand, the training requirements were more well-defined and the central state supervised that they were adhered to.⁴⁰

³⁶ Asker 2004 p. 355-58; Asker 2007 p. 104.

³⁷ Dombok 1756, 5 July; Mantalslängd 1761; Landsstat 1761. ULA.

³⁸ Mantalslängd 1761; Dombok 1762, 17 November. ULA.

³⁹ Frohnert 1993 p. 30f.

⁴⁰ Cavallin 2003 p. 47; Asker 2004 p. 350.

In general, what civil servants should know was to read and write, do accounts, have a fair knowledge of the law and be able to use it correctly. It is probably significant that when vice-fiscal Hagman asked the magistrate in Örebro to vouch for him when he wanted to apply for a new job, the magistrate did this with enthusiasm and made a special note of Hagman's excellent knowledge of the urban statutes (which were produced in a never-ending torrent).⁴¹ By contrast, during his time as clerk for the local asylum/poor house in Örebro Ludvig de Besche not only attracted substantial debts but also managed to make a complete mess of his accounts. Summoned to court, de Besche agreed when the bailiff wanted to have the accounts checked and expressed doubts as to their correctness. de Besche claimed to be ignorant of book-keeping and therefore, he said, he had been forced to "rely on the help of others". He had been totally unable to check why such a large and unexpected debt had arisen.⁴² Lacking the right qualifications he was at the mercy of those who claimed to know book-keeping. In the end, de Besche and his wife were held jointly responsible when it turned out that the accounts were severely flawed.⁴³

Inadequate skills were thus a severe drawback, and so was a strained personal economy (the third feature). Admittedly, this is a tricky issue to investigate since people had (and have) varying demands and expectations in life. What a "sufficient" income would be is hard to decide in a disinterested way, and subjective expressions of what one *ought* to be paid is of little value. For instance, town secretary Bergström, who had no family to support, complained vociferously about his salary (300 daler) while no complaints from executioner Ekman, who earned a mere 36 daler a year, have been found. Clearly, their expectations in life were not the same. Likewise, it is easy to find examples of lower civil servants (and higher, for that matter) who went bankrupt,⁴⁴ or on whose property execution was levied,⁴⁵ but it does not exactly prove that they were given insufficient remuneration for their work.

⁴¹ Dombok 1762, 7 April. ULA.

⁴² Dombok 1762, 12 May. ULA.

⁴³ Dombok 1762, 27 July. ULA.

⁴⁴ See, for instance, the bankruptcy of mayor Joakim Wetterstedt (Dombok 1756, 4 October); the bankruptcy of *landskamrer* Bergman (Dombok 1756, 26 April); the poverty in which *landskamrer* Bohm was said to have died (Dombok 1759, 7 November)

⁴⁵ See, for instance, the distrains of customs officer Prytz and "lawyer" Hoffman, both in 1756. Dombok 1756, 3 May. ULA.

Other types of evidence are more interesting if we want to understand the economy of these men. Firstly, one is struck by how often those, who "managed the junctions", had to forward money out of their own pocket to "make the trains run" (to extend the metaphor). Civil servants had to have ready cash to be able to carry out their work.⁴⁶ For instance, in 1759 Magnus Hansson (castle accountant in Örebro) was paid 700 daler for expenses incurred in 1758 for feeding prisoners. In the same way, Zachris Lööf received a reimbursement of 640 daler for having fed the prisoners in the Karlstad gaol in 1757 and 1758.⁴⁷ Both 700 and 640 were sizeable sums in view of what lower civil servants earned, and they show that successful civil servants had to have cash reserves – substantial cash reserves. Since this was not always the case, debt would always be a specter in their lives. It is not surprising, therefore, that three years after Magnus Hansson was appointed accountant for the boatswains we find him indebted (481 daler copper) to the merchant Almgren for purchases Hansson had made in his new capacity.⁴⁸ Hansson was also indebted to the local hospital/poor house.⁴⁹

That many lower civil servants combined several types of income corroborates the impression that they had, or feared, economic problems. This diversification suggests that they tried to get away from a pernicious dependence on their salary only. A typical mix seems to have been to have to complement the salaried office with several smaller tasks and, if possible, to have income from real property as well. One example of this is Magnus Hansson, whose main (?) job was to be castle accountant. He was also economically responsible for the town's contributions to the military upkeep (the boatswains) and often acted as representative of people who needed help in legal and economic matters. Hansson owned an estate in the region of Södermanland and, apparently, had four houses in the centre of Örebro.⁵⁰ Another example is Gabriel Hagman who worked very hard as vice-fiscal (public prosecutor/police), judging from how often he appears in the court records, but who was probably badly paid. He owned a farm outside Örebro, represented people in court, and applied, unsuccessfully, for the

⁴⁶ See also Frohnert 1993 p. 76f, 239.

⁴⁷ Örebro läns landskontor, Lantränteri- och specialräkenskaper F VI 18 (1759). ULA. For Hansson, the sums are recorded under "Fångförtäring efter stat" (400) and "Lantränteriräkning över restantierna av statsmedlen" (300).

⁴⁸ Dombok 1759, 27 August. ULA.

⁴⁹ Örebro Länsstyrelse, Landskontoret, G IX aa vol. 5, papers referring to 1758. ULA.

⁵⁰ Mantalslängd Örebro 1761, ULA.

right to manage the local tobacco factory (which presupposed that he was a burger of the town). Town secretary Bergström, who often stood in for the absent mayor, also wanted to become a burger to be allowed to better himself by engaging in "manufactures and similar commissions".⁵¹

The work of many civil servants involved acting with authority in public (the fourth feature). While much of the work of a judge no doubt consisted in reading and in writing (and this may have taken place at home, even in bed, where it was warm), he would regularly have to appear in court to hear testimonies and to pronounce verdicts. Whether in rural or urban surroundings, this would oblige him to speak and act in public. The job of bailiffs also involved much acting in public. Bailiffs summoned the peasantry in their district to taxation meetings thrice a year (spending approximately forty days annually on such meetings), at which times they had to negotiate with the sometimes hostile tax-payers. Bailiffs also acted as public prosecutors at the local courts in their districts, which also meant having to speak in public. Whenever military troops were taken through the district of a bailiff, he would be given the task of organizing such *durchmarschen*, and this required the ability to negotiate with the local peasantry (who would be given the task of transporting the troops and feeding the horses and men) and to pay them for their work.⁵²

Many civil servants acted in public, sometimes in very difficult situations,⁵³ where it was necessary to assert one's authority in the eyes of the subjects. This aspect of being seen and scrutinized by everybody was probably more pronounced for some civil servants than for others – a bailiff was more visible than for instance a subordinated clerk in a government office in Stockholm. We know that the Swedish state made a point of inviting the subjects to submit complaints about civil servants (and not least bailiffs) who did not act in accordance with standards.⁵⁴ Thus, the public aspect of civil servant work

⁵¹ It is not surprising that some lower civil servants "diversified" by resorting to criminal activities. See for example the charges brought against Simon Böös for having embezzled tax incomes, Dombok 1762, 3 November. ULA.

⁵² See e.g. Frohnert 1993 p. 174, 196f.

⁵³ Frohnert reports how a *länsman* was particularly unwilling to levy execution because of tax debts on poor people's property. It was not uncommon for poor people to have no movable property, he said, "either outside or inside the houses, [only] a bunch of unclad and hungry children, who make things worse by their pitiable sounds." Frohnert 1993 p. 146f, 210.

⁵⁴ Harnesk 2009

must have restricted their scope of action, both in terms of forcing them to stay within the limits of the law and in terms of making it difficult to delegate tasks to others. Here, the civil servant oath is important to bear in mind.

All civil servants had to swear an oath of allegiance (Sw. *trohetsed*) to the king, and whenever a new king was installed the oath had to be renewed. This oath was, in other words, personal and it emphasized the loyalty of the civil servant to the king in question. The civil servant received his authority from the king, and he promised, with God as his witness, to carry out his duty with loyalty and faithfulness. In addition to this, the civil servant had to swear a professional oath (Sw. *ämbetsed*), obliging him to act in accordance with the law and to exercise his duties to the best of his abilities.⁵⁵

These oaths stressed the personal responsibility of the civil servant. It was he, and no one else, who had the right and authority to carry out the tasks given to him. Should he be remiss in this respect, for instance by letting a member of his household carry out any of the key tasks connected with the job, it was likely that somebody would spot this (because of the public nature of civil service) and it was probably easy to bring a suit against the civil servant, adducing the fact that he had broken his oath. The question is, of course, what this meant in practice.

The role of the household – a tentative analysis

We have now established what characterized the situation of lower civil servants. They were often swamped in paperwork and needed much help in this respect. They were often expected to advance money on behalf of their employer(s) and needed cash reserves to survive. They frequently took on extra jobs or responsibilities, to increase their incomes but also, and perhaps most of all, to diversify and become less dependent on the civil servant salary. They had to master reading, writing and accounting on a non-trivial level, and they had to know what the law said. Their work was often carried out in public, and they were held personally responsible for the job – it was *their* job.

What role could the wife and the rest of the household play? Given the public character of civil servant work, the special skills required, and the personal responsibility that came with the oath, one would imagine that this role would be quite restricted. On

⁵⁵ Cavallin 2003 p. 69-73

the other hand, bearing in mind how their household had to have access to liquid capital and, also, the imbalance between work and available time, how could the wife and the other household members *not* play active roles?

In what follows, I will draw an outline of what these contributions probably were. It should be borne in mind that this is really where my research starts and that, so far, I have few definitive results to present. Therefore, the discussion will not build so much on large sets of data as on illuminating examples and, I hope, convincing arguments.

Liquid means

Access to ready cash was vital for civil servants: definitely so for those who were in charge of the levying of taxes (bailiffs and suchlike), but probably for all others too. The whole system presupposed that those who managed the junctions could pay out of their own pockets if necessary. In understanding the role of the household, one promising way is to delve deeper into how these men managed to come up with the required liquid means.

In an eighteenth-century popular play, it was suggested that bailiffs (who were depicted as being in severe economic predicament) should find wealthy women to marry; this was the solution to all their problems!⁵⁶ Indeed, it is far from unlikely that access to his wife's capital could be what kept a bailiff afloat. Access to the wife's capital could also be a precondition if one wanted to become a civil servant. While Swedish civil servant positions were not up for sale in the same way as in France, they were nevertheless commercial objects since the holder of a position could sell it to his successor; this was an accepted way of securing a "pension" for former civil servants.⁵⁷ Thus, access to the wife's capital could be a prerequisite both if one wanted to become a civil servant and if one wanted to remain one.

Usually, the sources disclose the importance of women's financial contributions only when something went wrong. We find one example of this in Örebro in 1762. This year, Carl Johan Hellman rose in front of court and announced that he was inclined to apply for a position as bailiff secretary (Sw. *häradsskivare*) and, as a consequence, he

⁵⁶ Frohnert 1993 p. 155

⁵⁷ This was called *ackord*. Thisner 2007

asked the magistrate to vouch for him. Hellman had been indebted to the town since the time he was town clerk and he had not received any salary at all for seven years (no wonder he needed to look for a job!).⁵⁸ Now, his debts had been repaid but this had been at the cost of all of his *and his wife's* property, "so that nothing is left for me and my family."⁵⁹ The magistrate obviously held no grudges against him and agreed to vouch for him in view of his conscientious work. A seventeenth-century example to the same effect was disclosed when Johan Adolf Rehnsköld was appointed royal secretary. A weighty argument for his right to have this position (not his suitability for it) was that both his father (also a civil servant) *and his mother* had forwarded money to the state, and that the state now had to repay by giving Johan Adolf a lucrative job.⁶⁰ The two cases show us how the capital of women was used both to acquire civil servant positions (Rehnsköld) and to disentangle a civil servant from the web of debts civil service had brought him into.

These cases are probably representative of larger processes going on in early modern Swedish society, especially in those social strata where forms of property other than land were common. According to Swedish law (and unlike the English common law), married women could have separate property and if they had inherited landed property it was automatically classified as separate. Forms of property other than land would have to be made into separate property, for instance through a prenuptial agreement, but in the absence of such an arrangement a woman's chattels could be used by her husband or seized by his creditors.⁶¹ In view of how important ready cash was not only to civil servants but to everybody who was "managing the junctions" – think, for instance, of bankers, brokers, and traders⁶² – there is good reason to think that the temptation to use the wife's property was strong.

⁵⁸ Hellman appeared as "extra magistrate" (*extraordinarie rådmän*) in the minutes of this session. *Rådmän* were to receive 100 *daler* silver a year for their work. If this applied to Hellman, his debt must have been around 700 *daler*. How did he and his family survive? Perhaps on a loan of 1300 *daler* copper from merchant Bohman. As security, Hellman offered a piece of land. Dombok 1762, 25 October. ULA.

⁵⁹ Dombok 1762, 24 February. ULA.

⁶⁰ Norrhem 1993 p. 57f.

⁶¹ Ågren 2009

⁶² See, for instance, the impending bankruptcy of trader Gunnar Hållander. In this case the wife Beata Charlotta Hedenbom claimed to have no resources to offer the creditors, "having already used all my paternal inheritance [for this purpose]". Dombok 1762, 17 November. ULA.

This argument can be expanded. A married man could not only control his wife's chattel property. As guardian, he could effectively exert control over the inherited means of minors (such as stepchildren, nieces and nephews, etc). Preliminary studies of eighteenth-century court records suggest that civil servants would often be entrusted with guardianships, probably because they were good at reading, writing and doing accounts.⁶³ As has been pointed out in previous research, guardians could have access to huge amounts of capital, that they could make use of in various ways.⁶⁴ They were of course expected to invest the capital in ways that would benefit the minors and they were also obliged to show their accounts to the local court, in order to prevent fraud. Nevertheless, access to minors' means, as well as to servants' unpaid wages, may have been one piece in the economic jigsaw puzzle that civil servants had to make. It suggests that Weber's point about how private property and state property were intertwined was correct. The meaning of this finding changes, however, if we realize that it was perhaps not the property of the man that was confounded with that of the state but rather the property of his subordinated household members.

Paperwork

Having all paperwork ready on time could be a problem, as we have seen. But if the household members of the civil servants had the right skills they could provide valuable help by making fair copies of the minutes and accounts. It is obvious that many sons must have been trained to do this because civil servant jobs were often "inherited" from father to son.⁶⁵ For instance, Niclas Broström succeeded his father as *lantränmästare* in Örebro, a job for which probably no formal education was required,⁶⁶ so it is reasonable to assume that he had been trained by his father. Town secretary J. E. Bergström had a "scribe boy" by the name of Petter Tivander living with him(1761); it is likely that he was related to *mantalskommisarie* Anders Tivander and that Bergström, who was a bachelor,

⁶³ For instance, castle accountant Magnus Hansson in Örebro, who was guardian of the children of iron master Marcus Pahl. Dombok 1756 31 May. ULA.

⁶⁴ Ighe 2007

⁶⁵ For Örebro, see Dombok 1756 3/5, vågmästaren; 1756 26/4, landskanslisten; 1759 10/12, lantränmästaren; 1762 3/11, stadsfältskären. ULA. See also Asker 320ff, Söderberg 1956 108.

⁶⁶ Asker 2004 p. 320ff.

did both himself and his colleague a favor when he employed Petter and gave him somewhere to live.

It is an intriguing question whether wives and daughters can also be shown to have given this type of assistance and, by extension, whether girls were given the same kind of training as boys. One could argue that fathers would regard teaching daughters to read and write a waste of money and time, since daughters would not have the chance of taking over the official position as civil servant. Seen from this perspective, it would be futile even to look for women who did paperwork. Methodologically, it is also difficult to prove who the actual writer of a specific document, handed in by a civil servant, was: we may be able to establish that it was not the civil servant himself but it is less straightforward to say who the writer was.

There are, however, circumstances suggesting that being able to read and write was not only regarded as instrumentally valuable but as intrinsically valuable for everybody, not least for religious reasons. Therefore, the argument that teaching was wasted on women who would not become professionals may be slightly beside the point. It is also worth remembering that it was difficult to recruit staff with writing skills in the seventeenth century.⁶⁷ This imbalance between supply and demand may have affected how people reasoned when it came to the teaching these skills. It is interesting that Petri Karonen, who has found an example of a woman customs account (early seventeenth century), notices how very neat her writing was.⁶⁸

There are more examples of women from the civil servant class who were obviously adept at writing and accounting.⁶⁹ The daughter of a professor in medicine and the wife of a bishop, Katarina Bröms was effectively managing the ironworks at Ockelbo for many years and her skills in accounting seem to have been crucial for the success of this enterprise.⁷⁰ Beata Klingstierna provides another example; in the court case brought against her (for debts), the accounts *that she had made herself* were explicitly used as evidence.⁷¹ A study of lower civil servants also shows that their daughters did well in the

⁶⁷ Asker 2004 p. 350-58.

⁶⁸ Karonen 1995 p. 88.

⁶⁹ See e.g. Lundgren 1987 p. 28.

⁷⁰ "Katarina Bröms", *Svensk Biografiskt Lexikon* 6 p. 626. She is also mentioned in Hedlund 1980 p. 99

⁷¹ Dombok 1690 2 June p. 450. ULA.

marriage market, without the author never really accounting for this fact.⁷² One reason could be, of course, that they brought valuable property into their husbands' hands (cf. above), but it is also conceivable that they were comparatively well-educated and therefore useful as co-managers of households.

Diversified economies

That salaries were perceived to be inadequate and unreliable is borne out by the fact that those civil servants who could diversify obviously did so. They could take on various "by-employments" that could be combined with their main occupation. For instance, lower civil servants often appeared in the court records as legal representatives of others. They also owned farms outside and real estates inside town.⁷³ Some civil servants were able to engage in substantial commercial activities.⁷⁴

Having diversified economies was necessary, but managing diversified economies was probably impossible for civil servants without the active assistance of all members of the household. For instance, servants were indispensable when it came to looking after farms. The court records often mention how servants act on behalf of their masters with respect to farms, or that servants who have been summoned to court are excused because they are away, looking after farms.⁷⁵ We can also imagine that wives (or, in their absence, housekeepers) were in charge of lodgers in the house, or houses, the family had in town. Managing farms and renting out rooms, servants and wives contributed with agricultural products and ready cash to the household.

Skillfully managed, such resources could be made to grow rather than dwindle. For instance, they could be lent out against interest. We find examples of this among the civil servant families in Örebro. The widow of *lantränmästare* Johan Broström, Anna Sara Frumerie, had lent large sums of money, always with a pawn as security (such as a diamond ring).⁷⁶ In one case, it was noted that she had paid the tax for another woman

⁷² Frohnert 1993 p. 73

⁷³ On civil servants' purchases of nobility land in general, see Söderberg 1956 p. 132-65 and Carlsson 1973 (second ed.) p.113-181. Villstrand 2009 p. 96, on how Anders Chydenius (a clergyman) and his wife Beata Magdalena Mellberg together turned their residence into a model farm.

⁷⁴ See e.g. Hedlund 1980; Frohnert 1993 p. 292

⁷⁵ Examples are given in Frohnert 1993 p. 77. See also Dombok 1762 5 April (the servants of Magnus Hansson), ULA.

⁷⁶ Bouppteckning för Anna Sara Frumerie, 17 January 1759, ULA.

and that she would not give up the pawn until the debt was properly paid. It is also interesting that her estate included many different types of money: Russian and Danish currency, Swedish coins from as far back as the 1680s, bank notes, etc. Clearly, the fact that her husband handled state money can not have been incidental to her choice of "job" as a small-scale banker.

Public vs. Private

The spatial borderline between work and home was not as clear and insurmountable in the early modern period as it is today. This is a point that has been made by many historians, and it has a bearing on how we should imagine the gender division of labor in civil servant households.

On the one hand, it was probably difficult for a wife to stand in for her husband in his job as bailiff or judge. This, I think, was not mainly because she lacked the skills but rather because it would have involved acting with authority in public. Such usurpations of authority would immediately have been spotted, reported and punished. The fact that it was the husband who had sworn the oath, and nobody else, was probably crucial. On the other hand, however, much of the civil servant's work was *not* done in public but at home (partly because it was warm there).⁷⁷ For instance, postmasters worked at home, having no office.⁷⁸ Resources entrusted to someone in his capacity as civil servant were also kept at home. It is worth contemplating that the man who was *lantränmästare* in Örebro in the 1690s noted in his monthly accounts that he kept some of the state's tax money "as cash in a bag in my home."⁷⁹

Even if state regulations insisted upon the personal responsibility of civil servants, it is possible that their "customers" – people living in society – conceived of civil servant households differently, that is to say, that they assumed that it was the entire household that "managed the junction" and that, therefore, they could take their matter to anyone representing that household. Some cases from the middle of the eighteenth century suggest that this is the right way of thinking about these matters. In one of them,

⁷⁷ The issue of warmth is very interesting but one I cannot go into. Let me just mention that in a court case about fighting it transpired that one of the witnesses, a local civil servant, was sitting in his bed when the fighting broke out in his house. Dombok 1690 3 March. ULA.

⁷⁸ Lundgren 1987 p. 24.

⁷⁹ Örebro län landskontoret, F V: 1, Kassainventarier 1694-1724, ULA.

concerning a postmaster's embezzlement of letters containing money, it transpired that one of the letters in question had been delivered not to the postmaster, who was authorized to receive it, but to his elderly mother.⁸⁰ It is clear that the postmaster used this fact to defend himself and to put the blame on the person who had delivered the letter (a servant of the accusing party). On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest that the letter had *not* been delivered to the mother. In another case, it is clear that a *länsman* (who was subordinated to the bailiff) had delegated many of his duties to his son. The *länsman* obviously regarded his position as his private property, and this was tacitly accepted by his superiors.⁸¹ In this way, it became possible to use the workforce of his household more flexibly. The peasantry was given no other option but to accept the son.

These cases suggest a situation similar to that of a peasant household where the husband brings his tools into the house to clean and oil them. In a similar vein, early modern civil servants could bring their materials home – paper, pens, ink, accounts, verifications and cash – and, to some extent, they could involve their household in their work. If we think of the spatial borderline between private and public as permeable, it becomes easier to understand how other responsibilities and possibilities than just making fair copies could peter out into the rest of the household. In everyday life, upholding the distinction between the civil servant's "own" tasks and those of his wife, who wielded authority over the household together with her husband, must have been difficult.

A Job of One's Own?

Could wives of Swedish lower civil servants have occupations of their own, occupations that were totally separated from those of their husbands? Could this be a source of income for the rest of the household? Could such incomes even explain why the husband was able to come up with liquid capital, which could be so important (as we have seen)? Or, was income-earning by women something that was so closely associated with low social status that even the poorest civil servant household would do almost anything to avoid having to take this recourse?

⁸⁰ Cavallin 2003 p. 209

⁸¹ Frohnert 1993 p. 66, 288. See also Lundgren 1987 p. 26. That civil servants looked upon their position as private property in pre-modern bureaucracy is something that Weber also points out.

We know relatively little about these matters, and this goes not only for civil servant households but for middling households in general. However, some instances may be mentioned. In her study of Västerås (another small Swedish town) in the 1690s, Hedlund mentions how some tradesmen had wives who worked as street-sellers (Sw. *månglerskor*). It would have been interesting to look closer into this case, because it suggests that tradesmen (who were relatively wealthy) could have wives who performed a kind of job outside the household that was probably not held in high esteem.⁸² For England, Amy Erickson has given us some examples of married women who had a job of their own, that was entirely different from that of their husbands.⁸³ In these cases, the fact that the husbands' guilds accepted these unorthodox practices was important. Whether the same could occur within Swedish guilds is unclear.⁸⁴ It may appear even unlikely for civil servant households, given their alleged preoccupation with social status.

Thinking about these matters, we should not restrict our view to the civil servant household and its economic needs. It is, I think, imperative to think about the forms of female labor that were available in society at large and what the connotations of such labor were. We know that women were overrepresented among those who were labeled "servants," as well as among those who performed unspecified labor. We also know that women (and widows most of all) were overrepresented among the poor.⁸⁵ These patterns should probably be explained with the reference to the fact that there were fewer "good" jobs available for women than for men, even if they did exist and even if some men had to resort to unspecified labor too. But in general, men had more alternatives, and men's jobs were more often dignified with occupational titles. Women who worked to support themselves (and their families) were often jacks-of-all-trades (Sw. *mångsyslare*) and they rarely had occupational titles. It is reasonable to think that this affected how female labor was imagined and valued in society. It is also reasonable to assume that this mattered in particular to the groups that would eventually form the middle class. Groups such as lower civil servants distanced themselves socially both from the aristocracy *and*

⁸² Unfortunately, Hedlund (who is otherwise meticulous) has failed to provide a reference to the source. Hedlund 1980 p. 42.

⁸³ Erickson 2011

⁸⁴ Dag Lindström's subproject within the Gender and Work project will take up this issue.

⁸⁵ Hedlund 1980 p. 63, 71: in Västerås in the 1690s, the servant group consisted of 73 men and 198 women, and the laborer group of 86 men and 210 women. On the poor, see p. 166.

from the peasantry where, as everybody knew, women performed hard manual labor. This militates against the idea that civil servant wives had occupations of their own outside the household and that they contributed to the household with wage incomes.

The fact that there were state pensions for civil servants' widows also suggests that these women were regarded as having previously been *supported by their husbands*. They had not supported themselves, and they should not be forced to start supporting themselves simply because their husbands had passed away. The existence of widow pensions can be construed to say something about how women's capacity to support themselves was construed in society.⁸⁶

However, the picture is more complex than this. The pension system was not comprehensive and, consequently, not every widow would receive a pension. In the first half of the eighteenth century, there were only about 350 pensions available, the size of the dispensed sums depending on how socially elevated the husband had been.⁸⁷ At the end of the century (1798), the system had expanded slightly, but it was still seriously undersized in relation to the needs in society. Widows would sometimes have to wait for ten to twenty years before they were assigned a regular pension, by which time they may of course have passed away themselves.⁸⁸

Women could, and did, petition their husbands' employer for temporary relief and such relief was also given out of grace (Sw. *nådegåva*), both to widows and to unmarried daughters. The petitions show the same kind of rhetoric as we find in other petitions by women: the invaluable contributions to the country by the deceased husband are extolled and the misery of his family vividly described. Temporary relief presupposed, however, that there was room for such expenses in the state's "extraordinary budget," which was not always the case. Moreover, even if a woman was given a pension, the size was often small for women whose husbands had been lower civil servants (perhaps as little as 25

⁸⁶ It may be worth contemplating that in contemporary Sweden, widows' pensions are very uncommon. It suggests, I think, that women are supposed to be able to support themselves.

⁸⁷ There were eleven "classes" of civil servants and the widows received pensions in accordance with the class of their husband, ranging from 1000 to 25 daler silver a year.

⁸⁸ Statskontorets arkiv, Riksarkivet, Stockholm, series E 1 d, RA, Namnregister, introduction by Erik Malmsten 1910.

daler per year),⁸⁹ and other sources of income must have been necessary. Thus, the fact that civil servant widows could in principle be awarded a pension is not a strong argument against civil servant widows having to work, nor does it rule out the possibility that they had worked to earn an income even when their husbands were alive.

Indeed, looking very closely in the historical records, we do find examples of this. For instance, in 1756 Christina Elisabeth Hoffman was given the right to work as tavern keeper (Sw. *krögerska*) in Örebro. Nothing more was said about her in this particular context, but in another context she was described as the wife of *mönsterskrivare* Simon Allenius (a lower civil servant employed within the military administration), and as the former wife of a *bergsfogde* Hamn (also a lower civil servant).⁹⁰ She appears to be a clear example of a woman who had twice married a lower civil servant and who had an occupation of her own.

The question is, of course, how common such a practice was and, perhaps even more important, how far up the social ladder such examples can be found. In view of how important social prestige and social distinction probably was to many civil servants, it is possible that they avoided waged work for wives as much as possible. As widows, many women probably first tried to acquire a pension, and/or to move in with their children,⁹¹ and/or to move in with other women in the same situation. For instance, *landssekreterare* Lampa's widow (who was born a noblewoman and who had no living children) lived with one "mademoiselle" Åbeck and one housemaid Stolpe (plus four servants) after the demise of her husband. In her first year of widowhood she received a pension amounting to 150 daler, which was half of what her husband's salary had been.⁹²

Conclusion

While the division of work is little developed in some societies it is elaborate and highly complex in others. What happened in the early modern period was that, gradually, European societies became more socially and economically differentiated. In other

⁸⁹ See for instance Statskontoret, E 1 d vol. 12 (1756), RA, where the titles given for the men were ryttmästare, lantmätare, prost, löjtnant, överstelöjtnant, kammarherre, kapten, landskamrer, regementsfältskär, landssekreterare, kornett, biskop, etc.

⁹⁰ Dombok 1756 29 December and 24 May. ULA.

⁹¹ See Hedlund 1980 for examples.

⁹² Mantalslängd Örebro 1761. ULA.

words, it now became possible to support oneself in other ways than just by being a peasant, and even for peasants and other rural inhabitants new economic possibilities presented themselves.⁹³ This was true even for a largely agrarian country like Sweden (and the rest of Scandinavia). The growth of civil service is an example of this tendency and particularly relevant for these countries where commercialization and industrialization were late (compared to for instance England).

Civil servants' share of the population was tiny (less than 2 percent),⁹⁴ but they were nevertheless crucial to the state that needed to "see" the people it strove to govern.⁹⁵ However, the role of civil servants cannot be reduced to tools of their master. Regardless of the agendas of states, complex societies need linkages and connections that allow the different parts to communicate with each other. Complex societies rely heavily on the points of articulation⁹⁶ to work smoothly. In this paper, I have used Margaret Hunt's expression "junctions" to highlight the macro-sociological importance of these points, and I have been particularly interested in the micro-historical importance of what those who managed the junctions did.

There was an obvious tension in lower civil servant households, meriting our attention. On the one hand, it seems as if a number of structural features tended to push these households towards a gender division of work which made the husband/father into the perceived "breadwinner." He was bound to his employer through an individual "contract", based on his oath to the king and, also, on his personal dependence and gratitude towards the usually higher civil servant who had given him his job.⁹⁷ He had to have certain skills and qualifications, and he would often perform his job partly in public. All of this must have made it difficult for him to delegate tasks to his household members, and to treat his office as his private property. Because of his social ambitions, he may also have been inclined not to involve his wife in publicly visible work. Much of

⁹³ Wrigley 1985 points to the importance of growing urban areas and of the increasing share of the rural population that worked with non-agricultural tasks.

⁹⁴ In 1751, the middle classes (of which lower civil servants were a component) have been estimated to comprise about 2-3 percent of the entire population. Carlsson 1973 Table 1.

⁹⁵ Scott 1998

⁹⁶ I borrow this metaphor from William H. Sewell Jr. 2005

⁹⁷ The importance of patron-client relationships is something I have not been able to delve deeper into in this article.

previous research has seen the civil servant as an isolated man without social ties who made up, together with other isolated men of the same type, the burgeoning bureaucracy.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that lower civil servant households could not afford a one-breadwinner system. They had too small incomes and too much to do to be able to manage without assistance from the entire household. The state pension system was clearly inadequate to support all civil servant widows. The public/private divide was not as strict as to preclude joint efforts by the household members, not only to support the household (the diversified economy) but also to carry out the particular responsibilities that came with the office as civil servant. This is the other side of the coin, and the historical importance of this side (of which Weber was aware) needs to be better understood.

In the light of these insights, we may have to reconsider how we interpret female titles such as "borgmästarinna" (mayoress) and "kamrerska" (wife of the regional head clerk). At first, it seems natural to construe them as *marital* titles, telling us to whom a particular woman was married. This is in accordance with how titles such as "doktorinna" and "professorska" were used in the first half of the twentieth century, i.e., meaning someone married to a doctor or to a professor. But it is possible that this is an anachronistic way of looking at seventeenth- and eighteenth-century female titles. If the mayor's wife and the head clerk's wife did in fact take active part in carrying out the job of mayor or clerk, it is possible that these titles reflect these realities, that is to say, that they were *occupational* titles. This hypothesis has already been put forward for early modern Portugal and early modern England,⁹⁸ and should be given serious consideration. When we find a woman described as "Sven Wej's widow, wife Elssa"⁹⁹ we must ask ourselves why she was described as *both* widow and wife. While widow must be her civil status title, maybe wife says something about her occupational status?

As I have explained above, it may have been particularly difficult for civil servant wives to actively share their husbands' work (in contrast to what was the case among peasants). This is precisely what makes them interesting. They are a least likely case. If

⁹⁸ Abreu-Ferreira 2002; Erickson in preparation.

⁹⁹ Dombok 1690 26 May: "Sven Wejs [?] enkia hustru Elssa hoos hwilcken han giästat". ULA. Examples of this linguistic practice – that women appear with double titles – were numerous in the 1690s. See also ongoing dissertation work by Christopher Pihl, Uppsala, pointing in the same direction.

they can be shown to have "managed the junctions" jointly with their husbands we can assume that this was the case in other social groups as well. And if they had occupations of their own, it is an example of how the gender division of work could respond not only to the demand for social distinction but also to the need to support oneself.

In the broader research project, of which this study forms part, the focus is upon early modern strategies of survival in general. Moreover, we are interested not only in how men and women actually used their time with the purpose of making a living, but also in the larger societal structures that affected what options were available. It is of course not too far-fetched to assume that, in general, women had fewer options in the job market; the discussion in this article has given some support for this assumption. The ways in which access to productive resources (such as land) were gendered are also of interest in this context.

However, we are not only interested in options and how many they were. What work means to those who perform it varies enormously and depends on other things than just range of alternative. The conditions under which work is performed are crucial. Were working hours regulated or not in early modern Sweden? Did the servant girl have the night for herself (as a saying from Denmark had it)¹⁰⁰ or was she constantly at her mistress's beck and call? Was there any possibility of appeal for a worker who felt mistreated by his/her master?¹⁰¹ Were all forms of work "seen" and recognized (including for instance domestic work)? How was work remunerated? Did work involve training and education or was it mere drudgery?¹⁰² And how did society treat those who were unable to work, like old people? Ultimately, these questions concern both power and "welfare" aspects of early modern life.¹⁰³

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in separate file.

¹⁰⁰ Ojala 2009.

¹⁰¹ This was the case in Norway. See ongoing work by Hanne Østhus, Oslo/Firenze.

¹⁰² See ongoing work by Jan Mispelaere, showing that children were expected to learn something useful when they worked.

¹⁰³ See e.g. Sandén 2005 and Hunt 2010 who both apply the concept of welfare on early modern society. See also Ågren 2011.

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Table 1: Sample of lower civil servants in the town of Örebro, according to the poll tax register (*mantalslängd*) of 1761 and the regional budgets (*stater*)
Bold = employed by state; others employed by town

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Servants</i>	<i>Salary</i>
Länsbok-				
hållare	Gröndal	yes	4	250
Länsnotarie	Öyer	no	0	200
Slottsbok				
hållare	Hansson	yes	6	?
Landssekre-				
terare	Lampa's	widow	4	(300+)
Landskamrer	Stilman	no	3+1	500+
Lantränt-				
mästare	Broström	widower	9	200
Kanslist	Söderstedt	no	0	"has salary"
Kontorist	Isaksson	no	0	?
Kontorist	Kvist	no	0	?
Collega	Åberg	yes	1	11
Tullinspektör	Bergman	yes	1	?
Tullskrivare	Lybeck	no	0	?
Skarprättare	Ekman	yes	1	36
Borgmästare	Fries	yes	9	600
Fältskär	Blom	yes	2	?
Rådman	Borell	yes	1	300
Rådman	Beckman	yes	2	300
Rådman	Bagge	yes	2	300
Rådman	Hedenbom's	widow	1	?
Rådman	Bröms	yes	6	?
Rådman	Hellman	yes	3	?
Rådman	Thun's	widow	0	?
Stadssekre-				
terare	Bergström	no	1	300
Skrivar-				
gossen	Tivander	no		?
Mätare	Broman	yes	1	?
Vågmästare	Behmer	no	1	?

NB Strangely enough, the fiscal and the new *landskamrer* are both missing in the poll tax this year.