In consideration of my meagre circumstances

The language of poverty as a tool for ordinary people in early modern Sweden

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Abstract

Petitions of different kinds are emerging as an increasingly used source for studies of early modern Sweden and beyond. Supplications offer historians great opportunities to examine claims coming from people of various backgrounds, and the larger complex of contemporary ideas these arguments were built on. In these documents, petitioners often bring up the issue of poverty. The purpose of the thesis has been to elucidate this language of poverty and the ideas and values behind its invocation, through studying how people described and used it in their communication with the County Administration of Uppsala between 1730 and 1734. The study has shown that statements of poverty were deployed by a large variety of people, but women were more prone to speak about it than men, especially in echelons above the peasantry. Poverty was used in several ways: to denote a subordinate relation in the social hierarchy, as an enhancer of plight or as something which was not deserved as the petitioners had fulfilled the duties expected of them. By calling themselves poor or emphasizing their blameless destitution, supplicants could ask for the County governor’s protection, try to establish themselves as deserving of help or invoke notions of Christian compassion. Behind the statements of poverty lay ideas of hierarchy and reciprocity set out in the Lutheran Table of Duties, which provided a base for the supplicants’ claims for help.

Keywords: Poverty; poor; petition; Table of Duties; household culture; County Administration.

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Abbreviations

AD  ArkivDigital
CA  County Administration
kmt  kopparmynt (coins of copper)
LKA  Landskansliet
LU  Länsstyrelsen i Uppsala län
RA  Riksarkivet
SAOB  Svenska Akademiens Ordbok
ULA  Landsarkivet i Uppsala

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Chapter 1 – The language of poverty in petitions

In the dark winter-months of 1734, the peasant Erick Larsson implored an inhabitant of a neighbouring parish, rusthållare Blomberg, to write a petition for him. Larsson would later describe how Blomberg had agreed to help him free of charge, out of his Christian compassion for the fellow’s poor condition. On January 16\textsuperscript{th} the supplication was presented to Baron Johan Brauner, governor of Uppsala and head of its County Administration (hereafter CA).\textsuperscript{2} It described how Larsson had been dismissed from the farm he lived on, and due to disagreements over the amount of taxes he owed his noble landlord, major Mårten Mannercrona, all his property – even the chickens he needed for his subsistence – had been sequestered. Larsson now asked the governor for assistance in getting his things back. That same day, governor Brauner sent the petition to major Mannercrona, with orders to explain himself. Mannercrona promptly responded that first, the petition needed to be signed by the actual writer. After two weeks, a new supplication from Larsson was presented at the CA, where he explained that his helper Blomberg had not wanted to sign, perhaps out of fear of the major. Instead, he had now employed the lawyer Urban Elfving to write another letter, marked \textit{gratis}.\textsuperscript{3} In it, Larsson insisted he should get his property back, and asked that:

\begin{quote}
Major Mannercrona should justly be ordered under penalty to immediately explain himself over my many complaints against him and to return my small property, which I have earned with difficulty and my own sweat and blood, the well-born Major having, without law and judgement or the high Executor’s permission, so harshly shut me out of it, that I poor man with my old aged wife do not own a piece of bread if not other, Christian people, would have pity on us.\textsuperscript{4}
\end{quote}

In this short passage, Erick Larsson – through the pen of Urban Elfving – emphasized several things. First, he had been unjustly treated by the major, who had taken his hard-earned property. This had put him and his old wife in poverty, a state which could only be ameliorated by other people’s Christian compassion. Why did Larsson, and many others like him, choose to combine an expression of poverty and dependence, which might have had quite negative connotations, with statements of hard work and unlawful treatment? How did this “language of poverty” relate to the other issues? It is with these questions that the following chapters will be concerned.

Poverty is a very ambiguous concept, capable to elicit a wide spectrum of emotions, ranging from shame to compassion to anger. For Western Europe, it has been suggested that between 1500 to 1700 the view of the poor went from primarily seeing them as objects of charity to perceiving

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} A rusthållare was the owner of a farm in charge of supplying a soldier and horse to the cavalry in exchange for certain tax reliefs, see Nordisk familjebok 1916, p. 1239.
\item \textsuperscript{2} The CA (länsstyrelsen) was a regional authority designed to exercise control over the region’s administrative management, such as tax collection, see Asker 2004, pp. 40, 44. In the thesis, the words “petition” and “supplication” will be used synonymously.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Thereby indicating that Larsson had not needed to pay the lawyer for his work.
\item \textsuperscript{4} Appendix 1, no 160 (petition 17340209). For a detailed account on how the references have been designed based on the sorting of the petitions in the archives, see Appendix 1. All translations are made by the author.
\end{itemize}
them as a threat or as potentially productive workers. It would therefore seem rather strange for Erick Larsson to mention his poverty as a reason for the governor to endorse his case against major Mannercrona. Indeed, in her study of English church witnesses who were asked to appraise their worth, Alexandra Shepard has found that most people actually avoided the language of poverty as it put their value as honest witnesses into question and set them out as dependent. By contrast, this evading of poverty is not as readily noticed in petitions, which begs the question if descriptions of poverty were something more in the early modern age than just a denominator of destitution and dependence. This indicated complexity in the deployment of the language of poverty will be examined closer in the thesis, by answering the following question:

- How did people describe and use the concept of poverty when contacting the County Administration of Uppsala between 1730 and 1734?

The decision to mention poverty in a petition would have been highly contingent on the particulars of the case, who the petitioner was and on the context in which it was written. The contents of a petition such as Erick Larsson’s would have been “shaped by prevailing norms, institutions and power structures”, in which supplicants presented themselves in accordance with a set of ideas. Since statements of poverty would have been formed by underlying perceptions about society, it is possible to analyse these expressions in order to glean something larger about the early modern world and the people who inhabited it. Therefore, the purpose of the coming pages is to elucidate the early modern language of poverty and the values and ideas that lay behind its invocation.

**Why study poverty in petitions to the County Administration in Sweden during the 1730s?**

When studying the early modern society, fundamentally built on hierarchy and inequality, on the domination of a few and the submission of many, it is very important to examine the nature of the constraints put upon people in a subordinate position. It is also essential however, to inquire how these individuals managed various events in their lives, and the tools they used in that process. In essence, it is just as vital to see what people were able to do as what they were prevented from doing. To investigate how they used concepts, and thereby accessed values and ideas in the endeavour to settle problems they experienced, highlight this effort for empowerment.

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6 Shepard 2015, chapter 4.
7 Shaw 2012, p. 65. On the contingency of petitions, see Hitchcock et al. 1997, p. 5; Würgler 2001, p. 32. R.A. Houston says petitions are “a means of self-presentation and of social identification around a proffered ideal of shared experiences, interests and values.”, see Houston 2014, p. 28. Similarly, Henry French and Jonathan Barry states that the goal with descriptions in petitions for poor relief was to establish belonging and responsibility, which was negotiated by referencing a set of social definitions shared with the judicial elite and through invocation of moral norms that they all subscribed to publically, see French & Barry 2004, p. 10.
Several Swedish historians in various areas have examined how early modern people used different concepts when arguing for a particular cause. For example, in his investigation of masculinity, Andreas Marklund has studied how the different parties used and articulated ideas about the responsibilities of husband and wife during the 18th and 19th centuries, in marital cases preserved in the minutes of the Uppsala consistory. In her dissertation and later work, Karin Hassan Jansson has examined court ledgers between 1600 and 1800 to find out what norms and perceptions people based their actions and arguments on in cases of rape, and how the responsibilities connected to a person’s household position created possibilities for subordinates to make demands of their superiors. From a political perspective, Karin Sennefelt has looked closer into the arguments of the peasantry during the Dala revolt of 1743, investigating their political repertoire and how they legitimised their actions toward the state, using sources such as commission minutes, hearings and letters. Finally, Martin Linde has analysed how peasants argued in petitions in order to resist the demands of the state, to see what possibilities they had to make themselves heard during the Great Northern War. This thesis is situated between these different fields of study as the petitioners’ use of poverty in a way can be said to be political, since it is a means to an end in the communication with a representative of the state. However, the cases and subsequent arguments are not about the political power of a collective group, but rather about issues affecting the petitioner as an individual, similar to the studies of Jansson and Marklund.

In Swedish historiography, petitions have been used sparingly to examine early modern people’s argumentation and use of concepts. Several scholars have employed them partially, but they have rarely been used as the primary source. One exception is a forthcoming study by Sofia Ling, in which she examines women’s possibilities to work and support themselves in Stockholm between 1650 and 1750. It is surprising that supplications have not been used to a larger extent, as their specific traits and inherent strategy make them particularly suited to this kind of examination. Even though they are collaborative documents, in the sense that the petitioner was not necessarily the actual writer, they allowed the supplicant a large scope of influence on the contents. It is also a document which originates from the petitioner and is written from his or her perspective. In addition, the text was created to convince the recipient of something and thus the argumentation itself motivated what was said and what was not. These characteristics all make the petition a strong contender as a suitable source for the object of study in this thesis. As with all material there are of course issues of source criticism which will be subject to further discussion in chapter 3.

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10 By contrast, petitions have been used comparatively more in other European countries, see for example Hitchcock et al. 1997; Bregnsbo 1999; Würgler 2001; Walker 2003; Houston 2014; Vallerani 2015.
12 Zemon Davis 1987, pp. 3 – 5. Davis contrasts petitions to hearings where, in her opinion, the witnesses were more constrained in what they were allowed to say.
As has been noted by several researchers who have studied petitions, the language of poverty was frequently deployed by supplicants and made up part of their reasoning. Poverty seems to have been mentioned in these letters from late medieval times and through the early modern period, in many different countries.\textsuperscript{13} The large space which this concept occupies in supplications indicates that it served important purposes for people who tried to get a particular decision, which motivates it being studied in its own right. The choice to study the description and use of poverty during part of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century and in Sweden in particular have been guided by several considerations. This was a time of transition, where a previous absolutist state experienced a period of parliamentary rule. It has been argued that during the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, the society of estates as the basis for social division was at its strongest, while these principles started to crumble during the following century and were completely changed in the 1800s. In addition, the 18\textsuperscript{th} century was an era of new ideas in many areas, such as science and economy.\textsuperscript{14} Seen as a whole, it was a turbulent century of conceptual change, where many different issues – including poverty – were contested and discussed. Indeed, the question of poverty was debated in tracts, pamphlets and parliamentary meetings,\textsuperscript{15} which could have affected how it was used in petitions. To specifically place the thesis’ analysis in the 1730s has been motivated first by the fact that it was a time of relative peace and prosperity, without serious crop failures or large epidemics. At the time, Sweden had been at peace for about ten years, and the extreme difficulties during the Great Northern War had in many respects had time to subside.\textsuperscript{16} This indicates that there should not have been particularly many petitions from people who experienced material hardship due to temporary dearth, people who otherwise might not use the language of poverty. The period is also before the large growth of proletarian and landless people, which exploded towards the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century,\textsuperscript{17} and a class-based view on poverty took hold.\textsuperscript{18} In essence, the 1730s was a time where the society of estates and the principles behind it still had a relatively strong foothold in Sweden, but the social changes linked to the end of the century were starting to become visible, making it a suitable time to study from a conceptual perspective.

During this changing time, the CA’s played a large part in people’s lives as they were charged with important tasks such as tax collection. This significance is reflected in the fact that the archives of different CA’s are full of petitions from people of various backgrounds and in a large variation of cases. For example, for the 18\textsuperscript{th} century in the CA of Uppsala, the two series which deal with petitions from individuals contain almost 300 volumes of extant supplications. Obviously, there was a large amount of contact between the CA’s and its regional inhabitants. After 1680, the need

\textsuperscript{13} See for example Dodd 2007, p. 282; Prytz 2013, pp. 168 – 176; Vallerani 2015; Ling 2016, pp. 68 – 86.
\textsuperscript{14} Heckscher 1949, p. 890; Carlsson 1973, p. 13; Stadin 2004, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{15} Heckscher 1949, p. 853; Holmdahl 1988, p. 19; Ashcraft 1995, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{16} Heckscher 1949, pp. 34 – 35.
\textsuperscript{17} Johnsson 2016, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{18} Himmelfarb 1984, pp. 525 – 529.
to be able to petition the CA’s grew even more as people were no longer allowed to supplicate the king directly. The CA, as a receiver of petitions and as the largest regional authority during this time, therefore most probably had a large impact on people’s lives. Despite this, the institution itself and its relation to the county’s inhabitants has been quite understudied. While this is not a study on the effect of the CA on people’s circumstances, the relation between the governor and the petitioners is of central importance when interpreting their use of poverty. The choice of using petitions at the CA of Uppsala has partly been determined by practical reasons – they are accessible in the County Archive of Uppsala and for this time period it contained a suitable number of petitions for the study’s scope. It is also a suitable county to investigate when considering the range of its population. Uppsala county was quite small, but had a diverse base for its income, with agriculture and mining being large contributors. In addition, the land had a relatively even spread between freehold (skatte), owned by the crown (krono), and the nobility (frälse). The relative closeness to Stockholm should also have enabled trade and the presence of the university probably added a diversity to the city. Taken together, many different people lived within the borders of the county and therefore had a possibility to end up as a petitioner to the CA.

Chapter 2 – Using the language of poverty in a culture of inequality

In the thesis I attempt to access early modern values and ideas, by examining the use of a concept, as it came to light in written language. A suitable theoretical framework therefore requires considerations on this system of norms and ideas, models on how concepts may be used in order to achieve goals, assumptions on how to work with language and finally reflections on how to define poverty. To concretize, we can again look at the case of Erick Larsson from chapter 1. In his petition, Larsson expresses that he is a poor man and has no bread for himself and his wife. Both statements can be considered to be linguistic expressions of poverty, used by him in an attempt to get his property back. Why would these utterances make the governor listen? What are the underlying ideas that make the language of poverty a viable strategy for him? The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the theoretical considerations which will help to answer those questions.

Household culture as system and practice

When thinking about how written representations of poverty are connected to a larger framework of values and ideas, it is useful to reason in terms of cultural system and practice. Culture, in the

19 Asker 2004, p. 239.
sense of a loosely bound together mix of knowledge, values and ideas – including ideological elements and frames of mind – consists of a system of symbols which comes to light in for example language, social practices and people’s actions. According to William H. Sewell however, culture is not only a system, but also part of an activity. To engage in cultural practice is “to utilize the existing cultural symbols to accomplish some end”.22 Using this semiotic code “means to attach abstractly available symbols to concrete things or circumstances, and thereby to posit something about them”. In that manner, culture is both system and practice which affects and changes each other constantly.23 For the actors, cultural practice presents a possibility to play on the different meanings of symbols, which are specified by their relations to other symbols, and thereby re-defining them in ways they believe will favour their purposes.24 In the study of petitions and poverty, this theoretical frame means that when petitioners wrote to the CA, the assumption is that they used these cultural symbols and attached them to their poor circumstances in a way which gave it a certain meaning, in the endeavour to accomplish their goal.

Culture as a theoretical concept has been applied to the early modern society by Karin Hassan Jansson, who speaks of a household culture based on hierarchy and reciprocity which provided “a repertoire of roles, relations and course of events”, which people could make tactical use of for their own purposes and goals.25 Many scholars have stressed the importance of the household for the structuring of early modern society. For example, Rosemarie Fiebranz states that the household might have been a cognitive model for how early modern people perceived the world. Similarly, Gudrun Andersson argues that the household worked as a frame for people’s actions. According to Susan Dwyer Amussen, the household “provided a model for the ordering of villages, counties, church and state”.26 Just as in a household, society was hierarchically built with different groups which all filled a particular function and who were in a reciprocal relationship with one another. This meant that as the master of the household was supposed to be both father and absolute king of his family, the king was the father of his people and responsible for their well-being.27 To understand the way early modern people described and used various concepts, including poverty, it is therefore essential to consider this household culture.

Even though the household as a hierarchical and unequal model of organisation of society had antique roots, its conceptual framework in early modern Sweden was adapted to the particular

24 Sewell 1999, pp. 47, 51 – 52. Sewell’s example of this is how the French National Assembly during the revolution managed to re-define term “the people” from meaning “the mob” or “urban poor” to those who were said to be sovereign in radical political theory.
25 Jansson 2014, pp. 2 – 3, 14. She motivates speaking about household culture because the notions, norms and values attached to it appear in so many genres and contexts.
26 Amussen 1988, p. 1; Andersson 1998, p. 299; Fiebranz 2002, p. 32. See also Phl 2011, pp. 38 – 40, who argues that the household was the basis of early modern people’s lives and therefore had a very important part in how they understood their world.
27 Amussen 1988, p. 1; Holmlund & Sandén 2013, p. 11.
period and has often been connected to principles established in Luther’s Table of Duties (Hustaran). There, a certain social order is prescribed, the society consisting of three estates, the ecclesiastical, the political and the household estate. Within each estate, certain people were supposed to be masters (the preacher, the ruler and the house-father respectively), and the rest (hearers, subjects and other members of the household) owed them their service and obedience. The masters of each estate had a right to decide over the others, but also a duty to care for and protect them. If the master of any of the three estates did not perform his duty properly, his authority was no longer legitimate. The analogy between the household and society as a whole also meant that when the housefather broke the norms and expectations of him, it threatened not only the internal order of the household, but the power structure of society itself.

The reciprocal, but very hierarchical and unequal relationship between masters and servants in the early modern age has been emphasized by several historians, including Eva Österberg, who argues that the tensions between hierarchy and reciprocity are essential for the understanding of early modern society and the relations between the state and its subjects. Thus, it can be surmised that the ideas set down in the Lutheran Table of Duties were very important when conceptualising relations between people in different positions and also in their dialogue with each other, and as such they might have provided powerful symbols available for cultural practice. One example of how the household culture was put into practice can be provided by Jansson’s research on arguments in cases of rape involving maids and their masters. In them, the housefather was accused of breaking his responsibilities as head of the household by being tyrannical and violent, while the maid was subject to allegations of disobedience, carelessness and promiscuity against the ideals of how servants should act. The relations and responsibilities of the household culture, as seen in the Table of Duties, thereby provided people with the basis for their arguments.

Ideology, power and manipulation of the public transcript

Hierarchy, inequality and reciprocity were some of the principles that constituted the household culture. In a more narrow sense, the contents of the Table of Duties has also been viewed as an

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28 Österberg 1992, p. 90; Phil 2011, pp. 38 – 39; Jansson 2014, p. 2. In Swedish historiography, there has been a debate on the extent to which the messages in the Table of Duties were spread to the general population and whether they internalised these principles or not, see for example Pleijel 1970, pp. 23, 32 – 34; Aronsson 1993; Lindmark 1993.


32 Jansson 2013, pp. 148 – 149; Jansson 2014, pp. 5 – 8. In cases where the victims were married women, their arguments were often based on the image of the honourable wife, loyal to her husband and the household, see Jansson 2002, p. 119. See also Marklund 2004, who argues that the image of the good housefather and his responsibilities were used in marital cases.
ideology used by dominant groups of society to legitimate the existing social order and relations of power, or as an ideal of how the world ought to be ordered from the point of view of the elite. In his dissertation, Peter Englund defines ideology as “a system of ideas connected to a certain social group, which has a political function and is used to guide and legitimate this group’s action in society.” In early modern Europe, this legitimation proceeded from the religious notion of the monarch or master holding power under God according to his will. To put yourself up against your master, was therefore to put yourself up against God. The ruler however, was supposed to exercise his power in the interest of the subject and had a particular obligation towards the poor and the powerless.

According to anthropologist James C. Scott, an ideology which legitimates the power of the dominant groups can be used by other groups to their own advantage. Scott’s work on peasant societies in East Asia showed that the farmers were able to pierce the professed values of the elite, by using their own ideology against them. He explained this by using the concepts public and hidden transcripts. The public transcript is the idealized self-portrait of the dominant elite, designed to affirm and naturalize their power. This ideology requires that the particular interests of the leading group are reformulated and presented as general interests of the larger part of society. In order to appear credible, the dominant groups must make good on at least a small amount of these promises. This opens up possibilities for the subjects to appropriate parts of the dominant ideology for their own advantages, asking them to take their own rhetoric seriously. What the subject really thinks about this order of society is only revealed in the off-stage hidden transcript. In an early modern society, where subordinate groups were expected to obey and serve their masters, Scott sees their displayed deference as a mask used to seem compliant with the dominant ideology. This has been criticized by several historians, who claim that the religious base on which the ideology rested might well have meant that ordinary people also believed in this hierarchical worldview.

Household culture and manipulation of the public transcript are two models which provide different ways of explaining how early modern people could use various concepts to their advantage when communicating with each other. Before either of them can be related to the use of poverty in petitions, these differences must be evaluated. The first basic distinction is that household culture, integrated in the early modern society, is something which confers rights and obligations to all members of the different estates. A danger with that approach is therefore that

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37 Scott 1990, chapter 1; Marsh 2005, pp. 6 – 7; Clark 2011, pp. 299 – 301. Andy Wood argues that the deference shown by subjects might in some cases be instrumental, for others it might have been ingrained. Compliance with the dominant ideology could therefore be both honest and cynical. In addition, acting deferent, through words, body language and other actions will have an effect on the agent who might also internalise the deference, see Wood 2006, p. 44; Wood 2006a, p. 809; Wood 2013, pp. 237 – 238.
the study puts too much emphasis on reciprocity and too little on hierarchy and inequality. In Scott’s theory however, the problem is the inverse, since in that case the subordinates are only able to use the promises which the dominant groups are forced to offer up in order to seem credible. The system itself does not offer any rights to the lower orders, rather they manage to achieve their goals by manipulating the transcript which is essentially created for the advantage of the elite. A second divergence pertains to the range of roles available for people when they argue for their cause. Scott’s theory has its origin in a modern peasant society where the groups are based on class and a dichotomy of rulers and ruled. Only in the position of a subject is the subordinate able to manipulate the public transcript, which might be too simplified a view as it only takes into account a small part of the Table of Duties. By contrast, seen from the backdrop of household culture the petitioner is given more roles and a larger scope for argumentation, which might be better suited for the complexity of the early modern society. Keeping these differences in mind will be essential in the coming analysis, and by looking at what extent the petitioners refer to themselves as subjects or as having other positions the theories can also be contrasted with each other.

**Analysing written statements**

How can we glean underlying ideas by simply looking at people’s linguistic expressions? According to Leif Runefelt, it is evident that statements normally do not intend to describe the world impartially or truthfully, but are phrased in a certain way to encourage a particular action or behaviour. These expressions are also made within a certain perceived reality and context, which might make them seem absurd or exaggerated when taken from that environment. For Runefelt, this leads to the conclusion that statements are expressions of a perceived reality which also contains normative features, and should not be taken as an attempt to give a true picture of reality. In other words, behind every statement there is an idea about the society in which it is written. 38

Quentin Skinner also emphasizes the importance of context, when arguing that to understand a text, it is fundamental to figure out what the author was doing when he or she invoked different concepts, rather than why the text was written in the first place. Our language is not only used to communicate information, but also to claim authority for our utterances, to evoke emotions in our interlocutors and to create inclusion and exclusion. In Skinner’s view, “words are also deeds”, which is why we should ask what can be done with a particular statement, and examine its relationship to other expressions and to broader networks of beliefs. 39 When analysing expressions one must therefore take into account who makes it, in what time it is made and for what audience. Further it is essential to understand the intention of the phrase (what the author was doing when writing), which can be done by taking the larger linguistic context into account – that is the whole

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38 Runefelt 2015, pp. 11 – 14.
range of communications which could have taken place on the given occasion by this utterance. Within this, the social context of the expression should be taken into account as a part of this linguistic endeavour. A similar way of working is expressed by Andreas Marklund when studying the construction of gender as a cultural concept. He argues that norms or ideals should be searched for amongst the actors themselves. In order to find out how gender was constructed, we must study how different individuals have formulated, interpreted and put the concept into practice. To that end, a thorough analysis of the text and context is vital, answering questions of who the author was, about whom he or she spoke, to whom it was written, what the author was trying to say and what arguments and rhetorical methods were used. As I interpret Skinner and Marklund, their reasoning means that to understand why the petitioner Erick Larsson deployed a statement involving the language of poverty we need to take into account who he was, what his case was about, how a petition was normally written and what other ideas of poverty and of society were expressed at the time. In essence, the surrounding context is key.

A broad perspective on the concepts of poor and poverty

Many historians working with poverty have noted that it is a very difficult term to delineate. To begin with, the terms poor and poverty are quite vague and were even more so in the early modern period. Persons are also labelled poor based on various definitions, depending on the people, institutions, period and place involved. When studying poverty as a material and tangible state, the problem is where to draw the line of poverty, often done by examining people on poor relief or those exempt from tax payments. At times, the scope is expanded to also take into account people who have limited means during a certain time in their lives, so called life-cycle poverty.

This thesis however, is not primarily about poverty in the narrower sense of lacking sustenance, but of poor and poverty as concepts and how they were used in practice. This makes it impossible, and inappropriate, to define it as encompassing only those below a certain line of subsistence. Today, the connotations of the word poor (fattig) means that it is mostly used for people who do not have the basic necessities relative to their time and place. In 18th century Europe however, the word poor had a much broader semantic scope. A poor person could be someone who relied on his labour to get by, or a family which did not earn enough to support every member of the household, or an individual who lacked possessions or wealth. Poverty has also been described by Laurence Fontaine as “a potential process as much as a condition”, in that it also concerned people

40 Skinner 1969, pp. 48 – 49; Skinner 2002, pp. 86 – 87. With the larger linguistic context, Skinner means that we must look at other contemporary authors, not only the one making the expression.
41 Marklund 2000, p. 182.
who might fall on hard times. Similarly, Olwen Hufton has expressed that the main characteristic of poverty in early modern France was one of vulnerability, of being exposed to a risk of not having enough to eat. Poverty is also relative to one’s social status.\textsuperscript{44} A priest and a crofter might both denote themselves as poor, but there would be a large difference in their economic possibilities. In the 17th century, poverty could therefore encompass both living in relatively humble circumstances, and being dependent on relief. Since most of the labouring population was regarded as poor, there was no firm line drawn between indigence and poverty before the end of the 18th century.\textsuperscript{45}

Apart from being a process and relative material state, poverty in the early modern period also had social and religious meanings, which come to light when looking at the linguistic meaning of the word.\textsuperscript{46} In \textit{Svenska Akademien}’s dictionary\textsuperscript{47} the word poor (\textit{fattig}) has had five different meanings with several variations within each category: 1. Someone living in small economic circumstances, who barely owns the bare necessities. 2. Something which in some respect is lacking or in an insufficient amount, such as spiritually poor. 3. Small, insignificant, simple; wretched, miserable, un-worthy. 4. Expression of contempt. 5. Pitable, un-happy.\textsuperscript{48} When looking at the English early modern definitions of poverty, Robert Jütte has stressed that its vocabulary had medieval connotations of social relations, and it was above all a subordinating relation between people. The word poor meant more than the opposite of rich or wealthy, which can also be seen in Swedish. Being poor was indicative of various forms of poverty (social, material or spiritual) but also an evaluative term meant to excite compassion or contempt. It could also be applied to someone who was inflicted by accidents or misfortunes. The complexity of poverty prompts Jütte to argue that in order to understand what values were associated with the poor, we must also look at words which have semantic relatedness to poverty, such as dearth, ruin, and need.\textsuperscript{49}

Rather than having a set definition of poverty, I have taken inspiration from this way of working when delineating which petitions to use. In a first review of the sources, I picked out the supplications containing the word poor and poverty (in relation to the supplicants themselves), which form the bulk of the analysed material. Many of these also include the words of semantic relatedness which Jütte mentions. In a second read, I also included petitions with synonyms to poor as depicted in SAOB. Those which have been found are destitute (\textit{utblottad}), meagre (\textit{knappa}), penniless (\textit{medellös}), ruin and doom (\textit{ruin och undergång}), wretched (\textit{arme, usel}), distressed or weak.

\textsuperscript{44} Hufton 1974, pp. 12, 18 – 20; Woolf 1986, pp. 9, 50; Fontaine 2014, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{45} Himmelfarb 1984, p. 28; Jütte 1994, pp. 8 – 10.
\textsuperscript{46} Unger 1996, p. 18; Vallerani 2015, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{47} The Swedish equivalent to the Oxford English Dictionary, depicting Swedish language from 1521.
\textsuperscript{48} 1. “som lever i små ekonomiska omständigheter, “som har det smått”; som blott […] knappast äger det nödvändigaste för livets uppehälle”. Synonyms are for example penniless (\textit{medellös}), needy (\textit{behövande}), destitute (\textit{utblottad, utarmad}); 2. ”som i ngt visst hänseende är dåligt utrustad 1. försedd, som har alltför litet av ngt […] andligen fattig”; 3. ”ringa, obetydlig, oansenlig, enkel; usel, eländig, ovärdig”; 5. ”beklagansvärd, stackars, olycklig”, see SAOB, accessed 2016-03-29.
\textsuperscript{49} Jütte 1994, pp. 8 – 10; Fontaine 2014, p. 15. The words that Jütte considers having semantic relatedness to poverty in the early modern age are indigence, dearth, sufferance, want, need, extreme need, nudity, ruin, solitude, exhaustion, pain and melancholy.
condition (beträngda, svaga tillstånd), and expressions of not having enough to support yourself, having nothing or little to live on or eat or being forced to beg. This inevitably involves a certain amount of subjectivity as to what synonyms should have been included. For example, some petitioners say that they have suffered or would be made to suffer if they are not helped. I have not included these in the material even though sufferance is a semantically related word to poverty according to Jütte, because I deemed it not sufficiently connected to the words described in SAOB, which is the only point of reference for Swedish language. With this extended perspective however, I am certain to have captured most of the petitions where the language of poverty, in this broader sense, was used.

**Operational questions**

With these theoretical considerations in mind, I have constructed the following working questions, designed to capture as much as possible of the context around the petitions in the analysis:

- What different references to poverty were made in the petitions?

This is the starting point of the investigation, because in order to examine how a concept is used, it must first be determined what is actually said. By studying the phrases themselves, the reader is also given a notion of what was in these petitions. What words except poor and poverty are used? Do petitioners primarily relate poverty to an economic, social or religious context? Is it a current state or something which *might* happen to them? Where in the petitions are expressions of poverty made, and how does it relate to the conventions on how to write a petition?

- Who were the petitioners using the language of poverty?

In the particularly hierarchical society that was early modern Sweden, one of the most crucial parts when analysing a text is finding out with whom it originated. People were divided by for example social origin, marital status, gender and household position, factors which affected how petitioners presented and described themselves and others. This implies that their arguments and actions were shaped by the unequal distribution of power and by the available social roles. How people spoke about personal poverty in petitions might therefore be affected by who they were, which is why it is important to incorporate this into an analysis of how the concept is described and used. Depending on whether various groups use poverty in different ways, and with different connotations, it could also give insights into the perception of poverty. For example, if more women than men used the language of poverty, it begs the question if this had to do with how poverty was perceived and if it was more acceptable for women to refer to themselves as poor.

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50 The number of petitions mentioning suffering and no other words semantically related to poverty are few.

- In what kind of cases was the language of poverty used?

This question aims to capture part of the external context of the language of poverty. The CA handled a variety of cases, each with a particular legal framework. If laws and regulations took poverty into account, it could have affected the petitioners’ choice to use it. If there was a legal advantage to calling yourself poor, this might explain why supplicants chose to name themselves as such. However, if the language of poverty was used in many different cases, it indicates that the choice to call yourself poor depended on more than just provisions in law.

- What were the stipulated causes of the petitioners’ poverty?

Through this question, it is possible to come closer to the ideas behind the language of poverty as its answer illustrates what kind of poverty the petitioners referenced, and how the supplicants wanted to appear in this state. It also indicates what form of poverty would have been strategic or acceptable to mention to the CA. As there is also quite a lot of previous research on what paupers indicated as the cause of their poverty when they applied for poor relief and why they did so, those results can be related and compared to the poverty expressed by petitioners at the CA.

- What qualities or actions did petitioners mention in connection to poverty?

Here, I want to find out which topics the supplicants bring up as related to poverty, as it is necessary in order to understand what lies behind these statements. The concept of poverty did not operate on its own, but was used in combination with other expressions and it is only by analysing these together that the underlying ideas and values can be gleaned. In short, the descriptions and use of poverty will only make sense when taking its relation to other issues into account.

As the working questions reveal, the thesis contains both quantitative and qualitative elements. The first three questions are separated into own chapters, where numbers two and three deal mostly with quantitative issues. By using other sources, such as tax registers and parish archives, I have traced the petitioners, finding out more about their social background and marital status. This information has been placed in a database which has then formed the base of my analysis. The two last questions have been answered by identifying certain themes in what was brought up in connection to poverty. Therefore, I have let the themes themselves, rather than the actual questions determine the disposition of the remaining chapters. Throughout the qualitative analysis, the categories of gender, marital status and social status have been taken into account by using the constructed database, to see if there are any patterns in who mentions what in connection to poverty. To be able to analyse these petitions however, a knowledge of the conditions surrounding their creation has been essential, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

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52 See chapter 4.
Petitioning was a widespread practice in early modern Europe and had its roots in antiquity. The possibility to supplicate ranged from handing in individual letters for poor relief to your local parish to presenting mass petitions to the king. The institute itself was both seen as a way of legitimating the social order and as a mode of communication between the Crown and the people. From the people’s perspective, they became involved in petitioning either because they wanted help from the authority or because they defended themselves against another petitioner’s claim. The petition therefore created a channel between the ruler and his subjects, which made it possible for men and women to shape this interaction on their own terms. In several countries, such as Britain, Germany, Russia, Sweden and Japan, petitions were for example used to influence legislation. The early modern state had several reasons to take these supplications into account. First, the supplication was a window into the mind of the general population. Secondly, if petitions were not heeded, there was always the threat of revolt. Thirdly, they could also be used as a way for the state and the people to alliance themselves against intermediate power holders. There is also some evidence that petitions from peasants and others were quite often successful to some extent.

In Sweden, a person could petition on both local, regional and national levels. Due to a growing state apparatus, the regional CAs were established between 1634 and 1635, headed by the County governor, with the task of over-seeing administration in cities and on the country side. The governor had a double role, being the Crown’s regional representative, as well as being charged with protecting the interests of the county and its inhabitants. The CAs had a wide range of tasks within the state administration which were stipulated in three consecutive instructions 1635, 1687 and 1734. For example, they were charged with taking care of church matters, monitor the courts and execute their verdicts, overseeing the recruitment of soldiers and collect taxes. Over time, two separate parts of the CA emerged, the County Registry (Landskansli) and the County Office (Landskontor), headed by a secretary and an accountant respectively. The County Office was basically responsible for collecting taxes, and the County Registry managed everything else. Below these, civil servants such as bailiffs, sheriffs and scribes took charge of the day-to-day tasks.
of the important functions of the CAs was to receive and process petitions from the public on various issues within their jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{60} According to the instruction of 1635, the governor was supposed to keep open every day except Sunday to enable people to hand in petitions. As such, the institute of petitioning was a way for the peasantry and the lower orders to be heard. In practice, the governors tried to limit this possibility by restricting the number of days a petition could be handed in. Petitioning was also limited by certain required fees, so called fees of \textit{charta sigillata}.\textsuperscript{61} How the actual handing in of the petition was handled is somewhat unclear. There are indications in the instructions that the governor was to have a room for waiting petitioners and that the petition was to be read out loud by the governor or his scribe.\textsuperscript{62} It is not certain whether this was done in practice, but the petitioners did quite often go to the CA in person which would indicate that some form of oral presentation would have accompanied the actual handing in of the petition.\textsuperscript{63} If the petitioner was required to appear physically at the CA, it might have been an additional restriction on the possibility to supplicate.

Whether it was done orally and in person or by just handing in a letter, the petitioners and their counterparts explicitly ask for something, making these letters highly strategic documents with the purpose of showing that the petitioner should get the CA’s help.\textsuperscript{64} An important assumption that I make when analysing them is therefore that the contents of the petitions are there because the petitioners or their scribes thought it would advance the cause of the supplicant.\textsuperscript{65} Nothing would have been put in the petition if there was not a reason for it. The choice of what to write and how to phrase the text however, was affected by the characteristics of the petitioner, but also by the conventions of how to write a petition and who actually wrote it.

**How to write a petition**

Who was the writer of a supplication? In 18th century Sweden, the ability to read was fairly widespread compared to the rest of Western Europe, but few people could write. Nils Erik Villstrand has argued that even though many of the peasantry could not write themselves, they still had access to a wide variety of more or less educated scribes who were willing to set up documents for them and as such they had an \textit{accessive} ability to write.\textsuperscript{66} There is reason to believe that the petitions to the CA was often written by someone else than the supplicant. Even though many

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\textsuperscript{60} Frohnert 1985, p. 251; Asker 2004, p. 239.

\textsuperscript{61} Linde 2000, pp. 96 – 97; Jonsson 2005, pp. 59, 235; Olsson 2007, p. 60; Linde 2009, p. 232. These fees were not supposed to be exacted from the poor and the peasantry only paid half, see Frohnert 2001, p. 164.


\textsuperscript{63} See for example appendix 1, no 110.

\textsuperscript{64} Sokoll 1997, p. 131.

\textsuperscript{65} See also Prytz 2013, pp. 46ff, who comments that the writer of the petition would have made conscious choices on what to emphasize.

\textsuperscript{66} Villstrand 1999, pp. 90 – 91, 93 – 94, 97. Thomas Sokoll applies the same argument in relation to illiterate paupers, who still had access to people who could write, so-called scriptural power, see Sokoll 1997, pp. 134 – 135.
different handwritings are visible in the material, several of them recur for different supplicants. Signatures on petitions handed in by peasants were often in the same hand as the text itself, but at times signed with a mark in different ink. There are also examples of petitions where the ink or the handwriting of the actual signature differs from the text.\textsuperscript{67} Some people undoubtedly wrote themselves, but many seem to have had petitions written rather than putting pen to paper themselves.

There are some indications as to the identity of these writers who were concealed behind the signature of the petitioner. According to \textsection 10 of the trial regulation (\textit{rätttegångsordning}) of 1695, both the party and his or her representative were supposed to sign documents handed in to the courts, including petitions.\textsuperscript{68} While this rule was explicitly applied to court processes, it seems also to have encompassed the handing in of petitions to the CA. There are also indications that the governor issued special decrees saying that the petition needed to be signed by the scribe as well.\textsuperscript{69} Despite these rules, the supplications were relatively rarely signed by anyone but the petitioners themselves. In the cases where they were signed by the scribe, these were often legally schooled, such as law students or various lawyers and prosecutors.\textsuperscript{70} Other writers could be parish priests or educated neighbours.\textsuperscript{71} In a case between assessor Bengt Silfwerstedt on the one hand and quartermaster Lars Sandberg and some farmers in Danmark parish on the other, the assessor complained that in his counterparts’ petition, the signatures were made by the same hand. The petitioners answered that the quartermaster had written the document and signed it himself, and for the farmers who could not write, their chaplain had signed. In addition, they argued that the meaning behind His Majesty’s trial regulation of 1695 could not be to force the peasantry to employ expensive scribes when one of the petitioners knew how to write.\textsuperscript{72} This implies that people did not always get help from established and educated scribes, but turned to others as well.

What are the source critical implications of not knowing whether the petitioners wrote their supplications themselves? In the process of making an oral story into a written document, the contents would have been affected.\textsuperscript{73} Therefore, it is possible to argue that the values and ideas coming to light in these supplications are in fact those of the writer, and not of the petitioner. It is my contention however, that as much as the actual words are the product of the scribe, that person would have had to adapt his way of writing depending on who was standing in front of him. In other words, the scribe would have had to know what was appropriate to say depending on the

\textsuperscript{67} See for example Landsarkivet i Uppsala (ULA), Länsstyrelsen i Uppsala län (LU), Landskansliet (LKa), D IV c:7, petition 17300720 (Johan Axberg). Axberg was a judge, so not only peasants had other people write for them.
\textsuperscript{68} Schmedeman 1706, p. 1419.
\textsuperscript{69} See appendix 1, no 152, 160.
\textsuperscript{70} See for example appendix 1, no 24, 136. In no 136, a particularly active scribe named Nils Westerström is noted to be a law student. See also ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17330908/17331013 (Christina Silvius /. Captain Fagerstråle).
\textsuperscript{71} Bregnsbo 1997, p. 113; Houston 2014, pp. 80 – 81.
\textsuperscript{72} ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321111 (Lars Sandberg et al. /. Bengt Silfwerstedt).
\textsuperscript{73} Villstrand 1999, p. 94.
characteristics of the petitioner. The statements in the petitions would have showed the legitimate expression used in meetings with the state, which prompts Andreas Olsson to argue that the norms expressed should have been accepted by both writer and petitioner.\(^{74}\) I would not go as far as to say they were accepted, as we cannot know what the petitioner really thought, but at least they were used by them. In addition, many peasants put their mark on the petition and there is evidence to suggest that the petition was read to the supplicant after it was written.\(^{75}\) Taken together, this indicates that the petitioner stood behind their content. In the thesis, I will sometimes say that petitioner A wrote something. Even though we do not know if this particular supplicant did write it, I will keep the straight form in order to avoid unnecessarily complicated sentences.

Another consideration when looking at the petition is how it was actually written. Supplications in many parts of Europe were based on a classical rhetorical division. With smaller variations, most petitions seem to have included parts which in Latin were called salutatio, captatio benevolentiae or exordium, narratio (including argumentatio), petitio, and conclusio. Beginning in the Renaissance, the importance of rhetoric as a basis for letter writing changed, and epistolary manuals were based on several literary traditions, but this basic model of division seems to have been kept.\(^{76}\) The petitions I have studied follow this pattern as well. The salutatio was a phrase of greeting, with variations depending on who was the recipient.\(^{77}\) The exordium was a sentence in the beginning of the petition, designed to capture the benevolence of the addressee.\(^{78}\) Most petitions where the language of poverty was used had such a sentence, but there are examples of supplications which go straight to the point instead. After this initial and more formal part came the story itself, the narratio, most often mixed with arguments (argumentatio) on why the governor should heed their cause. Sometimes the plea itself (petitio) came somewhere in the middle of the petition, with a continuation of arguments later, other times the plea was given towards the end. The end of the petition also reverted to being more formal, with a sentence which often included wishes of well-being or prayers for the governor and then a signature.\(^{79}\)

The rhetorical division of the petition makes it necessary to elaborate on to what extent rhetorical methods also affected the contents of the petition. Rhetoric, or the art of persuading in each particular case, consisted of three different parts: the finding of persuasive arguments (inventio), the ordering of the speech or letter (elocutio), and the execution of the speech (pronuntio). According to rhetorical theory, depending on the genre of the speech certain arguments were deemed suitable. The 17\(^{th}\) century rhetorician Gerardus Johannes Vossius states for example that in the genre which

\(^{74}\) Olsson 2007, pp. 60 – 61.

\(^{75}\) ULA, LU, IKa, D IV b:19, petition 17331103 (Olof Ersson ./. Thomas Kihlmarck).

\(^{76}\) Hansson 2000, p. 27; Sokoll 2001, p. 57; Shaw 2012, p. 62; Houston 2014, p. 73. Shaw names the parts inscriptio, intutilatio, petitio, and appreciatio while Houston also adds other parts which were part of the argumentatio.

\(^{77}\) How a recipient was titled was seen as very important, and one Swedish letter-writing manual devotes a full third to questions of titles, see Biurman 1731.


\(^{79}\) Offering prayers in the end of the petition was a wide-spread practice, see Houston 2014, p. 97.
Petitions belong to, one might search for arguments in the useful, the just, the pious, the necessary and the glorious among other things.80 This was then a method that when used might not allow for much individuality in the petitions, but would rather result in petitions reflecting rhetorical ideals. However, these ideals would in themselves be adapted to the society in which they were used. According to R.A. Houston, petitions were formed in accordance with how a letter was supposed to be written, making use of a rhetoric suited to the time and place.81 This means that even though the rhetorical methods which were used had their origin in revived classical rhetoric, they were also adapted to the time in which it was written.82 The extent to which rhetoric was used also depended on the context, as it was used more in writings connected to education than in manuals focusing on letters in a practical, work-related situation.83 Therefore, it is not entirely clear how much the writers of petitions relied on rhetorical method in their arguments, since it depended on their education and the letter-writing tradition they adhered to. However, based on the fact that these petitions in general follow a certain disposition and because letter-writing was highly surrounded by formal rules, it is likely that the arguments mirrored ideals rather than reality. Since this ideal would have been accommodated to the existing view of society, it is still possible to examine contemporary values and ideas through the material.

Due to this high level of prescription in writing, I have consulted two contemporary works, one on rhetorical method and one on letter-writing to help me work with the sources. The first is a work of the aforementioned Vossius, translated by Stina Hansson. He was the author of the basic textbook in rhetoric in Sweden between 1650 and 1850, and it was published in at least 24 editions. His advice on how to give a pleading speech is to start by gaining the love from the one you are pleading to, after that show how the plea can be endorsed without harm to anyone else and finally how you would repay the favour. Vossius does not mention poverty explicitly as something which might be used as an argument.84 By contrast, in the letter-writing manual, authored by Johan Biurman and published in 1731, poverty is mentioned as one of the persuasive arguments, along with issues of grace, kindness, charity, fairness, necessity or one’s family’s comfort. Biurman’s advice on how to write a petition is to start with the story itself, followed by the letter of the law and how this law could be applied to the particular case and ending with the conclusion and plea.85 Apart from normally having a rhetorical division, the petitions do not clearly follow either Vossius or Biurman, even though there are most often elements of them both in the various supplications.

80 Vossius 2006, pp. 5, 7.
81 Houston 2014, pp. 74, 77. In English letter-writing manuals petitions were part of a particular genre and the image given of the petitioner was prone to ideals, such as the helpless and friendless widow or the hard-working and resourceful pauper.
82 For example, rhetoric in the 18th century changed from putting most importance on inventio (finding arguments) to elocutio (how the sentences were expressed). With the coming of French influences on letter-writing, rhetoric was also criticized for being unnatural and fake, see Hansson 1988, pp. 40, 61.
85 Biurman 1731, pp. 9 – 11, 60 – 61.
Since the petitions follow such a clearly based structure, it is helpful to bear in mind where the expression of being poor is made in the petition because with the aid of the rhetorical principles, the intention of the phrase might be gleaned. According to Vossius, arguments to convince were of three different types called ethos, logos and pathos. The purpose of ethos was to win trust, and was primarily connected to the introduction of a speech. Similarly, the purpose of pathos was to affect the emotions of the listener, and primarily connected to the end of a speech. Consequently, logos or matters pertaining to the cause itself was to be put in the argumentative part of the speech.\(^{86}\) If a statement of poverty is made in the end of the petition, it might therefore be to incur some form of emotion with the reader. Since rhetoric was probably not the only method used however, the analysis must also take other factors into account.

**Numbers and nominal linking**

Between the five years 1730 and 1734 I have found 1,016 cases containing about one to three letters from people writing in a private capacity.\(^{87}\) Their division over time is shown in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of cases (N)</th>
<th>Number of cases (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>13 %</td>
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<td>1732</td>
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<td>14 %</td>
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<td>1733</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>23 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>1734</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,016</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16-20; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5-12; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV e:7-8

In the archive, the petitions from private groups and individuals are separated from letters from civil servants and other authorities. In the very few cases where I have found people writing in their official capacity, the letters have been excluded. Most of the cases involve individual petitioners or small groups, whereas only about five percent pertain to large groups such as parishes, guilds and jurisdictional districts (härader). The increase in the number of cases over time as portrayed in table 1, is probably not due to any real growth, but to how many petitions that have been preserved. The CA’s archive has most likely been culled,\(^{88}\) which can be clearly seen in cases involving two different parties where it is quite common that only the letter of one party remains. This makes it probable that whole cases have been lost. Estimates on how many petitions the different CAs handled range

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\(^{86}\) Vossius 2006, p. 6.

\(^{87}\) ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16-20; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5-12; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV e:7-8 (in total 15 volumes).

Some of these volumes, especially C IV e:7-8, also contain other documents such as lists, memorandums and thankyou notes which have not been included in the study. The petitions varied in number of pages, but a normally they were between one and three pages long.

from 100 to 2,000 per annum.\textsuperscript{89} Based on quantitative studies made on registers, 760 petitions were handed in to Västernorrland’s CA in 1735, whereas Närke-Värmland’s county received 267 petitions during 3 months in 1760.\textsuperscript{90} Another problematic issue is the fact that the petitions are relatively scattered throughout the archive.\textsuperscript{91} Apart from the large series where the petitions are normally kept, I have gone through a selection of other series, so I am fairly certain to have found the bulk of supplications. Despite the archive being somewhat incomplete, there is no evidence that it has been deliberately sorted so the extant petitions are skewed. Therefore, I would argue that they are sufficiently many to be able to make quantitative and representative conclusions out of the material.

From this large collection of petitions, I have sorted out those where people use the language of poverty, in total 217 cases spread over the years as follows from table 2.

Table 2. Number of “poverty” cases at the CA by year, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of cases (N)</th>
<th>Number of cases (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<td>1731</td>
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<td>1732</td>
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<tr>
<td>1734</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Appendix 1, no 1 – 217.

As can be seen from table 1 and 2, the language of poverty was used in 21 percent of cases (217/1,016) at the CA between 1730 and 1734. This indicates that poverty would have been an established subject to bring up in a petition, but that it in no way was something the recipient expected of a supplicant as the number of cases mentioning it then would have been larger. In general, the relative distribution over time in table 2 is similar to the one for the total number of cases, with variations of a few percent. The use of poverty in petitions therefore seem to have been fairly consistent during the period.

The petitioners’ titles are normally indicated in the supplication. Most people living in the countryside also wrote down the name of their village and their parish, which has made it possible to find additional information about them in other sources. For this nominal linking, I have primarily used parish registers and two different tax registers, poll tax registers (mantalslängder) and cadastres (jordeböcker). The poll tax register listed every household member between the age of 16

\textsuperscript{89} Gustafsson 2007, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{90} Frohnert 1985, p. 254; Jonsson 2005, p. 226. The population of Västernorrland county was about twice that of Uppsala’s in 1751, which might indicate that the number of petitions in 1734 could be quite close to the actual amount, see Statistiska centralbyrån 1999, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{91} The County Registry and County Office are separated into two different sub-archives. The petitions in the thesis are all from the County Registry, as individual petitions to the County Office are not preserved as a special series until the 1770s, see ULA, Landskontoret, D III. The petitions at the County Registry are primarily gathered under three different headings Missives from individuals (Skrivelser från enskilda personer, D IV b), Determined cases (Avgjorda mål, D IV c) and Incoming letters from individuals (Inkomna handlingar från enskilda, D IV c).
and 63. They are lists divided by parish, where the household head is named and it is indicated whether he had a wife, sons, daughters, maids, farmhands or other people living with him. I have primarily used this to find out the petitioners’ marital status. It is not entirely unproblematic to rely on these registers, since older people were omitted. If a wife was indicated, all is well, but if she was not it could be that the household head was either single or widowed, or the wife was simply too old to be noted in the register. Where needed I have therefore also searched for petitioners in parish archives such as registers over deceased, with various degrees of success. The cadastres stipulated the amount of tax a particular farm had to pay. I have used them mainly to find out the particulars of the farm the petitioner was working on, who owned the land and the size of the tax it was able to pay. One problematic issue with them is that their information was rarely changed, and so a home-stead might seem richer or poorer than it really was. Further details on how I have proceeded in using these sources to place the petitioners socially will be presented in chapter 6.

Chapter 4 – The concept of poverty in previous research

The research on poverty in early modern Europe is abundant. The field has tended to concentrate on two different areas, examinations of the poor laws and its institutions from a normative perspective and the material condition of poverty itself, including the survival strategies of the poor. Particular focus has been on people dependent on poor relief, much due to extant sources. In Sweden, research on poor relief in the 18th century has been done mostly in the urban setting of Stockholm, while studies of rural poverty have so far been set in the 19th century. The idea of poverty and perceptions of the poor have also attracted scholarly attention, especially through studies of normative material, debates and tracts produced by early modern thinkers. The characteristics of the sources, often being produced or mediated by elites, have made it difficult to reach the views of the poor themselves, but the need to find out more about how they perceived their own conditions has been pointed out by many scholars. The sources available to us make this endeavour very difficult as it is almost never clear whose perception the material reflects. In the thesis I therefore propose an alternative approach, which is to study the use of a concept rather

92 Schofield 2016, p. 605.
93 Lindström 2008, p. 68.
94 See for examples works of Jeremy Boulton, Laurence Fontaine, Bronislaw Geremek, Steve Hindle, Robert Jütte, Peter King, Alexandra Shepard, and Paul Slack. For Swedish works on the early modern poor, see for example Johanson 1984; Unger 1996.
95 It has been pointed out that this focus on people on poor relief risks giving a skewed picture of early modern poverty, as many more people lived in relative hardship than the comparatively few who were eligible for relief, see for example Boulton 2000, pp. 67 – 68; Engberg 2005, p. 125.
97 See for example Himmelfarb 1984; Ashcraft 1995. For a Swedish example set in the 17th century, see Blom 1992.
99 Even with personal sources, such as diaries, we can never be sure of the extent of the author’s self-censure, see King 2004, pp. 61 – 63.
than perceptions of it. By examining how ordinary people put the concept of poverty and the ideas behind it into practice, we can also glean what purposes it could fill and what importance it might have had for them. This approach also puts the petitioners themselves in focus.

Much of the research presented below concern English conditions. Sweden was a quite different country at the time, much less industrialised and proletarian, more rural and less densely populated, which makes it difficult to apply these results on Swedish conditions. Whenever possible, these English results have therefore been contrasted with Swedish poverty research which has, unfortunately, not been as abundant. First, I will discuss how poverty was conceptualised and later how the concept was put into practice. 100

**Poverty in a cultural system**

During the Middle Ages, poverty had a spiritual value where the alms-givers and the poor were part of a reciprocal system. By offering and receiving alms, the poor could survive and the donor came closer to salvation. In theory, the medieval poor were an idealised and necessary part of society, ordained by God. Towards the end of the period, connected to the Reformation, new ideas of how salvation was to be acquired – through faith rather than acts – emerged and the religious value of poverty was questioned. Despite the poor still being the charges of individual parishes, issues of poverty became state affairs. It has been suggested that the Protestant countries no longer saw charity as primarily a religious duty, and therefore considered only the involuntary poor, who were prevented from sustaining themselves through work, as deserving of help. From the 15th century, there emerged a basic distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor, where the primary people who should be relieved were the infirm, the aged and orphans. 101 In several works, it has also been noted that poor widows were traditionally seen as deserving. Isabel Chabot has suggested that this group were offered help because of their perceived powerlessness and a poverty derived from a state of natural inferiority. 102 The notion of the deserving poor had its religious roots in St. Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians, where it is stipulated that if a man shall not work, then neither shall he eat, thereby providing the basis for the idle as unsuitable objects of charity. 103 Even though the differentiation between deserving and undeserving poor might have been easy to make in theory, in practice it became difficult to distinguish between them. In addition, there

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100 Poverty is a very complex concept and difficult to describe in a way which makes justice to it. The following overview does not claim to be fully comprehensive due to the large field of research.

101 Himmelfarb 1984, pp. 3 – 4; Johanson 1984, p. 24; Stapleton 1993, p. 340; Jütte 1994, p. 11; Unger 1996, pp. 15, 21 – 22; Edgren 2001, pp. 53 – 55; Schen 2001, p. 13; Engberg 2005, p. 58; Ailes 2006, p. 24; Holmlund & Sandén 2013, pp. 9 – 10. In a Swedish legislative proposal from 1664, the deserving poor were considered to be small orphans, poor widows, aged sick people, people with mental afflictions, and others who could not support themselves after a special examination, such as people from higher birth who had fallen on hard times, see Unger 1996, p. 200.

102 Hufton 1974, pp. 11 – 12; Chabot 1988, p. 291; Sharpe 1999, p. 221.

103 Hindle 2004a, p. 38.
existed other forms of division, such as in 17th century England, where one commentator divided the poor into the impotent (the aged, orphans, disabled et cetera), the poor by casualty (due to life-cycle or accident) and the thriftless (the idle and vagabond). The first category was to be given relief, the second put to work and the third to be put in the house of correction.  

Starting towards the end of the Middle Ages, many scholars have noted a hardening view of the poor with increased suspicion both toward the deserving and the undeserving poor. Poverty was increasingly connected to moral decay and dishonesty. For example, badges giving a pauper the right to beg or relief went from being seen as a sign of worthiness to a mark of deviance.  

This notion of increased stigma needs to be nuanced however. Conny Blom has established that several of the medieval ideas and attitudes towards the poor were retained in Sweden during the 16th century, where for example the poor in asylums seem to still have been revered. Many of the religious values around poverty were still kept as Lutheran theologians encouraged charity as a sign of Christian brotherly love. According to John Walter and Keith Wrightson, in 17th century England the causes of dearth were explained by “the evil practices of the covetous and uncharitable, those ‘evill disposed persons unthankfull to God and without pitty towards poore men, [who] by their engrossing of grayne and other abuses will make want amidst plentifulness and continew still the affliction of the poore by their malice”'. This indicates, that in order to avoid dearth, pity towards the poor was necessary on religious grounds. Steve Hindle has also remarked that many, including privy councillors, clergymen and moralists, exhorted charity, which should be given righteously, freely, cheerfully, seasonably and wisely. In the context of 17th century English poor relief, Christian duty was expressed by many participants in the micro-politics of welfare. Despite the existence of a charitable notion however, it must also be emphasized that much of the system of poor relief was based on punitive ideas, where those who were not considered deserving – such as beggars, vagabonds and idlers – were to be punished. 

Lynn Hollen Lees has argued that, for the deserving poor, poverty was not only viewed as a negative early modern phenomenon, but that it was also seen as ordained by God, able to teach people civility and decency. Further, it was seen to encourage hard work, virtue and a sense of social hierarchy. In the mercantilist 18th century, poverty was also viewed as something necessary in order to drive the economy forward, the poor could be employed as a profitable workforce as

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105 Blom 1992, pp. 256 – 257; Jütte 1994, pp. 158 – 162; Unger 1996, pp. 21 – 22; Edgren 2001, p. 54; Hindle 2004, pp. 434ff. In his study of the badging of the poor in England between 1550 and 1750, Steve Hindle emphasizes that it is not entirely clear whether the badge was connected to shame, or if it could actually be a source of pride for the wearer, see Hindle 2004b, pp. 28 – 32.  
long as their wages were kept low, but the unemployed poor were seen as a wasted resource.\textsuperscript{112} According to Lees, the view on the poor and paupers in Britain seems to have hardened first at the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, introducing a rhetoric of exclusion, condemnation and moral superiority which was firmly set in Britain in 1834 when new poor laws came into being. After that, all dependent poor were now seen as undeserving. Lees also describes that during the 18\textsuperscript{th} century there were several different views of the dependent poor, they were distrusted and disrespected alongside the existence of a humanitarian discourse.\textsuperscript{113} In the same manner, Gertrude Himmelfarb has concluded that the stigma of poverty increased in England with the coming of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, when the reforms of the poor laws created a firmer definition between the pauper and the poor. She argues that paradoxically, through such a separation, the stigmatised view of the pauper came to be extended to all the poor. According to Birgitta Jordansson, in the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, poverty in Sweden had become connected to the lower classes – the proletarian workers – so that poverty among the bourgeoisie was seen as “something else”\textsuperscript{114}

From this, it is clear that the early modern concept of poverty and views of the poor were both conflicted and complex, with notions of charity, shame, compassion and condemnation existing side by side. To deploy the language of poverty in a petition would therefore not have been straightforward. To understand why petitioners denominated themselves as poor, it is also necessary to see how this abstract concept was applied in practice. How was poverty used in concrete situations, and what issues were connected to it?

\textbf{Poverty in cultural practice}

When determining whether to grant poor relief, the decision-makers drew upon “a common fund of ideas” about riches, idleness and poverty. In England between 1550 and 1640, Hindle has stated that this common fund meant that relief was an inescapable duty, but that almsgiving should be discriminatory and that the poor needed to have forbearance with their lot.\textsuperscript{115} In an examination of the deservingness of the poor, he has argued that people on relief were expected to conform to certain social norms to retain their right to help. These included regular church attendance to prove they were God-fearing, exhibiting a willingness to work in order to show industry and thrift, and showing that they knew their place by demonstrating proper deference.\textsuperscript{116} In Sweden, Blom has studied what values were important for the poor to exhibit during the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries. During this period, the poor’s willingness to work, their industry, dominated the normative poverty

\textsuperscript{112} Ashcraft 1995, p. 48. The theory of low salaries has been criticized by Leif Runefelt, who argues that the Swedish state in the Great Era did not want to keep its population poor, see Runefelt 2001, pp. 216 – 224.
\textsuperscript{113} Lees 1998, pp. 40 – 43. Gertrude Himmelfarb has argued that notions of compassion and charity were very present in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, both in a religious and philosophical context, see Himmelfarb 1984, pp. 32 – 38.
\textsuperscript{115} Hindle 2002, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{116} Hindle 2004, pp. 380 – 398.
discussions. Other important characteristics were obedience, gratitude, religious knowledge, humility and good behaviour. The Swedish crown also emphasized its responsibility for the poor on religious grounds, and that helpfulness towards your neighbour was a Christian duty, both for the state and the individual. This notion of helpfulness was not only applied to the poor of lower strata, but also for people of better means, so that they would not have to seek poor relief.\footnote{Blom 1992, pp. 63, 129 – 137, 240, 251.}

Shepard has studied the poor’s own description of themselves during the 16th and 17th centuries, when being asked about their worth in English church courts. For these witnesses it was important to emphasize their honesty, which included being able to live off one’s own and maintaining social and business credit. The poor therefore referred to their painful labour, their repute with neighbours and their house-hold sufficiency.\footnote{French & Barry 2004, pp. 26 – 27; Shepard 2004.} When indicating their worth however, they avoided calling themselves poor or making references to receipt of poor relief. When the issue of being poor or on relief surfaced, it was motivated by illness, burden of family or old age. Other indicators of poverty brought up by the witnesses were, besides receipt of alms, absence of an established residence, owning no more than their clothes, earning wages or not having any property. A majority of people calling themselves poor were women, and those who referred to relief were often widows, indicating that it was more socially accepted for them to bring up that issue. Shepard concludes that poverty in this context was strongly connected to notions of subordination and dependence, which made it easy for other witnesses to charge them with being dishonest or otherwise unreliable.\footnote{Shepard 2008, pp. 58 – 60, 80, 82; Shepard 2015, pp. 118 – 128, 131, 144. For more authors on the difference between women’s and men’s poverty, see Engberg 2005, p. 42.} By contrast, in a work on crime and justice in England between 1740 and 1820, Peter King concludes that within the framework of summary hearings, being poor could have a beneficial impact on the verdict and produce leniency and lesser fines.\footnote{King 2000, p. 106. However, later in his work King concludes that the law was biased towards the poor, pp. 364 – 367.}

**Poverty in petitions**

In essence, both Swedish and other European research indicates that while the view upon the poor hardened after the Reformation in that the selection of who to help became more narrow, there still existed a widespread notion of charity for those who could show that they were deserving. In practice however, the deserving poor were supposed to conform to specific ideals in order to retain their right to help. Poverty also seem to have been connected to dependence and dishonesty which prompted witnesses in England to avoid calling themselves poor. By contrast, the language of poverty was much more readily deployed in petitions of various sorts, where it does not seem to have had the same negative connotations or stigma.\footnote{Outhwaite 1999, p. 502; MacKay 2006, pp. 79 – 80; Dodd 2007, p. 298; Shepard 2015, pp. 128, 141.}
It is of course natural that the language of poverty was employed in petitions for poor relief, where the important thing was to establish yourself as one of the deserving poor. These letters contained many of the same references to poverty seen by Shepard when English witnesses explained their lack of means. In both Sweden and England, supplicants mentioned for example families in need, unemployment, accidents, illnesses, infirmity, and old age as causes for poverty while emphasizing their long residence within the parish, previous rate-paying, good reputation, hard work and honesty. The language of poverty was used in a much larger variety of petitions than those solely concerning poor relief however. In her study of petitions for permission to put up cottages on village commons in 17th century England, Garthine Walker finds many of the same issues as in supplications for poor relief, such as petitioners being born in the parish, age, previous effort to support one’s family, with impotence, unfair treatment and accidents being stated reasons for their claimed poverty. Walker concludes that these petitioners tried to set themselves out as deserving poor, but that they also used other arguments to get help, such as having the consent of the community, the patronage of wealthy people or notions of good will and charity.

When studying the language of poverty in Spain, Ruth MacKay found that poverty was used in combination with a language of charity, and as an attempt to highlight the plight through expressions that the receiving party should take pity on them or that God could not permit such need and hardship. In those petitions, the supplicants were not always poor, but the language of poverty was still useful for them. MacKay remarks that the petitioners did not speak a special marginal language of their own, but a shared language understood by both God and the king.

Some scholars have noted that when poverty was used, it was not always in a material sense, but as a marker of social subordination within the deferential tone of the petition. By making themselves out as poor, their dependant condition was highlighted, which could then make them eligible for certain benefits in accordance with paternalistic, fatherly ideals. In sixteenth-century Tuscany and England, claiming poverty could also be a way of arguing for your right to be heard by the prince or the court in order to obtain justice. In being poor, these petitioners argued that they were socially excluded from the common arenas of law, and because they were poor or illiterate they did not know the law.

In Sweden, the study of poverty in petitions is mostly limited to short passages in a few studies. The most extensive analyses have been made by Christina

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122 Boulton 1997, p. 27; Taylor 1997, p. 121; Hindle 2001, p. 115; Hindle 2004, pp. 409ff; Hindle 2004a, pp. 51 – 52. For Sweden, Sara Andersson has studied petitioners’ arguments in applications to get admitted to asylums, finding that the primary stated causes for their inability to support themselves were poverty, old age and various infirmities. As reasons for admittance, the petitioners referred to their Christian way of living, their work, their lack of relatives, their taxpaying, being able to pay the fees, not deserving to beg, or that they did not have much time left in their lives, see Andersson 2012, pp. 41 – 54.


125 Stretton 1999, p. 207; Dodd 2007, p. 282; Meyer 2015, p. 268. Stretton argues that the epitaph poor for widows might also have meant blameless and deserving of help, rather than materially poor, see Stretton 1999, p. 207.

126 Stretton 1998, pp. 84 – 85; Shaw 2012, p. 70.

127 See for example Bergman 2002, pp. 157 – 161; Lerbom 2003, pp. 73, 97; Linde 2009, p. 98.
Prytz, on petitions to the 17th century reduction commission and by Sofia Ling in relation to supplications on female work in Stockholm between 1650 and 1750. Prytz concludes that poverty was used more extensively by women than by men, and that it could be used both materially and in order to evoke sympathy. In the petitions studied by Ling, poverty was often set out to be an innocent suffering, and a state which implied moral and religious obligations on the decision maker.128

Chapter 5 – Making references to poverty at the County Administration

What kind of expressions did petitioners use when deploying the language of poverty? In this chapter I will give an overview of how supplicants phrased themselves on issues of personal poverty at the CA. The chapter also serves as an introduction to the rest of the analysis and demarcates the subject of poverty as the litigants themselves used it.

The most common way to express poverty was to call yourself poor. 70 percent of the cases (152 out of 217) contained an explicit reference to the petitioners themselves as poor.129 In 42 cases, petitioners denominated their circumstances, salaries and property as poor, or used the word poverty (fattigdom) or destitute (utfattig) to describe themselves.130 This is in sharp contrast to the results of Shepard’s examination of English court witnesses between 1550 and 1728, where it was relatively uncommon to name yourself poor.131 Bearing in mind that her investigation is conducted in another country and for another time period, this seems to indicate that presenting yourself as poor was done more readily as a petitioner than as a court witness. While the witnesses were asked to appraise their material worth, the denomination poor in a supplication did not necessarily pertain to an economical state, but was also used as a signifier of hierarchical status.132 “Poor” would then be used as a synonym to “humble” or “lowly”, rather than describing lack of subsistence. It is probable that the word poor was used in this fashion by some people in the sample, especially when the word figured in the formal beginning or end of the petition. For example, the smith Aron Pehrsson commenced by stating that “[I], poor man, need to come before Your Grace with this my humble petition”.133 He went on to describe how he had lent an ox to his brother-in-law a few

128 Prytz 2013, pp. 172 – 176; Ling 2016, pp. 68 – 84. The reduction commission was involved in executing orders of returning donations of land made to the nobility to the Crown, see SAOB, “reduktion”, accessed 2016-02-09.
131 Shepard 2015, p. 114. Out of her total sample, only 2,4 percent described themselves or their spouse as poor, see p. 128. The comparable number for this sample is 15 percent (152/1016).
133 Appendix 1, no 27 (petition 17300608).
years before, but now all the relative’s property, including the animal, had been seized because of debt. Pehrsson made no reference to economic trouble in the rest of his supplication which, together with the placement of the word in the supplication, points to him using it more as a denominator of status.\textsuperscript{134} Similarly, the first sentence in Ingrid Ekström’s petition read: “[I]ast Friday, I poor maid, had to humbly inconvenience Your Grace with my submitted supplication”. She re-iterated her statement of being poor in the end of the petition, where she claimed that because her counterparty had put himself against “the [CA’s] graceful command, so I poor maid must suffer”.\textsuperscript{135} Ekström does not mention that she is in a state of material want, and always use the word poor in relation to either the governor or the CA. Again, this indicates that her use of the language of poverty had a social rather than an economic dimension.

In 69 cases, petitioners called themselves poor without any elaboration on their circumstances or any other reference to poverty.\textsuperscript{136} It was however, just as common to use the word poor in combination with something else that had to do with the state of your property, circumstances, condition or other troubles. Anna Maria Sahlström, widow of a judge in Uppsala, called herself “a poor, defenceless widow” on several occasions in her letter, but she also asked the governor to help her in her “wretched and hard-pressed circumstances”.\textsuperscript{137} Another way of combining the word poor in a petition was to mention that you had become ruined, was in need or in distress. The farmer Mats Ersson wrote to the CA to complain that he had been put out of his home. He described himself as “a poor and spent taxpayer” and later went on to say that by being put out of his farm he “had become destitute and ruined”.\textsuperscript{138} In a similar manner, farmer Bengt Andersson addressed the governor in order to have a travel ban issued on a burgher who owed him money and when doing this he called himself “poor and needy man”.\textsuperscript{139} A few petitioners representing themselves as poor also made references to their small property or business, such as Anna Christina Palm, widow after a local scribe, who called herself “poor, defenceless widow” and later asked to be allowed to stay at the place where she lived “with my small, poor property”\textsuperscript{140} until the lawful day of moving (\textit{laga fardag})\textsuperscript{141} arrived. Tobacco maker Johan Schultz named himself a “poor young beginner” who did not want to pay as much tax as he had been assigned, as he had made “a small or no profit” during his months in Uppsala. However, he did not shirk from paying what could be

\textsuperscript{134} By contrast, he is described as poor in the poll tax register.

\textsuperscript{135} Appendix 1, no 106 (petition 17321113). For similar applications where the word poor is used primarily in relation to the governor, see for example appendix 1, no 42, 47 – 48, 71, 75 – 76, 82, 96, 147, 180.


\textsuperscript{137} Appendix 1, no 24 (petition 17300409). For other applications combining the word poor with a reference to their condition as miserable, pitiful, weak or poor, see for example appendix 1, no 2, 55, 68, 105, 110, 119, 131, 133, 155.

\textsuperscript{138} Appendix 1, no 7 (petition 17301203).

\textsuperscript{139} Appendix 1, no 39 (petition 17301203). See also appendix 1, no 28, 39, 68, 81, 102, 119, 126, 182, 192, 217.

\textsuperscript{140} Appendix 1, no 120 (petition 17330201). See also appendix 1, no 5, 83, 92, 95, 102, 119, 128, 156, 159, 195.

\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Laga fardag} was the day when all tenants were obliged to move away from the property they used, see Nordisk familjebok, 1907, p. 1379.
fair for his “small business”. Finally a few petitioners also called themselves poor in combination with statements that they could not feed themselves or that they had nothing to wear. Johan Upstedt, burgher and tradesman in Uppsala, was made to answer a demand for payment of a debt in 1733. In his answer, Upstedt claimed that he “poor man had endured misery and wretchedness, and still suffered from it” and after his creditors had taken all that was possible from him, he “did not own a coat to wear, or anything to lie in, much less any piece of food to put in my […] mouth”. The combined use of the word poor which has been described above occur in 83 petitions, which makes 8.2 percent of the total number of cases for 1730-1734 (83/1,016). Thus, even accounting for the fact that the word poor could be used to denote one’s place in the social hierarchy, it does seem to have been used as a marker of relative material poverty to a larger degree in these petitions than by the English witnesses examined by Shepard.

The statements used in combination with calling yourself poor, such as being penniless, in wretched circumstances or in need, could also be deployed on their own. Out of the 217 cases, 26 did not contain the word poor or poverty in regards to the petitioner, but made other references that denoted not having enough money, struggling with your subsistence or being in need. For example, miller Mats Jansson claimed that he and his family “had no roof over our heads […], and not a piece of bread to put in our mouths”. Similarly, customs officer Petter Landström made references to his destitute (utblottade) circumstances. In September 1734, captain Nicolas Benzelstierna recounted that because of his difficulties when he was imprisoned in Russia, he could barely sustain himself, let alone pay the sum he owed. In addition, he had no assets to pay with, since he did not have any disposition over his and his wife’s small property. Finally, the wife Kierstin Larsdotter handed in a petition to the governor in February 1734, asking him to forbid her husband to leave the country. She said that her husband had signed a contract with Gustaf Rudbeck to go to Danzig with him. This had brought her and her “poor, many small children to the greatest ruin” because he had taken away all the grain that the house would live off and had started to sell the cattle, so she would be left with the children in “greatest misery”.

The case of Kierstin Larsdotter also reveals that petitioners could speak about poverty as something which might happen to them in the future. Larsdotter stated that she would be left in misery, without any grain or animals, if her husband was allowed to leave the country. Similarly,

142 Appendix 1, no 3 (petition 17300114).
143 Appendix 1, no 119 (petition 17330314). See also for example appendix 1, no 21, 60, 83.
146 Appendix 1, no 9 (petition 17300312).
147 Appendix 1, no 51 (petition 17310811).
148 Appendix 1, no 148 (petition 17350421).
149 Appendix 1, no 165 (petition 17340206).
Johan Schultz – the tobacco maker we met earlier – argued that he had been set the same tax as others who earned a lot more than he did and owned property that he didn’t. He went on to say that if this was not changed, his doom was certain.\(^{150}\) Pointing to the risk of becoming destitute or left in a miserable state was done by certain petitioners, some of which also called themselves poor and others who did not. In 15 cases, it was only the risk of poverty that was emphasized, without any statement of being poor at the time of writing.\(^{151}\) So what did these people risk if the governor did not do as they asked? Some described this risk as Schultz, in general terms of becoming doomed, penniless, destitute or having to suffer,\(^{152}\) while others used more specific phrases. Some said that they would lack bread or other foods or have a difficulty providing for themselves.\(^{153}\)

When defending herself against her late husband’s creditors, Brita Johansdotter claimed that if she was not given more time to pay the debt, she had no other option than “with three small children, take up the beggar’s staff and move from door to door”.\(^{154}\) References to begging was only used as a contrast, something that might happen to the petitioners, never as something they were currently doing and only one petitioner mentioned being on poor relief.\(^{155}\) This is a similar result to that of Shepard’s since the English court witnesses in her material shirked from using references to poor relief when appraising themselves. However, other factors that Shepard found to demarcate poverty were not as prominent in petitions. In her examination, the witnesses related their poverty to not having more than their clothes, lack of permanent residence or working for wages.\(^{156}\) Some references were made of lacking abode or owning no more than your clothes, but in too few numbers (between three and seven cases) for it to be a clear and established denominator of poverty or a pattern comparable to Shepard’s.\(^{157}\)

Consequently, there seems to be several differences in how a petitioner in Sweden would have used the language of poverty compared to an English court witnesses. This may be due to several factors, such as petitioners using the language of poverty more as a strategic tool rather than actually suffering from material poverty. In addition, the language of poverty was used for different purposes in petitions and in a court. In a supplication, you would have a goal of getting something from the governor, whereas when asked to state your worth in court you would generally not be trying to get some direct advantage for yourself apart from appearing trustworthy. Other explanations of these differences could be from cultural, economic or social divergences between

\(^{150}\) Appendix 1, no 3 (petition 17300114).

\(^{151}\) Appendix 1, no 13, 18, 22, 37, 89, 103, 130, 134, 153, 178 – 179, 184, 186, 189, 202, 207.

\(^{152}\) See for example appendix 1, no 13, 15, 24, 56, 59, 91, 103, 149, 156 – 157.

\(^{153}\) Appendix 1, no 15, 24, 88, 100.

\(^{154}\) Appendix 1, no 11 (petition 17301210). For other references to the risk of having to beg, see appendix 1, no 2, 21, 102, 119, 130 – 131, 135.

\(^{155}\) The question of why they might use begging in this manner will be elaborated on in chapter 8.

\(^{156}\) Shepard 2015, pp. 118 – 128. Ruth MacKay has also found evidence that work was connected to poverty. In her study of 17th century Spain, artisans presented themselves as poor because they had to work, see Mackay 2006, pp. 77 – 78.

\(^{157}\) Seven mention their poor or small salary, seven that they lack somewhere to live or have moved around a lot, and only three that they lack clothing, appendix 1, no 4 – 5, 7, 9, 16, 33, 45, 60, 63 – 64, 74, 119, 129, 131, 167, 189, 216.
England and Sweden. For example, English witnesses who connected poverty to wages were often domestic servants or other proletarian workers, and for them wage labour and service was not an asset in court.\footnote{Shepard 2015, pp. 122 – 123.} By contrast, those mentioning their small pay in petitions were more often men of a certain standing, such as scribes or teachers.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 4, 16, 63 – 64, 74, 167, 189.} Proletarian workers at the CA did not connect their work to material poverty, and their work or service was often what they based their demands on, so for them it was most certainly an asset.\footnote{For an elaborated discussion of wage workers and poverty, see chapter 8.} This difference might possibly be attributed to divergences in the countries’ social composition – the higher number of unpropertied wage workers in England could have led to poverty already being connected to a particular class of people, which did not happen in in Sweden until the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

One final way of using the language of poverty in petitions will be discussed – the use of the word poverty itself. In her doctoral thesis, Christina Prytz concludes that people of higher strata used the word poverty in petitions, though women more so than men. Men would illustrate their economic loss by saying that they had been hurt or suffered. Normally men would use some other form of description of poverty, such as being in bad circumstances, leading Prytz to conclude that the word poverty itself was stigmatised.\footnote{Prytz 2013, pp. 171 – 174. The nobility was Prytz’s primary group of study, but her sample did include some people below those ranks.} In petitions to the CA between 1730 and 1734, the word was only used in 20 cases,\footnote{Appendix 1, no 5, 16, 20, 31, 56, 64, 67, 83 – 84, 87, 99, 132, 141 – 142, 158, 175 – 177, 206, 208.} which might be indicative that it was generally not used as a strategy by petitioners. However, it was still a denominator of poverty in almost ten percent of the sample cases which, I would argue, is not few enough to validate Prytz’s results that the word itself was stigmatised. The people using this word came from various backgrounds ranging from crofters toburgers and they were both men and women. The difference of how the word was deployed in these petitions and Prytz’s might be due to the petitioners’ social status. It is possible that noblemen or people of very high social backgrounds did not describe themselves as victims of poverty, but that it was possible to do so when coming from a lower part of the population.

To conclude, three distinctive groups have been found when looking at how people deployed the language of poverty. Firstly, there were the people who called themselves poor without any references to material need. Secondly, there were those who only pointed to poverty as something that might happen to them. And thirdly, a group where petitioners used other denominators for poverty, such as living in wretched circumstances, being impoverished, penniless or in need. In this group some people used the word poor, others did not. In addition, the language of poverty seems to have been used differently by these petitioners and the church court witnesses in 17\textsuperscript{th} century England, which might partly be due to the different forums and roles of witnesses contra
petitioners but it most certainly also has other explanations such as divergences between the two countries.

Chapter 6 – Characteristics of the petitioners themselves

Who were the petitioners invoking the language of poverty? Moving from the actual references themselves, this chapter looks more closely at the social background, gender and marital status of the supplicants. The categories will first be analysed in isolation, and later put together for a cross-sectional perspective. The three different groups discussed in the previous chapter will also be taken into account, since these represent three distinct ways of talking about poverty.

Eight of the 217 cases in the sample are excluded from the following exposition, since the analysis is based on individuals and their specific backgrounds.163 Seven of the excluded cases are petitions made by representatives for entire congregations or local jurisdictions, making an individual perspective impossible. The last eliminated petition is from a group where all the people petitioning have not been named, and thus I have not been able to determine their backgrounds. In essence, most of the analysis in this chapter is based on 209 different cases, involving 284 petitioners.164 They have been included since all supplicants’ names are on the petitions, making it possible to find them in other sources.

Social standing

A society at any given time is in reality too complex to put its members in neat compartments. This means that any social classification is necessarily a simplification. Even within the comparatively hierarchical society of early modern Europe, the social boundaries between people would have been fluid and contingent on a large number of factors, such as wealth, age, birth, religious confession and moral worth, to name only a few.165 Where people were placed on the social scale might also be subject to contention, both between scholars and contemporaries. A third complicating factor is the variation of social standing over the life-course, since societies are never static.166 Finally, in the society of 18th century Europe there were people who did not fit into the formally prescribed categories of the four estates, such as non-noble people of standing.167 This does not mean that a social categorisation cannot or should not be made however, just that a certain amount of caution is needed when using it to draw conclusions. I do not intend to use social

163 Appendix 1, no 22, 34 – 35, 38, 94, 150, 193, 199.
164 This is explained by the fact that 28 cases involve groups between 2 to 16 people, see appendix 1, no 15, 29 – 30, 36 – 37, 50, 61, 72, 80, 91, 93, 95, 97, 113, 124, 137, 144, 152, 158, 166, 170, 179, 181, 184, 190, 192, 202, 215.
166 Runefelt 2015, p. 21.
stratification to make detailed conclusions regarding small social differences between people, but rather as a tool to make quite broad conclusions on the overall composition of the supplicants.

For this division, I have chosen to use Sten Carlsson’s division of the early modern Swedish society, which can be seen in table 3 below.

Table 3. Ten layers of social division in early modern Swedish society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons of standing</strong>&lt;sup&gt;168&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The high aristocracy such as counts and barons. Others of equal rank, such as generals, colonels, manor-holding people and bishops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The lower aristocracy and their counterparts, such as judges in higher courts, assessors, majors and captains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non-noble persons of standing, such as teachers at academies, commissioned officers below the rank of captain, secretaries, surveyors, manufacturers, well-off craftsmen, doctors and most priests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lowest persons of standing, such as private teachers, innkeepers, non-commissioned officers, chamber scribes, sheriffs, stewards, skippers, retail traders, masters of crafts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peasantry and lower urban inhabitants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Peasants owning their own land and relatively well-off peasants working the land of the crown or the nobility. Craftsmen without their own business, master smiths and corporals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A very large group consisting of smallholders, especially farmers that worked other people’s land and had to do day-labours on manors or larger farms. In this group we also find the village tailors and shoemakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Crofters, soldiers, journeymen, smiths on ironworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proletarian workers and vagrants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Proletarian workers such as cottagers, farmhands, maids, labourers, and sailors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>People living as dependent tenants (inhyseshjon) and paupers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vagrants and people on the outskirts of society, with occupations considered shameful, such as various kinds of executioners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Carlsson 1971, pp. 16 – 18.

The reason for using this particular division is that it takes into account people outside of the four estates, and is sufficiently detailed without being too much so. Carlsson also worked specifically with the conditions in Sweden during the 18th century.<sup>169</sup> There are other stratifications to choose from, for example Eli Heckscher’s partition of society based on data from the second half of 18th century. However, Heckscher himself commented that it was very difficult to use the material due to shifting contemporary definitions. Further, that division is not always based on hierarchical principles, but rather based on occupations and urban/non-urban categories.<sup>170</sup>

According to Carlsson, these ten different layers were not clearly divided and may have overlapped each other, but they could still be said to have represented different, distinctly

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<sup>168</sup> Carlsson does not use these head-lines, he merely states that groups 1-4 are persons of standing and groups 5 and below part of the peasantry. I have added the third head-line myself, with thanks to Jonas Lindström for comments.

<sup>169</sup> Carlsson 1971, p. 11.

<sup>170</sup> Heckscher 1949, pp. 127 – 136.
discernible levels. Beyond cautions about fluidity, the table also contains some interpretative difficulties. For example, what is a relatively well-off peasant? I have chosen to look at the fiscal capacity of their worked farms, in other words the farm’s mantal. In cases where the capacity has been found to be above \( \frac{1}{2} \text{ mantal} \), I have considered the peasant as relatively well-off. A similar problem exists within group 3, what is a well-off craftsman? As I have not found sources which denote the wealth of the craftsmen, which also might vary over time, I have put all craftsmen masters in group 4, except for the aldermen of guilds who have been placed in group 3, since they were the leaders of the guilds.

There is also a question of where to put the people who Carlsson himself does not mention. Here I have relied completely on the titles with which the petitioners are addressed, which seems appropriate as titles were very important indicators of status. According to Jansson, in naming someone with a title early modern people “gave that person a place and a potential role in society which brought with it a specific set of expectations and notions.” When petitioning, it was very important how to address someone, which indicates that the title in itself was a classification. Carlsson mentions for example that the title of sir (herr) or madame (madam) was reserved for the four upper groups during the whole period.

The social division of the petitioners who use the language of poverty can be seen in table 4. What is apparent at first is the decidedly small number of people from the top (1-2) and bottom (9-10) layers. Noble people and others in high strata do figure as petitioners at the CA, for example there are 22 of them who are counterparties in the present sample, but they did not seem to invoke the language of poverty. For example, when a petition was made to foreclose the manor of Baron Adolf Herman Wrangel due to his debt of 18,000 daler coins of copper (köpparmyn, hereafter kmt), Wrangel responded that he had been subject to several misfortunes and a debilitating sickness, but he made no references to being in relative poverty.

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172 A mantal was a measure of the farm’s capacity to cultivate crops which were then to be paid in tax, see Nordisk familjebok 1912, p. 818. This mantal must be distinguished from the meaning of mantal in the poll tax registers, which was connected to a person and not a farm.
173 For more details on the considerations made during the social placement of petitioners, see appendix 2.
174 Women were often titled after their husband’s professions in the petitions. When placing them, regardless of their marital status, I have put them in the same group as where their husbands would have been placed.
175 Jansson 2014, p. 3.
176 Due to the fact that when a supplicant was not properly addressed, they made careful note of this in their own petition. See for example appendix 1, no 2.
177 Carlsson 1971, p. 20.
178 Appendix 1, no 10, 30 – 31, 53, 63, 69, 74, 98, 100, 102, 111 – 112, 134, 137, 146 – 148, 152, 156, 160, 177, 212. In all of the 1,016 extant cases at the CA for 1730 – 1734, 176 people belong to groups 1 and 2 based on their titles.
179 18,000 daler kmt was a very large sum of money at the time. For a point of reference, crofter Staffan Mattsson’s red cow was valued by officials a few years earlier to be worth 15 daler kmt, see appendix 1, no 5.
Table 4. The social division of petitioners using the language of poverty, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number of people (N)</th>
<th>Number of people (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplaced</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>99 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Appendix 1.
Note: Out of the 284 petitioners in the sample, I have only been able to classify 263. For the unclassified people, see Appendix 1, no 36 – 37, 57, 59, 61, 71, 78, 80, 96, 101, 104, 166, 171, 180, 195. The result of 99 percent is due to the rounding of numbers.

The higher strata’s avoidance of the language of poverty might of course be a consequence of them not being in a state of material want, and thus it would not have been viable for them to portray themselves as poor. An additional explanation however, would be that using aspects of poverty when petitioning was just not normally done by the higher end of society, since the word poor was connected to the petitioners social standing in relation to the governor. This is supported by the fact that the bulk of people who call themselves poor without engaging in any other elaboration on their condition or situation, thereby most likely using the language of poverty only as a way of indicating their place in the social hierarchy, belonged to the peasantry in group 5 or lower.180 In addition, if the language of poverty could be connected to notions of subordination and dependency,181 a member of high society might not want to be associated with it, and it would certainly not work as a strategy.182

The three members of group 2 who made reference to the language of poverty were all men, which would seem to contradict the results of Christina Prytz, when she concluded that poverty was used in argumentation mostly by women of higher strata.183 However, none of these men explicitly use the word poverty but rather, just as Prytz found, mention themselves being in risk of ruin or in bad circumstances. In light of this, I would argue that the language of poverty was not something the highest strata (groups 1 – 2) used as a tool, probably due to both the hierarchical aspect of the word poor and that making yourself out as poor might activate other associations of dependency or stigma.

180 See table 5 below.
181 Shepard 2015, p. 144.
182 People from higher strata who had fallen on hard times could normally receive special treatment as so called shame-faced poor, so as to avoid them having to beg as ordinary poor people, see Unger 1996, p. 200.
183 Prytz 2013, p. 175.
On the other end of the social spectrum, the results are somewhat more surprising. The people whom one would expect to be poor, the dependent tenants, paupers and vagrants, are also missing from the sample. One possible explanation for this might be that petitions from the lowest strata (groups 9 – 10) have been culled or that they are somewhere else in the archives. Based on the fact that there is a wide range of different cases from all the other groups however, it would seem highly unlikely to separate only petitions from dependent tenants, paupers and vagrants. In addition, the lowest strata also seem to be absent from the total collection of extant cases for 1730 to 1734. Instead, I would suggest that there are three reasons for the absence of lower strata as supplicants. The first regards the kind of cases the CA had to deal with, many of them about taxes, land and debt collection. If you were on the outskirts of society for reasons of poverty, you would probably not pay taxes or have any land. You would certainly have some debts, but in all likelihood no property that could be seized in payment, which would make it unlikely for a counterparty to turn to the CA for execution of an obligation. Thus, the governor’s authority would not be where you turned for help or appeared as a counterparty. However, these people might be expected to be present at the CA in other kind of cases, for example petitions to be exempt from paying tax or from serving as soldiers, or in supplications for search warrants, but they are missing there as well. Therefore, there must be additional explanations for their absence. Poor people were not required to pay petitioning fees, but they might not have been able to afford to pay a scribe or could have been subject to other impediments, such as lack of help networks, for them to petition. In addition, the years 1730 to 1734 were not a period of particular dearth in Sweden, which might also add to the lack of petitioners who were paupers or dependent tenants. In any case, the lowest strata did not use the CA as a venue for empowerment, regardless of any deployment of the language of poverty.

To analyse the rest of the groups in detail, a partition has been made taking into account the way petitioners spoke about poverty. I have separated the groups that use the word poor without elaboration, the people who only talk about the risk of poverty and those who use combinations of different references. The social distribution of these groups can be seen in table 5.

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184 In petitions to the CA in Örebro county, paupers do figure, as a result of the governor being in charge of the city asylum, see ULA, Länsstyrelsen i Örebro län, Landskontoret, G IX aa:5. In Uppsala however, these petitions seem to have been directed straight to the asylum council itself, see ULA, Uppsala hospitalsarkiv, I E:3.

185 Out of the 1,016 applications that has been studied, one would at least expect to find one pauper if they did turn to the CA at all. The lack of dependent tenants or paupers might also be due to my categorisation. Since these groups were often made out of widows, and I have categorised widows after their deceased husbands’ social background, some widows who should be placed in group 9 might have been set somewhere else. However, in the smaller sample of 284 people, only two women fit this description, a sergeant’s widow living at Uppsala asylum and the widow of a farmer living at her brother’s farm as a dependent tenant, see appendix 1, no 105, 116.

186 Fontaine states that the poorest was often the people with the fewest debts because they didn’t have the networks needed to get loans, see Fontaine 2014 p. 25. On the debts of the poor, see also Huffon 1974, pp. 54 – 62.

187 King has also concluded that it was not the most destitute that were most probable to become indicted at court, see King 2000, p. 216.

188 As we saw in the introduction, people did sometimes manage to get others to write for free.
Table 5. The social division of petitioners based on different uses of the language of poverty, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor without elaboration</th>
<th>The risk of poverty</th>
<th>Combination of references with or without the word poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number of people (N)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number of people (%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplaced</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>101 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Appendix 1.
Note: The total percentage of people range from 99 percent to 101 percent due to the rounding of numbers.

People talking exclusively of the risk of poverty were situated on a relatively high social level, ranging from groups 2 – 6, with the largest groups being 3, 4 and 5. By contrast, none from group 7 or below spoke exclusively of the risk of becoming poor. In the group who used the word poor without elaboration, the situation is almost the reverse. A fairly low amount of petitioners from higher backgrounds (groups 3 – 4) call themselves poor without indicating lack of means, while the number of supplicants from groups 6 and below make out almost 40 percent of this particular part of the sample. This suggests that people of lower social status used poverty to place themselves hierarchically in the social order, rather than stating that they were in risk of becoming poor or destitute. The risk argumentation seems to have instead been used by the higher strata, who by contrast did not to the same extent point to them being poor as a marker of hierarchy.\(^{189}\)

The third group encompasses the petitioners who use the language of poverty in different combinations. When comparing table 4 and 5, the composition in percentages between the sample as a whole and those who used the language of poverty in various combinations are fairly similar. Groups 2 – 4, above the peasantry, make out about a third in both tables, while groups 7 – 8 are slightly less than a fifth, with roughly half of petitioners being members of group 5 – 6, i.e. peasants

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\(^{189}\) That the risk of poverty was very much in the minds of people of middling status has been concluded by Michael Mascuch, see Mascuch 1995, pp. 59 – 61.
on larger and smaller farms. The slight lowering of the share of peasants compared to table 4 is mostly due to the fact that many from these groups use the word poor without elaboration.\footnote{The exact differences are: Groups 2-4, 27 percent in table 4 and 33 percent in table 5, groups 5 and 6 50 percent in table 4 to 44 percent in table 5, and groups 7-9 from 15 percent in table 4 to 18 percent in table 5.}

According to Carlsson, the four top layers of the classification represent about five percent of the total population.\footnote{Carlsson 1971, p. 13. Linde remarks that more than 90 percent of the population during the 18\textsuperscript{th} century was made up by the peasantry, see Linde 2000, p. 12. From material used by Heckscher, one can see that countryside dwellers made up about 80 percent of the population, excepting soldiers, see Heckscher 1949, p. 130.} In the sample of the group using poverty in different combinations, they represent 33 percent and consequently, people like priests, burghers and lower civil servants were clearly over-represented among people who deployed the language of poverty compared to the population as a whole. When taking the \textit{total} sample into account however, that picture changes somewhat.\footnote{Sources for the total 1,016 cases: ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16-20; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5-12; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7-8.} Between 1730 and 1734, I have been able to find in total 1,806 petitioning individuals, and based on titles in the writings themselves it has been possible to socially classify 1,372 of them.\footnote{See appendix 2 for considerations made during social placement.} Out of these 1,806, 757 people – 42 percent – could be classified as belonging to groups 2 – 4, that is the lower nobility and people of standing. Even accounting for the fact that I have not been able to classify some petitioners, and that these are not all of the petitions due to culling in the archive, people of standing are hugely over-represented as supplicants at the CA compared to the partition of the total population in Sweden at the time. However, it is somewhat telling that the supplicants from these upper groups make out more than 40 percent of petitioners, but only a third of those that use the language of poverty in combined ways and only 27 percent of people who deploy the language of poverty at all in their petitions. This would imply that issues of poverty were in fact used less by petitioning people of standing in relation to their participation at the CA, and that the same things as have been argued for the high nobility in regards to questions of subordination and dependence could be applicable to all these groups (2-4), albeit not as pronounced.

On the other hand, the groups comprising peasantry and below, 62 percent of petitioners who use the language of poverty in a combined fashion, are under-represented in comparison to society as a whole, but again when looking at the total sample of people, a more nuanced picture emerges. In the total sample, 557 people have been classified in groups 5-9, making it about 31 percent of the whole (557/1,806). The people from these groups articulating questions of poverty in relation to how many that petition the CA at all are clearly over-represented.\footnote{It should be noted that the percentage of people in groups 5-9 would in reality be somewhat higher. Due to the timeframe of the thesis, I have not been able to consult the cadastres for all peasants in the larger sample (1,016 cases) but have had to rely only on titles. Since titles are not used all the time for members of the peasantry, there exist some people in the large sample who are most probably peasants but as I have not had any title to go on, I have not been able to place them. Still, it is safe to say that even so, the ones using the language of poverty from these groups would still be over-represented but not as much, because even if all unplaced people were from the peasantry they would still only make out about half of the petitioners.} The conclusion from this is
that the peasantry and lower groups were not the ones who primarily used the CA to make changes in their lives, but when they did, they were more prone to use the language of poverty in their writings than people from higher strata.

As can be seen from table 4, about half of the people who used the language of poverty were placed in groups 5 and 6. When talking about using the word poor without elaboration this number is higher (63 percent) and regarding the risk of poverty, lower (32 percent). However, in all three variants of the language of poverty depicted in table 5, as soon as we approach the end groups, the number of people is smaller. Thus, in a sense, the people who used the language of poverty before the CA of Uppsala were what we might call “ordinary” people or people who were neither particularly high nor particularly low on the social scale. The lowest groups, who were exposed to the highest risk of material poverty (groups 7-10) make up only 18 percent of the people writing about poverty with some form of qualification of the term. This might have implications on their use of poverty as an argument. Persons of lower standing could have wanted to avoid calling themselves poor, since the term might be wrought with connected problems of dishonesty and dependence. It is possible that this was not the case for people in groups 5 and 6, as they might have had other credible ways to show that they indeed were honest or otherwise reliable. The use of poverty might therefore have been different depending on your social status, also between the peasantry on the one hand and crofters and proletarian workers on the other.

A look at the total sample again, in regards to groups 7-10, gives no conclusive evidence on the matter. Only 118 people (7 percent) have been found to belong to these groups. From table 5, it can be seen that 16 of these use the word poor without any qualification of the word and 28 use the language of poverty in some combination. That means that almost 40 percent (44/118) of crofters, soldiers, cottagers, maids and farmhands present at the CA did use some variant of the language of poverty in their petitions. Thus less than half of the total amount of people in these groups use the language of poverty, where one would expect more to do so due to their vulnerability to falling on hard times, which would point to them avoiding to describe themselves as poor. However, the ones who do use the language of poverty are still over-represented in relation to their overall participation at the institution (15 percent in table 4 compared to 7 percent as indicated above), which would instead indicate that they did not shirk at deploying the language of poverty, but rather embraced it in the same manner as the peasantry. Due to the highly strategic properties inherent in a petition, I would argue that the material supports the view that the language of poverty was not avoided by these people, since one would then expect them not to use it at all, such as the high nobility.

To summarize, the overall social status of the petitioners talking about poverty was quite diverse, but with a clear overweight for people from the middle layers of society, i.e. lower persons of

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standing and better-off peasants. That there could be quite a broad spectrum of people connected to poverty has been found by Sandra Cavallo, when studying who received poor relief in Turin, which even comprised people who had previously had important functions within the city. I have found evidence however, that in relation to total participation at the CA, the language of poverty in petitions was predominantly used by people who were peasants, crofters, cottagers and proletarian workers. Lower people of standing did use poverty as a denominator, but not to the same extent when taking into account their overall petitioning activity. The people lowest on the social scale did not petition the CA at all, and neither did cottagers and crofters to any great extent. However when they did, they quite often deployed the language of poverty. In essence, the petitioners’ social standing was a very important factor in determining who mentioned poverty.

**Gender and marital status**

Out of the 284 supplicants, 52 were women and 232 men, meaning 18 and 82 percent respectively which is consistent with numbers in previous research. This predominance of men is not particularly surprising, as women’s institutional participation normally was smaller than men’s during the early modern period. This picture is confirmed when looking at the whole collection of extant cases, where 214 women and 1,592 men were present at the CA between 1730 and 1734, 12 and 88 percent respectively. When comparing the number of women and men in the smaller sample to the total collection, 15 percent of the men (232/1,592) and 24 percent (52/214) of the women use the language of poverty in some form. This means that women were much more likely than men – almost twice as much so – to make some form of reference to poverty in their petitions. One reason for this might be that women were more economically vulnerable than men, and were exposed to a higher risk of falling on hard times. Another possible explanation is that it would have been more viable as a strategy for a woman to denominate herself as poor when arguing for her cause, depending on to what extent poverty was associated with gender issues. Lack of means

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197 For other works on people’s participation in legal institutions such as courts, see for example Andersson 1998; Stretton 1998; King 2000.
198 See appendix 1. Sofia Ling found that about 20 percent of her petitions were signed by women, see Ling 2016, p. 49. In Germany, women’s participation in petitioning ranged from 3 to 34 percent, see Würgler 2001, pp. 25 – 26. For petitions to the king of Denmark-Norway in the 18th century, Michael Bregnsbo has found that women made up about a fifth of petitioners, see Bregnsbo 1999, pp. 104 – 105.
199 See for example Andersson 1998, pp. 74 – 75 who concludes that the female participation in courts ranged between 14 to 20 percent during the latter half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century. Tim Stretton has studied female litigation in the English Court of Requests during the 16th century, where female plaintiffs made out 10 percent of the litigants, see Stretton 1998, pp. 99, 102. In a later work he states that women in English courts normally made up between 5 to 20 percent of the litigant population, Stretton 1999, p. 195.
200 ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16-20; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5-12; ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7-8.
201 For example, there were often more women than men receiving poor relief, see Wales 1984, p. 361; Sharpe 1999, pp. 224 – 225; Hindle 2004, pp. 408 – 409. For Swedish conditions in the 18th and 19th centuries, see Johanson 1984, pp. 56 – 57; Engberg 2005, pp. 42, 212.
might have been more connected with women, or it could have been more accepted for a woman to be poor than for men and therefore easier for them to use it as an argument. When studying petitions to the reduction commission in 17th century Sweden, Prytz concludes that women could talk about themselves as poor and defenceless in a completely different manner than what was accepted for men. This seems to have been the case in England as well, as Tim Stretton remarks that men were more reluctant to talk about their own poverty and weaknesses in court. The same has been put forward by Isabelle Chabot, who argues that women’s poverty was less questionable than men’s. Finally, Shepard has found that women, and widows in particular, were more prone to describe themselves as poor in English church courts than men.  

The petitioners’ marital status has been possible to discern for 250 people. For women this is normally a lot easier since they were often titled according to their marital status such as widow or wife (hustru). The Swedish word hustru however, did not always signal the woman’s marital status, but it was also used for women who were in charge of households, or had a capacity to govern. In this particular material, this has not been a problem since hustru mostly was used in combination with widow or it was obvious from other circumstances that their husbands were alive. Men however, who were normally titled after their work or social position have been more difficult to categorise especially when determining whether a man without a wife was a widower or single.

Out of these 250 supplicants, an overwhelming majority of 95 percent (238 people) was or had been married at the time of petitioning. Even if all the litigants who have not been possible to categorise were single, which is certainly not the case, the percentage of married or widowed petitioners compared to single would still be 84 percent (238/284). More specifically, out of the 250 categorised petitioners, 5 percent (12 people) were single, 16 percent (41 people) widowed and 79 percent (197 people) married. This means that singles were clearly under-represented and married people over-represented compared to the population as a whole. Due to the previous argument on which people would have been more vulnerable in society, one would expect the reverse. However, I believe that this is more a reflection of who turned to the CA in the first place rather than on who might use the language of poverty. Even though I have not established the marital status of the whole sample due to the timeframe of the thesis, it is my belief that the majority of the petitioners who turned to the CA did so as married heads of households. Consequently, the marital distribution at the CA is an indication of the great importance of marriage for early modern people’s empowerment.

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203 Pihl & Ågren 2014, pp. 188 – 189.

204 See appendix 1. In Ling’s study of female petitioners, all were married, see Ling 2016, p. 50.

205 Statistiska centralbyrån 1969, p. 79.

206 Jansson, Fiebranz & Östman have established that both men’s and women’s authority in early modern Sweden was tightly connected to their position as household heads, see Jansson et al. 2016, chapter 5. According to Pihl &
more likely that you would take recourse to the CA for help. This could have to do with the fact that married or widowed people to a higher degree were involved in the kind of cases that belonged to the governor’s jurisdiction. But this does not explain why single people were not more prevalent in cases concerning debts for example, or why there are only a few cases regarding demands from single people for their salaries.  

One factor that might play into this is that single people in a household could have their master write on their behalf, which would mean that they are not in the sample since they do not speak for themselves. However, such cases are extremely scarce in the whole collection, at most only a few cases and not enough to change the fact that the large majority of the people supplicating were married or widowed. As Stretton has found for the Court of Requests in England, there clearly seems to have existed some form of additional impediment other than jurisdictional for single people to turn to the authorities. Stretton, who studies single women, emphasizes the role of social pressures and lack of adequate resources to account for these people’s comparative absence. By contrast, in Swedish courts during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, single women were not as under-represented as seems to have been the case at the CA.

A cross-sectional perspective

When taking the different analytical categories into account at the same time, a more detailed picture of the petitioners can be painted. Table 6 shows the social composition of the petitioners in combination with gender. The numbers depict all petitioners using the language of poverty, regardless of how the concept has been used.

For men, the relative social composition of the petitioners, seen in column 3, is roughly in line with the percentages shown in table 4, which depicted the social background for the whole sample. This might of course be attributed to the fact that there are so many men in the sample, that the existence of women do not change the overall composition in a decisive way. When comparing the two tables, the numbers for most groups do not change more than a few percentages up or down. It is the corresponding number for the women above the peasantry (groups 3 – 4) that is remarkable, however – being 17 percent of all the women compared to 7 percent for group 3 when looking at both genders. For group 4, those numbers are 27 percent compared to 19 percent. If taken together, 22 percent of the men belong to the groups above the peasantry (2 – 4), while the corresponding number for women is 44 percent. Consequently, women in higher strata used the language of poverty in their petitions to a much higher degree than men within the same social

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Ågren, marriage was also an important factor in people’s possibilities to sustain themselves, see Pihl & Ågren 2014, p. 189.

207 See for example appendix 1, no 98, 106, 146.

group. This strengthens the conclusion that calling yourself poor was more acceptable or strategic to do for women, which becomes especially clear in higher levels of society.

Table 6. The social composition and gender of the supplicants, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number of people (N)</th>
<th>Number of people (% of men and women respectively)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Column 1</td>
<td>Column 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplaced</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: See appendix 1.
Note: In column 1 and 2 we see the absolute numbers of women and men in the sample. Column 3 and 4 show percentages of women and men from within their own group. The percentages amount to 99 percent due to the rounding of numbers.

These results seem to be in line with the ones presented by Christina Prytz and Alexandra Shepard, who both conclude that the language of poverty is used more by women than by men. Women of higher strata (groups 3 – 4) speaking more about poverty, might also be attributed to the fact that their husbands had professions that they themselves could not take over when the husband died, such as priests. That would in a sense put them in a more vulnerable position than a farmer’s widow who might have had other possibilities to stay on the farm. On the other hand, widows in higher social positions had a stronger legal protection in the case of their husbands’ deaths. In addition, a wife in the countryside could by no means be certain that she would be able to stay on the farm if her husband died. Women in a better social position might also have had larger networks and access to more people with the education it took to write to the CA.

Table 6 also shows a lot fewer women than men in groups 5 and 6, 57 percent men and 21 percent women. This might to a degree be due to the unplaced women, since it is my impression that most of these belong in either of these groups, but I have not been able to confirm it. Even so, there would still be fewer women from the peasantry who used the language of poverty than

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209 Prytz 2013, p. 174; Shepard 2015 p. 144. This is also concluded by Sara Andersson in her master thesis on petitions to asylums, see Andersson 2012, p. 42.
210 For example, widows of priests and burghers were allowed a so called nådår, where they could receive their husbands’ income during one year and also stay in the house for the same amount of time, see Schmedeman 1706, p. 674; Modée 1742 p. 276. For the meaning of nådår, see Nordisk familjebok 1914, p. 306.
211 See appendix 1, no 11, where petitioner Brita Johansdotter’s creditors states that she will surely have to leave the farm because she has no man to do the day-labours.
men. In group 8, the proletarian workers, women are again using the language of poverty to a relatively larger extent than men. No decisive difference in their way of talking about poverty has been found to motivate this difference. Instead, for these workers and servants, it seems to have been their ability to work which decided how poverty was used in petitions. When the people from this group called themselves poor and qualified the term in some manner, they often did so with circumstances which would have affected their ability to provide for themselves, such as age or sickness.212 By contrast, people who only called themselves poor without any elaboration generally did not reference anything that would have made it difficult for them to work.213 Therefore, the petitions indicate that gender would have been a determining factor when using poverty for people of higher social strata, while for lower groups this pattern has not been as clear.

Moving on to the relation between marital status and gender, it can be seen from table 7 below that single people are underrepresented overall. Population statistics for the year 1750 indicate that the single population in Sweden above the age of 15 was about a third for both men and women, but only 3 and 12 percent respectively were petitioners at the CA.214 Single women’s underrepresentation has been discussed above, but it should be emphasized that due to this, the unmarried women who ended up at the CA were hardly representative of the single population as a whole. It is interesting however that single men were even more scarce at the CA. To some extent this might be explained by the difficulties of finding out men’s marital status. It is often possible to see whether they are married or unmarried, but it has been virtually impossible to find out if these single men were widowed or had never been married. So in reality, this number of single men might be higher. Even if all men whose marital status has not been determined would have been single, they would still not amount to a third of the sample even if it would put them on par with the percentage of single women present. If it is the case that single men were more underrepresented than unmarried women, it could again have to do with the fact that it might have been more acceptable for women to denominate themselves as poor even when single. However, since no crucial difference has been found on how these men and women use poverty in petitions it has not been possible to establish if this is the case.

Table 7. The marital status and gender of petitioners in relative numbers, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>Unplaced</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>81 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Appendix 1. Note: The percentages have been calculated by dividing the number of, for example, single men only with the total number of men.

212 Appendix 1, no 20, 41, 77, 84, 86, 98. In this group only nine people use any form of qualification to the word poor.
213 Appendix 1, no 25, 32, 43, 48, 54, 58, 106, 143, 146, 203.
214 Statistiska centralbyrån 1969, p. 79.
The largest difference between men and women is the fact that most petitioning men were married and most women widowed. The low number of widowers might be affected by the same placement difficulties as for single men. In general however, if you turned to the CA as a man, you were most likely married and as a woman you were most likely widowed. Marcia Schmidt Blaine has found that women petitioning in 18th century New Hampshire tended to be widows or women without a male household head.\textsuperscript{215} This reflects that different marital statuses could have different implications for empowerment depending on your gender. For a woman, you might have had more possibilities (or more cause) to write to the CA if you were a widow, while for a man the same would be true if you were married. I would argue that this is connected to which person acted as the head of the household, since this was normally a married man or a widowed woman. If the need to write to the CA arose, it would have been natural that it was done by the household representative, and a man who was the head of a household was expected to be married and exercise the authority of a master.\textsuperscript{216}

In her study of gender composition in Swedish courts, Gudrun Andersson found that married women appeared more in court than either single or widowed women. One explanation to this difference from petitioning might be that the courts dealt with both civil and criminal cases, whereas the CA’s jurisdiction was quite different. Another problematic issue is that the above mentioned title \textit{husstru} did not necessarily mean wife. As Andersson herself remarks, it is very possible that many of the women titled wife in court were in fact widows.\textsuperscript{217} For the English Court of Requests, Stretton has concluded that widows were more prone to litigate than married or single women. He explains this by the fact that widows had more legal possibilities than other women and that becoming a widow might have been a catalyst for litigation in itself.\textsuperscript{218} There are a few cases that reflect this in the supplications, where widows shortly after their spouses’ deaths were demanded to pay the husbands’ contracted debts.\textsuperscript{219} So, in contrast to the results of Shepard, the petitions do not reflect a “concentration of the language of poverty as a form of self-description among women, servants, the young and (in the cases of women) the old”,\textsuperscript{220} which she interprets to mean that associations existed between poverty, dependence and social subordination. My results do point to poverty being more used by women than men, but mostly by women from a social position of standing and relative power, being widows in a higher position. The men who

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Schmidt} Schmidt Blaine 2001, p. 64.
\bibitem{Jansson} Jansson 2014, p. 3.
\bibitem{Andersson} Andersson 1998, pp. 90 – 92. By contrast, in economic cases where Andersson qualifies the litigants’ marital status with additional sources, she finds that there were more widows present than married women, see p. 280.
\bibitem{Stretton} Stretton 1998, pp. 109, 113. One important difference between the Swedish and English systems is that in Sweden, the early modern wife was not subject to the practice of coverture. When married, she retained ownership of for example land inherited from her parents, and her husband only had limited disposal of it, see Ågren 2011.
\bibitem{Shepard} Shepard 2015, pp. 143 – 144.
\end{thebibliography}
used the language of poverty were normally married, and likely the heads of households and thus not the most vulnerable part of society.

In summary, this chapter on gender, social background and marital status has shown that the people who used poverty as a strategy at the CA were of quite diverse social backgrounds, but were primarily relatively well-off peasants or lower people of standing. People in both ends of the social spectrum were more or less missing from the sample. To use poverty as a marker of hierarchy was more predominant among the peasantry and people of lower status. More women from higher strata than their male counterparts used the language of poverty which, I would argue, has to do with the way poverty was seen. It seems to have been more acceptable for a woman to actualise questions of impoverishment, due to the fact that they were over-represented compared to the total number of women who went to the CA during these years. There was also a predominance of married men and widows at the CA, which points to the importance of your household position when turning to the authority. Single people of both groups were under-represented in relation to their share of the population as a whole.

Chapter 7 – Supplications in a legal context

In this chapter, I leave the properties of the petitioners themselves and study what these petitions are actually about. Why did these supplicants contact the CA in the first place and could prescriptions in law explain their engagement with the language of poverty?

Contents of the cases at the County Administration

When categorising the different cases, I have consulted the Governor’s instructions (landshövdingeinstruktion) of 1687 and 1734 which set out the tasks of the governor, since most of the petitions can be said to relate to these duties. The few petitions for which it has not been possible to find a suitable section in the instructions often appear as isolated events, so I have put them in a category called miscellaneous. Other partitions would of course have been possible, but since the purpose with this section is to provide an overview of why petitioners turned to the CA, and not a study of the tasks of the authority itself, a rough division of the cases based on the instructions was deemed sufficient. Table 8 presents the composition of the cases where people deploy the language of poverty.

221 The instructions themselves are printed in Schmedeman 1706, pp. 1098 – 1105; Modée 1746, pp. 1071 – 1103. For the purpose and background of the instructions, see Asker 2004, pp. 126 – 130.
222 Pär Frohnert divides the tasks of the CA into seven parts: Its economic interests, its organisation, upholding law and order, promoting trade and industry, social issues, military questions and control of the church, see Frohnert 1985, pp. 215 – 216.
Table 8. Cases at the CA with references to poverty in absolute and relative numbers, 1730 – 1734.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case type</th>
<th>Number of cases (N)</th>
<th>Number of cases (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive measures</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources of the crown</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of soldiers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>217</strong></td>
<td><strong>101 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Appendix 1. The total percentage of 101 percent is due to the rounding of numbers.

The largest group of cases pertained to the CA’s job as an enforcement agency, seizing property from indebted people for private debts or executing court verdicts. The governor’s executive functions were stipulated in §§ 5 – 6 of 1687 year’s instruction and re-iterated in the instruction of 1734, where it was said that the governor could decide on executive measures in all civil court cases, but was not to act as a court.\(^{223}\) In reality, people went to the CA not only after a court verdict, but also if they had a clearly written obligation that the debtor had signed. The most common kind of case in this group was debt execution. In November 1730, the brothers Jan and Anders Ersson submitted a petition, demanding that their outstanding debt to the late crofter, Eric Forsberg, be paid by his surviving widow, Brita Johansdotter. They therefore wanted the governor’s help in sequestering some of her property as surety, since they were afraid that she would now leave the farm and live with relatives. Brita Johansdotter answered the petition, saying that she was more than willing to pay for the debt, but because of her bad situation, with her young children to support, she asked for more time. If not, she claimed she would have to go begging with her charges.\(^{224}\) Another common situation belonging to this group was when someone claimed to have precedence to a certain property, for example cases between two creditors who both wanted payment out of the debtor’s property.

The second largest group of cases pertained to the governor’s responsibility to supervise the resources of the state, such as taxes, land, forests and commons, which was stipulated in § 23 in the instruction of 1687.\(^{225}\) In September 1730, Ingri Wärenberg, wife of a burgher in Uppsala, applied to be relieved from some taxes which had been assigned to her previous husband on the grounds that the tax officer should have come long before and that she risked becoming destitute if she were made to pay. Another petition was made by Olof Larsson, peasant on a farm owned by the state. He said that he, poor farmer on Crown lands, had need of some wood for his fences but because there was no forest on his farm and he had no possibility to buy any, he asked to be allowed to chop some on the nearby commons. Finally, in June 1734 the master shoemaker Roland Iringh

\(^{223}\) Schmedeman 1706, pp. 1100 – 1101; Modée 1746, pp. 1073 – 1075.
\(^{224}\) Appendix 1, no 11 (petitions 17301126, 17301210).
\(^{225}\) Schmedeman 1706, pp. 1102 – 1103.
in Uppsala applied to be released from the duty of repairing the Crown’s roads. He argued that he had never shirked from any of his duties, but now he was forced to ask for a change. He stated that he had to rent property from others, he did not use any of the city’s fields and had a large household of children so it was difficult for him, craftsman and a poor man, to endure.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 13 (petition 17300923), 153 (petition 17340109), 191 (petition 17340629).}

The third group of cases was related to formal activities of the CA, as the supplicants wanted the governor’s help to send letters to other authorities, to make someone appear before the proper court or to issue proclamations of missing people. These activities might be said to pertain to the governor’s duty to uphold law and order, but they are not clearly stipulated in the instructions. For example, Margareta Larsdotter, a maid working in the household of an Uppsala professor, wrote in January 1730 to ask for the governor’s help. She had had an illicit relation with an apprentice in her former household, and after her pregnancy was discovered, he had given her a written promise of marriage. Since then however, he had become a journeyman and had moved to Stockholm. Now Larsdotter had heard that he intended to travel far away, thus shirking from his pledge. She, poor and innocent woman, therefore asked the governor “eyes crying” that he would write to the guild in Stockholm so the journeyman could be brought back. In April 1734, the discharged soldier Carl Andersson Räff pleaded for help in locating papers he had lost on his way to claim alimony from his regiment. The papers, which he needed in order to get the money, had contained certificates of his discharge and his right to support in addition to letters from the local priest. As if this was not enough, he had also lost papers belonging to his friends. He, wretched, distressed and paralysed soldier, had searched and inquired after the papers but had not found them. He therefore asked the CA to announce this in the churches, so that he and his friends would not lose their alimonies.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 43 (petition 17300112), 79 (petition 17320424).}

After these three larger groups of cases, there are three smaller ones, which pertained to issues of land, recruitment of soldiers and the CA’s own personnel. §§ 35 – 39 in the instruction of 1687 state that the governor should care for the correct use and building of farms and see that they were taken care of accordingly. He should also make sure that the farms were not overly divided into smaller parts and prevent them from becoming deserted.\footnote{Jonsson 2005, pp. 64 – 65.} Most of these cases were about people being turned away from the farms they used or whether they could get deeds for bought farms. In October 1734, adjutant Petter Berg petitioned the governor for help to get the discharged pyrotechnical soldier (lärfyrverkare) Johan Runbohm and his family off his property. He stated that he had given the soldier proper notice, but Runbohm refused to leave because of a made-up monetary claim on Berg. Berg further wrote that he had not given Runbohm any promise to stay, but that they had lived at his place as dependent tenants (inhyses) as long as he would have them. Runbohm answered, first saying that he was not a dependant tenant at all, but had been persuaded by Berg, as his brother-in-law, to stay with him and work as a paid tailor. He speculated that Berg
had probably not mentioned their familial relation because he was ashamed of Runbohm’s poverty. Furthermore, he would be happy to move from Berg’s house as long as he got paid for the work he and his wife had done.229 According to § 8 in 1687 and 1734 year’s instructions, the governor was responsible for overseeing the recruitment of soldiers in the infantry and the contracts made between the soldier and the group of recruiting farmers (the röte).230 This group contains petitioning soldiers who did not want to be recruited, several röte who wanted help with getting soldiers and cases between different röte on the responsibility of recruitment or salary payments to soldiers. In June 1730 the farmhand Anders Olöfsson sent a petition to the governor, claiming that he – poor farmhand – had been tricked into taking money from a farmer to be a soldier for that röte in 1718. Now the farmer was trying to forcibly recruit him despite him having given the money back. Since he was very frail and the farmer had fooled him, he asked the governor to let him stay in his current service.231 The governor’s responsibility for his own staff and certain people in the service of the Crown, such as scribes, bailiffs, tax personnel and foresters was prescribed in § 24 and § 44 of 1687 year’s instruction.232 The few cases belonging to this group were mostly about complaints over officials or petitions for employment in different areas.

The last group, miscellaneous, contains many different but isolated cases, such as Bengt Andersson who wanted his day-labours for his noble lord to be done in another way than was prescribed by the master. Other examples are Nills Lundström who had taken in an orphan but could no longer afford to sustain him and therefore asked the governor to help him in seeing that the child could go to the orphanage in Stockholm, and Mats Bertelsson who wanted permission to hire a farmhand as he was too old to work his croft himself.233 As can be seen, the language of poverty was employed by a large variety of people and in quite diverse cases. Many pertain to money or sustenance in some form, such as to get back loans they had made, to stay on their farm, not have to pay certain fees or to have the right to use the Crown’s commons. As such, they would have been things that were of a great importance for the petitioners, and it is more than likely that the words and strategies used in communication with the CA would have been carefully thought out, with or without the help of a scribe. But based on the cases alone and their legal context, could there be any reason for the petitioners to make themselves out as poor?

229 Appendix 1, no 208 (petitions 17341010, 17341016). This case shows the social intricacies of titles and that it mattered for people what they were called.
231 Appendix 1, no 25 (petition 17300603).
233 Appendix 1, no 123 (petition 17330913), 131 (petition 17330606), 161 (petition 17340116).
Legal incentives for claiming poverty

In her forthcoming book, Sofia Ling studies petitioning women on the labour market of Stockholm between 1650 and 1750, many of whom called themselves poor. Ling states that the regulations on work in the city might have affected their choice of speaking about poverty, as the poor of Stockholm could be given special license for certain jobs. Might there have been similar motivations for people to denominate themselves as poor in the legal framework of the CA and its jurisdiction? The large variety of cases where people use poverty suggest that the reason for doing so depended on wider notions, but that does not preclude that specific laws might have added an extra incentive. Due to the case diversity, a thorough survey of the surrounding laws has not been possible to make, so the analysis will be limited to some of the rules pertaining to the two largest groups of cases: executive measures and resources of the crown.

On a general level, poverty was something that the legislator took into account. The poor did not have to pay petitioning fees at courts or other institutions, but the legal protection for people without means went even further. People who had nothing with which to pay for a legal procedure were still to be given “what was necessary for their justice and defence.” In a regulation for the enforcement agency (Exekutoren) in Stockholm, it was stipulated in 1720 that the cases of the poor should be handled swiftly. From some laws, it can be gleaned that certain people were also considered to be extra deserving of help. For example, on the 23rd of June 1731 a regulation regarding payment of outstanding salaries to soldiers was issued. The pay was to come from a certain fund, and preference was to be given to former prisoners. However, among them generally needy (nödlidande i gemens, my italics) such as poor widows, minors, non-commissioned officers, people discharged due to age and those whose welfare had suffered because of accidents were to be helped first. That poor widows occupied a special place of legal consideration can also be concluded from a regulation regarding extra taxes from May 22nd 1719, where widows who were penniless and poor would be spared. In the specific jurisdiction of the CA, the governor was charged with overseeing the state of the poor in his region. According to the instruction of 1734, he was to make sure that there were no vagrants or idlers in the county. Those without support networks and impotent from age and illness, were to be put in asylums or parish poor houses unless they were able to work at the manufactories. Consequently, the people who could get help from the governor because of

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235 Schmedeman 1706, pp. 1094–1095. This regulation dated from 1686.
236 Modée 1746, p. 1004. This meant that a person who was poor could obtain verdicts, travel passes and other documents without paying, but the regulation - from 1733 - does not stipulate who is considered poor.
237 Modée 1742, pp. 74, 196; Modée 1746, p. 871. The legislation often connected poverty with widows, and especially poor priest-widows, see for example Stiernman 1729, p. 1258; Modée 1742, pp. 33, 276, 492. Other people who were denominated poor were schoolteachers and students, see Modée 1742, pp. 38, 40.
238 Modée 1746, pp. 1083–1084.
poverty were the aged, the sick and those unable to fend for themselves through work. This is a
distinction well known from regulations regarding poor relief.239

In matters of debts, foreclosures and sequester, a person’s poverty could have some significance.
According to the enforcement regulation of 1669, a creditor could ask officials to take certain
property into sequester before any court proceedings, on grounds that the debtor might escape or
sell the goods. For this to happen, the petitioner had to put up some security, and if such could
not be paid due to the supplicant’s poverty, the sequester might be allowed anyway if the case was
clear. In 1687, a provision was passed on how to proceed in matters when a debtor was so
overcome with debt that he or she had to give all his property to his creditors in order to avoid
arrest and to be free of claims. For this to be allowed however, the poverty had to be the result of
an accident or other things that was not the debtor’s fault. If the circumstances were caused by
living over one’s limits, gaming or idleness, this practice (called cession bonorum) was to be denied.240

In regards to taxes, there existed some legal possibilities to get relief because of small means. If
you were very poor you were not obliged to pay poll tax (mantalspenning).241 If a farmer turned out
to be too poor to pay the taxes related to the farm, the payment was tried at a later date and the
taxes could be written off if there were any special reasons for it, such as bad harvests. If not, the
property of the farmer was subject to foreclosure and later an auction. In addition, the poor
circumstances of the taxpayer were taken into account in a wide range of other regulations.242

From this short review, it is evident that petitioners would have been motivated to reference
their poverty or small circumstances because it was taken into consideration in legal provisions.
Whether it regarded debts, taxes or fees there were several examples when the laws gave lenience
to someone who was too poor to pay, provided that the poverty came from the right circumstances,
usually accidents, age or sickness, or even being a widow. Petitioners might therefore have had
more incentive to call themselves poor than witnesses in court, since the former wanted a certain
decision from the governor which was often based upon legal prescriptions.

The existence of regulations where a poor condition was considered does not mean anything in
itself if the petitioners did not know of them. There is quite a lot of evidence pointing to the fact
that early modern people, including the poor, had a legal awareness. Central proclamations were
read aloud in church and making references to law and custom was an established way for peasants
to argue in writings to officials and the king.243 A few petitions contained direct references to

240 Schmedeman 1706, pp. 596, 1121. The of practice of cession bonorum meant that the debtor ceded all his property,
except for the bare necessities of life and after that he was free from all debt. To acquire cession bonorum was therefore
an advantage for the debtor. See Nordisk familjebok 1905, p. 1503.
241 See for example Stierman 1729, p. 1509.
242 Modee 1742, p. 797; Frohnert 1993, pp. 102 – 103. For example, poor burghers were exempt from paying a
special tax in 1719, people who had been caused poverty by accident were exempt from another tax in 1727, and
poor people were not obliged to pay a certain fee in 1728, see Modee 1746, pp. 67 – 69, 667, 756.
specific regulations but it was more common just to mention his majesty’s laws in general.\textsuperscript{244} The petitioners also could have help from legally trained scribes.\textsuperscript{245} In essence, I would argue that the access to and knowledge of the law that supplicants possessed, in combination with the contents of the regulations, made for clear incentives to raise the question of poverty. But the legal framework was not the sole reason for deploying the language of poverty, since its usage could also be explained by several other ideas about society and social order, to which I will turn next.

Chapter 8 – Values and ideas behind the language of poverty

This chapter explores different explanations for using the language of poverty further, through the identification of certain themes brought up in connection to it and by trying to gauge the intention behind using this particular strategy. In what manner was poverty used in relation to other issues? And what where the ideas and values that motivated its deployment? As we have seen, provisions in law would have provided a certain incentive for a petitioner to bring up the question of poverty, but due to the variety of cases in which this language was deployed and the diversity of people who did it, legal regulations cannot wholly explain why it was used. In this chapter, I will argue that the language of poverty was primarily connected to three different complexes of ideas, which were all intertwined and served to show that the petitioner ought to get help from the governor. Firstly, the petitioners used poverty to activate reciprocal obligations between ruler and subject. Secondly, they connected to several of the norms normally seen in relation to the deserving poor, trying to establish their situation as blameless while at the same time describing themselves as industrious people with families to provide for. Finally, supplicants relied on the notion of Christian compassion as specified in the Table of Duties as a duty for all people to help their neighbours.

Asking for the governor’s attention and protection – the deferential, dutiful and poor petitioner

Petitioners often activated the language of poverty by calling themselves poor in various stages of the letter. Usually, they did this either in the beginning or end of the petition, or when asking the governor for what they wanted.\textsuperscript{246} To understand why supplicants chose to call themselves poor, it is helpful to specifically look at these parts of the petition and their rhetorical background in combination with contemporary advice on letter-writing. After having greeted the governor with

\textsuperscript{244} For petitions mentioning specific regulations, see for example appendix 1, no 15, 52, 56, 119, 183, 187.
\textsuperscript{245} Appendix 1, no 119, 197.
\textsuperscript{246} For example, in 53 out of the 69 cases were people call themselves poor without mentioning other aspects of poverty, petitioners said this in one or several of these stages of the petitions, see appendix 1, no 19, 23, 25, 27, 29, 38, 42, 47 – 48, 50, 52 – 54, 58, 61 – 62, 65, 69, 71 – 72, 75 – 76, 80, 82, 85, 93, 96, 104, 106 – 107, 109, 111, 124 – 125, 127, 137, 140, 143 – 144, 146, 150, 152, 154, 157, 168, 180 – 181, 183, 193, 203 – 204, 212 – 213.
his proper title, many supplications had a sentence or two introducing the reason for writing, called the *exordium*. The purpose of this part was to catch the recipient’s attention and to make him listen and think of what was coming, by making him feel benevolent towards the petitioner.\(^{247}\) According to Biurman, in the brief beginning of a letter one could, when needed, make use of the writer’s distressed condition or his unworthiness in writing.\(^{248}\) From this, it can be argued that the petitioners who denominated themselves as poor in *exordium* tried to evoke benevolence from the governor, which might have been achieved by emphasizing unworthiness or need. For example, in June 1733 Greta Westring, a chaplain’s widow, disputed a debt that she supposedly owed and wanted the governor to refer the case to an appropriate court. She started her plea in saying that “[I], poor and needy widow, am compelled in greatest humility to mention for Your Grace Baron and Governor [...]”\(^{249}\) Calling yourself poor in the end of the petition could also be intended to incite certain feelings in the reader or to express gratitude, as this was the purpose of the end of a letter according the manuals.\(^{250}\) When concluding his petition, the farmer Pär Mattsson said that “The highest God will certainly, for such great justice shown towards the poor, crown Your Grace and Your highborn relatives with his merciful grace and blessing.”\(^{251}\) Other petitioners called themselves poor in the actual plea to the governor, as Anders Ersson Balingh who contested an owed debt. After describing his problem, he stated: “Therefore, it is now my humblest request, that Your Grace would help me, poor man, to my right”.\(^{252}\)

If the intention of these relatively formal statements was to ask for the governor’s attentive benevolence, to incite other feelings or to express gratitude, it does not explain why petitioners chose to accomplish this by specifically calling themselves poor. To solve this, we need to take into account who the recipient was in relation to the supplicant, and the larger context of the petitioners’ world. In all these stages of the petition, the word poor is deployed in direct relation to the governor himself in a clearly humble tone. In addition to being head of the CA and a representative of the Crown, governor Brauner was a baron and therefore a member of the high nobility. In other words, he was very highly placed in the Swedish hierarchy, both in his official capacity as governor and as a person of noble rank. I would argue that supplicants who denominated themselves poor were showing due deference to a higher power, thereby writing themselves into the hierarchical order of society.\(^{253}\) In this instance, the word poor marks the subordinate position of the petitioner, more than expressing economic want. When the supplicants deferred to the governor, they showed that

\(^{247}\) Hansson 1988, p. 24; Vossius 2006, p. 17.

\(^{248}\) Biurman 1731, pp. 17 – 19. Biurman does not expressly base his advice on classical rhetoric, but according to Hansson, rhetoric is still the model for his book although other influences are visible, see Hansson 1988, pp. 37, 40.

\(^{249}\) Appendix 1, no 126 (petition 17330601).

\(^{250}\) Biurman 1731, pp. 20 – 21; Vossius 2006, pp. 18 – 19. The end of a letter could also be used to reiterate the strongest arguments.

\(^{251}\) Appendix 1, no 21 (petition 17301214).

\(^{252}\) Appendix 1, no 107 (petition 17321102).

\(^{253}\) Lerbom 2003, p. 73. Being deferent when writing to a superior was a common strategy, see Lyons 2015, p. 317.
they knew their place within society and did not challenge the existing power structure.\(^{254}\) The tone of the petition then “reinforced a sense of deference and humility on the part of the petitioner, whilst at the same time upholding the supreme and unquestioned authority of the king”,\(^{255}\) or in this case the governor.

It has been suggested that through these humble phrases, the ruler could be reminded of his duties to protect, to provide justice and be charitable in exchange for his subject’s loyalty. Underneath the deference was an aim to justify and uphold the petitioners’ rights to seek and gain redress in their difficulties. Cecilia Nubola has argued that petitions to the sovereign referred to the specific power relations between rulers and ruled, where the sovereign was the father, judge and legislator, with qualities that had to correspond to those of a good \textit{pater familias}, meaning just and mindful of the wellbeing of those in his care, in respect of natural and given roles and hierarchies. The ruler was deemed to be the protector of his subjects, and this extended to those who acted on his behalf. For example, in Sweden there existed a view that the governors were supposed to be the protectors of the peasantry.\(^{256}\) It would therefore have made sense to use the language of poverty in this subordinate fashion in relation to the CA. This reciprocal relationship, where deference and subordination was exchanged for just ruling is stated in the Table of Duties where the worldly authority is portrayed as God’s servant for good, to whom the subject owes subordination and dues such as taxes. It is an unequal relationship which is painted however, as the duties of the subject are clearly stated, while the responsibilities of the ruler are more subtly expressed as acting for good according to the will of God.\(^{257}\) This would, according to the reasoning above, include protection, justice and charity. Some scholars have argued however, that this benevolence on the part of rulers was only empty promises of care, and that appealing to these ideals would not get the lower orders anywhere. Instead, the deference was expected and did not change the outcome of the plea.\(^{258}\)

From the petitions, it is clear that some supplicants relate to the idea of the governor as the fatherly protector of his loyal and humble subjects. To begin with, the majority of people who called themselves poor like this were from the peasantry, which is logical as the governor was supposed to be their special protector. Looking closer at the particular pleas (\textit{petitio}) of supplicants, they sometimes made statements alluding to being in need of protection, indicating that they fled to the governor for aid. When reclaiming an out-standing debt, Elisabeth Eriksdotter stated that

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\(^{254}\) Van Voss 2001, p. 2; Meyer 2015, p. 263.

\(^{255}\) Dodd 2007, p. 283.


\(^{257}\) Luther 1648, pp. 34 – 35.

\(^{258}\) Kesselring 2005, pp. 5 – 7. E.P. Thompson argues that in practice, the higher strata’s paternal promises of care were just as much theatre as effective responsibility, see Thompson 1991, p. 64.
“since I do not know how I, poor widow, shall get mine, I humbly flee to Your Grace for a graceful resolution”. Others were more specific when referencing the governor as protector of the poor and suffering. Five farmers presented a petition in 1732, with a request to not have to pay for the services of a surveyor. In their plea they asked the governor, “as a pious and just father of the nation [lansensfader] to spare the poor taxpayer such heavy duties”. Similarly, the widow Maria Reuterhusia stated that she would “[t]herefore flee to Your Grace, as a highly benevolent patron for all poor and distressed” for help to get back an outstanding debt.

Some supplicants wrote about needing or wanting the governor’s protection in regards to other people. When farmer Jacob Tomssson was accused by his noble master, baron Åke Oxenstierna, for not performing his day-labours as required, he pleaded that the governor should “take me, as a poor farmer, under your graceful auspices and protection”. Christina Witte, wife of a wigmaker in Örebro, was accused in October 1733 by the alderman of the guild of wigmakers in Uppsala for having come there in order to sell wigs without permission. Because of the allegations, the wigs and working material she had brought with her were seized. In her defensive statement, she asked that the governor would, “put my poor person and my poor property, in a protected state against [the alderman’s] further claims”. This practice of appealing to a higher power for protection against someone above you in the hierarchy has also been seen in the practice of poor relief, where paupers in England would appeal to higher standing magistrates after receiving a negative answer from the poor relief overseers.

In various ways, the petitioners referred to the governor’s duty to protect them, suggesting that supplicants could make valid claims on the CA through the use of deference and expectations on the prescribed roles of superior and inferior. To examine whether these statements affected the success of the petition is beyond the scope of this thesis, but I believe it is reasonable to argue that if calling yourself poor in this context had no effect at all the petitioner just would not have used the language of poverty in this manner. There were plenty of people who did not, so it certainly was not a mandatory way to address the CA. What is certain however, is that petitioners of various strata – but mostly the peasantry – did use the terminology of ideas set forth in the Table of Duties between members of the political estate when engaging in a rhetoric of protection of the poor in exchange for deference.

259 Appendix 1, no 57 (petition 17310617) Other petitions where petitioners mention that they flee to the governor see for example appendix 1, no 17 – 19, 55, 68, 87, 117, 128 – 129, 157, 214.
260 Appendix 1, no 91 (petition 17321220). For similar examples, see appendix 1, no 102, 144.
261 Appendix 1, no 68 (petition 17320323).
262 Appendix 1, no 10 (petition 17300417). For a similar case where a crofter asks for protection from his master, see appendix 1, no 123.
263 Appendix 1, no 115 (petition 17331019).
264 Hitchcock et al., 1997, pp. 11 – 12. The authors claim the paupers made use of the distant paternalism of the magistrates, but Steve Hindle has pointed out that the judges’ involvement in the poor relief system might not have been motivated by “benevolence born of paternalism”, but by self-preservation, see Hindle 2004, pp. 446 – 447, citation on p. 446.
Fulfilling the duty of a subject

Whereas the ruler was obliged to rule justly and protect his subjects, it was the duty of the subjects to be obedient and dutiful servants, who paid tax and gave the Crown its due. Supplicants continually used the word poor to remind the governor of his obligations and portray themselves as deferent, but to what extent did the fulfilment of their other duties come to light when they described themselves and their poverty?

Petitioners often combined the statement of being poor with a title. For men, this denominator often related to their place in the worldly four estates, or to their service to the crown as subjects according to the tripartite estate-system in the Table of Duties. Out of the 107 cases where men called themselves poor, 24 contained the title peasant or burgher, 39 were denominators related to their service to the Crown, such as taxpayers (skattedragnor), soldiers, subjects, or pertaining to their duty to recruit soldiers (rotebönder), and in 43 instances the petitioners called themselves “man”. In the first two categories, the great majority were from groups 4-6, that is the peasantry or just above whereas the title of poor man was used by a somewhat more mixed group of both higher and lower strata. The men who called themselves peasants, taxpayers, soldiers et cetera were often married men acting in the position as a household head. Entitling themselves in this manner, they engaged with the social hierarchy between the different four estates and emphasized fulfilling their duties to the Crown within the political estate. This was not the case for women and proletarian workers who related themselves more to the social order within the household estate. Women, despite writing as household heads, most often referred to themselves in terms of their marital status as poor widows, and lower workers made references to their position as servants (tjänstepiga, tjänstedräkt, tjänstehjon). Since both of these groups are mentioned in the Table of Duties as part of the household estate, there is a distinct difference between how men as masters of this estate seemed to set themselves in relation to the other estates (of both teachings) in a way that was not done by women and servants. As a consequence of this, men explicitly referenced their duties as subjects even when titling themselves, which servants and women generally did not.

As we have seen in the previous section, women did request the governor’s protection even though they did not reference their own duties as subjects. It might be however, that poor widows were by definition seen as a group worthy of protection and help. In his study of women’s participation in the Court of Requests in Tudor and Stuart England, Tim Stretton suggests that the epithet poor for widows could mean blameless and deserving of help, rather than lacking material


In addition to calling themselves poor, widows sometimes also named themselves defenceless (värnlös). A hint as to what this word might have implicated is given in the petition of Greta Lundberg, who wrote to the governor in order to keep a plot of land that had been given to her. In it she stated that she had been left as a father- and motherless child, “thereby left defenceless”, also referring to him as the protector of orphans. Being defenceless thus meant not having someone to either care for you, to protect you or to represent you. The widows who used this term, most from echelons above the peasantry, were obviously grown women, with more legal right than any other of their gender to act in an environment such as the CA. In her study, Christina Prytz found a woman who explained she had become defenceless after the death of her husband. That these widows reference themselves as defenceless, should therefore mean their lack of a husband or of a male household leader. I would argue that by naming themselves defenceless, the widows emphasize their lack of male protection or care despite them being entitled to act independently and to represent the household. By not having a husband to protect them, it was the duty of the governor as father and master to provide this protection – in line with the existing analogies between households on different levels in society.

As Harald Gustafsson has pointed out, underneath petitioners asking for the help of a superior while emphasizing their own duties, there was a strong notion of reciprocity – if the dutiful subject paid tax, the ruler had to fulfil his obligations, including protection, providing justice and charity. The only individual woman who called herself taxpayer, the old widow Elisabeth Ericksdotter, expressed this mutuality when she was drawn into a case against the steward Erich Stenbeck, who claimed that the money she had received from her brother because of a debt in reality should be paid to Stenbeck himself. In her answer to the CA, she stated that “[I] do not want to lose my outstanding debt any more than he, since I now in old age have great need of my money, so that I who have been an old taxpayer, should not have to seek my bread at other peoples’ doors”. For Ericksdotter, because she had paid tax for a long time she should not have to resort to begging, which was why she deserved the help of the governor in the issue of who had right to the money. A similar reasoning has been found by Sofia Ling when studying female petitioners in Stockholm, where several old widows claimed to have paid tax for a long time. Ling argues that this kind of

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267 Stretton 1999, p. 207.
268 Appendix 1, nr 19, 24, 45, 68, 120, 154, 204.
269 ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310729 (Greta Lundberg ./. Erik Östman). Prytz connects the word defenceless to women’s stipulated subordination, see Prytz 2013, pp. 156 – 158, 172.
272 Gustafsson 2007, p. 94 – 95.
273 Appendix 1, no 2 (petition 17301028). There was an additional woman named taxpayer, but in a group petition of eight people where the other petitioners were men, see appendix 1, no 158.
argument served to explain that the women were honest citizens who deserved help from the authorities.\textsuperscript{274}

Apart from petitioners calling themselves taxpayers, several expressly claimed to have paid or wanting to pay tax.\textsuperscript{275} Mats Ersson, a peasant who had been turned out of the farm he worked on said that he had become ruined and destitute because of this, despite having put all his efforts to working in the fields. He then asked the governor “to let me keep the farm since I, as well as any other peasant, pay my large taxes and build what is necessary on the homestead”.\textsuperscript{276} Sometimes petitioners expressed their willingness to pay tax despite certain hardships. A group of peasants wrote to the governor with comments on the necessity of employing a surveyor to perform a partition of the village of Grytrjom in Tierp parish. While they did not put themselves against the partition itself, they claimed that it could just as well be performed by two honest men, so that the “poor taxpayer, who is subject to so many difficulties and duties [\textit{onera}] will be less troubled”.\textsuperscript{277} Others tried to put pressure on the governor by expressing that if their request was not granted, they would have trouble fulfilling this duty. For example, the burgher Lars Helsing, who wanted the CA’s to help him find a lost horse expressed that “if your Grace’s graceful hand would not help me, I poor, will become a destitute and incapable man unable to support myself, or pay what I should to the Crown.”\textsuperscript{278} In the same vein, farmer Olof Mattsson wanted the governor to hold off a sequester until he had the chance to sue his counterparty, stated that: “if [the money] would be taken from me, who works on a Crown-homestead with large taxes, I will be completely ruined, and the Crown will lose its taxes”.\textsuperscript{279} When accused of having unlawfully chopped down wood, a farmer and farmer’s widow in Uflunge defended their right to take necessary firewood by saying that “if we cannot use the forest, for which we pay heavy taxes, we will become incapable [\textit{oförmöga}] and could not pay the taxes for our homesteads”.\textsuperscript{280} It is apparent that the petitioners reasoned that since they were paying taxes, they should not end up in a troubled, poor state and therefore the CA ought to help them. They were also keen to emphasize that if the governor did not give his aid, the state would lose revenue – more than likely adding pressure on him. Paying their dues to the state was thus something which conferred a possibility for the petitioners to make demands of the governor to do his part.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{274} Ling 2016, p. 81. See also Andersson 2012, pp. 52 – 53 for serving the Crown as an argument for being received at the asylum.
\item \textsuperscript{275} In total, 46 cases contained references to paying tax, whether by calling yourself taxpayer or some other expression. See appendix 1, no 1 – 3, 7, 10, 15, 17 – 18, 23, 26, 28, 30, 36, 55, 65, 73, 75, 89, 91, 94 – 95, 109, 115, 118, 120 – 121, 124, 130, 136, 138, 147, 149, 152 – 153, 155, 157 – 158, 161 – 162, 177, 181, 183 – 184, 192 – 193, 202, 212.
\item \textsuperscript{276} Appendix 1, no 7 (petition 17301203).
\item \textsuperscript{277} Appendix 1, no 91 (petition 17321220).
\item \textsuperscript{278} Appendix 1, no 73 (petition 17311112).
\item \textsuperscript{279} Appendix 1, no 163 (petition 17340131).
\item \textsuperscript{280} Appendix 1, no 202 (petition 17341003).
\end{itemize}
About three quarters of the petitions mentioning tax-paying were from the peasantry, and the rest mostly burghers.281 The same was the case for people who mentioned other duties towards the state, although here we also find two people below the peasantry, a crofter and a former saltpetre-boiler. The kind of service that was emphasized were for example hiring and paying soldiers and serving as a forester or a scribe, while others just made reference to being a faithful subject or a poor servant to the Crown.282 Again, petitioners reasoned that since they had done their duty towards the state, they should not have to suffer. When the farmer Pär Mattsson wanted to transfer his part of the farm to his son-in-law, he described what had happened and finished:

> Because of this, it is my most humble prayer, that Your Grace will consider to gracefully have mercy over me poor man, and let my son-in-law dispose of the whole farmstead, since we cannot both nourish ourselves with our wives and children on half the part, otherwise I will be forced to take the beggar's staff with my wife and seek our bread across the country, I who in past war-times have become completely destitute through the hiring of many soldiers and difficult tenements.283

As this is towards the end of the petition, Mattsson’s purpose with this phrase might have been to incur sympathy, but in accordance with classical rhetoric, the service to the Crown could also have been his strongest argument. Some petitioners from Svista also mentioned hiring of soldiers, as they commenced their supplication by saying: “At the last general inspection our soldier for Svista rate no 128 under Bälinge company was discharged, since then we have diligently sought to hire another good man, which from Stockholm and other places made us much destitute”.284 While not using this as a reason for the governor to heed their cause in the same way that Pär Mattsson did, these farmers still point to the fact that they have tried to do their duty despite it causing them harm. The crofter Mats Bertelsson wanted to be allowed to take in a farmhand to do his work as a forester since he had become too old, so “that I in my age who has served His Royal Majesty for 44 years as a forester, should not be driven to beg for my food in my old age”.285 Old Johan Bengtsson said he was poor and had nothing to live on when asking permission to use the Crown’s commons. In addition, he “assumes that your Grace, will take my plea to heart so much more since I have served His Royal Majesty and the Crown as saltpetre-boiler in some and twenty years’ time”.286 Both of these petitioners emphasize their service to the Crown as something which the governor should take into account and which made them deserve certain treatment.

To conclude, about 60 petitions in which the language of poverty is used also point to the petitioner having done his duty as a subject by for example paying taxes or serving the Crown in

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281 The very few women who mentioned paying tax did so in relation to their husbands, see appendix 1, no 55, 115, 120. No people from the lowest strata (groups 7 – 9) used taxes to argue for their cause.

282 Out of the 15 petitions where other duties are mentioned five were from large groups, see appendix 1, no 21, 34 – 35, 94, 97, 113, 131, 145, 170, 181, 191, 196, 199, 210.

283 Appendix 1, no 21 (petition 17301214).

284 Appendix 1, no 97 (petition 17320504).

285 Appendix 1, no 131 (petition 17330606).

286 Appendix 1, no 210 (petition 17341023).
some other way. Emphasizing your own part in the reciprocal relationship between ruler and subject set out in the Table of Duties could be a way for the petitioner to pressure the governor into fulfilling his end of the bargain, by providing protection or justice. The supplicant could therefore use his position as a subject to make demands and as a base for his claims. The language of poverty was used in connection to this relationship, as people argued that they had performed their duties despite difficulties or that if they were not given help, their poor state would make them unable to continue doing right by the Crown. However, there is also a sense that if you were a good subject, you should not have to beg or be pushed into destitution. If you had done what was expected of you, you did not deserve to be cast into the ranks of the undeserving poor. It was mostly men (burghers and peasants) who emphasized their role as a subject to the Crown, whereas women were more prone to connect poverty to their marital status as widows, without defence from a male household head. One possible explanation to this is that the poor widows were seen as a group deserving of help regardless of their fulfilment of duties, while men instead had to motivate this with having paid tax or something else in service of the crown. All of the analytical categories, gender, social and marital status seem to affect how petitioners argued in relation to the governor, but with various importance. For women, gender and marital status determined how an argument was formed while for men it would seem that gender and social position were more important as no very high- or low-ranking men used poverty in relation to duties as subjects. As mostly men of a certain social standing seem to be the ones who engaged with their own duties as subjects (apart from using deference) it can be questioned if Scott’s theory of manipulation of the public transcript – with its emphasis on the specific relation between ruler and ruled – is the most suitable way of looking at the communication between the governor and the petitioners. The petitioners did use a language of deference and service set out by the higher orders, and asked for protection in return but as shall be shown it was by no means the only role in which they could make claims.

**Establishing deservingness – the blameless, industrious and impoverished petitioner**

While the previous section focused more on the role of poverty in the subordinating relationship between subject and ruler, this part continues to examine the actions and qualities mentioned in relation to poverty but from a more material and economic perspective. In particular, questions of what the petitioner claimed to be the cause of their past, current or risked poverty and how the supplicants had tried to counter this state will be answered. This part of the thesis connects in large part to the ideas of the deserving poor, as several similarities between these petitions and pauper letters have been identified. I will argue that again poverty was mentioned so the petitioners would seem worthy of help, as they go to great lengths to establish that they were not to blame for their situation, and that they worked hard to support themselves and their families.
The rule that only the deserving poor were to be given relief of course prompted paupers to try to set themselves out as such in their letters for relief. In his study of the poor in 17th century England, Steve Hindle concludes that paupers in requests for charity made references to their age, family burden, physical damage or hard times as reasons for them to be given relief. Another distinctive factor was that they had taken pains to support themselves or others. Notions of honesty and credit were important as well. In a later article, Hindle studies the concept of deservingness in relation to poor relief policy, and argues that church attendance, industry and thrift, sobriety, child-rearing and deference were clear markers of deservingness in early modern England, something which was expected for the pauper to retain her relief.\(^{287}\) Several scholars have found however, that the notion of the deserving poor could be used by petitioners in other contexts as well, where issues of accidents, sickness, age, and family burdens were highlighted.\(^{288}\) As in the petitions studied by Sofia Ling, the supplicants to the CA did not ask for poor relief, nor were they paupers. As will be shown below however, they still used several of the same arguments as people on poor relief in trying to get the governor to heed their cause. This prompts the question if the concept of being deserving could be applied to a larger segment of the population and that poverty in the more material sense could be expressed by people other than those on the brink of absolute destitution.

\section*{A poor condition not caused by the petitioners themselves}

In 84 cases, the petitioners stated a reason for or contribution to their claimed poverty, ranging from clear references to the ideas of the deserving poor such as illness, age, or accidents, to unjust treatment from someone else.\(^{289}\)

Eight petitioners referenced their age as contributing to their poverty.\(^{290}\) The majority were from the lower strata (groups 7 – 8), and half were women. The farmhand Carl Larsson was the only one who highlighted his youth. The case was between the bailiff on Viby mansion on the one hand, and Larsson and his master on the other, concerning where Larsson was obliged to serve. In his letter to the governor, Larsson recounted how, before coming to his master, “[I] had to walk about the country a time seeking my sustenance with Christian people, as no one wanted to hire me because of my young age”.\(^{291}\) Since the boy’s youth made it difficult for him to support himself, he had had to beg. On the other end of the spectrum, old age could also cause difficulties. When her

\footnotesize{\(^{287}\) Hindle 2004, pp. 158 – 162; Hindle 2004a, pp. 41 – 50. In her master thesis, Sara Andersson finds that questions of age, illness and a previous good life were prominent in pauper letters when applying to get into asylums in the south of Sweden, see Andersson 2012, pp. 42 – 50.


\(^{290}\) Appendix 1, no 2, 86, 98, 127, 131, 184, 195, 210. A few also connected their age to poverty by calling themselves poor and old, but did not clearly mention their age as a cause for their destitution, see appendix 1, no 49, 139.

\(^{291}\) Appendix 1, no 86 (petition 17321024).}
son Olof was accused of being a vagrant, and was therefore to be taken in as a soldier, the widow Maria Larsdotter had a petition submitted to the CA. She explained that for the last 13 years, her son had served with other people, and she, “poor and distressed widow and old and decrepit, lacking a man to help me, have put myself deeply in debt”. Similarly, the former sheriff Johan Wijdholm, said that now in his old age, he had nothing to support himself from, except making errands for his friends between Stockholm and Vässland.

Some petitioners connected their age and subsequent poverty (or risk of becoming poor) in arguments why they should be given help. The maidservant Marija Christoffersdotter, who wanted to get her pay after 10 years of service, reasoned that since she had worn out her youth at her deceased master’s home, and now had reached an age where she could no longer serve, it would be difficult for her, poor maidservant to lose her money. The crofter Mats Bertelsson applied in June 1733 to be allowed to take in a farmhand to help him at his place, so that he “in old age, who have served his Royal Majesty during 44 years as a forester, should not be driven away to beg for my food.” We have already seen this motivation expressed by Elisabeth Ericksdotter, the widow saying that she, who in her age had need of her money, and as an old taxpayer should not be made to beg. Both she and Marija needed money because they were old (and supposedly could not work anymore) and Mats needed help on his farm so that he would not be turned out of it. This connection between age and poverty can be understood through the Governor’s instruction of 1734, where he had an explicit responsibility for poor people who could not support themselves due to their age or illness. Susannah R. Ottaway has also argued that there was an assumption that the community had a responsibility to care for their elderly members, but who were expected to sustain themselves as long as possible. There were distinct benefits for the aged as they were clearly defined as a group. As could be seen from the examples above, several petitioners also made references to trying to support themselves still. To bring up age in connection to poverty could therefore be a strategy because it gave the petitioner a possibility to engage with society’s and the governor’s responsibility to help them. However, the importance of this should not be over-emphasized as it was done by very few petitioners.

Only four supplicants, all men from the peasantry or below, mentioned illness. The cottager Lars Olsson described himself as having served as a soldier and being left with a bad left hand and “for these my frailties I am struck from the poll tax register”. He, as well as his family was sick,

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292 Appendix 1, no 195 (petition 17340808).
293 Appendix 1, no 127 (petition 17330430).
294 Appendix 1, no 98 (petition 17320614), 131 (petition 17330606). For a similar case, see appendix 1, no 183.
295 Appendix 1, no 2 (petition 17301028).
296 Modée 1746, p. 1084.
297 Ottaway 2004, pp. 8, 63.
298 Appendix 1, no 20, 67, 84, 122. Some again made the connection between poverty and illness in calling themselves poor and ill/frail, but not as a direct cause or contributor, see appendix 1, no 77, 176, 195.
with no strength to hire anyone, “sitting in a cottage in greatest poverty”. Fredrick Börts, wanted to get tax exemption and said that he could barely earn his bread “due to the weakness of my eyes, so that I live in greatest destitution and poverty.” The farmer Erich Ersson also asked not to pay his remaining tax and stated that “I was onslaught by sickness and many troubles and large taxes during the whole wartime and beyond, in addition I lost my animals in 1720 due to illness, so despite my diligence at the farm I still could not pay the crop tax”. Therefore, he asked the governor to take his needful state into account. Again we see that, while mentioning their illness these petitioners also made sure to emphasize having served, worked or tried to support themselves.

Apart from being sick, Erich Ersson also mentioned how his poor situation was due to the accident of losing his animals. In total, 12 petitions related poverty to various bad events. In addition, 7 cases poverty was ascribed to wartimes or hiring of soldiers. All but one of these were men, but there was another social spread than for age and illness as almost four fifths were from the better off peasantry or above. Some supplicants explained that due to accidents they had no money to pay their debts. As we saw in chapter 7, the kind of poverty which was often taken into account in laws was the one caused by accidents. When the burgher Nils Eliasson asked the governor to forbid his creditor to sell Eliasson’s sequestered property, he attached a letter written to the royal council in which he claimed that he had diligently tried to come to terms with all his creditors, and “the […] ones who had the larger outstanding debts with me remitted them in all fairness, in consideration of my many accidents and horrible events”. The reason for Eliasson to bring up these accidents became clear in his letter to the governor, where he referenced the law from 1687 about cession bonorum – to be released from the debts if the poverty had come about through accidents. Others asked the governor for respite with or exemption from taxes due to an inability to pay because of bad weather, bad harvests or problems with their animals. Just as with debt release, this could have legal reasons as bad harvests might give a right to write off taxes. When citing war-related issues as a reason for poverty, some mentioned that they had become destitute due to hiring or paying soldiers. Others spoke about the economic loss that had befallen them because they had been imprisoned or had had to flee. Some just made references to the difficult times of war putting them in poor circumstances.

Appendix 1, no 18 (petition 17301111).
Appendix 1, no 67 (petition 17321026). For a similar case see appendix 1, no 84.
Appendix 1, no 122 (petition 17331121).
See appendix 1, no 4, 164.
See appendix 1, no 117, 138, 177.
Appendix 1, no 60 (petition 17311207). Other petitions pertaining to not being able to pay because of impecuniousness due to accidents or difficult events, see appendix 1, no 4, 119.
See appendix 1, no 117, 138, 177.
Modée 1742, p. 797. See also appendix 1, no 135 for a practical application of this legal technicality.
Appendix 1, no 21, 97, 113, 122, 129, 135, 148.
be heeded. A few people hinted that being the victim of accidents was something that should be taken into consideration by itself. When burgher Lars Hesling lost a horse, he wanted the governor to help him by putting out a warrant for it. In the middle of the petition he asked the governor, whose grace towards all poor and unfortunate was famous, to help him – foremost among these poor - as he had already lost one horse through a stray bullet. Similarly, farmer Mats Mattsson wanted to have a part of a stable because if he was not allowed to put his horses there during the winter he feared his destruction as he would lose even more horses than he had already done.308 Bringing up accidents in this manner could have to do with the rhetorical method to arouse sympathy in the governor as rhetorically, sympathy could be evoked by recounting something horrible which you did not deserve.309 However, Birgitta Jordansson has also argued that, at least between burghers in the 19th century, the poverty caused by accidents or unhappy events was not connected to morality and therefore it was not condemned.310 The combination of law, sympathy and non-condemnation might then explain why the issue of poverty was raised in the first place.

So far, men primarily referenced illness, accidents or hard times as a reason for poverty, while women were more prominent where age was concerned. The top reason for poverty among women however, was being a widow or at least without the help of a man.311 A few of these recounted that after their husbands’ deaths, all their property had been taken due to debts or that it was about to be taken. Chatrina Eliasdotter mentioned that after her husband, sergeant Tobias Lille had died, she had been forced to apply for permission to live at the asylum due to her miserable state.312 Others just stated that they had been left in poverty after their husbands had died. Most of these women were widows, but some were wives who had been left by their spouses. In February 1734, the peasant’s wife Kierstin Larsdotter handed in a petition, in which she recounted that her husband had contracted with postmaster Gustav Rudbeck to go with him to Danzig and she wanted the governor to forbid this. She stated that

“This damaging agreement is contracted without any good reason, without my knowledge, to the greatest ruin of me and my poor many small children; In addition, he [her husband] has removed all the crops, that the house would live from, and has now begun to sell the animals, so that before the trip begins, I will be left in greatest distress with the children, and so I will have no more help by a man at the farm”.

It can be noted here that Larsdotter applied a way of arguing which was common in marital cases, when she criticized her husband’s unwillingness to support her and the children. This has been

308 Appendix 1, no 73 (petition 17311112), 103 (petition 17321116).
309 Vossius 2006, p. 11. Encouraging various feelings would however primarily be done in the end of a speech, which was the case in Mats Mattsson’s petition but not Lars Hesling’s.
311 13 women gave this as a reason for their poverty, see appendix 1, no 6, 12, 24, 102, 105, 120, 132 – 133, 165, 175, 184, 195, 209. This again points to the importance of marriage for one’s sustenance, see Pihl & Ågren 2014, p. 189; Jansson et. al 2016 chapter 5.
312 Appendix 1, no 105 (petition 17320719).
313 Appendix 1, no 165 (petition 17340206). For a similar case see appendix 1, no 175.
interpreted by Andreas Marklund as a critique of the husband’s role as a household head, as he was ultimately responsible for the household’s sustenance. Larsdotter’s reasoning was therefore tightly connected to her husband’s duty as household head, but also to her role as a wife who deserved a husband who could fulfil his duties. More than two-thirds of these women who made mention of their widowhood or absent men being something which caused poverty were from social backgrounds above the peasantry, whereas men from these social groups tended to ascribe their poverty to accidents and bad events. This could give some explanation as to why women in a relatively high position were able to use poverty in their petitions more than their male counterparts. In addition to being old, women could also make references to their lack of male support as a cause for poverty. This difference has also been found by Jordansson, who argues that a woman in the 19th century could be seen as deserving poor if they lacked sustenance, especially if they did their duty as mothers, while men were only deserving after they had fulfilled their duties as workers. No cases have been found where men said they would end up in poverty because they did not have a wife or a woman to help them. From this analysis, it would also seem that women tended to explain their destitution with things connected to their own condition; they were old or left as widows. Men, on the other hand, connected their poverty to things that had happened to them in their endeavour to support themselves, they had become ill or suffered accidents while trying to fend for themselves. One possible explanation to this is that women, or at least widows, were seen as a group which was deserving of help in itself whereas a male equivalent for this did not exist. This would in turn have made it easier for women to raise the issue of poverty.

The analysis above shows that many people besides paupers could engage with notions connected to the ideas of the deserving poor. It was just as common however that petitioners ascribed their poverty to something which was normally not connected to this notion. In 42 cases out of 84, supplicants instead claimed that their poverty was the result of unfair treatment on someone else’s part, such as property being taken for no reason, being charged something that you were not obliged to pay, being unlawfully put off the farm or breach of contract. Six of these cases involved individual women, who were again somewhat under-represented. About a third of the cases involved questions of property being taken from the petitioner in payment of debts that were owed. When civil servants put a lock on Per Jansson’s barn, he complained to the governor that this had caused him and his family to have nothing to live on, and he did not know why this sequester had been performed. He also recounted that two years before, his property had been taken, but since then he had always paid his taxes so he did not think himself indebted now. The farmer Lars Olsson reasoned in a similar manner when his former master came to him asking for

317 Appendix 1, no 118 (petition 17530919).
more taxes, despite him always having paid as much as he thought he owed. Due to this, he was caused to come in a difficult and penniless time. Ingrī Wārenberg, widow after a burgher in Uppsala, and now remarried wife to another burgher, told the governor that in her husband’s absence, some of her property had been pawned for old taxes belonging to her former spouse. She argued that the civil servant should have come to her much earlier asking for payment, and this sequester would cause her to become destitute, she who had their small children to support.

Others spoke about having been put off farms or had had fields or employment taken away from them, often in combination with some statement of having done their part. In May 1733, the burgher Johan Lēnholm wrote to the governor asking to be allowed to appropriate a field belonging to the burgher Erich Elg since Elg had not paid the taxes. Elg answered that if this field was to be taken from him, he and his family would have no other option than to beg and he had now paid his taxes. The cottager and former man-at-arms Anders Lundberg complained that he:

was discharged from the farm [rusthållet] three years ago for no apparent reason, and since have had no pay or sustenance, and now for half a year I have suffered a difficult illness which ails me still, so me and my wife and three small children must endure great misery and poverty as long as God wishes it. Therefore, I leave to your Grace to reconsider mine and my poor’s condition, whereby I humbly await a graceful decision [...].

It is not entirely clear what Anders Lundberg wants in his petition, but two signed certificates were attached to it, indicating him having lived well and having paid his taxes. Other acts that caused poverty could be for example destruction of fields or property, not getting your money on time, not being able to use the city mill, having to pay alimony or breaches of contracts. Some of these statements of being caused ruin or destitution probably served as an enhancer of the wrongs which these unjust behaviours had led to as many of these supplicants had counterparties whom they wanted to put in a bad light. Whenever poverty was stressed however, it seemed to be essential to highlight that it had not been caused by the petitioners themselves, it was a blameless destitution. Some did so by claiming to be sick, the victim of accidents or becoming widows, while others emphasized the bad doings of others. Even when it is not apparent what had caused the petitioners’ hard times, it was nonetheless made evident that the supplicant was not to blame, as they would sometimes say it was not of their doing even though they did not explain why. In addition, a passive linguistic form was often used, such as “I have [...] been struck by great misery and

318 Appendix 1, no 18 (petition 17300618).
319 Appendix 1, no 13 (petition 17300923). For other cases where the cause of the petitioner’s poverty was wrongful sequestering or other fees, see appendix 1, no 3, 17, 30, 64, 83, 89, 100, 132, 156, 158, 160, 179, 182, 186, 216.
320 Appendix 1, no 54 (petition 17330512).
321 Appendix 1, no 84 (petition 17330407). For other petitions claiming poverty because of lack of farm, field, forest or employment, see appendix 1 no 9, 33, 63, 185, 189, 202, 210, 215.
323 Appendix 1, no 197, 200.
poverty”324, “need and suffering have come over me”325, or “I who have come into great pennilessness”.326 Women were more prone than men to connect their poverty with their status as single householders, being widows or wives without husbands. This might offer an explanation as to why women could use the language of poverty more than men, as they had an additional reason for poverty not caused by themselves. Despite emphasizing their destitution as blameless, many still made sure that they also seemed dutiful and had tried to do their part, by working hard, supporting their family, paying taxes or leading a good life. Certain aspects of this will be the subject of the next section.

**Toiling to support yourself and members of your household**

As was established earlier, petitioners who called themselves poor often made references to having fulfilled the duties of a good subject, by for example paying tax. Another quality which was emphasized by the petitioners was their industry, or willingness to work. In early modern society, there was a strong connotation between being able or willing to work and your credibility and usefulness to society. Just as paying taxes was the duty of a loyal subject, working to support yourself and your household was the duty of (almost) all members of society according to Lutheran values. According to Conny Blom, willingness to work was seen as important for poor people during the 17th century, and its importance increased over time. Similarly, Leif Runefelt has found that diligence (*flit*) was a central virtue in Sweden during this time. Andreas Marklund has also emphasized the particular duty of the male household head to support his family during the 18th century.327 In accordance with this, only those whose ability to work for sustenance was diminished for reasons beyond their control were to be helped by society through the system of poor relief. By emphasizing their willingness and ability to work, the petitioners could therefore maintain that they had a right to claim certain things.

This connection between fulfilling society’s expectations of you and claiming some benefit is particularly evident when proletarian workers asked for something from their masters.328 Many of these called themselves poor in relation to the governor, while emphasizing that they had served or worked for their masters and therefore had a *rightful* claim for pay or other things. For example, the servant Sara Swart recounted in her petition how she had served honestly and well in the house of corporal Frank’s parents for 15 years, but the last three she had not received any salary. Now her mistress had died and she wanted to get her pay from the corporal, indicating that he knew

324 Appendix 1, no 5 (petition 17301001).
325 Appendix 1, no 55 (petition 17310930).
326 Appendix 1, no 14 (petition 17300714). See also appendix 1, no 51, 114, 175, 190.
328 See for example appendix 1, no 48, 98, 107, 143, 146, 182. That work provided a right to different things can also been seen in petitions from other strata than servants, see appendix 1, no 172 – 173, 185.
how she had toiled and served. She therefore asked the governor to help her, poor servant, to get her right.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 143 (petition 17331016).}

I would argue that in the petitions the workers base their claims on their two positions, as subjects as well as servants according to the Table of Duties. By deploying the language of poverty in relation to the governor, calling themselves poor in a humble manner they write themselves into the hierarchy as loyal subjects worthy of protection. At the same time, they point to having been dutiful servants, working and serving their masters, who in turn are bound to give them their pay. The ideas on how society ought to be ordered thereby gave the proletarian worker a basis for demand. Again we also see the analogy of the household on different levels; when the housefather falters (by not paying salary), the servant/subject wants help from the father of the country (or region in this case).

Work was emphasized by many petitioners in various positions, not always in connection to poverty. Some supplicants pointed out that despite their work and diligence, they had been put in a poor state or risked being ruined. In June 1734, leaseholder Petter Wernander wrote to the CA protesting that the farm he leased had been given away to the owner’s relative and his lease had been terminated. Wernander argued that he should be allowed to stay at the farm due to the contract. He ended his petition stating that “[I]f I, against all odds, would be driven from [the farm], where I have put in so much toil, work and expenses, my welfare will be ruined”. When being demanded to pay her late husband’s debts, Marita Jönsdotter asked to be allowed to keep the grain that was still on the ground and the silver she had gotten when she married. She said that “if the great misfortune would befall me, to lose the grain that I, with my husband have tread many tired moments, […] I will have nothing with which to pay the servants this fall, nor any winter food for me, and see no other way out, than to seek my bread from others”.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 102 (petition 17320628), 189 (petition 17340620). See also appendix 1, no 7, 9.}

Others pointed out that despite hardships, they worked or had worked to support themselves. Most of these were men from various social backgrounds, such as the bakers Petter Florin and Mathias Buhrman, who said that they only had their poor industry to supply the city with soft bread and to pay their dues.\footnote{Appendix 1, no 15 (petition 17300903).}

The teacher Jonas Stafrén, who wanted to get paid for educating the children of bailiff Nils Degerman, said he had been seriously wronged and ill-treated by Degerman despite having done his utmost in his service “and because of this I am quite vexed that I must experience it, I who from my first youth have been in small circumstances, and not without the greatest toil have helped myself through poverty.”\footnote{Appendix 1, no 99 (petition 17321108).} The same was expressed by fellow teacher Erik Biörkström, whose father-in-law, bailiff Jonas Bohman had demanded that Biörkström’s property should be sequestered because of debt. The same had happened before, which Biörkström explained in his answer to the governor, after which he “with the help of other Christian people, had had to get
food for myself, my dear wife and children, with great effort in severe poverty”. Nils Larsson Wiggberg, a discharged soldier, who wanted to get back manure which had been taken by a previous employer also expressed the difficulties he had had in supporting himself and his family, when he mentioned that “I, poor discharged soldier, have with great effort tried to feed my few animals, for the sustenance of my poor wife and small children”. Finally, the only woman who mentioned her hardships in trying to fend for her family, the widow Maria Larsdotter, expressed that she “with the greatest toil and misery, have supported [stått för] my poor household from the death of my late husband until this day and year”. By emphasizing their work in connection to poverty, the petitioner could also claim that they had done their part, that they had fulfilled the expectations of society. In this endeavour poverty likely served both as an enhancer of their toil but also as a way of establishing that the supplicant deserved help. By portraying their poverty as blameless due to external events or other people’s wrongful treatment, and at the same time highlighting their efforts to conform with the ideal of industry the supplicants tried to put themselves in a position where they could achieve their goals.

As was seen by the last two examples, the work the petitioners highlighted was not only in support of themselves but also for their families. Arguments pertaining to the comfort of one’s family was mentioned by both Biurman and Vossius as suitable in the genre of petitions. Vossius further explains that causes for the advantage of one’s family was considered just or pious. In his dissertation, Leif Runefelt finds that two of the most important virtues for the master of the household was to be pious and just. In addition, he was responsible for sustaining his wife, children and servants. By emphasizing that you supported your family, a household head could therefore claim to be fulfilling his duties within the household estate. Most petitioners however, instead highlighted the trouble they had or would have to support their families. In some cases, as illustrated by Larsson Wiggberg and Larsdotter above, the petitioner stressed that they had succeeded in maintaining their families despite hardship. In other instances however, the supplicants argued that if the governor did not heed their cause, they would be unable to provide for their families and be forced to beg or otherwise end up in ruin and misery. In other words, to fulfil their duties as household heads, the help of the CA was needed. Christina Prytz has found that in the context of donation letters to the nobility, the Crown took on a responsibility for the noble families in exchange for fidelity. This included making it possible for them to fulfil their

333 Appendix 1, no 64 (petition 17310930).
334 Appendix 1, no 182 (petition 17340424).
335 Appendix 1, no 195 (petition 17340808). For other examples, see appendix 1, no 63, 67, 73, 99, 122, 127, 156, 160, 187, 190.
336 Biurman 1731, p. 61; Vossius 1990, pp. 7 – 8. Vossius advice on this is only mentioned in 17th century editions.
339 See appendix 1, no 63 – 64, 87, 182, 195.
340 See appendix 1, no 11, 21, 56, 89, 100, 102, 130, 153, 156, 165, 175.
duties to the Crown, such as educating their children or supplying the necessary soldiers. What seem to come to light here is an analogy, where the supplicants ask for the governor’s help in order to be able to fulfil their duties in sustaining themselves and their families. It can be exemplified by Anders Pährsson, whose barn had been locked as security for a debt. Pährsson asked to keep his grain and pay the debt with the money he could get for it. Otherwise, “I and my small children will suffer famine, since I have no assets to live from since the grain barn was taken from me.”

The same logic is visible in Maria Löfgreen’s petition, where she asked the governor to be allowed to keep a piece of field and use it as before, in order to be able to feed herself and her small children. Here we also find one unmarried man, a parish tailor, who asked the CA to forbid anyone else to do tailoring work, or else he could not support himself and the farmhand or pay his taxes. Apart from the petitioner emphasizing their duties in accordance with household culture, there are a few alternative explanations to these pleas. As they tend to turn up towards the end of the petition, where the supplicant asked the governor for something it might be argued that these statements of upcoming troubles were made to enhance their plight and to get the governor’s sympathies in accordance with rhetorical method. Another possible reason for the supplicant to stress their need for help to support themselves and their families might be that it put pressure on the governor, especially when the petitioner said they would otherwise have to beg. In the particular case of begging, the governor was responsible to see to it that this phenomenon did not take place within his jurisdiction. By making a sort of threat, that if you do not help us we will become charges of the state, the governor might have been persuaded to help the petitioners.

Others who mentioned their families only said that they were in trouble, or had to support them. Interestingly, while wives and widows of many different strata did not emphasize doing their duty by paying tax or being industrious in the same extent as men or unmarried women, they were over-represented in pointing out that they had children or servants to support. That women in Sweden often maintained that they had a family to support in order to strengthen their claims has been concluded by Prytz and Ling, whereas Walker has found that English women rarely brought up their duty to sustain their families in petitions. Schmidt Blaine has found that in New England however, women clearly stated that things were done for the good of the family. Catharina Kreyman, widow after a burgher in Uppsala, used a particularly graphic way of expressing her

541 Prytz 2013, pp. 93 – 94.
543 Appendix 1, no 100 (petition 17320927).
544 Appendix 1, no 88 (petition 17320329).
545 Appendix 1, no 153 (petition 17340109).
547 Marcia Schmidt Blaine has made this argument in relation to petitions in North America, see Schmidt Blaine 2001, p. 73. See also Linde 2009, who argues that people claiming to not be able to pay tax if not helped was also a threat, p. 98.
548 See appendix 1, no 6, 11, 13, 24, 45, 55, 88, 102, 110, 115, 120, 132, 165, 175, 195.
family burden when she started her petition by saying that “[t]he greatest need forces me, poor and distressed widow, who sits [sitter] with four minors to provide for, to often bother Your Grace”. Kreyman wanted to get back the relatively minor sum of 5 daler 8 öre kmt she had lent to a married couple, and went on to describe how she had had to go to the CA’s office several times both this week and the one before, so that “my poor, small children sit at home with unoccupied teeth and cry for food”. In addition, this demanding of money had caused her to “lose the bread for her poor little ones”.350 The burgher widow Ingri Wärenberg, who had remarried also used the phrase “sitting with my small children to provide for”, as did several other women.351 To mention that you needed to support your children was pointed out also by women from lower ranks, such as Anna Nilsdotter, the wife of a boatswain, who was claimed for debts and told the governor that:

> What concerns the debt for which I am claimed, I do not deny it, and it would have been paid if not my unfaithful husband, Gottfried Gilliam, who has run away from me to Brandenburg, had not through his running put me deep into debt, which I have now paid, since my creditors harshly demanded it and I dearly wanted to try to keep my credit with them, otherwise I cannot honestly feed myself and my child”352

Some women did not explicitly say that they needed to provide for their children, but used the same way of expressing how they sat with, were burdened by or left with small, sometimes fatherless, children.353 Again, we see how these women emphasize their widowhood, or being without a husband present, probably enhancing the vulnerable position of a woman without a man to represent or support her. No men in this material mentioned having been left with children or that these were motherless.354 One tentative explanation to this difference, that men to a larger degree emphasized working to support their family while women said they had been left or sat with children to support, could be attributed to the different roles of the man and wife as householders. As Marklund has concluded, the male householder had the over-arching economic responsibility for the household. While women’s work was seen as very important for the household, it was still formulated as secondary in relation to the men’s duties.355 For a man, it would therefore be very important to emphasize that he tried and wanted to do his duty in working for his household’s sustenance, whereas for women it might have made more sense to express the lack of a male household head, and the vulnerability that entailed. This would have been especially true if they were widows, since that group already was seen as in need of help. Adding that they had small children to support would then enhance this vulnerability, as minors could also be seen as generally

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350 Appendix 1, no 110 (petition 17320505).
351 Appendix 1, no 13 (petition 17300923). See also appendix 1, no 24, 88, 120, 195.
352 Appendix 1, no 175 (petition 17340424).
353 See appendix 1, no 6, 11, 45, 132, 165.
354 By contrast, Sofia Ling has found that men could refer to their children as motherless, and connects this to them making references to being alone (ensörjande) in their responsibility to support their household, see Ling 2016, p. 65.
needy. This difference seems to have become even more distinct into the 1800s, as Jordansson has argued that women in the middle of the 19th century were expected to be provided for, and therefore there would have been a different expectation on her than on a man when it came to providing for a family, and if she had a child she would therefore be entitled to help.

In summary, the petitioners all seemed to portray their poverty as something they had not caused themselves, both with references to causes familiar from the area of poor relief and by trying to establish that someone else had acted unfairly. Petitioners also tried to show that they worked diligently for their own and their families’ subsistence. Whenever the family was mentioned, petitioners often set themselves out as having trouble sustaining them without the help of the governor in this particular case, which might have served to invoke sympathy, to put pressure on the CA not to create more beggars and vagrants or as a reference to wanting to fulfil the duties of a household head or servant. Married or widowed women did not to the same extent emphasize their work explicitly, but instead they were more prone to stress their duty to support their children or servants. They also often ascribed their poverty to becoming widows, or being left by their husbands. This could possibly be explained by the different expectations on men and women within the household. I would argue that taken together all this, the petitioner being blameless in poverty or risking a ruin for which they were not the cause, working through it, wanting to support themselves and their families, was a way for the supplicants to show to the governor that they deserved help. Here, women had an advantage as they could access the idea of the poor, deserving widow, something which was used by women from all strata but particularly by widows from layers above the peasantry. However, for both genders it was possible to argue that their poor states merited help – if the poverty was of the right kind, for which the petitioner could not be blamed – and in addition could argue that they did or wanted to do what was expected of them.

**Invoking Christian compassion – the needy and wretched petitioner in poverty**

Up until now, it seems that poverty’s role was to act almost as an auxiliary to other arguments, used either as a negative contrast (if you had served the Crown or worked, you should not have to beg or end up in ruin) or as an enhancement (you toiled through or despite poverty). Some petitioners however, put poverty at the forefront in asking that the CA or others should take their poor states themselves into account, based on Christian compassion. The ideas of the dutiful subject or the industrious worker connected to poverty were also based on religious ideals and virtues, although

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356 See chapter 7.
358 Blaine argues that many of the phrases about the troubles of the petitioner had to do with exhorting sympathy, see Schmidt Blaine 2001, p. 62. In 17th century England, Steve Hindle has argued that there existed a tradition of priestly exhortations about the miseries of the poor to incur compassion and sympathy, Hindle 2001, p. 102.
the petitioner did not explicitly say so. To deferentially ask for the governor’s help as protector of the poor was founded on the notion that all authority came from God, and therefore the King was God’s vicar on earth and had the duty to see to it that God’s will was done. In this manner, he had a religious duty to help the poor or the lowly, who were obliged to obey and serve the Crown. Religious principles also governed how the poor were perceived and who were considered deserving, with the emphasis on work increasing from the Reformation onwards, and the range of people who were to be given poor relief narrowed. Despite this, the Christian duty of being helpful and compassionate to your neighbour persisted into the 16th and 17th centuries as well as the state’s responsibility for the poor. The notion of helpfulness was not only connected to the deserving poor, but also to people of higher status, so that they would not have to seek relief. This Christian duty to help your neighbour was explicitly stated in the Table of Duties, as it was said there that all Christians should love their neighbour as themselves. In a later edition of the explanation of Luther’s small catechism, authored by Olof Svebilius it was said that your neighbour are all people, but first all who are in need.

Several scholars have pointed to the religious language in petitions. For example, Prytz has pointed out that they reflected a religious obligation to show generosity and compassion. Jens Lerbom has found that during the 16th century, there was a religious tone to the petition where the receiver was expected to behave as a Christian. In the 56 cases where supplicants make explicit references to poverty as a state which should in itself merit help, the appeals to notions of Christian compassion become apparent even though it was not expressed by everyone. Again, married women and widows are over-represented, making out almost 40 percent of cases. That this is the case for widows is not surprising as this study has shown that they could maintain that they were a particular group who merited help. As poor widows they were God’s poor, deserving of sympathy, a message which was stated in the Bible. This notion was expressed by Elisabeth Ericksdotter who said that people often gave the church precedence in debt cases and that “the highest God has also taken poor widows into his graceful auspice and protection, and want their just causes to be helped as much as others”. The priest widow Anna Noraa said that “no one becomes rich from what they take from a poor widow”, but she assumed that God would still provide for her. Brita Johansdotter also pointed to the religious merits of helping a poor widow,

360 Luther 1648, pp. 34 – 36; Dodd 2007, pp. 286 – 287.
362 Luther 1648, p. 40; Almqvist 1845, p. 43. In an earlier version of Svebilius’ explanation this particular passage is not included, see Svebilius 1804.
363 Lerbom 2003, pp. 72, 97; Prytz 2013, p. 169.
366 Appendix 1, no 2 (petition 17301028).
367 Appendix 1, no 184 (petition 17340703).
when she ended by saying “God bless your Grace, who takes me miserable and deplorable widow to heart”. Even though the notion of helping poor widows was not always justified with explicit references to God, the language and words employed were associated with religious expressions. For example, Elisabeth Säfström, widow of a judge, described how the magistrates had taken the meagre condition she had been left in into their hearts (behjärta). Sara Sundell, the widow of a priest, asked the governor to look upon her, a poor, homeless widow with many small children with compassionate (misskundsamma) eyes. With the use of these flourishing words, it also becomes clear that the writers of the petitions employ rhetoric designed to inspire emotion in the reader, which would make very much sense when the motive of using poverty was grounded in the notion of Christian compassion. Other statements such as have mercy (förbarma) or to gracefully consider the petitioner’s needs were also deployed to point out that they should be given help in their poor states. Another, more direct reference was made by Erich Hansson, who asked that his sons should not to be taken as soldiers. He pleaded with the governor, asking for his Grace’s “Christian discretion” in considering his condition, thereby invoking the notion of Christian charity.

Several petitioners also made references to how Christian people had aided them in their poverty, such as the miller Mats Jansson who, when turned out of his mill, described that “[lack of] a roof over my head is my utmost destruction which each person faithful to Christ can take to heart”. The burgher Johan Upstedt, who had come in financial trouble due to accidents described how everything was taken from him.

I did not own a coat to wear, or anything to lie in, much less any piece of food to put in my own, my poor wife’s and children’s mouths. And they [the creditors] know very well, that I own nothing which is mine, it belongs to magister Hernodius, who out of Christian compassion and taking my deplorable state to heart, helped me so that I barely can get my food and sustenance, but no more.

Several people who asked the governor to take their poverty into account, or who described themselves as having been helped by Christian people, also ascribed their states as being due to various things they could not control. When the tradesman Jöran Smedberg was threatened with having his property taken due to debts, he asked the governor to wait with the sequester, “in taking my trade- and penniless condition to heart, which I have come into due to other people’s damage to me and not my own actions”. At the same time Smedberg assured the governor, as God was his witness, that he had often considered how this debt should have been paid. The poverty these

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368 Appendix 1, no 11 (petition17301210).
369 Appendix 1, no 6 (petition 17300722), 45 (petition 17310407). For similar cases see appendix 1, no 110, 132, 151.
371 See for example appendix 1, no 4, 9, 11, 21, 45, 110, 117, 151.
372 Appendix 1, no 183 (petition 17340527).
373 Appendix 1, no 9 (petition 17300312).
374 Appendix 1, no 119 (petition 17330314). For similar applications see appendix 1, no 64, 79, 86, 160.
375 See for example appendix 1, no 64, 67, 117, 119.
376 Appendix 1, no 197 (petition 17340817).
petitioners asked the governor to take to heart was therefore of the blameless, deserving kind that every Christian had a duty to consider.

In summary, several petitioners reasoned that the governor and other people ought to take their poverty itself into account. Sometimes this plea was devoid of any religious language, but many times words were used which implicitly referenced Christian notions of compassion and in other petitions this was explicitly stated. The poverty that supplicants seem to reference however, was of the kind which was not caused by the petitioner himself. Again, widows made sure to reference their status as poor widows.

Chapter 9 – The language of poverty as a tool: hierarchy and reciprocity

In the study of early modern Europe, petitions are emerging as an increasingly used historical source in several areas. Since the language of poverty permeates many supplications, most researchers who examine them make note of it. As of yet however, this complicated concept and its function in petitioning have not been subject to any larger studies in its own right. 377 Therefore the goal of this thesis has been to elucidate this language of poverty and the ideas and values behind its invocation, through studying how it was described and used in petitions to the CA of Uppsala during the 1730s. By considering these supplications as strategic documents, containing symbols used in cultural practice, it has been possible to glean what contemporary ideas lay behind statements of poverty. 378 The investigation has revealed a complex and varied deployment of the language of poverty, which often did not have to do with purely economic issues, but also with hierarchical notions based on the petitioner’s place in society and of the supplicants’ responsibility to act in accordance with certain norms as well as other people’s duty to help their neighbours. The roots of these notions can be traced to religious ideas of how society ought to be arranged and an ideal conception of people’s reciprocal obligations and rights. These petitions reveal the central role religion played for the argumentative strategies early modern people had at their disposal, 379 and that describing yourself as poor, or in risk of poverty had a large part in this. The thesis has shown that the actions and qualities brought up by petitioners in connection to poverty often could be understood from the framework of the Table of Duties. The fact that the ideas and values in Luther’s small catechism were so widely used in these petitions, and by such a different range of people, indicates that it was more than simply an ideology imposed from above – it also provided ordinary men and women with the basis for their own claims and rights. To speak of petitioners’

377 For two exceptions, see Ling 2016; Vallerani 2015.
378 Pamela Sharpe expresses that by reading petitioning letters we can get some appreciation of the rights, duties and obligations of early modern people, see Sharpe 1999, p. 230.
379 Braddick & Walter have described religion as playing a large part in the validation of social and political hierarchies, see Braddick & Walter 2001, p. 35. The importance of religion in how society was formed and how its people perceived themselves has also been emphasized by for example Stadin, 2004 p. 14 and Ericsson 2002, pp. 71 – 72.
use of the language of poverty and the issues connected to it only as a manipulation of the public transcript might therefore be too much of a simplification.

A petitioner who called him- or herself poor in a petition, showed deference toward their lord and thereby assigned themselves a place in the hierarchical social order. By humbling themselves and using the denomination poor, which was done mostly by peasants and the lower orders, supplicants indicated that they knew their place in society, and that they did not intend to challenge this with their petition. This subordinate function of poverty could help explain why people of higher strata did not explicitly call themselves poor in any larger extent. They did show a certain deference to the governor, but they did not denominate themselves as poor in the process. It might simply not have been appropriate to connect themselves to a phrase which was used by peasants and lower strata in order to show subordination. The reason for deploying poverty in this manner might have been because it was expected from the governor, but as it is not used by all or even most peasants this seems not to have been the case. It is more likely that the petitioner in this manner sought to activate notions set forth in the Table of Duties, where the humble, loyal and poor subject was obliged to give the Crown its dues, in exchange for good governance and protection.

In addition to calling themselves poor, many petitioners indicated having paid taxes or served the Crown in various ways. By claiming to have fulfilled their duties, the supplicants could also make demands on the governor. What lies at the heart of this strictly hierarchical ideal system is then the notion of reciprocal rights and obligations which could be applied to many relations, for example that between ruler and ruled or between housefather and servant.\textsuperscript{380} In essence, the hierarchies of the household culture which were expressed in the Table of Duties created a way for the people to make their own demands and claims in which the subordinate function of poverty had a large part.\textsuperscript{381} As such, these ideas formed a part of the semiotic system of symbols, such as that of the dutiful subject, available for people in cultural practice. It is of course entirely possible that by using questions of deference, obedience and loyalty, the petitioners helped cementing and legitimating a social order which was in essence based on hierarchy and inequality,\textsuperscript{382} but for the individual petitioner it could mean a possibility to argue for your right to retain your farm or something else of equal importance. In the context of marital disputes Andreas Marklund has shown that wives could often get the authorities attention by claiming that their husbands had not fulfilled the duties as the heads of the household. Similarly, Karin Hassan Jansson has found that maids could argue successfully in rape cases by setting themselves out as loyal servants and their

\textsuperscript{380} Jansson 2014, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{381} It is important to remember however, that these people were subordinate in a very real sense of the word, subject to the inherent inequality of the early modern world, see Braddock & Walter 2001, pp. 41 – 42. Many researchers working with petitions have emphasized, however that this hierarchical system of inequality could work in favour of the petitioner, see Marsh 2005, pp. 25 – 26; Olsson 2007, p. 64; Houston 2014, p. 271.

\textsuperscript{382} Wood 2006, p. 812.
assailants as tyrants who did not act as good housefathers.\textsuperscript{383} A possible subject for further research would be to examine whether or not this type of reasoning in petitions had any impact on the governor, although it seems to me that if it did not it would simply not have been used.

It could be argued that the petitioners’ engagement with the language of poverty while making themselves out as loyal and dutiful subjects and asking for the governor’s protection was exactly the kind of manipulation of the public transcript which Scott has emphasized. But when deploying the language of poverty, petitioners engaged with several other duties than that between ruler and ruled, such as the duty of a household head to work for yourself and your family, or other people’s duty to be Christian neighbours. Scott’s theory, which is most suited to explain arguments relating to the petitioner as a subject, is therefore somewhat lacking when trying to elucidate the whole complex use of the language of poverty.

In the same manner as supplicants for poor relief, petitioners tried to establish themselves as industrious, working through poverty or having been put in a poor state despite their diligence. When supplicants emphasized that they had toiled during their poverty, the destitution described likely served as an enhancer to the claimed industry – that despite having a hard time supporting themselves, they had managed. Supplicants also emphasized their family burden, and how they worked to support them, or how they wanted to but needed the governor’s help, otherwise they and their families would suffer. Whereas both women and men raised these issues, widowed or married women were much more likely to stress their burden of children than specific work. This difference might be due to the fact that a lone woman with children could been seen as more vulnerable and thereby more deserving of help. Members of the lowest stratum, the proletarian workers, emphasized their work and loyal service to their masters regardless of gender but they often did not connect notions of poverty to it in any other manner than calling yourself poor in a subordinate fashion. From their arguments however, it is clear that their service and work created rights to get paid, which they could claim of their masters in a similar manner to the loyal subject and his lord.

The notion of industry and supporting your family were important virtues within the household culture. The household head had a duty to take care of his family and almost everyone had a duty to work for their own subsistence in accordance with the teachings of Luther.\textsuperscript{384} By fulfilling these duties, or at least wanting to, the petitioner could then argue that the governor, reciprocally, should help them – that they did not deserve to end up in poverty. The same way of using the language of poverty as a negative contrast could also be seen when petitioners emphasized having served the Crown or paid taxes. The poverty they write about in this manner is clearly of another kind than calling yourself poor to establish your subordinate position. Whenever petitioners argued that they should not have to beg or that they had ended up in trouble despite their work, poverty is described


\textsuperscript{384} Marklund 2004, p. 288; Jansson et al. 2016, chapter 5.
as an unwanted condition. If you did what was expected of you – you should not end up having to suffer, beg or be ruined. This way to use poverty reminds of what Alexandra Shepard has found about church witnesses in England, where there were clear negative connotations to the notion of poverty.\textsuperscript{385} The witnesses she studied also tried to emphasize their virtues, being honest, having worked or never having been on relief. The difference here is that these petitioners willingly talk about poverty although in a negative manner, at least when it is seen as something they risk if not given the help of the governor. One reason why they do not hesitate to use poverty in this manner might be that they are not actually poor, as Shepard’s witnesses seem to have been. Very few petitioners from the lower peasantry, crofters and cottagers talked about poverty as something they risked without the help of the governor, which means that most of the supplicants who did were probably relatively well-off. These were then people who could counter the expressions of poverty with credible statements of having done what was expected of them.

At the same time, petitioners did not hesitate to describe themselves as having endured great hardship or making themselves out as needy or having suffered from their poverty or poor states. Whenever people gave a reason for or described what had contributed to their destitution however, they made sure to emphasize that it was not something of their own doing. It was, as Sofia Ling has concluded, portrayed as an innocent suffering.\textsuperscript{386} The reasons for becoming poor varied between things normally emphasized by paupers, such as age, illness or accidents but to the same degree it was also due to other people’s unjust treatment. Women often emphasized becoming widows as a reason for hardship, and through the whole examination their emphasis on themselves as poor widows who have been left alone has been prominent. I would argue that the petitioner, by setting themselves out as blameless in their poverty tried to establish their deservingness of help with the aid of notions of a useful member of society. As people who had fulfilled their duties, both as industrious heads of households and dutiful subjects, whose troubles were not of their own making, they could argue that their poor situation was of the kind that merited help, or that they did not deserve to end up begging or in ruin. In establishing themselves as deserving of help, women had an additional weapon in their arsenal, as poor widows were as a group portrayed as deserving from the start. As such, it was more important for them to make themselves out as defenceless and alone, rather than industrious.

As the poverty was set out to be blameless, it could also be used to evoke feelings of sympathy and compassion with the reader. Petitioners often made use of rhetorical method to enhance their stated suffering, and this was also connected to the notion of Christian compassion. As stated in the Table of Duties, all Christians had a responsibility to help their neighbours, and references to this was used by several petitioners. By making themselves out as in need, but not because of their

\textsuperscript{385} Shepard 2015, chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{386} Ling 2016, pp. 73 – 80.
own doing, the supplicant could therefore claim that the governor should help them out of his duty as a Christian.

Through the study, the principles of the Table of Duties have been a recurrent theme in the petitions. The supplicants made reference to a large variety of roles prescribed in this religious document, such as the industrious household head, the loyal subject, the subordinate servant, the protective ruler and the compassionate Christian. I would argue that this diverse way of making use of these principles, together with the fact that it was done in a large variety of cases and by many different people, motivates talking about it as a practice of household culture rather than manipulating a public transcript. These ideas were not just something which conferred power to the dominants and which could be appropriated by the masses. Rather, despite being very hierarchical and unequal, they nonetheless gave people possibility to argue for why they should be given help or even to criticize their superiors. There is evidence to suggest that the household culture had lost much of its influence towards the 19th century. For example, discussions about the authority of a household head in relation to marital violence gradually vanished and became private matters. As the Table of Duties vanished from the explanation of the Lutheran catechism in 1811, it would be interesting to see to what extent the deployment of the language of poverty changed moving into the 19th century with its increase of landless workers, rise of industrialism and connection of poverty to the emerging working class. Another possibility would be to compare the results from this study with petitions from a Catholic country.

Finally, if we return to the starting point of the thesis – the petition of Erick Larsson – it is now possible to see the ideas and values behind the short passage presented. Larsson named himself a poor man, who with his wife would have nothing to eat if other Christian people did not take pity on them. He also made sure to stress that the situation he found himself in with subsequent poverty as a result, was not of his own doing, but because his counterparty, Major Mannercrona, had acted unlawfully. What Larsson was doing when he handed in the petition, was asking the governor to order Mannercrona, Larsson’s own landlord, to give back his property. By calling himself poor, it can be argued that Larsson invoked the governor’s protection and duty of just ruling against the unlawful behaviour of his master, especially since Larsson himself had been a hard worker and thereby done what was expected from him. The bad behaviour of Mannercrona was heightened by the fact that in taking Larsson’s possibility for subsistence, he also infringed on Larsson’s ability to fulfil his duty as a household head to provide for his family. In addition, since Larsson’s situation was blameless, he could also put pressure on the governor by asking him to act as a good Christian. In short, the language of poverty and the values and ideas behind its invocation created a possibility for Larsson to set himself up against someone of a much higher rank than himself.

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388 Pleijel 1970, p. 44.
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Svenska Akademiens Ordbok, [www.saob.se](http://www.saob.se)
Appendix 1. Sample petitions and sources for nominal linking

The complete number of petitions containing the language of poverty (217 cases) have been listed below. When referencing these petitions in the text, I have noted the number in the appendix and when making citations also the relevant petition, such as: Appendix 1, no 1 (petition 17300225). Whenever I mention a petition which is not in this sample, a full reference in the normal fashion has been made. To find out the marital status and social origin of the petitioner, poll tax registers (mantalsländer), cadastres (jordeböcker) and church records (kyrkoarkiv) have been consulted. For clarity and easy access, all the sources used for one case have been gathered together. To avoid misunderstandings due to wording, references to the sources are made in Swedish. The numbering of the petitions has been decided by the order in which they lay in the boxes, since they are not always ordered chronologically in the archive. When the cases involve two or more parties, the writings have normally been put together in one bundle by archivists. To make the relevant petition easier to find, the first date in the following appendix is the date on the first writing in the bundle, regardless of who it is from. If that date differs from the one on the petition that was sent in by the petitioner who used the language of poverty, an additional date has been added. For example, in case number two in this appendix, between Erich Stenbeck and Elisabeth Ericksdotter, it is the woman who uses the language of poverty. However, the first writing in the case came from Erich Stenbeck on October 15th 1730. The first date referenced is therefore 17301015, so when searching for the relevant source, the need to go through whole bundles is avoided. The date on Elisabeth Ericksdotter’s petition is October 28th 1730, so an additional date 17301028 has been added. As some poll tax registers are missing page numbers, I have chosen to reference all of them by giving the name of the parish and the farm.

1. Landsarkivet i Uppsala (ULA), Länsstyrelsen i Uppsala län (LU), Landskansliet (LKa), D IV b:16, petition 17300225 (Erich Jansson ././. Jean Mallenius); Riksarkivet (RA), Mantalsländer 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Giresta socken (parish), Furuby; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 125, p. 1295; ArkivDigital (AD), Kulla kyrkoarkiv, AI:1b, p. 41.


3. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300114 (Johan Schultz); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, Al:a:1, no 417.

4. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300604/17300708 (Ström Lorentsen ././. G Hagert); AD, Vendel kyrkoarkiv, C:4, p. 98.


6. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300722 (Elisabeth Säfström); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a:1, no 237, 326.


9. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300723/17300312 (Danviks hospital ././. Mats Jansson); RA, Mantalsländer 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Balingsta socken, Säva kvarn. Note: This case is physically located in the same bundle as number 8 although they concern two different events.


12. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300831 (Anna Catrina von Husen /. Jonas Buhrström); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, Al:a1, no 6; AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling El1:1, 17170409.

13. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300923 (Ingrid Wärenberg); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a1, no 78.


15. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300903 (Petter Florin and Mathias Buhrman); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a1, no 87, 418.


19. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300618 (Carin Mårtensdotter /. Magnus Randt).

20. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17301111 (Lars Olsson).


22. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300319 (Bro härad).


24. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:16, petition 17300409 (Anna Maria Sahlström /. Gustav Rudbeck); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, Al:a1, no 124, 246.


32. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5, petition 17300211 (Ingrid Pärsdotter ./. Helena Erichsdotter); AD, Uppsala
domkyrkoförsamling, AIa:1, no 321.

33. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:5, petition 17300923 (Johan Ersson ./. Anders Ekelööf); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820

34. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300220 (Rasbooks församling).

35. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300220/17300222, (Rasbo församling).

36. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300312 (Söderby rote ./. Gryttjom rote); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820

37. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300312/17300303 (Gryttjom rote ./. Rote 43).

38. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300109 (Orresta rote).

39. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17301203 (Bengt Andersson ./. Petter Lindgreen); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-
1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Helga Trefaldighet socken, Rickomberga; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929,
vol. 125, p. 1494. For marital status, see ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320914 (Petter Bergstedt ./. Bengt Andersson).

40. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300928 (Johan Johansson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län,

41. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300217 (Israel Mihrman ./. Axel Ersson).

42. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300827 (Erich Matsson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol.

43. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17300112 (Margareta Larsdotter); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, AIa:1,
no 302.

44. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310608 (Mats Andersson ./. Dannemora gruva); RA, Mantalslängder
494.

45. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310407 (Sara Sundell ./. Daniel Björcklund); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-
1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Börje socken, Broby.

46. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310120 (Bengt Lindbergh).

47. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310304 (Lars Larsson ./. Johan Berg); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820

48. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310312 (Per Jansson ./. Olof Ryman).

49. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310225 (Petter Forman ./. Olof Lund); AD, Uppsala
domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 172.

50. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17311129 (Rote 41 Bälinge kompani); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820
Uppsala län, vol. 36, Skuttunge socken, Södra Krycklinge, Dragby; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929,

51. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310804/17310811 (Johan Tunander ./. Petter Landström); AD, Uppsala
domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 406.

52. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17311230 (Carl Winge); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36,
Gryta socken, Säva gästgivaregård.

53. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310709/17310726 (Christina Piper ./. Johan Bredström); RA,
Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Bred socken, Edsberga; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-
54. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17311007/17311027 (Johan Leenholm ./ Mats Larsson).
55. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310930 (Margeta Andersdotter).
56. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310713 (Nils Eliasson).
57. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310617 (Elisabeth Eriksdotter ./ Eric Widström).
58. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, undated petition (Rote 128 ./ Anders Ersson).
59. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310802 (Margareta Almberg).
60. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17311210/undated petition/17311207 (Nils Eliasson ./ Anders Corssar).
63. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17310830 (Kapten Camitz ./ Johan Blomberg); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 38, Arnö socken, Pastor.
64. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17310826 (Jöran Mårtensson ./ Anders Andersson’s widow); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 38, Arnö socken, Pastor.
65. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17311014 (Olof Lundh ./ Abraham Lundholm); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIA:1, no 399.
66. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17311012 (Waltin Merckel ./ Pär Pärsson); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIA:1, no 92, 332.
67. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17321026 (Fredrick Börts).
68. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17320323 (Maria Reuterhusia ./ Brita Thun); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIA:1, no 167.
70. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:6, petition 17321214 (Lars Pärsson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 37, Äkerby socken, Berga; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 127, p. 11.
71. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17310615 (Elisabeth Olofsdotter).
72. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17310521 (Jan Jansson, Olof Andersson, Jöran Pärsson).
73. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17311112 (Lars Helsing); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIA:1, no 189.
74. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17310918 (Isak Schmitz ./ Baron Gyllenclou).
76. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17320104 (Mats Ersson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Långtora socken, Lyngesta by; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 127, p. 690.
77. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17321108 (Pär Nilsson ./ Måns Germundsson).
78. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17321004 (Erich Andersson).
79. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17320424 (Carl Andersson Räff).

81. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17320417 (Hans Biörkbom).

82. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17320823 (Erik Kieder); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Höjsta socken, soldater.


84. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17330407 (Anders Lundberg); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Alunda socken, Vättsta.

85. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321209 (Märta Brander).

86. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321013/17321024 (Petter Bröms ././. Carl Larsson, Jan Tomsson). Note: This particular letter is not written as a petition, but as a testimonial in support of Carl Larsson’s master’s claim that he took the poor child in and therefore in accordance should be allowed to keep him. As it is clear that the CA sees Carl Larsson as a party in this case, I have chosen to include it.

87. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320607 (Jonas Bohman); AD, Skuttunge kyrkoarkiv, AI:1, p. 331.

88. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320329 (Maria Löfgreen).

89. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320510 (Per Olsson).


92. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321128 (Elisabeth Tibelia).


94. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320525 (Farmers in Jumkil).


96. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320420 (Lisken Andersdotter ././. Eric Granberg).


98. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320614 (Marija Christoffersdotter ././. Johan Nilsson’s heirs, Major Ruth); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 127, p. 132.

99. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321108 (Jonas Stafrén ././. Nils Degerman).

101. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321011 (Anders Höök).


104. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320524 (Botila Bröms).

105. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320719 (Chatrina Eliasdotter /. Elisabeth Dragman).

106. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17321113 (Ingrid Ekström /. Axel Kiellman).


110. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:18, petition 17320505 (Catharina Kreyman /. Anders Gabriel Duhre and his wife); ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:17, petition 17310828 (Sven Svensson Arman /. Anders Gabriel Duhre and his wife); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, Afa1, no 68.

111. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330131 (Johan Andersson /. Kapten Drake); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 30, Vendel socken, Karebo; RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 36, Vendel socken, Holvarbo; RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Vendel socken, Holvarbo; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 587; AD, Vendel kyrkoarkiv, C:4, p. 97 – 103. Note: In the poll tax register of 1730 there is one Jan Andersson in Holvarbo who is noted as married. In the tax register of 1735 there are two Jan Andersson (old and young) where the old Jan Andersson has no wife mentioned in the tax register. As this may be due to her being old, I have also consulted the church registers to see whether any wife of Jan Andersson in Holvarbo died during the years 1729 to 1735. As this is not the case, I have assumed the wife’s absence to be due to her age and not death.


115. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17331017/17331019 (Gotfrid Kähler /. Christina Witte).

116. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330315 (Johan Nyberg /. Margareta Andersdotter).


119. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330308/17330314 (Zacharia Brander /. Johan Upstedt); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Afa1, no 79.

120. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330201 (Anna Christina Palm /. Petter Möller).
121. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330427 (Pär Ersson); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 548.


123. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330913 (Bengt Andersson./. Carl Stoltz).


125. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330912 (Olof Jansson./. Johan Hasselgren, Jonas Sundstedt); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 880.

126. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330601 (Greta Westring./. Kierstin Olofsdotter).

127. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330430 (Johan Wijdholm./. Petter Lundblad).

128. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330117 (Kierstin Mattiasdotter./. Christopher Lundgren); AD, Hagby kyrkoarkiv C1, p. 120.

129. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330611 (Johan Mallenius); AD, Kulla kyrkoarkiv, AI:1b, p. 41.

130. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330502/17330512 (Johan Lenholm./. Erich Elg); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a1, no 324.

131. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV b:19, petition 17330606 (Mats Bertelsson); AD, Järlåsa kyrkoarkiv, C2 pp. 20, 160.

132. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330303/17330309 (Jon Olofsson./. Johan Altman, Anna Sahlbeck); RA, Jordeböcker Västernorrlands län (from 1762 Gävleborgs län), vol. 67, p. 1155; AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a1, no 71; AD, Berg kyrkoarkiv AI:1, p. 48.

133. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330426 (Maria Andersdotter); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, Al:a1, no 252.

134. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330418/17330425 (Jonas Meldercreutz./. Korpral Mossberg).

135. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330510/17330530 (Danvik hospital./. Margareta Jansdotter); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 127, p. 345.

136. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330510/17310708 (Olof Lundh./. Anders Jacobsson Häggren).


139. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330626/17330426 (Carl Prints./. Bengt Wallqvist); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Läby socken, kaplan.

140. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:7, petition 17330628 (Petter Sörfwillius./. Magister Hernodius, Per Persson); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a1, no 318.


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17331016 (Sara Swart ./. Korpral Franeck); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 234.


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17331207 (Per Åhman).

ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17331210 (Stina Lang ./. Julius von Höphner).

ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:8, petition 17331221 (Gustaf Nybom ./. Nicolas Bentzelstierna); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 152.

ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV b:20, petition 17340907/17350421 (Carl Otto von Dinggraffen ./. Nicolas Bentzelstierna).


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV b:20, petition 17341130 (Bro härads allmoge).

ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV b:20, petition 17340511 (Anna Jöransdotter Gråberg).


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340110 (Axel Andersson ./. Inspektor Malmberg); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Álvkarleby socken, Västanà.


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340115 (Israel Laurentius Nyman); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Ca:3, 17331016, 17351211.


ULÅ, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340116 (Nils Lundström); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 39.

163. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340207/17340225 (Nils Kyronius ./ Erich Tunbergh); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, AIa:1, no 89, 402.

164. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340202/17340316 (Isaac Westberg ./ Claes Ankarström); AD, Ålkarleby kyrkoarkiv C:1, p. 35.

165. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340206 (Kierstin Larsdotter); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 73.


167. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340208 (Christopher Billmark); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Göteborgs och Bohus län, vol. 53, Marstrands stad, Magistraten.


169. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340220 (Lars Diurberg ./ Jacob Törn); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 38, Kungsängen socken, Tibble.


171. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:9, petition 17340228 (Sven Lundstedt); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 158.

172. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340306 (P Tammelin); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 206.

173. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340307 (Margareta Michaelsdotter ./ Mats Carlsson).

174. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340313 (Nils Nyman ./ Lars Mattsson); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 70, 128.

175. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340313/17340424 (Petter Helin Johansson ./ Anna Nilsson); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 341.


179. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340406 (Anders Borell, Anders Säfström); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling AIa:1, no 300, 303.

180. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340408 (Anna Cajsa Boulande).

182. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340502/17340424 (Nils Larsson Wågberg ./ Olof Ryman).


184. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:10, petition 17340530 (Erich Hansson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Tensta socken, Pastor.

185. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340530 (Matts Ersson ./ Perh Ersson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Alunda socken, Furuby; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 223, 244.

186. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340619/17340703 (Petter Lindroth ./ Elisabeth Ersdotter et. al); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Viksta socken, Gålsta.


188. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340621/17340703 (Fredrik Wilhelm Dohl ./ Hindrich Wenman); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 127 – 129.

189. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340716 (Oland härad ./ Norunda härad).


191. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340731/17340808 (Jean W Elgenstierna ./ Maria Larsdotter).

192. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340802/17340928 (Johan Schultz ./ Jacob Mellenius).

193. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340808/17340817 (Johan Kruse ./ Jöran Smedberg).

194. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340808/17340812 (Carl Gabriel Duhre ./ Erich Johansson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Danmark socken, Djurgårdstorpet.

195. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:11, petition 17340820 (Norunda härad).


197. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17340925/17331024 (Jacob Lindberg ./ Jacob Ludvich Schultz); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:1, no 319.

198. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17340925/17341003 (Georg D. Swebilius, Isak Myhrman ./ Pehr Olsson, Malin Matsdotter); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Viksta socken, Ulfunge; RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 634.

199. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17340925 (Hans Hansson Nohrström).

200. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17340926 (Maria Smadbeck ./ Jöns Buschberg).

201. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341001 (Sara Ersdotter ./ Johan Persson); RA, Jordeböcker Uppsala län 1631-1929, vol. 129, p. 902.
206. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341002/17341015 (Albrecht Theel /. Ingeborg Granzelia); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a:1, no 206.

207. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341002/17341009 (Marcus Simming /. Nicolaus Lörfman); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a:1, no 5.

208. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341010/17341016 (Petter Berg /. Johan Runbohm).

209. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341010/17341019 (Anders Hagberg /. Britta Kerstin Brandt).

210. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341023 (Johan Bengtsson); RA, Mantalslängder 1642-1820 Uppsala län, vol. 39, Hjälsta socken, Tuna ägor.

211. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341023 (Måns Jansson).


216. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341128 (J Wernander); AD, Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling Al:a:1, no 328; AD, Alunda kyrkoarkiv C:3, p. 10 (17350421).

217. ULA, LU, LKa, D IV c:12, petition 17341223 (Kristina, änka efter Erik Jans).
Appendix 2. Considerations and titles for social division

The titles described below are those found in the total sample of 1,016 cases. They have been placed by using Sten Carlsson’s book *Att lyta samhällsklass* and the ranking order of 1714, *Kongl. Majts Förnyade Rang-Ordning*. Placing people by titles in any general way is difficult, since the title itself is not always enough. For example, in the ranking order of 1714, it is clear that if you were an assessor in the castle court of Reval, you belonged to a higher ranking than assessors at the court in Livonia.\(^3^9^0\) In the same fashion, according to the state calendar of 1735 as reproduced by Gunnar Artéus in *Krigsmakt och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, a judge in the courts of Stockholm ranked higher than his counterparts in smaller cities.\(^3^9^0\) Therefore, when you held your title also mattered. However, since the groups listed below are quite broad I have consequently placed the people with the same title in the same group, and therefore assumed that they would be in different ends of the same group’s spectrum.

Sometimes, albeit rarely, different titles that would imply that someone should be in different groups are used for the same person. For example, a lieutenant might also be a nobleman which would place him in a higher group. In the case of conflicting titles, I have let the highest ranking title decide the placement. However, any kind of stratification made this way will inevitably contain a certain amount of subjectivity and error, especially on lower levels, which may be subject to discussion. However, I have made a large effort to motivate each placement. It is also important to remember that what I am aiming to achieve here is not an exact placement, but a rather broad overview. Due to a certain ambiguity concerning certain titles, I have not been able to place every titled person. Examples of such titles are adjutant, quartermaster, student, gardener and forester where the title itself does not imply the social background of the person. A student for example, could come from any of the four estates. As a consequence of this, about 80 titled people have not been socially grouped. As I have been able to group in total almost 1,400 persons I do not see this as something that will skew the result overly much.

Special mention should be made about the placement of people in group 4. For the higher groups, 1 – 3, the people could normally be placed with the help of the ranking order of 1714, made up of many military titles and civil officials. The officials denoted by Carlsson to belong in group 4, such as bailiffs, were of too low a rank to be placed using the ranking order. By that logic, I have put some civil servants who are not mentioned in the ranking order in group 4. This may cause group 4 to be uncharacteristically large. In addition, as artisan masters are mentioned by Carlsson as belonging in group 4, I have also put burghers in this group although certain wealthy burghers could most certainly belong in higher groups. Further, concerning groups 5 and 6, titles apart from farmer are mostly not used for the peasantry, and the petitioner is not even always called a farmer. Due to the time frame of the thesis, I have not been able to look closer into the background of each farmer, but have had to rely solely on titles which have probably made the group smaller than it would have been otherwise. In addition, I have not been able to distinguish between different types of farmers (such as freehold, Crown (krono) or noble (frälse)) solely on titles, so for the total sample groups 5 and 6 have merged. This is not a problem in the thesis however, as I never compare groups 5 and 6 with each other with reference to the total number of cases. In most cases I have found a suitable English translation, but in a few cases this has not been possible, why only the Swedish title is given with an explanation of what the title entails.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swedish title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friherrinna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biskop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grevinna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Högvälboren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3^9^0\) See ranking order of 1714, points 39, 40.

\(^3^9^0\) Artéus 1982, pp. 135 – 138.
## Group 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapten</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kammarherre</td>
<td>Chamberlain</td>
<td>Chamberlains are noted in the ranking order of 1714 on an equal rank with majors, see points 22 – 28.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Välborne</td>
<td>Wellborn</td>
<td>The title välboren was the title given to noblemen below the rank of baron or count, see Nationalencyklopedin, 1996, “välboren”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Överstelöjtnant</td>
<td>Lieutenant-Colonel</td>
<td>According to the ranking order of 1714, lieutenant-colonels are ranked just below colonels, just above majors, see points 12 – 22.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Group 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advokat</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>I have put lawyers in group 3 due to the fact that all other legal actors, such as judges and prosecutors have been put there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditör</td>
<td>Auditor</td>
<td>According to SAOB, an auditör was a legal official serving in military courts and at regiments, see SAOB “auditör”, accessed 2016-02-08. In the ranking order of 1714, certain auditors are placed in the last rank on equal footing with certain secretaries and circuit judges (häradshövdingar), see point 40. Based on this I have placed them in group 3, as Carlsson states that secretaries were in this group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direktör Brukspatron</td>
<td>People in a leading position over a factory or iron-works</td>
<td>Carlsson mentions fabrikanter in group 3, which I have taken to be on equal footing with these two titles, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiskal</td>
<td>Prosecutor</td>
<td>Some prosecutors at higher courts and royal institutions were equals to the secretaries at those same authorities in the ranking order of 1714, see point 37. Carlsson places secretaries in group 3, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fänrik Kornett</td>
<td>Second lieutenant</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaplan Komminister Kyrkoherde Pastor</td>
<td>Priests of different kinds, such as chaplain, curate, rector and reverends</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirurg</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landssekreterare</td>
<td>Secretaries of various kinds</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish title</td>
<td>English translation or explanation</td>
<td>Explanation for placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akademisekreterare</td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lantmätare</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Professors and others with a doctor's degree</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Löjtnant</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rådman</td>
<td>Judges in lower courts in cities and on the country-side</td>
<td>Carlsson places judges in higher courts in group 2, therefore judges in lower courts should be placed lower than this. See also the ranking order of 1714 point 38, where judges in the lower courts of Stockholm were equal to certain lieutenants, and Artéus 1982, p. 138 where the judges in Gothenburg equalled certain secretaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kämnär</td>
<td>A civil servant in charge of financial administration for the state.</td>
<td>According to Artéus 1982, p. 137, räntmästare at the universities equalled certain highly placed lieutenants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Häradshövding</td>
<td>Judges in lower courts in cities and on the country-side</td>
<td>Carlsson places judges in higher courts in group 2, therefore judges in lower courts should be placed lower than this. See also the ranking order of 1714 point 38, where judges in the lower courts of Stockholm were equal to certain lieutenants, and Artéus 1982, p. 138 where the judges in Gothenburg equalled certain secretaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Räntmästare</td>
<td>A civil servant in charge of financial administration for the state.</td>
<td>According to Artéus 1982, p. 137, räntmästare at the universities equalled certain highly placed lieutenants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alderman</td>
<td>Alderman</td>
<td>According to Carlsson, artisan masters should be placed in group 4, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16. As the aldermen were in the highest position in their respective guilds, I wanted to distinguish them from the rest, whereby they have been placed in group 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ålderman</td>
<td>Alderman</td>
<td>According to Carlsson, artisan masters should be placed in group 4, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16. As the aldermen were in the highest position in their respective guilds, I wanted to distinguish them from the rest, whereby they have been placed in group 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryggare</td>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>The brewers in the material seem to have had permission to brew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apotekare</td>
<td>Apothecary</td>
<td>I have seen them equal to artisan masters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrendator</td>
<td>Lease-holder</td>
<td>According to SAOB, an arrendator is simply a person who uses land belonging to someone else for lease. In theory this could be any kind of person, however in the material the title of arrendator is consistently used for people who seem to come from a higher social stratum than the peasantry. They all have last names in which patronyms are not used. Because of this, I have put the people called arrendator in group 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Befallningsman</td>
<td>Bailiff</td>
<td>Befallningsmänn were those in each jurisdiction who carried out the orders of the CA, and gave orders to the sheriffs (länsman), which were placed in group 4 according to Carlsson, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fogde</td>
<td>Bailiff</td>
<td>Befallningsmänn were those in each jurisdiction who carried out the orders of the CA, and gave orders to the sheriffs (länsman), which were placed in group 4 according to Carlsson, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgare</td>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td>Carlsson does not mentionburghers at all in his grading, however, due to the fact that he puts artisan masters in group 4, I have putburghers and tradesmen with no other denomination in this group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 4**
alcoholic beverages, and according to SAOB this was often performed together with serving of beer, such as an inn-keeper, see SAOB “bryggare”, accessed 2016-05-06.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fältväbel</td>
<td>Sergeant Major</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Förare</td>
<td>A non-commissioned officer</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gästgivare</td>
<td>Inn-keeper</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handelsman</td>
<td>Tradesman</td>
<td>See explanation for bryggare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hantverksmästare</td>
<td>Artisan masters of all kinds</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informator Pedagogus</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16. The title pedagogus seem to have been used for private teachers in the material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspektor</td>
<td>Steward</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landsgevaldiger</td>
<td>Prefect</td>
<td>A civil servant who was not placed according to the ranking order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Länsman</td>
<td>Sheriff</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mönsterskrivare</td>
<td>Scribes of various kinds</td>
<td>Carlsson has put kammarkskrivare in group 4, see Carlsson 1971, p. 16. I have chosen to treat all scribes the same, even though it could certainly have varied somewhat depending on where you served.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Häradsskrivare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kammarkskrivare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regementsskrivare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppbördsskrivare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notarie</td>
<td>Notary</td>
<td>As with the scribes, the notaries are not mentioned in the ranking order of 1714. Since they should be above the peasantry and their work was in large part to take down minutes as scribes, I have put them in group 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organist</td>
<td>Organist</td>
<td>The one organist has been put in group 4 due to the fact that he should be above the peasantry, but below priests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skeppare</td>
<td>Skipper</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sockerbagare</td>
<td>Confectioner</td>
<td>On par with artisan masters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaktmästare</td>
<td>The Swedish word vaktmästare here is not to be meant as janitor or caretaker, but he was the head of the castle prison, see SAOB, “vaktmästare”, accessed 2016-02-09.</td>
<td>A civil servant who was not placed according to the ranking order.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groups 5 and 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bonde</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemmansägare/-brukare</td>
<td>Owner or tenant of a taxed farm</td>
<td>Owners or tenants of hemman was considered part of the peasantry, Lindström 2008, p. 22. The people above the peasantry who owned hemman were normally titled something else in the material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herdagsmän</td>
<td>Representatives for the peasantry at the diet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korpral</td>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mästersmed</td>
<td>Master smith</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mjölnare</td>
<td>Miller</td>
<td>On the same level as the peasantry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nämndeman | Lay judge | They were normally recruited from the top layer of the peasantry.
Roteintressenter Rotelagare | Members of a rote had the responsibility of recruiting soldiers for their area | When looking at the material in detail, for the sample of 217 cases which contain the language of poverty, the members of rote have been peasants. Therefore, I have placed people titled roteintressent in group 5 and 6.
Sockenskräddare | Parish tailor | Carlsson 1971, p. 17.
Tolvman | Equivalent to nämndeman, lay judge, see SAOB, “tolvman”, accessed 2016-05-06.

**Group 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gesäll</td>
<td>Journeyman</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torpare</td>
<td>Crofter</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salpetersjudare</td>
<td>Maker of saltpetre</td>
<td>I have come across both salpetersjudare and salpeterdräng in regards to making of saltpetre. I wanted to distinguish between the two even though salpetersjudare could probably be seen as a proletarian worker. But, as all called dräng has been placed in group 8, the people titled salpetersjudare was placed in group 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smed</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Backstugusittare</td>
<td>Cottager</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dräng Kyrkodräng Trädgårdsdräng Humlegårdsdräng Landgevaldigerdräng Salpeterjudardräng Gruvdräng</td>
<td>The title dräng was often given to young men who worked in some form of service. Normally it was a younger man working on a farm, however these men could be older or married as well.</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piga Tjänstepiga Fattigpiga</td>
<td>Maid, and also the female equivalent of dräng, even though a married woman was not called piga.</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brukskarl</td>
<td>Man working at ironworks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish title</th>
<th>English translation or explanation</th>
<th>Explanation for placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inhyses</td>
<td>Dependent tenants</td>
<td>Carlsson 1971, p. 17.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>