

# The voice of the people?

Supplications submitted to the Swedish Diet in the  
Age of Liberty, 1719–1772

**Martin Almbjär**



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**Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious**  
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**Umeå University**  
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# Abstract

This dissertation is devoted to the study of who used the formal channels of interaction in the early modern era and why. It examines the full range of the political conversation in early modern Sweden, as seen in the supplications to the Diet in the Age of Liberty (1719–1772), and more specifically the supplications submitted to the parliamentary committee tasked with handling them, the Screening Deputation. The literature yields few systematic studies of this official channel, and supplications have long been *terra incognita* in the early modern political landscape. Their exact importance is uncertain, to say the least.

Using a database built on three samples from the beginning, middle, and end of the Age of Liberty, the Diet's supplication channel is shown to have been used by two groups: supplicants from state-affiliated households primarily tried to use it to pursue their claims on the state, to settle various issues related to employment, or to receive some sort of support through hard times; and, increasingly, commoners, especially delegates in the Estate of the Burghers, used the channel for their *gravamina* concerning commerce, taxation, and the like, and state support for public amenities, a group for whom the Screening Deputation offered an alternative route to getting their grievances heard by the Diet. Both groups increasingly used the Diet's supplication channel was appeal the verdicts of the King in Council (Kungl. Maj:t). Although most were not appeals against the Judicial Audit, the results reveal an active use of appeals, and thus a *de facto* erosion of Kungl. Maj:t's supremacy. The results also show that as many as three-fifths of all supplicants had their supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation for further examination by the Diet. Although the acceptance rate was definitely lower in the 1730s and 1740s, the committee seems to have been fairly benevolent in its interpretation of the rules on petitioning.

The results, lastly, show that although the Diet's supplication channel allowed excluded groups direct access to the Diet—including women of all classes, commoners of rank, and unrepresented groups—it mainly catered to men with the social status or wealth that put them in the middle and upper strata of society. Although this supplication channel stood open to anyone, its egalitarian potential was seemingly never realized. The use of March and Olsen's institutional theory about the logic of appropriateness, has revealed that certain institutional templates and norms that would have enabled these groups more access to the channel succumbed and made room for other institutional foundations.

Supplications were part of the medieval and early modern centralization of legal and political power, the formation of the state, the protection of the privileges of Swedish subjects, and, during the Age of Liberty, the power struggle between the Diet and the kings. Each supplication viewed by itself might seem trivial, but nonetheless played a part in each and every one of these major processes. An ordinary Swede could have an impact on early modern politics when acting in concert with other supplicants, like rain eating away at rock.

Keywords: Age of Liberty, audit, Diet of Estates, early modern state formation, eighteenth century, institutions, national debt, parliamentary committees, petitions, political participation, public office, supplications, taxes, trade privileges, Supreme Court, welfare



*Till Emilia  
och till Eleonora,  
som jag ser fram emot att prata med*



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Umeå, as the spring of 2016 turns into summer

*Martin Almbjör*

# Abbreviations

ÅT	Årstrycket (Royal Proclamations)
BdA	Bondeståndets arkiv (Estate of the Peasants' Archive)
BdP	Bondeståndets riksdagsprotokoll (Estate of the Peasants' published Diet minutes)
BrA	Borgarståndets arkiv (Estate of the Burghers' Archive)
BrP	Borgarståndets riksdagsprotokoll från frihetstidens början (Estate of the Burghers' published Diet minutes)
Dkmt	Daler kopparmynt (Riksdaler, copper coinage)
Dsmt	Daler silvermynt (Riksdaler, silver coinage)
EdH	Expeditionsdeputationens handlingar (Expediting Deputation's records)
FU	Frihetstidens utskottshandlingar (Committee documents from the Diet of the Age of Liberty)
FLV1766	Förordning om lagarnas verkställighet, 12 November 1766 (Ordinance for the Better Execution of the Laws)
KF1727	Kungl. förordning angående de mål och ärenden, som böra iakttas till riksdagarnas förkortande, 4 August 1727 (Royal decree for a Shortening of the Diets)
KF173	Kungl. förordning angående vad vid tillkommande riksdagar till deras förkortande vidare bör iakttas, 6 October 1738 (Royal decree for the Further Shortening of the Diets)
PrA	Prästerståndets arkiv (Estate of the Clergy's archive)
PrP	Prästerståndets riksdagsprotokoll (Estate of the Clergy's published Diet minutes)
RA	Riksarkivet (Swedish National Archives)
RaP	Ridderskapets och adelns protokoll f.o.m. 1719 (The Estate of the Nobility's published Diet minutes from 1719)
RaS	Ridderskapets och adelns signaturer under riksdagsbeslutet (The Signatures of the Nobility to the Diet Resolution)
RF	1720 års Regeringsform, 17 June 1720 (Instrument of Government 1720)
RhS	Riddarhusdirektionen, Riddarhusets stamtavlor 3.0 (Stockholm, 2002) (The genealogical tables of the Swedish nobility)
RO	1723 års Riksdagsordning, 17 October 1723 (Diet Act)
RT	Riksdagstidningen (Diet gazette)
TB1756	Kungl. Förordning angående upprättande av förslag till lediga tjänster, det så kallade Tjänstebetänkandet, 23 November 1756 (Memorandum on Service)
UdH	Urskillningsdeputationens handlingar (Screening Deputation's records)
UI1748	Urskillningsdeputationens instruktion, 10 May 1748 (Screening Deputation's instructions of 1748)
UI1760	Urskillningsdeputationens instruktion, 8 December 1760 (Screening Deputation's instructions of 1760)

## Terminology

The term ‘Kungl. Maj:t’ (‘King-in-Council’) refers to the king and the Council of the Realm as an administrative, judicial, and political corporation or entity. The ‘Council of the Realm’ refers to the Council corporation *excluding* the king, while the term ‘king’ refers to the office itself (with King reserved for specific incumbents).

Committees could be referred to as both committees and deputations at the time. I have kept these names when referring to specific committees, like the Secret Committee and the Screening Deputation, but otherwise use the blanket term ‘committees’.

‘Petitions’ and ‘supplications’ are used as synonyms unless a distinction is necessary. However, the Swedish verb ‘att supplikera’ (in German ‘supplizieren’) is translated as ‘to petition’.

The term Sweden most often refers to both the Swedish and Finnish parts of the realm. I sometimes distinguish between these and then talk about Sweden and Finland, or the Finnish or Swedish parts, or Sweden proper, when I, for example, compare the geographic distribution of supplicants. Swedish spelling and names has generally been used for Finnish locations. The town of Åbo is accordingly referred to as ‘Åbo’, not ‘Turku’, for example.

# 1 Introduction

## State formation and political interaction

Political influence, here defined as the influence over the use and distribution of ‘society’s essential resources’, is a common topic for historians.<sup>1</sup> To understand who could access and wield political influence is key to understanding the conditions that people have lived under at different times. It is a relevant issue when studying just about any period in history. Despite, or perhaps because of, its relevance, political influence is nonetheless a challenging topic to come to grips with, as it can be exercised in so many ways, and when one way closes, another invariably opens up.

It is certainly challenging to determine what opportunities ordinary people—besides the economic and political elite—had to exercise political influence in the early modern era (roughly 1500 to 1800). The early modern era, after all, is one where formal political structures underwent thoroughgoing changes. Looking at the political geography of the period, the number of polities decreased, while the power and centralizing tendencies of those remaining increased. The political quilt of medieval Europe featured an abundance of different political units. Come the nineteenth century, and Europe had stabilized into a more coherent and smaller group of similar sovereign states, which to varying degrees had lifted political power from local society to the central point of the state’s organization. Most of these states would later evolve into modern nation-states.<sup>2</sup> The growth of these sovereign states from the Middle Ages onwards gave increased importance to parliaments or diets, courts of law, and the like—in this text referred to as ‘channels’, or ‘interaction channels’—that either came into existence during the Middle Ages or in the shift from medieval to early modern times.<sup>3</sup>

One explanation for this increased importance was the needs of the state. Success in war meant the difference between supremacy and submission, and the growing and increasingly sophisticated armies, fleets, and bureaucracies were very expensive. Taxes had to be levied, troops conscripted, salaries paid, officers and administrators educated, and, last but not least, the royal court aggrandized.<sup>4</sup> Thus, rulers needed to extract resources from their subjects.

At the same time, there were the needs and aims of the populace, the impact of initiatives and actions stemming from society at large. On certain issues or policies it was not the elite but other groups in society that initiated contact with the state, and if these groups wanted to exercise influence they increasingly had to make their mark on central government as its centripetal draw on political power grew. Local political structures; poor relief; the maintenance of forests; the exercise of justice; social control; taxation: all these and many other issues progressively came under central or local jurisdiction authorized by the central authorities. Of course, early modern society was still decentralized compared to modern society, and the growth of the early modern

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<sup>1</sup> Definition partially borrowed from Sjöberg and Ågren, ‘Egendom, kön och förändring’, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Tilly, *Coercion, capital, and European states*; Watts, *The making of polities*; Gustafsson, *Makt och människor*.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, *Lineages of the absolutist state*, 437–438; Hintze, ‘The preconditions of representative government’; Tilly, *Coercion, capital, and European states*, 101–103; Gustafsson, ‘Vad var staten?’, Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan*, 68–74, 167–169; Watts, *The making of polities*, 227–229.

<sup>4</sup> Tilly, ‘Reflections on the history of European state-making’; Brewer, *The sinews of power*; Tilly, *Coercion, capital, and European states*; Glete, *War and the state in early modern Europe*, especially 16–41; Gustafsson, *Makt och människor*, ch. 6.

states did not always entail centralization, but a shift was definitely underway. Through these channels, subjects sought control or influence over the state's decisions, and, by doing so, also made sure certain norms and ideas to some extent guided the state's development. These channels presented ways to seek cooperation from below—and to resist.<sup>5</sup>

Knowledge about the nature of the interaction through these channels is therefore one way to determine the extent to which people could exercise influence. The extent to which they could have a say. The focus of this dissertation is thus political interaction through these official channels between state and society in Sweden in the early modern period. Following Michael Mann, society is defined here as 'multiple overlapping and intersecting socio-spatial networks of power', a wealth of social relations between humans that empower and enable differently, depending on the context.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, drawing inspiration from Michael Braddick, the early modern state is defined as a 'weakly coordinated and relatively undifferentiated' network of institutions and offices.<sup>7</sup>

## Early modern political interaction

Any researcher interested in early modern society's interaction with the state through formal channels necessarily stands on the shoulders of a great many historians.<sup>8</sup> In Sweden, the body of research is often described as being split in two camps, which either emphasize the oppressive aspects of the early modern Swedish state or its cooperative, consensus-seeking features.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the state is depicted either as a powerful organization acting through force and coercion, or as an attentive seeker of support through dialogue and interaction. The ideal types of this dichotomy are of course relevant to any study of interaction between state and society, but it will not be the main concern of this dissertation, largely because I would argue that the description of the field as split into two camps somewhat overlooks its sheer diversity.<sup>10</sup> I have already used and will continue to use the term 'interaction' throughout the dissertation as a conscious choice between the extreme absolutes of this dichotomy: however, I maintain that we need to know who participated in the interaction, under what circumstances, and to what end. To characterize an interaction, we need to know if it was affirmative or reluctant, if it had boundaries, and to what extent they could be manipulated or circumvented. To have an interaction is one thing, to have an all-inclusive interaction is something different.

Scholars studying the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have rightly paid considerable attention to Riksdagen, the Swedish Diet, and new texts on the topic continue to emanate from

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<sup>5</sup> Mann, *The sources of social power*; Hindle, *The state and social change in early modern England*; Braddick, *State formation in early modern England*; Gorski, 'Beyond Marx and Hintze?'; Harding, *Medieval law and the foundations of the state*, 252; Melve, 'Har staten vendt attende'; Joyce, 'What is the social in social history?'; Gustafsson, *Makt och människor*, ch. 7; Vu, 'Studying the state through state formation'.

<sup>6</sup> Mann, *The sources of social power*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Braddick, *State formation in early modern England*, 45.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Torstendahl's overview of the Swedish field of research since the nineteenth century, Torstendahl, 'Stat och samhälle'.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Glete, *War and the state in early modern Europe*, 176; Hallenberg, Holm and Johansson, 'Organization, legitimation, participation', 249; Villstrand, *Sveriges historia*, 282; Samuelson, "Efter vårt enfaldiga förstånd", 52–54.

<sup>10</sup> Some researchers' stance or results certainly fit the description. See, for example, Österberg, 'Bönder och centralmakt'; Blickle, Ellis and Österberg, 'The commons and the state'; Harnesk, 'Den svenska modellens tidigmoderna rötter?'; Sven A. Nilsson, however, who is sometimes placed in the coercion corner, is actually harder to pigeonhole: he studied the increased fiscal pressure on the Swedish peasantry during the seventeenth century, yet also the interaction between state and peasantry in, for example, the state's extraordinary commissions to its bailiffs in the early seventeenth century. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid*, 81–101.



Swedish history departments.<sup>11</sup> If one were to analyse the trends, the most common themes seem to be the political and social culture of the Diet as a whole, and the political reach and organization of the commoner Estates, thus shifting focus from older literature's emphasis on the nobility, the king, or the Council.

Of equal importance for understanding the opportunities for influence open to Swedish subjects were *häradstingen* (district courts), which were often preferred by the peasantry for political action. Harald Gustafsson, in his synthesis of a large inter-Nordic research project on political interaction in eighteenth-century Scandinavia, describes the district courts as the forum of choice for the Swedish peasantry in the eighteenth century, often in combination with other channels.<sup>12</sup> Then, towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, *sockenstämmor* (parish meetings) began to supersede the district courts.<sup>13</sup> Then there were the extraordinary commissions of inquiry, which at times travelled the countryside in order to assuage the peasantry by bringing Crown servants to justice for their abuses. These commissions also facilitated the integration process of newly conquered areas such as Blekinge or Gotland into Sweden proper.<sup>14</sup>

Some researchers have even abandoned the formal channels and have studied the role of violence and disobedience in the Swedish early modern political register. Karin Sennefelt, in studying Dalupproret, the major peasant uprising of the mid eighteenth century, and Mats Berglund, in his analysis of street riots in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Stockholm, both argue that violence and open manifestations of disobedience were recurring features of eighteenth-century Sweden's political repertoire.<sup>15</sup> Sennefelt, moreover, has continued her interest in the political culture that existed outside the formal channels in a study of Stockholm as a political arena.<sup>16</sup>

## Supplications

However, before we leave the formal channels for other means of wielding influence, we should note a certain imbalance in the coverage by researchers. It seems, they have concentrated their attention on certain channels while others have been overlooked, above all supplications, or formal written petitions made to the powers-that-be. Supplications and their place in the Swedish political landscape very much remains *terra incognita*. In 1979 Sven Lindblad wrote that supplications had 'on the whole not been considered in Swedish historical research', and a systematic investigation 'seems one of the most pressing matters for history'.<sup>17</sup> In 1985, Pär Frohnert highlighted the lacunae in the research on this topic.<sup>18</sup> In 1994, Gustafsson tentatively suggested that supplications in Sweden had not been as important in people's political toolboxes

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<sup>11</sup> For some recent examples, see Skuncke and Tandefelt, eds., *Riksdag, kaffehus och predikstol*; Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik*; Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt*; Scherp, *De ofrälse och makten*.

<sup>12</sup> Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 116–117.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 117–118; see also Aronsson, *Bönder gör politik*.

<sup>14</sup> Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid*, 81–101; Lennerstrand, *Rättvisans och allmogens beskyddare*; Bergman, *Makt, möten, gränser*; Lerbom, *Mellan två riken*, 99–101.

<sup>15</sup> Sennefelt, *Den politiska sjukan*; Berglund, *Massans röst*.

<sup>16</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*.

<sup>17</sup> Sven Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', ch. 2, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 251.

as in the Norwegian realm, but also admitted that his argument rested on ‘scant research’.<sup>19</sup> Neither had the situation improved in 2007, when Gustafsson described the literature on the topic as ‘not large’.<sup>20</sup> Nor is the relative lack of interest a Swedish peculiarity. In 1997, Peter Bickle wrote that that on a European level ‘the political significance of *supplicationes* and petitions has never yet been adequately acknowledged.’<sup>21</sup> Not only are supplications thus an area in need of further examination—there are many sources out there that we know little about—but academic wanted posters litter the previous research.

Moreover, we cannot discount supplications as a channel for political interaction just because the supplication channel did not work in the same way as the Diet did. There is evidence that the public, and especially the peasants, employed supplications for political influence. Either by signing them collectively or writing about matters that involved the wider community, the peasantry used supplications to further their interests. Whether it concerned taxes, the right to continue with slash-and-burn agriculture, to debate the possible outcomes of a ban on aquavit, or the user rights of a river, the Swedish peasantry petitioned *landshövdingarna* (the county governors), and when that did not suffice, *kollegierna* (the administrative boards) or even ‘Kungl. Maj:t’ (‘King-in-Council’).<sup>22</sup> Nils Erik Villstrand has shown that some communities fought the state’s initiative for a remodelling of the county’s military conscription system for years, with supplications among their varied repertoire of strategies.<sup>23</sup> Martin Linde has shown that the peasantry from Asker district in Närke in the early eighteenth century presented supplications to the county governor to complain about excessive taxes and Crown servants.<sup>24</sup>

Turning to other groups, Ann Fällström and Ilkka Mäntylä argue that burghers used both supplications and *riksdagsbesvär* (gravamina), submitted to Diets for the same type of matters, albeit the gravamina proved more successful.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Anders Florén has found that both smiths and ironmasters at the Jäder ironworks, to the west of Stockholm, used supplications to solve a large array of disputes and problems concerning production, prices, and working relationships at the ironworks.<sup>26</sup> Erik Lindberg and Sofia Ling has shown how *fruktmånglerskor*, female costermongers, in Stockholm used supplications to settle disputes on supplies, prices and access to markets.<sup>27</sup> In other words, what today would be classified as labour and market disputes were negotiated using supplications.

These examples show two things. First, supplications were used for the same type of conflicts and issues as those that were heard in the Diet, and by all sorts of groups, whether represented in the Diet or not. That is, the same behaviour and issues that are usually labelled as political interaction can be seen in operation in Swedish supplications as well. Second, research exists on

<sup>19</sup> Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 113.

<sup>20</sup> Gustafsson, ‘Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt’, 79.

<sup>21</sup> Bickle, ‘Conclusions’, 335.

<sup>22</sup> Frohnert, ‘Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden’, 254; Ericsson, ‘Central power and the local right’; Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeinflytande under frihetstiden*, 143–145; Ericsson, ‘Från fällande dom till kunglig nåd’; Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 70–71; Frohnert, ‘Kronan, individen och lokalsamhället’, 146–148, 158; Gustafsson, ‘Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt’, 90.

<sup>23</sup> Villstrand, ‘Bokstäver, bönder och politik’.

<sup>24</sup> Linde, *Statsmaket och bondemotstånd*, 91–92, 96–105, and *passim*; see also Wittrock, *Regering och allmog under Kristinas förmyndare*, 46–48.

<sup>25</sup> Fällström and Mäntylä, ‘Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden’, 261–268.

<sup>26</sup> Florén, *Disciplinering och konflikt*, 141–180, 195–199.

<sup>27</sup> Lindberg and Ling, ‘“Spanska” citroner till salu’.

the use of supplications in early modern Sweden concerning specific errands or groups, which raises the issue of systematic research focused on general interaction. Supplications could be used for political purposes, but it is uncertain how common that actually was. Here was a channel that could lead straight to the central authorities, and open to anyone (unlike the Diet's Estates), and yet these examples only show who could make use the channel, not to what extent they actually did.

As Lindblad argued in 1979, there is a need for a systematic mapping of the supplication channel in order to reveal the entire political landscape. What type of role this third formal channel—which existed alongside the district courts and the Diet—played in Swedish early modern politics, and what its relationship to the other channels might have been, remains uncertain. Additionally, supplications existed in most if not all other contemporaneous states in Europe, unlike established parliaments that included the peasantry. Supplications are therefore potentially a useful point of comparisons between Sweden and other states or regions. It is for these reasons that I have systematically studied the Swedish supplication channel.

What follows is a discussion of the term 'supplication' and its meanings, followed by a survey of the state of Swedish research on who used supplications and what for. As is obvious from its title, this dissertation is a study of supplications presented to the Swedish Diet in the Age of Liberty (1719–1772). It is a choice based both on analytical and empirical concerns. Previous international research on supplications is considered in Chapter 3, where I discuss and compare the theoretical and organizational development of supplications in medieval and early modern Europe. Previous international research on supplications is also used as a point of comparison and discussion when concluding my study in Chapter 16, while a discussion of the difference between *gravamina* and supplications features in Chapter 15, where the results from this study help to emphasize how the various channels were connected and differentiated. But first, what was a supplication?

## **The term 'supplication'**

Everybody is free to write petitions and have a drink of water.<sup>28</sup>

In a wide, worldly sense, supplications—and petitions—refer to a practice that seemingly existed in most premodern societies, namely that of subjects and citizens who turned to their sovereign or representative for some kind of help. Addressing them directly, either in person or in writing, rich and poor alike took their problems to their rulers and political representatives, asking for the mundane or the extraordinary. To provide some very different examples, workers in ancient Egypt filed complaints through petitions, as did their latter-day equivalents in the UK's royal dockyards. In Japan, *daimyos* and *shoguns* placed petition boxes in towns and castles to welcome complaints and suggestions from anyone, and this type of communication even played a significant part in the rise of the Rothschild family, when the late eighteenth-century progenitor Mayer Rothschild successfully offered his banking services to the landgrave of Hesse-Kassel with

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<sup>28</sup> 'Supplizieren und Wassertrinken sind jedermann erlaubt', a traditional German saying. Translation from van Voss, 'Introduction', 1. An alternative saying goes 'Supplizieren und Wassertrinken sind jedem gestattet'.



**FIGURE 1.1** The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius (AD 161–180), sacrificing to Jupiter in gratitude for his victories in war.

a supplication. Indeed, even the bible tells us that King Solomon had to adjudicate disputes his subjects brought to him.<sup>29</sup>

The term ‘supplication’ is of Latin origin, stemming from ancient Rome and the term ‘supplicatio’, a word in turn built on the prefix ‘sub’, meaning under, and the verb ‘plicare’, meaning to yield.<sup>30</sup> It has two different types of practical meaning, one religious and one worldly. In the religious sense, a *supplicatio* or supplication was an offering of wine and incense to the gods, made either in gratitude during good times or with a plea for help at times of crisis. For example, a supplication was arranged in 396 BC when the Romans conquered the Etruscan town of Veji. These pleas could also be directed to the secular authorities, and in Imperial Roman civil proceedings, supplications refer to both extraordinary pleas and requests as well as to standard legal instruments addressed to the Roman Emperor.<sup>31</sup> This connection between the

<sup>29</sup> Roberts, ‘The petition box in eighteenth-century Tosa’; Morton, *The Rothschilds*, 20–21, 31; *Bibeln*, 288; van Voss, ‘Introduction’, 1; Lunn and Day, ‘Deference and defiance’.

<sup>30</sup> Karlgren, *Med rop om hjälp och bistånd*, 17.

<sup>31</sup> Neuhaus, *Reichstag und Supplikationsausschuss*, 74–77; Siebert, ‘Supplicatio’; Goldsworthy, *Augustus*, 339.

supplication's spiritual and secular meanings is obvious its synonyms. One Swedish synonym for supplication, *böneskrift*, translates as 'prayer letter' or 'request letter'. In Germany, there is a similar kinship between the word for petitioning, *bitten*, and the word for praying, *beten*.<sup>32</sup> The terms 'supplications' and 'petitions' furthermore sometimes refer to the same types of requests, sometimes to different types, although the former term was more common on the Continent until the nineteenth century, and the latter more common in the Anglophone world.<sup>33</sup> In this study, the terms are largely used synonymously when comparing, for example, the UK with Sweden.

After the Fall of Rome, the use of supplications was adopted by the Vatican and the papal curia: people sent in supplications to request dispensations from convictions for murder, approvals for divorce, or approvals for marriage with someone too closely related.<sup>34</sup> From there, the name spread.<sup>35</sup> In the Holy Roman Empire, the use of the term peaked between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries and became part of the legal system in the sixteenth century.<sup>36</sup> It was also in the sixteenth century we find the first known use of the term in Sweden.<sup>37</sup>

However, as the term spread across Europe, it was applied to existing practices. In her study of supplications in early modern Bavaria, Renate Blickle argues that when the Bavarian administration adopted the term, the principality's peasantry did have to learn a new behaviour; they merely attached a new name to a common practice. Blickle's findings about how the term could be used for a large number of different appeals and requests moreover warns us against attaching continuity to the name, as practices and purposes changed according to time and place, potentially hiding temporal and regional differences.<sup>38</sup> Supplications thus came to encompass a wide array of requests when different polities developed different traditions throughout the medieval and early modern periods.

This complex situation poses difficulties when it comes to defining supplications. A definition applicable to all of early modern Europe seems to be out of reach. For example, should we consider the supplication channel as an ordinary channel, which existed within the legal and administrative framework, or an extraordinary channel that existed outside it? In the Holy Roman Empire, whether addressed towards the emperor or a prince, supplications functioned as an extraordinary or supplemental instrument of redress.<sup>39</sup> Looking at central and northern early modern Italy, Cecilia Nubola's definition takes no note of these differences, simply defining the supplication 'in its most general meaning' as 'letters ... which single citizens, or organized or recognized groups, sent to the state authorities requesting grace, favours, privileges, or calling attention to injustices or abuses'.<sup>40</sup> In Cosimo I de' Medici's Florence, however, supplications were seemingly used as an extraordinary instrument for redress. Supplicants had to demonstrate

<sup>32</sup> Würgler, 'Voices from among the "silent masses"', 15.

<sup>33</sup> Würgler, 'Voices from among the "silent masses"', 14.

<sup>34</sup> Schmugge, 'Female petitioners'; Salonen, 'The supplications from the province of Uppsala'.

<sup>35</sup> Würgler, 'Voices from among the "silent masses"', 15; see also Watts, *The making of politics*, 51–52.

<sup>36</sup> Neuhaus, *Reichstag und Supplikationsausschuss*, 87–89.

<sup>37</sup> Karlgren, *Med rop om hjälp och bistånd*, 17.

<sup>38</sup> Blickle, 'Supplikationen und Demonstrationen', 274–278.

<sup>39</sup> Neuhaus, *Reichstag und Supplikationsausschuss*, 88–98; Neuhaus, 'Supplikationen als landesgeschichtliche Quellen', i, 160. Ulbricht, 'Supplikationen als Eko-Dokumente', 151; Blickle, 'Supplikationen und Demonstrationen', 269–273, 278–289.

<sup>40</sup> Nubola, 'Supplications between politics and justice', 35.

that they had made use of the ordinary legal system first and had no other recourse but to turn to their prince in person.<sup>41</sup> Thus, with this complexity in mind, a definition based on Swedish conditions will have to suffice.

As I have studied formal political channels and institutions, a supplication in this study refers to a *request of varying nature, submitted by one or several subjects to the king, his representatives, or the Diet in accordance with the law, be it written or implicitly based on equity*. Supplications submitted informally thus fall outside this definition, although certainly an efficient method of achieving similar ends. Likewise, all standard internal communication between government representatives is excluded from this definition, as I want to study communication between subjects and their rulers or representatives. Additionally, supplications and petitions could be submitted to representative bodies as well. In the English Parliament, for example, petitions were originally addressed to the king, but by the end of the fourteenth century many were addressed to the House of Commons.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, a supplication was not the same as a gravamen submitted to Kungl. Maj:t. Gravamina were delivered to Kungl. Maj:t at Diets by representatives of the Estates—then comprising the Nobility, the Clergy, the Burghers, and the Peasantry—and as we will see, by the quasi-Estate *krigsbefälet* (the army command). This type of interaction was contextually fixed—gravamina could only be submitted at Diets—and only Diet delegates could submit them. The supplication channel, meanwhile, was formally open to anyone. There were overlaps between supplications and gravamina, but the different accessibility and contexts means they were to all intents and purposes two separate channels.

Lastly, the definition takes no heed to what the author of the request called it. Be it a grievance, a complaint, a memorial, a supplication, an appeal, or the like; fixating on what names people assigned to letters, names which have seemingly little analytical value, only leads to confusion and blurring of a bigger picture. The term ‘memorial’, for example, also referred to a type of communication between different Estates at the Diet as well as official correspondence within the state. My object is to attain a bigger picture of the different practical uses of the channel, not the different types of document terms used by the supplicants themselves.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the definition of supplication in this study is primarily analytical, but it is at the same time similar to how the central authorities defined the term, at least in Sweden’s fifty-year Age of Liberty (1718–1772). Looking at the *diarium* or register of incoming business for one of the Royal Chancery’s offices in the 1720s and 1730s—the Inrikes civilexpedition, Civil Administration Office it is evident the secretaries distinguished between memoranda—communications between state officials and state organs—and supplications, and apart from gravamina (see ch. 15), all communications from the king’s subjects were categorized as supplications, a categorization in line with my chosen definition.

Thus, a supplication was a *request of varying nature submitted by one or several individuals to the king, his representatives, or the Diet in accordance with the law, be it written or implicitly based on equity, but which*

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<sup>41</sup> Shaw, ‘Writing to the Prince’, 71–73.

<sup>42</sup> Haskins, ‘The Petitions of Representatives in the Parliaments of Edward I’, 190.

<sup>43</sup> Beat Kümin and Andreas Würzler also address the diversity of document names used by the supplicants themselves, Kümin and Würzler, ‘Petitions, Gravamina and the Early Modern State’, 45.

*was not submitted as a gravamen to Kungl. Maj:t at the Diet.* With that definition in hand we can now turn to the existing literature on Swedish supplications.

## **The literature on Swedish supplications**

By this point it is fairly clear that the supplication channel was an accepted way to exercise political influence, and there is no lack of examples of supplications used in this manner. Neither is there a lack of use of supplications as a source material in other types of studies not necessarily pertaining to the field of political interaction.<sup>44</sup> What *is* lacking, however, are systematic studies of the supplications themselves. There are a few—the number certainly has increased in recent decades as historians have started showing an increased interest in the topic—but there is not a plethora of research, and the studies that exist are often small and limited in time and geographical scope. Almost all of them are studies of supplications submitted to the county governors. Below I present a thematic synthesis of results from studies of supplications submitted to regional authorities, mostly county governors, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The reader should take note, though, that there is a large variation in geography and time. Several areas are not represented in any of the studies—all the Finnish counties, for example. A presentation of the literature on supplications submitted to the central administration and Kungl. Maj:t follows.

### ***Supplications submitted to the regional administration***

Beginning with the social composition of the supplications and in the north of Sweden, Alexander Jonsson has examined 2,153 supplications submitted to the county governor of Västernorrland in four separate years between 1685 and 1735. Although the peasantry remained the biggest group throughout the period, other members of society increased their activity. Besides some clergy and noblemen, many supplications originated from burghers and the so called *ofrälse ståndspersoner* (commoners of rank). The latter group—non-noble officers and civil servants, ironmasters, and the like—lacked representation in the Swedish Diet and supplications remained their only formal option besides the courts.<sup>45</sup> Jonsson's findings about the supplicants' social composition are echoed in studies of supplications in mid eighteenth-century Östergötland (267 supplications) and Närke (960 supplications) by Pär Frohnert and Charlotta Ekman respectively, albeit with a smaller proportion of peasants. Frohnert, for example, shows that 40 per cent or less of the supplications came from peasants.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, Frohnert shows that of the peasant supplications about one-fifth stemmed from collectives, who most of the time made requests with a 'larger scope' that can reasonably 'be considered political'. In Gustafsson's study of 149 supplications submitted by rural inhabitants of Skåne between 1661 and 1699, one-third of the supplications came from collectives. Ekman, on the other hand, places the proportion of supplicant collectives as lower than this, at about 5 per cent.<sup>47</sup>

Besides the commoners of rank, there were other groups excluded from Diets. In her study of 289 supplications submitted to the county governor of Södermanland between 1770 and 1774,

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<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Leide, *Ödeläggelse och uppodling efter skånska kriget*.

<sup>45</sup> Jonsson, *De norrländska landsbördlingarna*, 226.

<sup>46</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 253–254; Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 16–18.

<sup>47</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 254; Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 18; Gustafsson, 'Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt', 90; See also Olsen, 'Det moraliska priset för legitimitet', 30.

Maria Westerberg, like Ekman, shows that although they comprised a minority, women submitted supplications to the county governors.<sup>48</sup> In contrary to Westerberg and Ekman, Lindberg and Ling contend that roughly a quarter of all supplications submitted to *Handelskollegium*, the commerce board of the Stockholm Magistrate, between 1650 and 1750 were submitted by women. How many supplications and if trends varied over the century is however not accounted for.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, the findings from Frohnert's and Ekman's studies and from Mats Berglund's brief examination of 102 supplications submitted to the Stockholm magistrate in 1749 reveal that people from the lower strata of society could utilize supplications.<sup>50</sup> Jens Lerbom's study of 64 peasant supplications addressed to the regional administration on the Baltic island of Gotland in the latter half of the seventeenth century reveals that the supplications came from both wealthy and less wealthy peasants.<sup>51</sup>

Nonetheless, supplications from society's lower socioeconomic strata and female supplicants constituted a minority. It seems people from the more male, affluent and influential parts of society—the burghers, the commoners of rank—were behind at least half of the supplications to the county governors. At least during the eighteenth century.

The commonest theme in the supplications is different types of economic requests, as when people sought the county governors' aid with distraining debtors and similar claims. What people asked for also varied according to their social background. Peasants tended to ask for tax relief, poor relief, or permission to cut down oak trees, the latter request being largely an administrative request prescribed by the law, and first two more dependent on the arbitrary goodwill of the county governor. While public servants also wrote these types of supplications, they often complained about their salaries or the housing that went with their position. Burghers seem to have sought the aid of county governors in debt-related matters more than other supplicants.<sup>52</sup>

Thus supplications were used by the peasantry and the middling sort and above, including burghers, commoners of rank, clergy, and noblemen. Women from all sections of society and men from the lower socioeconomic strata—day labourers, servants, maids, cotters, and the like—also submitted supplications. Their grievances, as well as those submitted by the commoners of rank, show that supplications remained an alternative for people excluded from the Diet. Although the reasons varied, the supplicants mainly sought help with settling claims, resolving property issues, or for financial relief. The more eye-catching examples, where corporations and collectives used supplications for different purposes, can be found in the material as well, although the frequency of such supplications seemingly varied depending on

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<sup>48</sup> Westerberg, 'Suppliken som källa till kvinnohistorien', 12, 16; Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 19. Both Westerberg and Ekman find it difficult to establish which social groups these women came from; see also Gustafsson, 'Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt', 90.

<sup>49</sup> Lindberg and Ling, '"Spanska" citroner till salu', p. 14, n. 36.

<sup>50</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 255; Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 17; Berglund, *Massans röst*, 46; see also Christina Unger, *Makten och fattigdomen*, 13; Persson, 'Statsskifte, kommunikation och människor', 33.

<sup>51</sup> Lerbom, *Mellan två riken*, 102–128.

<sup>52</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 254; Westerberg, 'Suppliken som källa till kvinnohistorien', 8–11; Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 14–20; Jonsson, *De norrländska landsbördingarna*, 226–233; Gustafsson, 'Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt', 89–93; Berglund, *Massans röst*, 45–46.



the region and period. Never did this group of grievances compose the lion's share of the supplications.

We must exercise caution in drawing conclusions about the supplication channel from these findings, of course. This overview is built on a disparate set of studies that vary in focus from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries, and from Skåne in the south to Västernorrland in the far north. There are clearly still lacunae, especially in parallel studies of several counties, including Finnish ones. However, that said, a substantial portion of the regionally submitted supplications can in Frohnert's terms be considered political, and groups which did not have access to the Diet made use of this channel. Moreover, there was a social breadth to the supplication channel that was wider than that of the Swedish Diet's, at least on a regional level. Compared to the gravamina submitted at Diets, this channel was de facto open to a larger section of society.

### ***Supplications submitted to the central administration***

If the literature on supplications submitted to the county governors is sparse, it is close to non-existent for supplication submitted to the central organs of the state. The emphasis on county governors is of course justified in the sense that these royal representatives probably bore the brunt of supplications. On the other hand, a study of centrally submitted supplications might be more relevant, because they not only constituted a direct channel to the heart of government, but also to the state's central decision makers. During the Great Northern War (1700–1721), for example, which caused thousands of people to flee westward from Finland when Russia seized the territory, refugees wrote to Kungl. Maj:t for financial aid.<sup>53</sup> Anu Lahtinen has argued that fifteenth- and sixteenth-century noblewomen could with advantage turn to the king with a supplication on occasions when their—often male—counterparts turned the local courts and other arenas against the women.<sup>54</sup> Thus, Kungl. Maj:t became directly involved in individual business of property and subsistence. Here lay a direct channel between individual subjects and the rulers of Sweden.

Yet, to my knowledge, there only exists two systematic study of supplications submitted to any of the state's administrative or and Kungl. Maj:t: Anna Hillborn's investigation of *Riksregistraturet*, Kungl. Maj:t's register of outgoing correspondence, and in particular supplications submitted by women and granted by Kungl. Maj:t in five sample years between 1626 and 1654. In these five sample years Hillborn found several hundred requests were granted, 476 in total, especially for land disposal or welfare. Quite many of them originated from public servants' wives or widows, such as non-noble officers or clergymen. In total, about a third of the supplications stemmed from noblewomen and two-thirds from non-noble women, the latter group including a small number of widows of soldiers and cavalrymen.<sup>55</sup> Elin Hinnemo's survey of more than 1000 court cases involving women between 1760 and 1860, of which a majority stemmed from supplications from women to Kungl. Maj:t, shows a similar social span but with

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<sup>53</sup> Aminoff-Winberg, *På flykt i eget land*, 208–209, 280–281.

<sup>54</sup> Lahtinen, *Anpassning, förhandling, motstånd*, 186–190.

<sup>55</sup> Hillborn, 'Och fogar iagh på dhet ödmuikeligaste', 25–54; Mary Elizabeth Ailes has also written about war widows in the first half of the seventeenth century based on supplications, but uses supplications submitted to different central state organs and has no systematic ambitions. Ailes, 'Wars, widows, and state formation'.

a seemingly higher proportion of people from society's lower strata as well as burgher women. Like Hillborn, Hinnemo also finds that many of the cases involve property or applications stemming from a lack of sustenance, but the different time frames generate dissimilarities as well. For example, Hinnemo's samples contain criminal law cases as well as majority applications, a category of errands that grew markedly in the nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup>

Hillborn's and Hinnemo's findings echo some of the results from the regional level. For example, women had access to the supplication channel. Neither examines how large a share of the total amount of supplicants the women supplicants constituted, but the fact remains that women did use supplications at this level as well.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the channel was open to people represented in the Diet, in this case noblewomen and clerical widows, and people not represented in the form of widows of non-noble officers and private soldiers. As there are no other systematic studies of supplications submitted at this level, we do not know to what degree other individual subjects, collectives, or corporations petitioned Kungl. Maj:t in this way.<sup>58</sup> However, if the proportions are similar to the higher estimates of, for example, Gustafsson and Frohnert, it would mean something between a third and a fifth. Further studies are necessary if we are to know if the social composition and the occurrence of collectives and corporations among regionally submitted supplications is repeated at the central level.

A study of supplications submitted to these central organs thus seem like a fruitful venture. Firstly, if the administrative boards are disregarded, the supplications to Kungl. Maj:t and the Diet not only constitute a channel for interaction but for political interaction. Political, not necessarily because the content of the supplications fits my chosen definition, but because supplicants addressed their grievances to their leaders and representatives. Centrally submitted supplications were thus political because they were addressed to the political headquarters of the realm and—if successfully submitted and not rejected—found at least a reading there. If the Diet constituted one direct channel by which society could get the attention of their leaders and representatives, supplications constituted another. Not only that, but if the findings from the regional level apply at the central level as well, this channel was even more inclusive than the Diet's Estates. Swedish subjects were possibly faced with fewer constraints on their direct interaction with the central organs of the state, and yet historians have still spent little time researching it.

Secondly, by remaining on the central level this study can complement the results from the studies of regional supplications. Together with the findings of earlier research, my findings can help us to understand the variations—or lack thereof—between the different segments or levels of the supplication channel as well as their connections. Herein lies the opportunity to compare not only the supplication channel with other channels, but also the relationship between its different levels.

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<sup>56</sup> Hinnemo, *Inför högsta instans*, 35–65.

<sup>57</sup> Hinnemo, *Inför högsta instans*, 32, measures the portion of court cases where a women constitutes one of the parties, not the portion of female supplicants.

<sup>58</sup> A survey of supplications that reached the Civil Administration Office's during three months in 1745, shows that roughly a third of the supplication stemmed from commoners of rank, and that most supplicants applied for posts, with issues about property, taxes and pensions among the other more common errands. Additionally, a sixth of the supplications stemmed from women. I wish to thank student Kai Bergström, who took History B during the 2015 spring term, for compiling and sharing these results with me. Vol. 21 1745, Inrikes civilexpeditionens ingående diärer C1a, RA

### *The quality of Kungl. Maj:t's and the Diet's source material*

It is complicated to design a systematic programme of research when studying supplications submitted to Kungl. Maj:t, unfortunately. When it comes to the supplications themselves, archivists have mostly weeded out the original supplications, because they thought them not important enough, and they scattered the remaining examples through different collections.<sup>59</sup> There are occasional registers of supplications exist from the mid sixteenth century, often consisting of brief summaries of the supplication's content, date of reception, and outcome.<sup>60</sup> It is unsure to what extent they are complete, however. It would of course be possible to replicate Hillborn's method of examining the register for outgoing communications on a larger scale, with the caveat that the results will only answer the question of who successfully used the channel, not who used it per se.

By the late 1710s the sources improve, and from then on comprehensively kept series of registers cover all incoming business, including supplications. However, the registers and the annotations about the supplications they contain were spread out through the different offices of the Royal Chancery, and are therefore accessible in different series of records, kept in different ways depending on administrative traditions and the individual secretaries. Despite these drawbacks, the registers can still serve as points of entry into the minutes of Council meetings that can also reveal information about the handling of supplications. They certainly give us increasing insight into the level of political interaction between the central organs of the state and society. If there existed no better source material, the reader would still be left with a reasonably coherent story of supplications submitted to Kungl. Maj:t, using the aforementioned registers and minutes.

However, a better series of source material does exist, in the shape of the records of Urskillningsdeputationen, the Screening Deputation. A Diet committee in existence from 1723 to 1772, the Screening Deputation was supposed to receive all supplications submitted to the Diet. Although the original supplications are mostly missing for the Diets before 1755, the committee's secretaries summaries of all supplications, including the rejected ones, survive in their *urskillningslistor*, screening lists, which closely resemble the Royal Chancery's registers. Consequently, one only needs examine one series of records, not several different sequences of records and minutes, in order to get a sense of all the supplications submitted. From the 1755–56 Diet onwards, the committee's records also include copies of almost all grievances and appendices submitted to the Screening Deputation, which provides additional information when the screening lists do not suffice.<sup>61</sup>

The Diet's political position in 1719–1772 was unique because of the political powers it amassed and exercised. One could argue that even today's Swedish Parliament is not as powerful. Added to this there is the fact that the Diet's systematic processing of supplications was also unique—a uniqueness of benefit to the present study of the supplication channel in two ways. Firstly, there was no precedent for the Diet's handling of supplications and the legislators had to adapt the channel to the Diet's organization. This led the Estates to continuously regulate the

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<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Cavallie and Lindroth, *Riksarkivets beståndsoversikt*, i. 326–327.

<sup>60</sup> Bergh, *Kungliga kansliets i riksarkivet förvarade diaries*, 439–440.

<sup>61</sup> See ch. 5.

channel, in contrast to the Swedish kings, who had issued little or at least comparatively terse legislation in this area. This continued calibration reveals a great deal about the administrative and legal contexts within which this channel between Swedish subjects and their representatives operated.

Secondly, the Age of Liberty was the moment when the Swedish Diet came the closest to being synonymous with the Swedish state. Over these fifty years, the Diet assumed a political position that would remain unmatched until the advent of full parliamentarianism and liberal democracy in the early twentieth century. Furthermore, this was when the Diet progressively came to the point where it not only issued new legislation and agreed upon taxation, but also audited Kungl. Maj:t, the central administration, and even the county governors. On top of that, it established central administrative organs with oversight of the national debt, among other things. To quote Fredrik Lagerroth, this was a Diet that became ‘a ruling Diet’, for, as Pär Frohnert has it, ‘the Diet and the channels that led to it were without comparison the most important path to influence centrally made decisions’.<sup>62</sup>

Although the Estates were the representatives of certain sections of the population, and were not Kungl. Maj:t’s representatives, they certainly aimed to control the state. Access to the Diet ultimately meant access to the state, at least in this period when the Diet assumed most of the traits of a state organ. Even though the Diet never became part of the state—the Riksdag is still not part of the state to this day, and is not encompassed by the same administrative laws that direct the organs of the modern Swedish state today—supplications submitted to the Age of Liberty Diet can still, to a large extent, be considered as having been submitted to the Crown, or at least the guardians of the state, for all intents and purposes.

### ***Supplications to the Diet, 1719–1772***

The Estates’ propensity for involving themselves in ostensibly minor matters such as supplications may not have been the subject of systematic study, but that does not mean that it has gone unnoticed in the literature.<sup>63</sup> Especially historians in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used this micromanagement as further evidence that the Estates were corrupt and partial. As an abuse of power that threatened the legal rights of the individual, the stream of minor business handled by the Estates was intrinsically connected with the parties of the era and the selfishness, the particularism, and the political frivolity these factions were thought to have encouraged.<sup>64</sup>

Organizationally speaking, the most exhaustive study is of course Fredrik Lagerroth’s two-volume work on the Diet in the Age of Liberty. Regarding the topic of the Screening Deputation, Lagerroth gives a brief and incomplete account of the characteristics of the Diet’s regulation of supplications. Additionally, Lagerroth argues that people could use supplications for private matters as well as for public business, sometimes reminiscent of the modern ‘people’s initiative’. Lagerroth does not go into the details of the supplications’ contents, rendering comparisons

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<sup>62</sup> Lagerroth, ‘Frihetstidens parlamentarism och nutidens’, 306; Frohnert, ‘Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden’, 272.

<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 78–80, 95–96; Metcalf, ‘Parliamentary sovereignty and royal reaction’, 119; Wottle, *Det lilla ägandet*, 74–75; Villstrand, ‘Memorialets makt’, 203–204.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, Odhner, *Sveriges politiska historia under konung Gustaf III:s regering*, 108–109; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 408–410; Stavenow, *Sveriges historia intill tjugonde seklet*, 366–370; Valentin, *Kungamaklet och folkmaket*, 6–7; Stavenow, *Det adertonde århundradets parlamentarism i Sverige*, 17, 29; Hallendorff, *Svenska folkets historia*, 106–108, 133–141.

impossible.<sup>65</sup> His study is nevertheless important as a reference, for example for the chapters on the legislation below.

Turning to the supplications themselves, earlier research has shown that people sought the Estates' aid to secure appointments to public office. This type of suit seemingly dominated the Diet's supplication channel in the 1760s. Per Edler, Ingvar Elmroth, Kaarlo Wirilander, and Maria Cavallin have in different ways examined such supplications and the regulation on these matters, showing how servants of the Crown, including commoners of rank, used this channel to appeal against others' promotions (such cases were referred to as *prejudice*, or 'matters of prejudice', where a less competent person gained an appointment to the disadvantage of a better qualified candidate).<sup>66</sup> Their results are discussed in conjunction with my own findings, but their findings do not provide information about the other types of issues people used the channel for.<sup>67</sup>

In Sven Ulric Palme's anthology about the working procedures of the Age of Liberty Diet, various contributors study a range of parliamentary proceedings as they worked their way through the Diet machinery, including the trajectory of a number of supplications.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, I have studied supplications submitted by *bäradshövdingen* (district judge) Mauritz Stålhandske who presided over the *bärader* (hundreds) of Vemo and Masko in the vicinity of Åbo. My results agree with Lagerroth's observation that topics varied from a personal to a national scale, as Stålhandske tried to use the channel for varying matters, including appealing against prejudice, improving agriculture in his district, and reforming Ständernas bank (the Estates' Bank).<sup>69</sup> Like the Palme volume, it shows that the supplication channel could be used for other purposes than appointments, but not to what extent. Lastly, Christina Prytz notes that men and women submitted supplications regarding the Great Reduction of 1680, when the Crown rescinded most of its land grants to the nobility, to the eighteenth-century Diet.<sup>70</sup>

Lagerroth also mentions that Diet delegates made use of the supplication channel for business of the type where it would have been 'more natural for a Diet delegate to raise his proposal in his Estate'.<sup>71</sup> Petri Karonen has used burghers' grievances about economic matters submitted throughout the period to look at descriptions of Finnish identity. From his findings, we learn that burghers and towns used the Screening Deputation for the same type of errands that they could have submitted as *gravamina*.<sup>72</sup> Fällström and Mäntylä, Frohnert, and Sven Lindblad also point out that the Screening Deputation was used by Diet delegates.<sup>73</sup>

Weighed together, these findings imply that just as with regional supplications and supplications submitted to Kungl. Maj:t—if the disparate findings are to be generalized—this

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<sup>65</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges Riksdag*, 109–113, 115–116; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 57, 67–68, 74–77, 155–156, 262, quote at 77.

<sup>66</sup> Prejudice was spelled either *prejudice*, *präjudice* or *präjudice*.

<sup>67</sup> Instead of repeating the references here, see the notes on pp. 97–100.

<sup>68</sup> Palme, ed., *Schematiska framställningar*, 35–37, 44–45, 66–71 for example.

<sup>69</sup> Almbjör, 'Mauritz Stålhandskes behov av att klaga', 4–11.

<sup>70</sup> Prytz, *Familjen i kronans tjänst*, 46.

<sup>71</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 76.

<sup>72</sup> Karonen, 'De finska borgarna och begreppet "Finland"'.

<sup>73</sup> Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', ch. 3 iv; Fällström and Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', 264; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 194.

channel was open to people, whether represented in the Diet or not, for personal matters and for matters of larger scope. However, just as with the other levels on which the supplication channel operated, we do not know to what extent or in what variety. Nor do we know how the use of supplications altered over the course of the Age of Liberty. Researching this channel will tell us more about the extent to which the Diet as a political arena interacted with the rest of society. Of course, any answers will vary according to whether the channel was mostly used by Diet delegates and the corporate bodies they represented, or by people not represented in the Diet. Therefore, the present results will also shed light on the specific political circumstances of the Age of Liberty.

### **Towards an institutional theory**

To theorize and understand what factors and structures formed the supplication channel, excluding some but including others, I have chosen to apply a theory from the field of sociological institutionalism. Sociological institutionalism focuses on norms, legitimacy, and appropriateness. It derives from sociological studies of organizations, and is sometimes referred to as the ‘new institutionalism’ in sociology or ‘normative institutionalism’.<sup>74</sup>

Sociological institutionalists emphasize how institutions survive not because they are necessarily effective, but because they are legitimate: ‘organizations embrace specific institutional forms or practices because the latter are widely valued within a broader cultural environment’.<sup>75</sup> Old models and solutions tend to be employed for newly surfaced problems, while organizations tend to grow increasingly similar over time.<sup>76</sup> Sociological institutionalists do not disregard rationality, but stress the fact that people attribute legitimacy to solutions that from a goal-oriented perspective are not optimal. This approach does not deny ‘calculations and anticipations of consequences’, but regards ‘calculations and anticipation as occurring within a broader framework of rules, roles, and identities’.<sup>77</sup> In other words, actions can be perceived as being goal- or means-oriented, not only the former.

Within this school of thought, James March and Johan Olsen have developed institutional theories for the understanding of modern politics and governance. March and Olsen define an institution as a ‘relatively stable collection of rules and practices, embedded in structures of *resources* that make action possible—organizational, financial and staff capabilities, and structures of *meaning* that explain and justify behaviour—roles, identities and belongings, common purposes and causal and normative beliefs’.<sup>78</sup> In other words, the institution is a set of norms and rules in action. What characterizes these rules and practices according to March and Olsen is thus not that they are goal-oriented or consequence-oriented, but that they are based on what is appropriate and correct in a certain situation. As such, an action is dependent on what position or identity the agent considers him or herself to have, and what the agent perceives as the correct

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<sup>74</sup> Hall and Taylor, ‘Political science and the three new institutionalisms’, 946–949; Peters, *Institutional theory in political science*, 25–36.

<sup>75</sup> Hall and Taylor, ‘Political science and the three new institutionalisms’, 949.

<sup>76</sup> DiMaggio and Powell, ‘The iron cage revisited’, 147–154; March and Olsen, ‘The new institutionalism’ 742–743; Hall and Taylor, ‘Political science and the three new institutionalisms’, 953–954; Wijkström and Einarsson, ‘*Från nationalstat till näringsliv?*’, 23–24, 49–55.

<sup>77</sup> March and Olsen, *Democratic governance*, 28–29.

<sup>78</sup> March and Olsen, ‘The logic of appropriateness’, 691.

thing to do in that specific situation. This, in turn, is referred to by March and Olsen as a 'logic of appropriateness', something different from a logic of consequence.<sup>79</sup>

Where these rules come from varies. March and Olsen describe them as both stemming from within the institutions that shape our identities, our ability to gather information and arrive at solutions, as well as from society in general, our family, our social group, and so on.<sup>80</sup> Thus, institutions are self-pollinating, shaping their environment on the one hand and remaining under the influence of norms and values shared by society at large on the other. Furthermore, institutions do not necessitate a shared ideology or value system, but rather 'interrelated practices and routines, sometimes formalized into formal rules and laws and sometimes less formally specified. Those practices and routines, as well as their interpretations, must be built on shared understandings of the behaviours they mandate or permit'.<sup>81</sup> Institutions therefore mediate or buffer deeper differences in values and opinions.

The logic of appropriateness is March and Olsen's explanation for the phenomenon generally referred to as path dependence.<sup>82</sup> When a logic of appropriateness has been established, the possibility for change diminishes because the institutions themselves impact on our decision-making. As mentioned above, not only external factors but also the institution has an effect. Newly arrived agents are presented with *fait accomplis* that limit how they interact, what they perceive as possible actions, and thus how the institution evolves.<sup>83</sup> Institutional stability therefore stems from normativity and rules.

On the other hand, March and Olsen also distinguish between the ideas and norms underlying the institution and the complexity of enacting them in ever-changing reality. Any particular action is not determined 'precisely' by institutions.<sup>84</sup> In other words, it is still possible to act in impermissible ways, and peoples' tendencies to do so depend on the embedded, rule-guided, structural strength of the institution. The appropriate logic creates impediments and channels actions certain ways, of course, but it is also open for interpretation and disobedience.<sup>85</sup> Agents can manipulate the logic of appropriateness or interpret it varyingly, as long as others view their actions as appropriate.

This ambiguity has seen a degree of criticism levied against March and Olsen. How can one distinguish between interaction that strengthens and interaction that undermines the logic of appropriateness? Indeed, the seeming infallibility of this theory is a common criticism. If the logic of appropriateness does not necessarily limit the range of actions, it is unclear what and how many actions are needed to uphold it, especially when studies have shown that organizations can prosper despite undermining behaviour. There is also a clear risk that all actions will be interpreted as taking place within the logic of appropriateness when that may not be the case.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> March and Olsen, *Rediscovering institutions*, 21–22; March and Olsen, 'Institutional perspectives on political institutions', 249–253.

<sup>80</sup> March and Olsen, 'The logic of appropriateness', 696–698.

<sup>81</sup> March and Olsen, *Democratic governance*, 34–35.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, Pierson, 'Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics'.

<sup>83</sup> March and Olsen, 'Institutional perspectives on political institutions', 250–251, 255–258.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* 252; see also March and Olsen, 'The logic of appropriateness', 692–696.

<sup>85</sup> March and Olsen, 'Institutional perspectives on political institutions', 258.

<sup>86</sup> For a summary of the criticism, see Peters, *Institutional theory in political science*, 31–33.

Andreas Duit has proposed that we divide ‘institutional reproduction mechanisms’ into two different analytical categories: ‘reproductive rules’ and ‘reproductive practices’. Reproductive rules are rules that generate long-term effects in the form of reproductive practices or behaviour, which are adapted to the rules and to other agents. Duit, however, proposes that we first identify the reproductive patterns, then the rules that are vital for guiding and upholding these patterns, and lastly the connections between rules and practices over time. By doing so, we decrease the risk of focusing needlessly on formal rules, which might play little or no role whatsoever in institutional change or stability.<sup>87</sup> In the present dissertation, Duit’s concepts and analytical schema have informed the analysis of the development of ruling institutions over time, and allow a test of the degree to which the logic of appropriateness can explain the development of the Diet’s supplication channel. With these concepts, I intend to avoid making the theory infallible as described in the paragraph above.

The application of March and Olsen’s theoretical perspective to explain the development of the Age of Liberty Diet’s supplication channel entails the following: this supplication channel was an institution embedded in a certain organization, the Diet, and it remains to analyse which ideas and templates underpinned this channel’s existence and its organizational development. This can be achieved by studying the Swedish supplication channel’s development before and during the Age of Liberty, and by studying the regulation of Diet supplications. As the channel was part of the Diet, its relationship to the Diet’s organization and development is also of relevance.

The institution was moreover embedded not only in an organization, but also in the interaction that took place within it. This interaction is understood as consisting of submitting supplications, examining them, and the interaction between Diet delegates at the Diet in general as well as in the Screening Deputation specifically. Combining March and Olsen’s theory with Duit’s analytical categories—reproductive rules and reproductive behaviours—for institutional change requires a study of development over time. Thus, the entire Age of Liberty—1719–1772—serves as the period of study.<sup>88</sup>

## Aim and questions

Who took part in the interaction through the formal channels of the early modern era and why? To answer that question, my aim is to examine the social range of the political conversation in early modern Sweden, as seen in the Age of Liberty Diet’s supplication channel. More specifically, I will examine the supplications submitted to the parliamentary committee tasked with receiving them, the Screening Deputation. Previous research has yielded few and disparate systematic studies of the supplication channel, and therefore supplications, this third formal channel in Swedish political culture, remains *terra incognita* in the early modern political landscape. To gauge the full range of opportunities open to early modern Swedes to exert influence we need to examine this channel as well. This study contributes to this effort with findings from one of the central levels of the supplication channel.

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<sup>87</sup> Duit, ‘Path dependency and institutional change’, 1101–1103.

<sup>88</sup> The lack of longterm systematic studies of supplications was highlighted by Neuhaus in 1979, another wanted sign gone unanswered so far. Neuhaus, ‘Supplikationen als landesgeschichtliche Quellen’, ii, 90–91.



In what follows, I analyse the aforementioned Diet committee as a channel for *political interaction* between society and the Diet. I also analyse the same channel as an *institution* through which this political interaction took place, to see to what extent an institutional perspective can explain the channel's development and political interaction. An institution is a set of norms, rules, and practices embodied in organization, a theoretical perspective takes both ideological and organizational factors into account, and thus makes it possible to answer the following questions. What relevant historical templates and norms can be found in the development of the other levels of the supplication channel? To what degree did they affect the organization and work of the Screening Deputation? How did the Diet's development as an organization affect that of the Screening Deputation?

Turning to the interacting parties, I first want to understand to what extent people interacted with their representatives through this channel, who they were, and what they wanted. How many supplications did the Estates receive? Looking at variables such as gender, geography, and social belonging, who used the channel? What did people ask for?

I also want to understand the reasons for the supplication channel's existence; its historical, institutional, and international context; and its development from the perspective of the Diet and, by extension, the Estates. This issue is partially covered in the questions concerning the development of the other levels of the supplication channel, but there is also information to be found in the regulation for the channel itself. Because of my theoretical perspective, which focuses on reproductive practices and rules, I also want to understand to what extent regulation guided behaviour. Hence, I ask a number of further questions. Why did the Estates allow Swedish subjects to submit supplications to the Diet? How did the Estates regulate the channel and for what reasons? How successful were the subjects who submitted supplications to the Screening Deputation? To what extent did the committee and supplicants adhere to the regulations?

I will use the results from this study to discuss the relationship between this specific level of the supplication channel and its other levels, as well as with other channels that existed in Sweden at the time. By doing so, I will be able to determine the supplication channel's role in the early modern Swedish political system. As a bonus, the results will permit a deeper understanding of the level of interaction between the Diet and society in the Age of Liberty. Lastly, I will compare my findings about the Swedish supplication channel with findings in the literature about similar channels in other European states, mostly focused on Denmark–Norway, Britain, and the politics of the Holy Roman Empire. Such an approach will both situate early modern Sweden in an international context and yield similarities and differences that can deepen our understanding of the specific Swedish experience.

## **Disposition**

The dissertation can be seen as structured into five parts. Part I contains this introduction followed by an account of the sources and methods used in this study. Part II is a background section with chapters on the development of the supplication channel in Sweden and abroad, identifying the ideas and templates on which the Estates may have constructed their channel along, and on the basic economic and political history of Sweden in the Age of Liberty and the Diet's organization during that period.

The empirical study begins with Part III with two chapters on regulation and its effects. Chapter 5 considers the regulations that guided the Screening Deputation's work and the motives behind issuing such regulations, while Chapter 6 measures the regulation's effects in terms of the number of supplications, their acceptance rate, and the congruence between interaction and regulation.

Part IV turns to the supplicants and their requests. In Chapter 7, I examine the literary style of the supplications and analyse three examples of supplicants who had their supplications examined by the Diet that reveal more about the conditions and structures that underpinned the supplication process. Chapter 8 is a study of the supplicants' place of residence. Chapter 9 accounts for the degree to which supplications were submitted by individuals, groups, or corporate bodies, as well as the supplicant's gender. Chapters 10 and 11 present my findings about the supplicants' social background, and Chapters 12, 13, and 14 the supplications' content. In Chapter 15, I summarize the findings of parts III and IV, placing them in a chronological perspective informed by March and Olsen's theories. Thus Parts III and IV gradually move from the general traits of the supplication channel and its interactions to the specific traits, and then back again in Chapter 15.

Part V's two chapters conclude the dissertation. Chapter 16 summarizes the findings and remarks on the March and Olsen's theory in light of its use here, followed by a comparative discussion of the central and regional levels of the supplication channel, and the political role played by the Diet's supplication channel during the Age of Liberty, situating the findings in an international context which both contrasts and accentuates the conclusions. Chapter 17 is a brief epilogue, tracing the history of supplications and petition into the twenty-first century.

## 2 Sources, methods & categorization

In this chapter I consider the various types of source material I have used in my research. The chapter begins with sections on the sources and methods employed to examine the regulation of the supplication channel as well as the interaction itself. I then continues with a presentation of the categorizations of supplicants and supplications employed in the empirical chapters, with general remarks on the reliability of the screening lists and the supplications, before turning to the categories of supplicants, their supplications, and their success rate. The chapter ends with some remarks on the use of tables and figures in the text.

### Legislation

The legislation directly concerning or related to the Diet's working procedures and its supplication channel can be found in *Ärstrycket* (Royal Proclamations and Public Announcements). *Ärstrycket* consists of proclamations, ordinances, and decrees, but also propaganda, news, and prayers, issued on a central, regional, or local level. The state never issued compilations itself; instead, academics and the interested public stepped in. Axel Brusewitz's 1916 compilation features all of the period's constitutional laws and their amendments, Estate privileges, various committee instructions, and most other edicts and proclamations regarding the inner workings of the Diet.<sup>89</sup> To complement Brusewitz's compilation I scanned Nils Herman Quiding's printed index of statutes issued between 1522 and 1862.<sup>90</sup> I also searched the public databases of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century publications: SOT (Svenskt offentligt tryck), SB17 (Svensk bibliografi 1700–1829), and Collijn (Svensk bibliografi 1600-talet).<sup>91</sup> Whenever a piece of legislation did not feature in Brusewitz's compilation, I consulted Reinhold Gustaf Modée's or Johan Schmedeman's compilations, or simply located the material in the archives.<sup>92</sup>

To find debates that preceded the legislation, I consulted the Estates' printed minutes and previous research. Printed transcriptions of the nobility's and the peasantry's minutes, including registers of keywords, names, and dates, survive from all Age of Liberty Diets. The official publication of the clergy's and burgher's minutes has now reached the 1750s.<sup>93</sup> I have also used documents in the Estates' archives when the minutes make reference to them.

### Supplications and screening lists

In order to examine the supplications, I have turned to the committee responsible for receiving the supplications, examining them, and then deciding whether or not the supplication was a matter for the Diet or not. As mentioned in the introduction, this committee was called Urskillningsdeputationen, the Screening Deputation. As we will see in Chapter 5, minutes of their transactions do not survive for the entire period, but they consistently recorded their transactions in *urskillningslistor*, or screening lists. Until 1748 these lists are often the only trace of

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<sup>89</sup> Brusewitz, ed., *Frilhetstidens grundlagar*.

<sup>90</sup> Quiding, *Svenskt allmänt författningsregister*. I examined the following keywords: ansökningar, charta sigillata & riksdagsordningen.

<sup>91</sup> These databases are all accessible through <<http://libris.kb.se>>; I used the following terms: suppli\*, urskillning\*, charta sigil\*, petition, riksdag, sollicitant, ansökan, ansökningar. For information on the databases, see Kungliga biblioteket, 'deldatabaser i LIBRIS'.

<sup>92</sup> Modée, *Utdrag utur alle*, 15 vols.; Schmedeman, *Kongl. Stadgar, bref och resolutioner*, 2 vols.

<sup>93</sup> For information on the project to print the minutes of the Estates, see Sveriges Riksdag, 'utgivning av protokoll från riksdagen'.

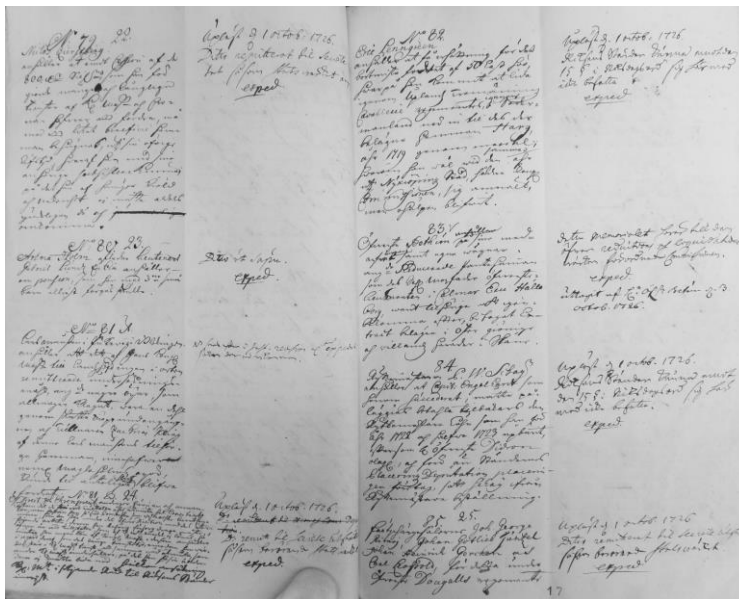


FIGURE 2.1 Excerpt from the 1726-27 screening list. The left-hand columns have the summaries for supplications 79 to 85, the right-hand columns the notes about what the Screening Deputation decided and why.

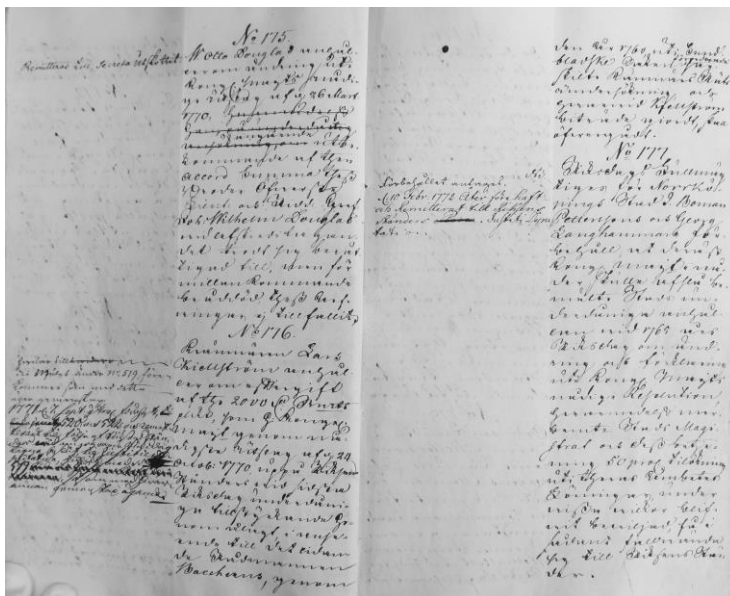


FIGURE 2.2 Excerpt from the 1771-72 screening list. In the right-hand columns, the summaries of supplications 175 to 177, submitted during the Diet's first term; the left-hand column has the notes on the Screening Deputation's decisions.

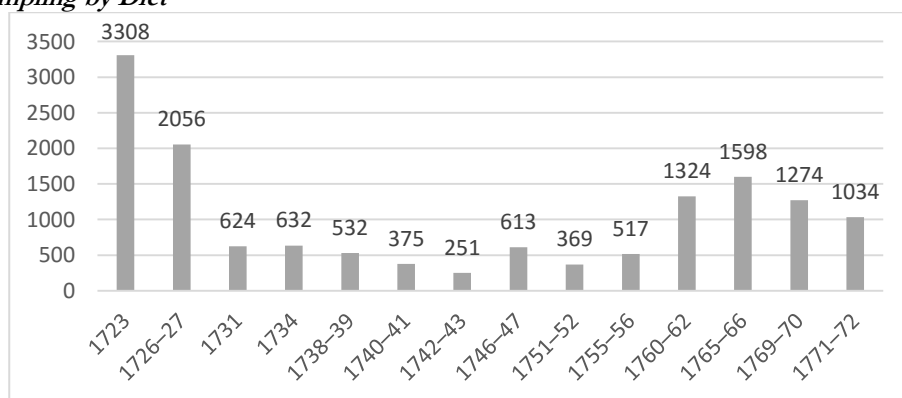
the committee's dealings besides random, hastily written notes or annotations and a number of the supplications they examined. The screening lists consist of summaries—mostly referred to here as listings—of supplications together with the committee's verdict on whether the supplication should be referred to the Diet or rejected. Of the screening lists I have made use of, the screening list from the 1746–47 Diet does not include the committee's decision, and in this case I matched the screening list to a separate list of resolutions in the archive.

The summaries in the screening lists vary in length, from some twenty or thirty words to several paragraphs, and they provide the name, most often a title or profession of the supplicant, and an account of the request. Furthermore, each supplication and its summary were numbered in chronological order according to when supplicants delivered their requests. The first supplication submitted at each Diet and its listing in the screening list received a '1', the second a '2', and so on. The screening lists, including both accepted and rejected supplications, were printed and published from 1738 until 1772, first in *Ärstrycket* and then from 1755 in *Riksdagstidningen* (the Diet Gazette).

Of more importance for this study, the printing of the screening lists in *Riksdagstidningen* coincided with a marked drop in the lists' quality. From 1755 onwards, the summaries were shorter and sometimes vague. However, this decline in quality was most likely due to the fact that supplicants were obliged to submit dual copies of all their documents from 1755, and hence the Screening Deputation's archive contains almost complete collections of the supplications submitted to the committee after that date. Although the screening lists constitute the dissertation's main source of information for the supplications and their response from the Screening Deputation, I have been able to supplement with the original supplications submitted from 1755 and onwards.<sup>94</sup>

## Sampling and counting

### *Sampling by Diet*



**Figure 2.3.** The number of listings in the Screening Deputation's screening lists. *Sources:* R2458, R2522, R2576, R2643, R2727, R2804, R2856, R2944, R3033, R3126, R3258, R3420, R3538, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>94</sup> The Screening Deputation started keeping minutes from the 1751–52 Diet (see ch. 5) and these could have been used in this dissertation. Especially some of the conclusions in Chapter 6 could have been further developed by the results from a survey of the minutes. However, such a survey was not needed to fulfil the aim and questions of this study and was therefore not prioritized.

When counting the number of supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation during the Age of Liberty, I have arrived at the results by counting the listings in the committee's screening lists. This supplication channel saw two peak periods—in the 1720s and the 1760s (Fig. 2.3)—while it reached its nadir in the 1740s. In total more than 14,000 supplications were submitted to the Screening Deputation from its inauguration in 1723, with the lion's share submitted at the beginning and at the end of the era. This is simply a too large a number to examine completely, so sampling was called for. As the study covers the supplication channel's development over the entire Age of Liberty in order to charter the shorter and longer lines of change and consistency, I have therefore selected three Diets, 1726–27, 1746–47, and 1771–72, on which to focus. This choice facilitates an examination that stretches across the entire Age of Liberty and gives one sample from the beginning, the middle, and the end of the period. Besides these three Diets, I have also included smaller and more specific surveys of the 1738–38, 1740–41, 1742–43, and 1765–66 Diets. In these instances, the object has not been a representative sample, but rather to examine particular characteristics.

### *Data sampling*

Even with just three Diets, the screening lists from these Diets contain a total of 3,703 listings (Table 2.1). Therefore I have made three representative samples of 33 per cent each, meaning I have randomly selected one-third of the summaries or listings from the screening lists, on which to build my examination. In total, this gives three samples amounting to a total of 1,232 listings. These samples are referred to here as the 1726–27 sample, the first sample, or sample one; the 1746–47 sample, the second sample, or sample two; and the 1771–72 sample, the third sample, or sample three (Table. 2.1).

These three samples have been collected using simple random sampling without replacement; in other words, each listing has had the same chance of being included in the sample, and each listing has had its chance of being sampled a second time reduced to zero.<sup>95</sup> The random sample has been made by choosing listings at random through their screening list number. Each listing is an element: listing 1 is element 1, listing 2 element 2, and so on. In total, the 1726–27 screening list's 2,056 listings equal 2,056 elements; the 1746–47 list, 613 elements: and the 1771–72 list, 1,034 elements. I enlisted the help of associate professor Ingeborg Waernbaum at the Umeå

	Listings	Sampled listings
<b>1726–27</b>	2,056	684
<b>1746–47</b>	613	204
<b>1771–72</b>	1,034	344
<b>Total</b>	3,703	1,232

**TABLE 2.1** The number of listings and sampled listings from the three selected Diets (by listings). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>95</sup> To illustrate, think of a cloth bag filled with fifteen marbles of which you want to take out five. When you reach your hand in, each one has the same chance of getting taken. The picked marble is then put to one side—in other words, has its chance of getting taken from the bag a second time is reduced to zero. The entire finite population being sampled, the original fifteen marbles, decreases on each selection as no marbles are replaced. No remaining marble has a greater chance of being taken than any of the others remaining. For more information on the method, see Särndal, Swensson and Wretman, *Model Assisted Survey Sampling*, 3–23.

School of Business and Economics, Umeå University. She was presented with the number of elements in each screening list and from it created a random sample from each Diet with the statistical computing program R.<sup>96</sup> Because I wanted a representative sample of the entire population—regardless of characteristics—no other framework was utilized. Waernbaum presented me with three lists of numbered elements in chronological order that constituted the three samples. I then matched the elements with the listings with corresponding numbers. For example, the sample for the 1726–27 screening list contained elements 3, 7, and 13, which refer to the listings with the same numbers in the screening lists. The samples presented here have thus been gathered with a scientifically accepted and accurate method without bias. This method enables us to view the samples as representative.<sup>97</sup>

### ***Data counting***

With the samples selected and collated, there are still a few things to deal with before we can move on. Firstly, my investigation of the sampled listings in the screening lists quickly revealed that not all listings were summaries of supplications. A proportion of the listings concerned referrals from official bodies such as the administrative boards, Kungl. Maj:t, and so on, while some listings were missing from the screening lists. Secondly, some listings contained several supplications. When these two findings are weighed together (Table 2.2), the number of supplications is greater than the number of listings in each of the three samples.

The 1726–27 sample illustrates why. The screening list from this Diet comprises 2,056 listings. Of these, 684 ended up in the 1726–27 sample. Within this sample, 81 listings concerned referrals from administrative organs and were excluded from the study as they do not constitute supplications.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, two listings were missing from the screening list. In total, 83 of the 684 sampled elements were discarded. The remaining 601 listings in turn contained 756 supplications, because some supplicants included several requests or supplications in their documents.

When drawing up the screening lists, the Screening Deputation’s secretaries did not give each request a separate listing, but rather included all requests in one set of documents in the corresponding listing. As many as 55 listings contained several supplications, with Björneborg

Type	1726–27	1746–47	1771–72	Total
Listings in the screening lists	2,056	613	1,034	3,703
Sampled listings	684	204	344	1,232
Administrative referrals/missing	83	1	0	84
Remaining listings	601	203	344	1,148
Supplications in remaining listings	756	285	359	1,400

**TABLE 2.2** The three sampled supplication listings, broken down by type (by listings and supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>96</sup> For more on R, see R Development Core Team, R: *A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*.

<sup>97</sup> The method makes it possible to calculate the margin of error for each subset of elements in the samples.

<sup>98</sup> Many of these referrals did concern individual supplications, but that does not make them supplications but rather referrals of supplications.

County's infantry regiment's supplication containing no fewer than 22 separate requests at once.<sup>99</sup>

Looking at Table 2.2, all samples produced a higher number of supplications than the number of sampled listings. The 1726–27 sample presents the biggest absolute gap between listings and supplications, the 1746–47 sample displays the biggest relative gap, and the third sample the smallest absolute and relative gap. Thus, the numbers in Figure 2.3 are probably minimums, with the real number of submitted supplications having been greater, although judging by the difference between the samples the difference between listings and supplications decreased towards the end of the period. Furthermore, it is my interpretation that the significantly lower portion of administrative referrals in 1746–47 compared to twenty years earlier is also indicative of a trend where the screening lists only listed supplications. The referrals kept coming to the Diet and perhaps even through the Screening Deputation, but they were no longer listed in the screening lists to the same degree.

Thus, there exists a difference between the number of sampled listings and the number of sampled supplications as a result of several listings containing several supplications. With these distinctions in mind, I will still refer to both the sampled listings and their requests—requests being considered as the supplications proper—as supplications in order to avoid complicating the analysis outside this section. Nonetheless, I have noted in all tables and figures whether the values are based on the count of listings ('by listings') or, as is the case for most tables and figures, on the count of supplications ('by supplications'). In a few instances, both counts have been used ('by listings and supplications').

## Categorization

In this section I present the main categorizations that have been used throughout the study. Some additional minor ones are presented in the empirical chapters. As already mentioned, the screening lists—with the addition of the 1771–72 supplications—comprise the core material for this study, and I have decided to take all the summaries and supplication copies at their word. This decision means that if a supplicant claimed he was a merchant from Linköping and asked to be given 2,000 dsmt in order to set up a sugar mill, he will be categorized as a merchant and his supplication as one concerning commerce. To be sure, there were most likely people who lied completely or partially for a variety of reasons. Yet, I have made the assumption that most people who came to the Diet in order to submit a supplication did so for sincere reasons and were honest about who they were, especially when considering that a closer examination in the Diet would risk exposing anyone who made false claims. To assume the opposite, meaning that the majority or at least a large portion of the supplicants acted dishonestly, is of course imaginable, but not likely unless proven otherwise.

For some categorizations, it has been necessary to consult additional source material. Take the fact that it at times has proved difficult to determine the social or geographical background of the supplicant. On occasion, the indices of names drawn up by the committee provided more information regarding the name of a supplicant only described by surname or the like in the

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<sup>99</sup> Attachment 56a; Ärende 1739, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.



screening lists.<sup>100</sup> Regarding noble supplicants, the published genealogical tables of nobility resolved most confusions.<sup>101</sup> Nonetheless, people whose background for one reason or the other has not been described sufficiently in the screening lists, who were not aristocrats, or whose background cannot be surmised from their request and its description, have remained more or less anonymous besides the request itself. Whenever the screening lists have created uncertainties for the results, I have highlighted this fact.

There is furthermore a case of inconsistency in the choice of additional source material. In Chapter 6, I discuss the personnel changes in the Screening Deputation using printed lists of which delegates sat on which committees (see p. 113). Later in chapter 10 I discuss the frequency of Diet delegates among noble supplicants by using signatures from Riksdagsbesluten (the Diet resolutions, see pp. 140–141). The reason why I have not used the Diet delegate lists for both is simply because I did not become aware of them until late in my research and did not have time to make a new study informed by them instead.<sup>102</sup>

### **Geography**

When establishing where the supplicant sent the supplication or came from to submit it in Stockholm, I have used the standard eighteenth-century administrative units—*län* (counties)—as the lowest denominator. The use of a smaller scale than that would have been futile as the information in many listings and supplications leaves a lot to be desired. I have not been able to identify the place of residence at all for a large proportion of supplicants, although that proportion decreases for each sample. The proportion is over 40 per cent in the first sample, above 20 per cent in the second, and ends at below 10 per cent in the third and final sample. The comparatively low proportion of supplicants of unknown residence in the last sample stems from the higher quality of the source material; when the screening lists have failed to provide, the original supplications have often revealed the necessary information. Thus, changes in the geographical background must be treated very carefully, and because of the large portion of unknown cases, the section on geographical background is much shorter than first intended.

It should also be noted certain supplicants' home locations can be determined on one scale, but not on another. This is the case with, for example, Georg Henrik Lybecker's supplication from the 1726–27 sample. Lybecker asked to be reassigned from his current regiment because he could not speak Finnish and wanted to transfer to a cavalry regiment in the south of Sweden.<sup>103</sup> Which regiment he was placed with at the time of writing his supplications is uncertain; neither the screening list nor the nobility's genealogical tables provide further information. However, he was presumably stationed in Finland. Thus, he has been categorized as living in Finland when comparing the number of supplications from Sweden proper and Finland respectively, but as unknown on a county level. With cases such as Lybecker's and

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<sup>100</sup> Alfabetiskt register, fol 484–509, R2522, UdH, FU, RA; kronologiskt och alfabetiskt register, fol 1–37, R2944, UdH, FU, RA; kronologiskt register, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>101</sup> RhS.

<sup>102</sup> Lastly, the categorization utilized in this study is adapted to the specific findings. Regardless, Michael Bregnsbo's and John Markoff's quantitative studies of Danish supplications and French *cahiers de doléances* respectively have been very inspiring in helping me identify relevant variables and methods for categorizations. Their influence is perhaps not immediately visible, but it is there. Markoff, *The abolition of feudalism*; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*.

<sup>103</sup> Ärende 1523, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

others' in mind, the proportions of unknowns stated above are consequently minimums that increase slightly the more we zoom in.

Secondly, a related point. Even when some geographical information is provided, pinpointing the exact place of residence has seldom proved possible or has required some very broad assumptions. I have assumed that when people petition concerning a property here or a factory mill there they also lived there unless it was obvious they resided elsewhere, as was the case with public officials working in Stockholm. When priests wrote and only specified their home diocese, I have placed them in the county where their cathedral chapter lay. I have also used Google maps to find several factory mills and *kungsgårdar* (royal demesnes), and for a few noblemen I have used the location of their *säteri* or *sätesgård* (manor) where possible. There are of course uncertainties associated with these choices, and again the geographical results need to be taken with a pinch of salt. The geographical categorization has different levels, as follows:

### ***Large scale***

- Sweden
- Finland
- Sweden's German provinces
- Abroad (Swedish supplicants living abroad as well as foreigners)
- Unknown

### ***Medium scale***

On this and the next level, I have only included supplicants from Sweden proper and Finland. Supplicants from Sweden are categorized as belonging to one of the three main parts of Sweden—Götaland, Svealand, and Norrland—roughly corresponding to the southern, central, and large northern parts of Sweden respectively. Skaraborg county, which straddled both Götaland and Svealand, is included in Götaland because the county governor's residence was in the town of Mariestad in Götaland. Finland has been divided into two parts: a western part including the counties of Åbo & Björneborg and Österbotten, and a southeastern part including the counties of Nyland & Tavastehus and Kymmenegård & Savolax.

- Götaland
- Svealand
- Norrland
- Western Finland
- Southeastern Finland
- Unknown (supplicants from Sweden or Finland whose location cannot be determined)

### ***County scale***

Supplicants are labelled according to which county they lived in, or as unknown, if they lived in Sweden or Finland but their specific county of residence could not be determined.

## *Type*

Individuals (one or two persons)

Groups (non-corporate collectives comprising three persons or more, including groups of an unknown size)

Corporate bodies (ranging from smaller corporations such as individual guilds or parishes to entire regiments, towns, districts, and regions. This category includes recognized corporations such as towns, regiments, and peasant districts, but also seemingly temporary or ad hoc groupings behind a supplication, such as the clergy of Östergötland at the 1746–47 Diet.<sup>104</sup> This also applies in other sets of categories with this variable)

Other (administrative bodies and similar)

## *Gender*

Men

Women

Men and women

Corporate bodies (corporate bodies were not ungendered in the sense that they were primarily controlled and run by men. However, they cannot at the same time be categorized as solely male, as they formally represented women and children as well. For example, a peasant district corporation consisted of all peasant households, not only the male peasants. For these reasons, corporate bodies have their own variable)

Other (includes administrative bodies and cases where gender could not be established)

## *Social background*

There are problems with discrepancies between supplicants' titles and professions. Many men held titles that did not correspond to what they actually did or the position they held. Both officers and civil servants could occupy rungs lower than their official title.<sup>105</sup> Likewise, people held on to their titles when they retired, and some even retired with a higher rank than they held at the end of their service. There are several reasons for this and the supplicant Lorentz Blåfiell provides one example. He asked to be given the *karaktär* (character or title) of a major so that he could enjoy a major's pension for the remainder of his days.<sup>106</sup> Thus, Blåfiell wanted promotion upon retirement so that he could enjoy a better pension, and, if successful, he could call himself a major although he never attained that position in his working life.

Regardless, titles afforded their holder with a certain position. Early modern society was indeed a status society. As we will see later in this chapter, most countries including Sweden had published orders of rank in which offices and commands were given a certain value on a hierarchical scale. These orders of rank did not differentiate between titles with and without corresponding offices, and titles decided how a person would be received and, in turn, received others. 'People were seated according to rank, they ate, drank, raised their glasses and conversed

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<sup>104</sup> Ärende 309, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>105</sup> Rystad, 'Till frågan om tjänster och löner'; Nils-Göran Nilsson, 'Rank or command?', 124–127; Norrby, *Ordnade eliter*, 82–85.

<sup>106</sup> Ärende 330, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

according to rank, they danced, played cards, sat in church, took communion, walked in line, and were buried according to rank', as Karlo Wirilander writes.<sup>107</sup> Inspired by Bourdieu, Esbjörn Larsson argues that titles functioned as symbolic capital in early modern society, and directly influenced how people acted.<sup>108</sup>

Titles furthermore not only structured relationships within a group, they also determined which people belonged to it. Peasants belonged to the peasantry, regardless of whether they were too old themselves to work the soil or were of a gender that disqualified them from taking part in political meetings; a former officer was still part of the group of military personnel after he retired. Titles afforded people not only an individual, but also a collective position. Thus, all supplicants have been categorized according to their titles.

However, status categorizations based on titles are less accurate for women, who, unless widowed, often held male-dependent social positions in early modern society. Their legal status was decided by the household to which they belonged. Married women were under the guardianship of their husbands, unmarried women under the tutelage of their fathers or brothers and hence were accessed as having the status of the male head of the household. Women's status was therefore dependent on their household and that household's status often depended on its male head, living or dead.

The problem with this male-dependent status comes to the fore in the screening lists, where women are described according to the profession or status of a male. For example, Beata Forsteen, who asked the Estates for financial support following the death of her father, a district judge, was also described as a district judge's daughter and nothing more.<sup>109</sup> Widows were also identified according to their late husband; when the Screening Deputation's secretaries summarized Anna Berner's supplication, they described her as a widow of a deceased major.<sup>110</sup> Thus, a woman who married a major and never remarried after his death remained a major's widow for the rest of her life. Needless to say, unless that widow had a good pension or some sort of inheritance it is unlikely she subsisted as a major's widow. Therefore the title is not a good description of what Anna Berner actually did for a living and does not give a complete picture of her social standing in the community. Yet it is the only piece of information available in the sources and the fact that the Screening Deputation's secretaries found their relations noteworthy moreover highlights the information's relevance.

Thus, women are defined by their male family members when no other information was available. The status of the husband, dead or alive, trumped that of the father or brother, while father trumped brother. This method has been used by several social historians. It is not perfect—besides the aforementioned reasons the method also neglects the status women held for themselves and thus brought to their households in different ways—but it is serviceable.<sup>111</sup>

The same method was applied to supplicants who were only described as relatives of someone, as, for example, the heirs of a nobleman with the last name Fleming who submitted a

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<sup>107</sup> Wirilander, *Herrskapsfolk*, 162.

<sup>108</sup> Larsson, 'Att studera titlar som kapital'.

<sup>109</sup> Ärende 417, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>110</sup> Ärende 761, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>111</sup> Wirilander, *Herrskapsfolk*, 180; Sewell, *Structure and mobility*, 270–272; Erikson and Goldthorpe, *The constant flux*, 232–239; Vikström, *Gendered routes and courses*, 49–51; Hinnemo, *In för högsta instans*, 42–43.

supplication at the 1746–47 Diet.<sup>112</sup> The listing provides no explanation of who the heirs were, but Fleming is a noble name and the supplicants have been categorized as noblemen.

### ***Estates***

One way to categorize the supplicants is through the corporate organization of the Estates. In Sweden, the politically sanctioned Estates were the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasantry, all four being represented at the Diets. The peasantry were defined as *skattebönder* (peasants who owned their own land), freeholders, and *kronbönder* (peasants who leased Crown land) or leaseholders.<sup>113</sup>

This Estate ideal for society nonetheless corresponded less and less with reality. During the eighteenth century many other interest or affinity groups surfaced without being accommodated within the old divisions. One of these groups were the military regiments, which formed a quasi-Estate during Diets—quasi because it could not vote in the Diet. Thus, all supplications from regiments or the regiments’ representatives have been categorized as belonging to *krigsbefälet* (army command). The army command was not a proper Estate of the Realm in the wider, societal sense, unlike the other Estates, but it is counted as one in this study because it ranked as an (quasi) Estate at the Diet.<sup>114</sup>

Furthermore, the commoners of rank and unrepresented lower groups’ categories measure to what extent the supplications were employed by people outside the Estate system. Commoners of rank occupied a social or economic position that elevated them from the lowest strata of society, but did not possess a position or status that made them part of the Estate corporations. Included in their ranks were non-noble officers and civil servants, non-noble *brukspatroner* (ironmasters), apothecaries, and clerks.<sup>115</sup>

Meanwhile, the biggest change in the social composition of the Swedish populace took place on the countryside, where the differences between the propertied and the non-propertied population increased and the latter group quadrupled in size between 1750 and 1850.<sup>116</sup> Together with soldiers and servants, as well as day labourers in the towns, the crofters, cottagers, rural day labourers, and workers, they occupied society’s lower rungs excluded from the Diet’s Estate system. Supplicants confirmed as belonging to these groups are categorized as unrepresented lower groups.

Moreover some supplicants have been categorized as complex, because the authors came from different groups, or none when the supplicants were seemingly administrative organs acting as supplicants. An example of different groups joining together was the staff of Göta hovrätt, Göta Court of Appeal.<sup>117</sup> These two categories are bundled together as ‘other’. Lastly, people whose social background remains unknown have been categorized accordingly. This includes people who had served the Crown in some unknown way. For example, J. Lund at the 1726–27

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<sup>112</sup> Ärende 286, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>113</sup> *Frälsebönder*, tenants of the nobility, were considered part of the nobility and would have been categorized accordingly, had any tenants been located in the samples. Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeinflytande under frihetstiden*, 24.

<sup>114</sup> For a different opinion, see Artéus, *Krigsmaket och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*.

<sup>115</sup> Definition of commoners of rank taken from Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner*, 17–21.

<sup>116</sup> Winberg, ‘Population growth and proletarianization.

<sup>117</sup> Ärende 999 & 1874, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.



**Figure 2.4** A political allegory of the four Estates. The burgher and peasant are dragging the cow in two directions, the nobleman rides the cow and the clergyman milks it.

Diet asked that the Estates pay him his unpaid salaries, but the list does not specify what type of position he had or had had previously.<sup>118</sup>

Noblemen  
 Clergy  
 Burghers  
 Peasants  
 Army command  
 Commoners of rank  
 Unrepresented lower groups  
 Other  
 Unknown

### ***Diet corporations and Diet delegates***

Besides noting which Estates of the Realm supplicants belonged to, I also wanted to determine to what degree supplications stemmed from or were submitted on behalf of corporations formally represented in the Diet. In addition, I also examine how many of the remaining supplications came from Diet delegates, acting on behalf of themselves or for someone else.

For the corporative category, the benchmark is simple and generous: if the supplication stemmed from or was submitted on behalf of a corporation represented by one of the five

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<sup>118</sup> Årende 103, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

Estates in the Diet—the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, the peasantry, and the army command—it is categorized as a Diet corporate supplication.

Establishing whether a supplication was submitted by a Diet delegate is both simple and complicated. The process is fairly straightforward for the commoner Estates and the army command, as the screening lists identify people as Diet delegates in these cases. Identifying Diet delegates from the nobility proved harder work. The screening lists do not identify noble Diet delegates as such, only as noblemen, and sometimes not even that.<sup>119</sup> Therefore I consulted the genealogical tables of the nobility as Diet membership was guaranteed to the head of the family, the oldest living male family member on the male line. Although this was not a formally established procedure before 1762 it was more or less in practice for the entire Age of Liberty (see pp. 67).

However, because noblemen could give proxies to other members of the nobility, in their own immediate family or beyond, the tables do not provide total certainty (For the nobility and proxies, see pp. 67–68). In other words, although not head of his family, a nobleman could still become a Diet delegate on someone else's behalf. To be able to identify at least some noblemen from this group, I have consulted the Diet Resolutions from the three sampled Diets. These resolutions listed several of the major policy decisions made by the Estates during the Diet in question and, more importantly, were signed by all representatives present at the Diet's conclusion. This means that all noblemen still present at the Diet signed the resolution, including noblemen with proxies. However, even with these precautions the number of noble delegates must be treated as minimums, although my opinion is that most noble Diet delegates in the sample were identified through these sources.<sup>120</sup>

Diet corporate bodies

Diet delegates

None (supplications neither submitted by corporate bodies or Diet delegates nor on the behalf of corporate bodies)

### ***Secondary status***

As noted earlier, the estates in their broadest sense became a less and less satisfactory way to categorize early modern society from the sixteenth century onwards. Firstly, the nobility grew more and more diverse. It is not certain that the *noblesse de robe*, officers, and landowners always shared the same interests. Secondly, the link between occupation and rank grew looser as the percentage of non-noble officers or civil servants increased throughout the century. Thirdly, the

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<sup>119</sup> There are several possible reasons for this different procedure concerning noble Diet delegates. Firstly, the supplications were submitted to the chancery of Riddarhuset and thus, the secretaries who wrote the draft for the Screening Lists possibly did not view noblemen primarily as Diet delegates. The status of a nobleman, regardless of rank or wealth, probably trumped any sort of honour that might have been bestowed on the nobleman by being a member of the Diet. Secondly, the members of the Estate of the Nobility were not elected, they were born to their status. Or rather, they were born into a noble family and their status as noblemen also granted them the privilege to attend the Diet. In this way as well, their nobility possibly took precedence over their parliamentary status in the eyes of the secretaries.

<sup>120</sup> As the Estate of the Nobility was arguably at its largest at the beginning of the period in question, when the most important elections for committees and the Marshal of the Diet was selected, not all delegates of the nobility active at each of the three sampled Diets were present at the end of the respective conclusions. They therefore did not sign the Diet Resolution. See ch. 4. Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens riksdag*, 153.

commoners of rank and unrepresented lower groups were both very heterogeneous categories, and consequently this second variable is necessary to interpret the background of noblemen, commoners of rank, and the unrepresented lower groups.

This second categorization is referred to as secondary status. Secondary status was not necessarily less important, but as the variable's name signals, Estate membership was the official primary screen for eighteenth-century Swedish society. Under secondary status, I have categorized supplicants based on their occupation, as understood by their titles or the content of their supplications. For people involved in business while at the same time equipped with a post in the army or civil service, the latter takes precedence over the former. In regard to the previously mentioned difference between titles and offices, this is less of an issue when considering the supplicant's line of occupation; most people were given higher titles within their field of activity and a captain still belonged to the military, regardless of his real command.

Ecclesiastical servants (supplicants who belonged to the Estate of the Clergy)

Commercial agents (burghers and other self-employed agents engaged in commerce)

Rural land-proprietors (peasants and non-noble rural land-proprietors)

Military (military personnel except administrative personnel)

Civil servants (includes the higher offices occupied by civil servants. In theory this category would also include all lower offices on the local level such as *länsmän*, or county sheriffs, and the like, but none could be found in the samples)

Other (commoners of rank and unrepresented lower groups not belonging to any of the above categories, such as lawyers, doctors, artists, and the like, as well as non-noble staff of the royal household. Supplicants who had served the Crown in some unknown way are also included. Lastly the group includes administrative organs and supplicants labelled as complex)

Unknown

### ***State affiliation***

An extension of the secondary status variable, this categorization measures how large a proportion of the supplicants in one way or another the held public office, either previously or at the time of submitting their supplication. The number of state-affiliated supplicants found in the samples is most likely a minimum number, as supplicants with an unknown social background most likely included state-affiliated supplicants, but have all been categorized as not state affiliated.

State affiliated (features all supplicants who can be confirmed as working for the state when they submitted their supplication or that had previously worked for the state)

Not state affiliated (the rest of the supplicants)

### ***Employment status***

It is also of interest to know what type of state affiliation the supplicants had. There are some uncertainties involved, especially as regards the number of unemployed supplicants, as the information provided by the screening lists is not complete. The genealogical tables of the nobility have shown that the screening lists sometimes arbitrarily record employment status. To



some extent this issue is likely connected to the request. A supplicant who asked for welfare had to highlight his or her lack of means, whether for lack of employment or an inability to work. Likewise a request for a promotion or better wages directly reveals the employment status of the supplicant. However, when a supplicant asked for reimbursement of unpaid salary, the supplicant's employment status was less relevant, at least for the secretary writing the summary. Widows also present a classification problem. Women are sometimes referred to as widows or relatives of a particular man, sometimes only by their name, or, in some cases, their employment. Whether or not the latter group of women were widows is unclear.<sup>121</sup> Thus, the number of widows is most likely the minimum and should be treated as such.

Employed (supplicants were in state employ at the time)

Unemployed/expectant (the supplicant had been employed, but was at the time of the supplication. People on expectancy salary are also categorized as unemployed. See pp. 180–181 for more information on expectancy salaries)

Retired

Deceased father or brother (the supplicant's brother or father had been in Crown employ)

Widowed (the supplicant's late husband had been in Crown employ)

### ***Status according to rank***

Many of the positions in Swedish government had an assigned rank, including all commands in the Swedish army and the important central and regional positions. Sweden was not alone: officially sanctioned tables of rank existed in Prussia, Russia, and Denmark-Norway, for example.<sup>122</sup> These ranks can perhaps be explained by contemporaneous society's obsession with order and precedence, and came to dovetail with the nobility's struggle to gain and maintain their monopoly on all the important posts available in the state administration. At the same time, the calls for a table of ranks had originally come from within the nobility, where a majority wanted to circumvent rank that stemmed from one's lineage in favour of rank according to one's position and competence. Lastly, the Sweden's leaders saw an opportunity to challenge social hierarchies that were beyond their reach and replace them with hierarchies aligned with the state's intentions.<sup>123</sup>

It was an intrinsic part of this system to rank all offices and commands according to their status. From its inception in 1672 the system was straightforward, with each post assigned a number between 1 and 40. For example, members of the Council of the Realm and the presidents of the central government boards were assigned the rank of 1, county governors 7, and so forth. Wives took the same rank as their husbands.<sup>124</sup> The most important posts around which the scale was built were the military commands, whose hierarchy demarcated the important line between posts that had to be filled by noblemen and those which could be

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<sup>121</sup> Åsa Karlsson-Sjögren has encountered the same problem in her study of eighteenth-century urban electoral registers, and remarks that women referred to by just their surname most likely included both widows and not; Åsa Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten*, 41; also see, for example, Taussi Sjöberg, *Rätten och kvinnorna*, 104; Hinnemo, *Inför högsta instans*, 38.

<sup>122</sup> Artéus, *Krigsmaket och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, 122–126; Norrby, *Ordnade eliter*, 76–82.

<sup>123</sup> Englund, *Det hotade huset*, 153–166; Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk*, 125–127.

<sup>124</sup> Other rules applied for other female relatives but as there are just a few cases involving female family members who were not wives or widows, I have decided to apply this rule to all women.

assigned to a noble, although not necessarily. Colonels could be found at rank 11, and everything from 12 and below was not necessarily a noble rank.<sup>125</sup>

The ranking system grew into something more than a mere yardstick. It seems to have been incorporated into the social system of the time in its own right. One proof of the table of rank's social worth can be found in the constant tweaks to the ranking system. Not only did new positions appear and old ones disappear, but different posts were calibrated up and down the table, sometimes even to create desirable societal effects. *Lantmätare* (land surveyors) were added to the scale in the 1740s in order to increase the profession's attractiveness.<sup>126</sup> Another proof of the ranking system's social influence was a 1723 decree, which stated that when different branches of the army and navy shared quarters (in fortresses for example) everyone had 24 hours to get to know one another's rank. After that, no one could blame ignorance when disputes arose over rank.<sup>127</sup>

Thus, just as membership of a parliamentary Estate or of a certain profession granted position, a certain rank was also a measure of a person's entitlement. Furthermore, rank was oblivious to whether the title corresponded to an actual post, as was the case when someone had a captain's title but served in the army as a lieutenant.

In accordance with the different categories used by Sten Carlsson and Gunnar Artéus, I have divided the military officers and civil servants into four groups. Following their method, promotion to major from captain seems to have been the important step, despite the abovementioned demarcation of the colonelcy. Thus, the categories differentiate between company and regimental officers, not the rank of colonel and those below it.<sup>128</sup> In cases where there were several supplicants of different ranks (a major and a captain, say), the supplicant has been categorized according to the highest rank.

Group 1 (high commanders in the military and their civilian equivalents)

Group 2 (regimental officers and their civilian equivalents)

Group 3 (company officers and corresponding civilian posts)

Group 4 (ranks 39–40, NCOs, their civilian equivalents, and non-ranked offices  
Army privates)

Other (supplicants categorized as complex—such as regiments for example—or unknown)

### ***Resources requested in the supplications***

I have categorized the supplications by the type of resource requested. The Estates controlled the state's resources and supplicants tried to gain access to them. These resources were contextual. For instance, a poor woman who sought a pension, an artillery captain who sought higher wages, and a mill owner who looked for support all sought different resources even though they all requested money. They acted in different contexts and with different privileges,

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<sup>125</sup> Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner*, 50; Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 88–93.

<sup>126</sup> Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 108–112; Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner*, 55–58; Artéus, *Krigsmakt och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, 142–148.

<sup>127</sup> To make matters worse, a captaincy or its equivalent in different branches, sometimes even different regiments, of the armed forces had different positions in the ranking list. A captain's post in the artillery, for example, was ranked higher than a captaincy in the regular infantry. Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 110.

<sup>128</sup> Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner*, 39–40, 50–82; Artéus, *Krigsmakt och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, 236.

and consequently this set of categories will further highlight which circumstances enabled and which excluded. Each resource category in turn has a set of subcategories.

### ***Commerce***

This comprises supplications relating to terms of business and enterprise specifically, while supplications about the taxation of trade or industry are categorized as fiscal with one exception: requests concerning custom duties when actualized for trade or production purposes. One example is the ‘Cobbler guilds of the entire realm’ which turned to the Estates for higher duties on competing merchandise and lower duties on imported seal- and calfskin necessary for their own wares.<sup>129</sup> In this case and others like it, duties were primarily a commercial tool.

Privilege and terms (requests for the granting of new privileges or trade terms or the changing of existing ones)

Protection (supplications seeking the impairment or abolition of competitor’s privileges and terms or help against those encroaching on the suppliant’s own privileges)

Support (requests for some type of commercial support)

Other

Commercial supplications are also subcategorized according to the economic sector of the business in question.

Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries

Commodities and hospitality (supplications about the production and trade of commodities as well as the sale of food, drink, and lodging)

Mining, metal, and wood production

Trade and transport

Other

### ***Employment***

Supplications concerning the state’s role as an employer.

Appointment (requests for an appointment or a promotion as well as requests to retire)

Benefits (supplications on the topic of salaries and other employment conditions)

Prejudice (appeals against prejudicial treatment. See pp. 97–100)

Other

### ***Fiscal***

Requests concerning the state’s fiscal structures and resources.

Claims (supplications about claims people had on the state)

Property (supplications concerning Crown property, including supplications concerning royal demesne. These supplications could also have been put in the commerce category, but as the basis for the supplication was a piece of public property, they belong here)

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<sup>129</sup> ‘Antoni Juli på skomakare Embeternes vägnar I hela Riket’, Ärende 1904, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

Taxes (supplications about taxes and rates with two exceptions: *friar*, or free or exempt years, and certain custom duties; see the commercial and welfare categories for further explanations)

Other

### ***Judicial***

Requests from people seeking access the Estates' help in different court cases or concerning the Estates' administration over the crown's judicial system.

Administrative (supplications to the judicial branch's administration)

Civil cases (requests about the settlement of disputes between private individuals, not concerning the state's resources)

Wrongdoing

Mercy (supplications from people seeking mitigation of their sentences)

Other

### ***Welfare***

Supplications concerning the state's part in its subjects' welfare. The category includes grandproposals concerning the general welfare of society, such as the upbringing of young, poor relief, and religious matters.

Expectancy list (requests by superfluous officers and civil servants to receive expectancy salary until a position becomes available. For more, see pp. 180–181)

Maintenance and construction (requests for the maintenance or construction of public buildings and amenities, for example rebuilding a burnt down town house or church)

Pension and support (supplications concerning pensions and other types of state support for individuals who claimed to not be able to support themselves. Includes free years—although the granting of a free year entailed a complete or partial relief from taxes, such a request was considered a form of social support)

Other

### ***Other***

Includes questions of status, rewards, printing books, disputes arising from the election of Diet delegates, and unclear requests. There are no subcategories.

### ***The supplications' scope***

Besides examining the supplication's requests I also examined their intended scope. This refers to the direct impact the supplication would have if approved without alterations. If the supplication aimed to better the military rank of one person it had a direct impact of one. If the request directly concerned an entire district, it had the scope of a district. This method of course entails simplifications. For example, a request from a town to hold a market once a year only directly affected that town's privileges; indirectly, however, if granted it would affect several other towns and the countryside round about. Another example would be the appointment of a colonel, which impacted the new incumbent as well as the applicants who did not get the appointment, and quite possibly the entire regiment's personnel, their spouses, children,

dependent relatives, and so on. I recognize that there are a multitude of both feasible and remote consequences of such decisions, but that does not mean they all require to be measured. I measure one of these effects, the direct effect.

It should furthermore be remembered that direct personal impact did not necessarily mean that the supplication had been written by one or two individuals. A good example is the supplication submitted in 1746–47 by the *fiscal* (public prosecutor) Carl Lagerborg at Åbo Hovrätt (Åbo Court of appeal) on behalf of himself and other *rusthållare* (farmers who paid for the cavalry's maintenance) for *livdragoneregementet* (the Royal Dragoon regiment) in Finland. They complained about the regiment's colonel, who forced the dragoons to march 40 or 50 kilometres to labour for him and who flogged anyone who disobeyed his commands. This, Lagerborg lamented, did the regiment a great disservice because few civilians were prepared to join the regiment when vacancies occurred. He asked the Estates to rectify this problem.<sup>130</sup> I have categorized the direct impact of this supplication as personal, because its aim was to do something about one person, the colonel. But as can be seen in the supplication, an unknown number of supplicants stood behind the complaint and an unknown number of people stood to gain by a change.

For the categorization of the supplications' direct impact, there are two sets of categories, the latter being a simplification of the former which is used for comparisons between different groups of supplicants and resources.

### ***Direct impact, detailed***

Personal (1–2 people)

Group, 3–10 (3–10 people)

Group, 10+ (more than 10 people)

Group, unknown size (a group of an unknown size, but definitely containing more than two people)

Corporate (minor corporate bodies such as guilds, associations, or regiments)

Local (a geographical area comprising one or several villages or parishes, a rural district, a town, or a mining district)

Regional (one or more rural districts, towns, or mining districts, one or several counties or dioceses or a half of the realm, meaning Sweden or Finland)

Realm (both Sweden proper and Finland, not necessarily the German provinces)

Unknown

### ***Direct impact, simplified***

Personal (1–2 people)

Group and corporate (groups of varying sizes, including unknowns and minor corporate bodies such as guilds, associations, or regiments)

Local and regional (varying between a geographical area the size of one or several villages or parishes, a rural district, a town, or a mining district on the one hand, to one or more

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<sup>130</sup> Årende 39, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

rural districts, towns, or mining districts, one or several counties or dioceses or a half of the realm, meaning Sweden or Finland)

Realm (both Sweden proper and Finland, not necessarily the German provinces)

Unknown

However tempting it is to see these categories as referring to exclusive classes of increasing size, there are overlaps. Several parishes might refer to a wider or more populous area than two rural districts. A cluster of districts might be a wider or more populous area than a diocese. Regiments are another example. Categorized as corporate bodies, they certainly comprised more people than any village, and regiments were spread out over larger areas than even several rural districts. The regimental impact would certainly be larger than many direct impacts labelled local. Thus, these categories reflect a rough, but not conclusively increasing scale that conceptualizes people's ambitions when submitting supplications to the Diet.

### ***Acceptance rates***

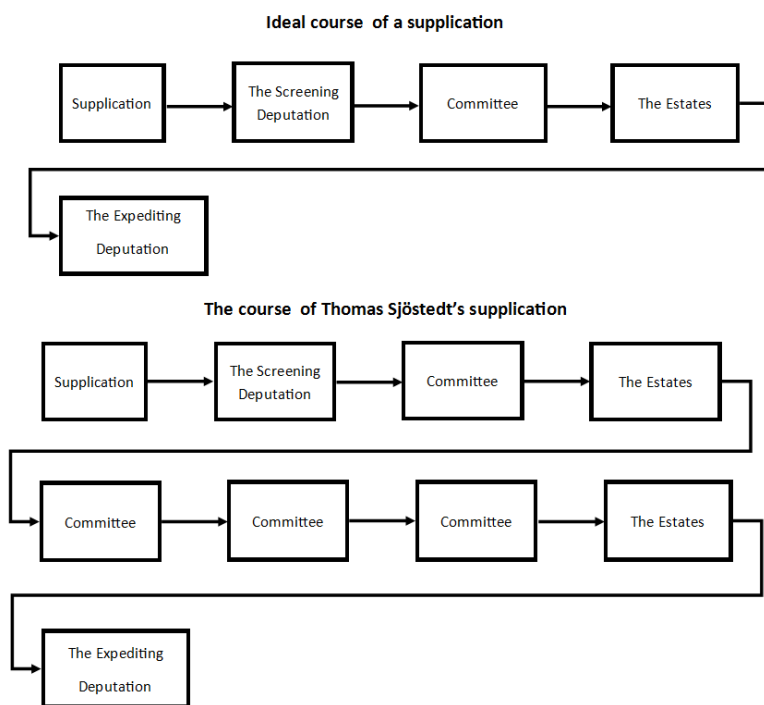
In this study the success of supplications is understood as the proportion of supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation that were accepted and referred for further examination. It does not refer to the final verdict for two reasons. Most importantly, the aim of my study is to determine which groups in society found it possible to interact with their political leaders. Measuring a negative or positive final verdict is not the best way to accomplish this aim, because even suits that met with a negative final verdict had been examined by the Estates. Without knowing the individual merits of each case, the Screening Deputation brought supplications before the Diet, and by doing so, they consequently acknowledged them as matters of interest. Examining the Screening Deputation's responses more accurately highlights what type of errands the Estates involved themselves in. Accepted errands had political rights at this level, those denied did not. A promise to examine a grievance in itself held a legitimizing responsibility, which was an aspect that formed part of the institution of supplications, as we will see in the following chapter. The Screening Deputation granted access to this examination when they accepted a supplication, and therefore the committee's acceptance rate is a feasible way to measure supplicants' success.

The second reason can be visualized by comparing the ideal course a supplication would take with the meandering path a supplication could take through the Diet (Fig. 2.5). Gauging the final outcome for all supplications heard by the Diet would be a time-consuming task because of the Diet's unwieldy character—further elaborated on in Chapter 4—but also because of the idiosyncrasies of the examination and voting procedure. When a supplication was accepted by the Screening Deputation, it passed through one or several other committees.<sup>131</sup> There it stayed for a certain time, depending on whether the committee had a lot of other business, if its members agreed or not, or if they had to wait for documents or testimonies in order to make a decision. In short, it was uncertain whether the supplication would ever leave the committee.<sup>132</sup> Those that did reach the Estates' chambers, where it would first lie tabled for a few days and

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<sup>131</sup> Sometimes the supplications went straight to the Estates' chambers but I have simplified the example for clarity's sake.

<sup>132</sup> See, for example, Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 205–206.



**FIGURE 2.5** The ideal course taken by a supplication and the actual course of Thomas Sjöstedt's supplication to the 1765–66 Diet.  
*Sources:* Thomas Sjöstedt's supplication in Palme, *Schematiska framställningar*, 229–230.

then be read aloud at least twice, and more than that for important issues.<sup>133</sup> Only then could the supplication finally be put to the vote, but the amount of business often mushroomed towards the end of each Diet. Moreover, all Estates had to vote in order for a resolution to pass, meaning that even if three Estates concurred the fourth Estate could purposely or inadvertently nullify all the effort by not voting.<sup>134</sup>

It could also be the case that the Estates disagreed, whereupon the supplication returned to the committees for a second or third round of consideration. Such a scenario is illustrated by Thomas Sjöstedt's prejudice appeal: he submitted his grievance to the 1765–66 Diet and it had to clear five committees and two votes before it was finally approved.

Moreover, even if the Estates agreed, it was not certain their verdicts would match as they could make different provisions—provisions they did not necessarily communicate to one another. It was then the job of Expeditionsdeputationen (the Expediting Deputation) to match the verdicts into a coherent whole, which makes it harder for me to categorize what counts as successful verdict from the supplicant's point of view.<sup>135</sup> In this committee, an Estate that had failed to block the other three's decision in the Estate chambers could furthermore have another go and have the Expediting Deputation grind to a halt by blocking the decision before its

<sup>133</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 195.

<sup>134</sup> See, for example, Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 179–180.

<sup>135</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 143–151.

dispatch.<sup>136</sup> On at least one occasion, burgher and peasant Diet delegates stayed behind after the Diet disbanded in order to influence the Expediting Deputation's work.<sup>137</sup> In other words, trying to establish the final outcome of each suit would not only be less than optimal for my aims, it could also be a tortuous and, in the end, fruitless venture.

Of course, measuring the final outcome could also yield results. If a certain type of supplication always received a negative verdict upon examination and this recurrence became publicly known, supplicants in all likelihood would have stopped submitting supplications on this matter and taken their grievances elsewhere. To the extent that there are such instances, they lie beyond the focus of this study and remains an issue for future research.

Accepted

Reservation (when supplicants successfully reserved the right to submit a supplication later, but never took up the opportunity <sup>138</sup>)

Rejected

No response or retaken (supplications that received no response, either because the Screening Deputation never made a decision or because the supplicant withdrew the supplication)

### On figures and tables

The results, when applying these categories to the three samples, are presented in the shape of figures or tables. The reader will be able to locate all these results at the back of the dissertation in the appendices. I have also included figures and tables of the most relevant information from the appendices in the relevant chapters.

Most figures are based on the sample's absolute numbers. Only in certain instances have I chosen to display percentages. The reason for this choice is the large difference between the first sample on the one hand, and the second and third samples on the other. Using percentages would hide this difference and this study's findings are better relayed to the reader by displaying it.

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<sup>136</sup> These conflicts were seemingly more common towards the end of the period, but the issue would probably require more attention; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 442–445; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 231f.

<sup>137</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 283–284.

<sup>138</sup> Explained further in ch. 5 and 6.



### 3 Supplications to the Crown

According to my chosen definition, ideas, norms, and templates are essential parts of any institution. These elements are then embodied in an organization and the interaction between agents within it. It is therefore of interest to examine what precedents the Estates had, both in terms of ideology and the organizational realization of that ideology, both in Sweden and elsewhere. That is the topic of this chapter, and as such it is mostly a survey of the literature.

The chapter comprises two sections. First I examine the development of the Swedish supplications as an institution from the Middle Ages to the early nineteenth century, focusing on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and on supplications submitted to kings. The second section is more international in outlook. Neither of the sections is an exhaustive account, but nonetheless I am able to identify some tendencies, both in ideology and organization. Both sections cover three aspects in turn—judicial, administrative, and patriarchal—which together can be used to understand the development and organization of the institution that was Swedish supplications.

#### Swedish supplications

Frohnert views Swedish supplications as connected with early modern society's foundations on particular privileges. Supplications protected individuals' or corporations' immunities—defined as 'that which the individual was allowed to decide over' by the Crown—from infringement of other people or the authorities.<sup>139</sup> This aspect is referred to as the judicial aspect.

Charlotta Ekman, on the other hand, highlights how supplications were one of a number of standard administrative procedures. Legislation in the 1730s made supplications a part of debt collection and several forms of forestry business, so that, for example, the county governor had to be consulted in any matter concerning oak trees because the Crown owned all oaks.<sup>140</sup> This is referred to as the administrative administrative.

Lastly, Gustafsson, Andreas Olsson, Kim Olsen, and Ann Grönhammar all emphasize the idea of a reciprocal contract, requiring social responsibility from the monarch in exchange for the subject's political submission.<sup>141</sup> Thus, the possibility to submit supplications to the monarch was not necessarily part of an established law or an administrative regulation, but built on custom and custom law sprung from the idea of the merciful and benevolent monarch. This is thus referred to as the patriarchal aspect.

These aspects should be seen as ideal types and not mutually exclusive. The judicial and patriarchal aspects are very much connected for example. However, when viewed as separate, they reveal different traits of the institution and the conditions for its development.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 251.

<sup>140</sup> Ekman, 'Suppliker till landshövdingen', 24–33.

<sup>141</sup> Grönhammar, 'Folkets böner till kungen', 117; Gustafsson, 'Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt', 88–89; Olsson, 'Inte bara undersåte utan också borgare', 61–65; Olsen, 'Det moraliska priset för legitimitet', 32–37.

<sup>142</sup> Neuhaus has proposed we distinguish between *Gnadesupplicationen* and *Justizsupplikationen*, supplications of mercy and justice respectively, a categorization that, however, only partially corresponds to the different aspects used here. Neuhaus, 'Supplikationen als landesgeschichtliche Quellen', i, 129–130, 138.

## *Judicial aspects*

Upholding the law was considered a *regalrättighet* or *regalia*, a regal right, of the kings and queens of early modern Europe. That is, it was part of a collection of rights generally viewed as belonging to the office of the king. These were the right to ‘make war and peace; form alliances and appoint emissaries ... levy taxes; issue legislation; appoint posts of the Crown; audit the execution of justice; and coin money’.<sup>143</sup>

The Swedish king developed into a guardian of the law during the Middle Ages. He was supposed to make sure that no one’s judicial rights faced infringement, ratified in Magnus Eriksson’s Landslag (Country Law), which was issued in the late fourteenth century. For example, it was the king’s duty to make sure no one was convicted for a crime he or she had not committed. Perhaps consequently, the king also became the supreme judge in his realm. The possibility to appeal verdicts to the king was therefore specified in the various regional law codes, including Upplandslagen, ratified in 1296, and in Hälsingelagen, put in writing in the 1320s or 1330s.<sup>144</sup>

By the time of the early seventeenth century, supreme royal justice was doled out by the king and his *riksråd* (the Council of the Realm) in seemingly arbitrary compositions. The Swedish king since the Middle Ages had held courts during his travels around the realm, more or less irregularly, with his Council or some of his councillors—so-called *räfsteting* and *rättarting*. What bound the different constellations together was that they all composed *konungens nämnd* or *konungsnämnd* (the King’s Bench). As the Swedish state’s scope expanded and the duties of its kings multiplied, the direct involvement of the king presented problems. According to Sture Petré, the judicial hierarchy of lower and higher courts had all but collapsed by the reign of Karl IX (1599–1611).<sup>145</sup>

In 1614, Svea Hovrätt (the Svea Court of Appeal) was established. It was a *kungligt kollegium*, a royal board, and councillors from the Council of the Realm sat on its bench. With it, the *konungsnämnd* had found its formal, stable form in the Swedish judicial system. However, it became clear even before the establishment of the court that Gustaf II Adolf (1611–1632) wanted to remain the highest court of appeal, and new appellate regulations were issued in 1615, only one year after the establishment of Svea Court of Appeal, that duly confirmed his wish. These regulations granted subjects *beneficium revisionis*, meaning that they could submit a supplication to the king, appealing the verdict in a court of law. Gustaf II Adolf viewed the *beneficium revisionis* as an extraordinary legal instrument and the form of the supplication was chosen to signal this, as well as to force the appellant to show the court due respect and temper his or her language. Moreover, the appellant had to pay a large sum of money to procure the right to appeal. Åbo hovrätt (the Åbo Court of Appeal), Dorpat hovrätt (the Dorpat Court of Appeal), and Göta hovrätt (the Göta Court of Appeal) were inaugurated in 1623, 1630, and 1634 to cater for Finland, the Baltic provinces, and southern Sweden respectively.<sup>146</sup> Thus, a judicial

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<sup>143</sup> Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, 22–23.

<sup>144</sup> Sjöberg, *Det kommunala besvärsinstitutet*, 51; Nygård, ‘Den hogste domsmakt i dei nordiske land’, 65; Ljungqvist, *Kungamakten och lagen*, 133–136.

<sup>145</sup> Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 4, 8–9, 13; Charpentier Ljungqvist, *Kungamakten och lagen*, 135.

<sup>146</sup> Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 15, 22–25; Frohnert, ‘Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden’, 210; Nygård, ‘Den hogste domsmakt i dei nordiske land’, 67.

hierarchy was instituted with rural and town courts at the bottom, courts of appeal in the middle, and Kungl. Maj:t at the top.

Besides the possibility for subjects to defend their rights and immunities, cynicism and jurisprudence lay behind this development. Gustaf II Adolf was set on judicial primacy in order to protect his friends and allies. Moreover, the role of the king as the auditor of his servants was important. Johan Skytte (1577–1645)—Gustaf II Adolf's teacher in the art of ruling or what we would refer to as political science—was a firm believer in the monarch's right to control his servants through audit.<sup>147</sup> Gustaf II Adolf's *rikskansler* (Chancellor of the Realm) Axel Oxenstierna (1583–1654) thought that failure to grant subjects access to the monarch was to violate their legal rights, and he held up the Holy Roman Empire as a warning example, where princes neglected their judicial duties for warfare and corrupted the judicial system by not keeping a watchful eye on it. According to Oxenstierna, a prince had to busy himself on his subjects' behalf in order to test the lower instances to which judicial authority had been delegated.<sup>148</sup> Thus, protection of friends and allies as well as the royal audit motivated the continued involvement of the king in judicial practice.

Although Gustaf II Adolf regarded *beneficium revisionis* as an extraordinary legal instrument, it seems his Swedish subjects thought the opposite.<sup>149</sup> Theirs was the opinion that prevailed, as ordinances in the 1660s and 1670s established Justitierevisionen (the Judicial Audit), the judicial oversight subcommittee of Kungl. Maj:t that presided over appeals, and Nedre justitierevisionen (the Lower Judicial Audit), the secretariat whose task it was to examine and prepare the court cases for Kungl. Maj:t. The Judicial Audit kept this form until 1789.<sup>150</sup> Thus, the king's and Council of the Realm's long-standing involvement in court cases, which stretched back to the Middle Ages, through supplications became formalized.

The reign of Karl XII (1697–1718) and then the Age of Liberty saw Swedish subjects presented with an additional form of legal protection. Karl XII created the office of ombudsman, who among other duties had the specific duty of supervising the Crown's servants in order to make sure they carried out their duties and adhered to the law. In the Age of Liberty, the name of this office was changed to become Justitiekanslern (the Chancellor of Justice), who was open to supplications regarding wrongdoing, and periodically travelled the country in order to scrutinize the local and regional administration.<sup>151</sup>

Thus, the judicial aspect consisted of the king's formal position as the legal guardian and highest court of appeal at the top of the judicial pyramid. However, the apparent formalization process is even clearer if one looks at the administrative aspect of the supplications channel.

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<sup>147</sup> Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 9–11.

<sup>148</sup> Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 22–24.

<sup>149</sup> Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 25.

<sup>150</sup> Carlsson, *Den Svenska Centralförvaltningen 1521–1809*, 77–80; Petré, *Kungl. Maj:ts och rikets Svea Hovrätt*, 25–26; Michael F. Metcalf, 'Det politiska spelet kring högsta domstolens tillkomst', 6; Nygård, 'Den Högste Doms makt I Dei Nordiske Land', 67–68.

<sup>151</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 207; Simon Carpels, 'Royal Power and Bureaucracy'; For information on offices that had previously held similar duties to those of the Ombudsman and the Justice Chancellor, such as the riksdrots, General-Richz-Schultz and General-Inspector öfuer Ordningarne, see Lundberg, 'Den underbare mannen', 3–5.

### *Administrative aspects*

According to Mats Hallenberg, the Swedish early modern state experienced three intense phases of growth. The first occurred in the first half of the sixteenth century under Gustaf I (1521–1560), the second in Gustaf II Adolf's reign, and the last under Karl XI (1660–1697).<sup>152</sup> These periods, together with alterations in the 1710s, entailed changes in the presentation of grievances to the Crown and serve to highlight the administrative aspect of the supplication channel.

When Gustaf I seized power in Sweden in 1521, he moved quickly to establish the first permanent secular administration in Swedish history. As Björn Asker has noted, it seems improbable to a modern eye that Gustaf I's personal rule—which consisted of him; a chancery for incoming and outgoing correspondence; a government board for public lands and funds; and a group of bailiffs—would be the foundation for the present Swedish administration. Nonetheless that is the case, and one of the newly created Chancery's responsibilities was to receive supplications. Supplication registers exist from the mid sixteenth century, consisting of brief summaries of the supplication's content and the answer they received.<sup>153</sup>

The Swedish state's next growth spurt started when Gustaf II Adolf ascended the throne. Between 1614 and 1635 the Swedish administration expanded to new levels. Besides the aforementioned courts of appeal, the chancery was made into a full government board and was made responsible for foreign affairs, and boards for the army and navy were created. Just as with the Svea Court of Appeal, members of the Council of the Realm sat on each newly created board, and indeed led them. Furthermore, the country was divided into *län* (counties) administered by county governors who acted as deputy regional representatives of the king.<sup>154</sup>

With the establishment of these new administrative organs, supplications were further ingrained into the state's organization. The instructions for the administrative boards and county governors spelled out that they were to receive supplications. The county governors were instructed to spend as much time as possible in their towns of residency and to keep a room in their chancery in which to receive supplicants. The administrative boards were to have designated days of the week when they received supplications or even designated times. The instructions issued by Kanslikollegiet (the Chancery Board) stipulated that secretaries should not let supplicants bother them and should always refer them to afternoon hours.<sup>155</sup>

In 1680, the constitutional tide turned in favour of absolutism, and Karl XI became absolutist ruler of the country. Through a massive revocation of grants of royal land, he broke the old landed nobility's hold on politics, leaving power concentrated in the king's bureaucracy.<sup>156</sup> He also restructured the central administration: the Council of the Realm was renamed the Royal Council and its influence was severely weakened.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Hallenberg, 'The state as enterprise', 54–55.

<sup>153</sup> Bergh, *Kungliga kansliets i riksarkivet förvarade diarier*, 223.

<sup>154</sup> Carlsson, *Den svenska centralförvaltningen 1521-1809*, 1–25; Jonsson, *De norrländska landshövdingarna*, 53–60.

<sup>155</sup> Carlsson, *Den svenska centralförvaltningen 1521-1809*, 11; Erlandsson, *Skånska generalguvernementet 1658-1693*, 196; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 252; Jonsson, *De norrländska landshövdingarna*, 59, 66, 70.

<sup>156</sup> Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid*, 251–266; Ågren, 'Rise and decline of an aristocracy'.

<sup>157</sup> Only the chancellor of the realm, renamed into chancery president, had a seat on a board as well as in the Council. Carlsson, *Den svenska centralförvaltningen 1521-1809*, 81–87.

Karl XI also wanted to cut the number of supplications. The so-called *sollicitantsplakatet* (the Petitioner's Edict) of 1680 decreed that all grievances that could be addressed elsewhere could not be submitted to the king; and the edict was read aloud from church pulpits twice a year—May and December—even in the late Age of Liberty. Kungl. Maj:t was supposed to only receive either appeals against the courts of appeal and government boards, or matters that required royal involvement, nothing else.<sup>158</sup> To a certain extent, the Petitioners' Edict merely ratified the intended structure of the supplication channel. At least one ordinance similar to the Petitioners' Edict had been issued in the fifteenth century—Kungl. Maj:t had long been overworked.<sup>159</sup> Nonetheless, in the late seventeenth century, Kungl. Maj:t took a stand against supplicants who abused the system, in an effort to reduce the sheer number of supplications received.

The next measure came in 1686 when Kungl. Maj:t re-introduced *charta sigillata* (stamp duty), which all supplicants, among many others, had to pay. With the exception of paupers and peasants, who were mostly exempt from fees or at least had discounts, the king's subjects now had to pay to use the supplication channel. From 1695 scribes who aided supplicants had to countersign the supplication and accept liability.<sup>160</sup> With these regulations, supplicants faced a harsher reality than earlier in the century.

These stipulations, however, by no means stopped the flow supplications to Kungl. Maj:t. During Karl XII's short regency, the Royal Council spent no less than two days a week going through supplications and other lesser matters.<sup>161</sup> During his almost constant absence on the battlefields of the Great Northern War (1700–1721), Karl XII's councillors handled requests in his name. For instance, on 10 January 1705 they granted the supplicant Ernest Christian Pinto, a teacher of oriental languages stricken with epilepsy, all the collections taken up in the capital's churches.<sup>162</sup>

The last years of Karl XII's reign and the Age of Liberty brought further changes to the organization of Kungl. Maj:t. Kungl. Maj:t already had one specialized division—the Judicial Audit—and now it was further divided into sections for foreign affairs, military business, and government administration. Supplications were dispersed between the different sections.<sup>163</sup>

Thus, the administrative aspect of the supplication channel consisted of its formalization to become part of the new state's administration's *modus operandi*, matched by administrative measures and regulations designed to control and stem the flow of supplications. As already noted, the Estates established themselves as another level in the supplication channel during the Age of Liberty. Their inclusion meant that the supplication channel now ran from the lowest rungs of the court system, with a variety of special courts, some of which *de facto* were above the local level and directly under the courts of appeal, and via instances such as *domkapitel* (cathedral chapters) right to the top. Neither does this include extraordinary commissions (see

<sup>158</sup> *Kongl. Maj:ts Nädiga Förordning, Hwar efter alla Sollicitanter sigh hafwa at rättta, förr än dbe någon ansökning boos Kongl. May:tt göra* (Stockholm, 30 Aug. 1680), *ÅT*; Reuterswärd, *Ett massmedium för folket*, 128, 133, 138.

<sup>159</sup> Hillborn, 'Och fogar iagh på dhett ödmiukeligaste', 19; Cederholm, *De värjde sin rätt*, 303.

<sup>160</sup> *Kongl. May:tz Stadga och Förordning, Angående Charta Sigillata, Eller Stämplat Papper* (Stockholm, 23 Dec. 1686), *ÅT*, §§ 4 & 24; Vällstrand, 'Memorialets makt' 204–205.

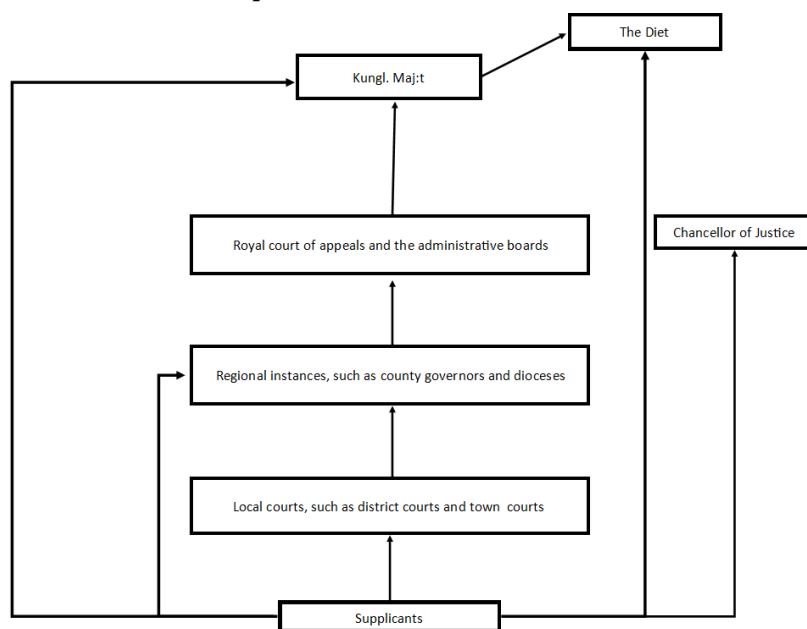
<sup>161</sup> Carlsson, *Den svenska centralförvaltningen 1521-1809*, 101.

<sup>162</sup> 10 Jan. 1705, p 360–363, vol. 636, Senatens registratur, Riksregistraturet, RA.

<sup>163</sup> Carlsson, *Den svenska centralförvaltningen 1521-1809*, 109–111.

p. 3) as they were not permanent state organs, while noblemen possessed the right to have cases tried immediately in the courts of appeal.

### *Judicial and administrative aspects*



**FIGURE 3.1** The different courses available for supplicants during the Age of Liberty, including standard appeals through the courts.

Thus, in my opinion, Age of Liberty supplicants had unmatched opportunities to petition their rulers or representatives (Fig. 3.1). Perhaps we can consider this period *peak supplik* (peak supplication). That is not to say the supplication channel reached its most socially encompassing state, but the expansion of supplications as an instrument or channel for interaction reached its apogee during the Age of Liberty. As an institution, the supplication channel stood strong as a practice incorporated into the Swedish early modern state's judicial and administrative procedures. How this channel's hierarchy worked, and how the Diet was integrated into it, are usefully illustrated by the case of the butcher Erik Hultin, who asked for the Estates' help at the 1771–72 Diet.

### *Erik Hultin, or, the supplication channel in action*

Erik Hultin submitted a supplication to the 1771–72 Diet in order to extract himself from a precarious situation. A butcher by trade, Hultin lived in Strängnäs, a town about 60 kilometres west of Stockholm.<sup>164</sup> He had reported vice-district judge Carl Gustaf Billberg to the district court in Åker for breaking the sumptuary laws, but his actions backfired on him when on 28 January 1769 Hultin himself was fined for wrongfully accusing a servant of the Crown. The butcher immediately went to the Svea Court of Appeal for a stay of proceedings, an action

<sup>164</sup> This example was previously published in Liliequist and Almbjör, 'Early Modern Court Records and Petitions'; the description the events is based on Justitie Deputationens betänkande i fallet rörande Slaktaren i Strängnäs Erik Hultin riksdagen 1771–72, R1998, BdA, RA; Supplik 333, R3638, UdH, FU, RA.

supposed to buy an appellant time to submit documents from the district court as grounds for the appeal. The district court stalled, however, and before Hultin could plead his case the appeal's court rejected his appeal on 15 March. Things quickly turned even sourer for the butcher: whilst Hultin beseeched the county governor to help him procure the documents necessary for an appeal to Kungl. Maj:t, the very same county governor's office for some reason ordered a bailiff to collect the fines Hultin had incurred, although that lay within Strängnäs's town jurisdiction.

In late July 1769, the bailiff and his assistants entered the town, and although the butcher was busy in the fields outside Strängnäs, the bailiff confiscated some of Hultin's property in his absence and publicly announced an auction on Sunday 4 August. On that day, the bailiff returned with an even bigger following, including Billberg. When the party arrived at Hultin's house, he had barricaded himself inside. Several other burghers stood outside and tried in vain to show the bailiff a receipt that confirmed Hultin had already paid his fines to the magistrates. The bailiff ignored them, and his companions went about their business with axes, smashing windows and breaking down the door in an attempt to get inside. Hultin exited the house, snatching up an axe as he did so, and proceed to assault and insult the bailiff and his companions, who retreated.

Such an assault on servants of the Crown constituted a serious offence. Hultin was sentenced by an extraordinary session of the town court to a hefty fine and to lose his honour. If he could not pay his fine, he faced 28 days in prison without food, a penalty often associated with death. He turned to Svea Court of Appeal, but despite a letter signed by 20 burghers that testified to his honest character Hultin did not succeed. An unsuccessful appeal to Kungl. Maj:t followed. Thus, when the Diet opened in 1771, Hultin was there in order to appeal his verdict. His supplication was accepted, and was duly referred for investigation. Their investigation uncovered several errors, including ones made by an assistant secretary in the county governor's office. The investigating committee recommended that the Estates free Hultin on almost all charges, which they did. He still had to compensate the bailiff and the sheriff for their pain and suffering.

This case is quite a curious one. Was the conflict caused by sheer ignorance or by an underlying disagreement between the town's burghers on the one hand and the local authorities who governed the surrounding countryside on the other? Did this a personal vendetta trigger deeper structural antagonisms? Although Hultin had wronged the Crown's servants, he had also been under severe pressure and faced blatant insult, and while Kungl. Maj:t was unmoved, these circumstances vindicated most of his crimes in the Estates' eyes. In this case the Estates presented themselves as the protectors of justice and its proper administration; this supplication not only fulfilled its purpose for Hultin, but also for his fellow subjects, as errors in the administration of this case had been uncovered through the audit. As a result, others would hopefully not have to endure the same treatment as Hultin had.

Perhaps most importantly for this dissertation, Hultin's case highlights how the Age of Liberty Diet became part of the judicial and administrative system during its fifty-year reign. It expanded these hierarchies with one more tier that possibly helped people to fight for their rights and combat injustice. In order to reach this last level, however, the individual had to have the right resources. Firstly, Hultin was quite knowledgeable about how the judicial system worked and who to turn to with what errands and what the next procedure was. Secondly, he was a burgher with a profession that provided him with sufficient income to afford all these measures. There was now stamp duty to pay, and obtaining the necessary copies of court documents for

his legal appeal also cost money. Thirdly, his burgher status meant that he had contacts who were prepared to protect him, vouch for his character, and probably lend him money if needed.

Hultin was in many ways an exemplary supplicant, for he followed the judicial pyramid from the bottom to the top, following all the strict procedures required of him. Many supplicants and kings did neither, which is our next topic.

## Swedish kings as patriarchs

As Karl XI's Petitioners' Edict shows, the formal structure of the supplication channel did not always work. People bypassed several levels and went straight to Kungl. Maj:t. At one point, it was rumoured that Karl XI stayed out of the capital in order to avoid the throng of supplicants beseeching him to reverse his revocation of grants of royal land in the Great Reduction. In 1682, because of cash flow problems and other pressing matters, he simply announced that all supplicant creditors who came to him that year would receive no money.<sup>165</sup> Karl XI was not the first king to experience Swedes' defiance of formalities. Gustaf I had lamented that he was inundated with petitions, and Karl IX once complained that 'we are troubled and overrun by countless complaints and court cases on a daily basis, which according to equity and law should have been heard and solved' at lower levels.<sup>166</sup> His son Gustaf II Adolf suffered the same fate on his travels, when people stood by the wayside, soliciting his help in humble supplication.<sup>167</sup>

Neither did the Petitioners' Edict eradicate all such unwelcome behaviour. In 1682, two years after the original decree, the Petitioners' Edict was reissued.<sup>168</sup> Then in 1688, eight years after the original edict, Karl XI had to legislate again: the new edict decreed that anyone who had the audacity to attempt to overturn Kungl. Maj:t's decisions would pay a hefty fine.<sup>169</sup> Both of these edicts had to be reissued in 1723 and 1727 respectively, as Kungl. Maj:t sank under mass of supplications that had not followed the proper channels or procedures.<sup>170</sup> Formal structures were ignored, and supplicants refused to abide by the stipulations of the legislation and regulations.

Sheer opportunism explains much of this, but at the same time the idea of the benevolent and merciful monarch should not be forgotten. A gracious king would always do right, regardless of what the formalities might prescribe. As an example, both Kristina (1632–1654) and Gustaf II Adolf could waive the obligatory deposit required when appealing to Kungl. Maj:t.<sup>171</sup> The supplicants were poor, but had just cause, and the benevolent monarch had to let justice prevail.

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<sup>165</sup> Blomdahl, *Förmyndarrättens huvudskede*, 487; Persson, *Servants of fortune*, 176–177.

<sup>166</sup> Setterkrans, 'Karl IX:s högsta domstol', 376: 'wij warde dageligen med oändelige klagomåhl och rättgångz-saker bemödde och öfwerlöpne, som dock med rätta och efter Sweriges beskrefne Lag borde först på Håradz- och sedan på Lagmans-ting blifwa förhörde och slitne; Cederholm, *De närjde sin rätt*, 303; see also Petrén, *Kungl. Majts och rikets Srea Horrätt*, 8–9.

<sup>167</sup> Petrén, *Kungl. Majts och rikets Srea Horrätt*, 9.

<sup>168</sup> *Kongl. Mayt:z Förnyade Förordning och Påbud, Hwar efter alle Sollicitanter sigh börsamligen rätta skole, för än dhe sig vnderstå boos Kongl. May:st någon ansökning att göra* (Stockholm, 26 Apr. 1682), ÅT.

<sup>169</sup> 'Resolution och förklaring/om theras straf som någon sökia emot Kongl Majts afsagde dom' (16 Mar. 1688), Schmedemann, *Kongl. stadgar, bref och resolutioner*, i. 1199.

<sup>170</sup> *Kongl. Majts Förnyade Förordning Och Påbud, Hwarefter Alle Sollicitanter sig börsamligen rätta skola, för än de understå hos Kongl. Maj:t någon ansökning göra* (Stockholm 3 Oct. 1723), ÅT; 'Påbud huru de böra anses, som å nyo beswåra Kongl. Maj:t med ansökningar, öfwer hwilka de förene erhållit resolutioner' (16 Nov. 1727), Modée, *Utdrag utur alle*, i. 731–732.

<sup>171</sup> Petrén, *Kungl. Majts och rikets Srea Horrätt*, 29–30.



The expectation that not only would the king help you in your hour of need, but that you would meet him face to face further explains why supplicants dared to circumvent the lower levels (Fig. 3.2). To a large extent this idea rested on historical precedent, for in the past the kings of necessity had toured the country ceaselessly, moving from residence to residence. Now, though, the chances of seeing and meeting a king was much less in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. As Renate Blickle puts it, ‘Documents handed personally to the sovereign represent but a fraction of all the petitions and complaints addressed to rulers in the early modern period. This part of the supplications system must be viewed as one small piece in the greater tableau of political practice, a stylized remnant of the otherwise largely suppressed possibilities of a physical encounter between rulers and ruled.’<sup>172</sup> Thus, as part of an increasingly large state apparatus, the king simply did not have time and opportunity to meet his subjects to the same extent as his predecessors used to. At the same time, the very administration that kept sovereigns and subjects apart also incorporated the idea of the face-to-face meeting. This was why the county governors—the King’s regional representatives—were required to keep rooms in which they could meet supplicants. Similarly, the seventeenth century Chancery had a special waiting room where supplicants could meet the Chancellor of the Realm.<sup>173</sup>

The face-to-face meeting that transcended formal hierarchies was also necessary in order for the king to audit his servants. It was a strong belief among the peasantry, for example, that the



FIGURE 3.2 Waiting at the roadside for the prince to pass was a successful tactic for supplicants throughout the early modern period.

<sup>172</sup> Renate Blickle, ‘Peasant protest and the language of womens’ petitions’, 186–187.

<sup>173</sup> Frohnert, ‘Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden’, 251.

king needed to be accessible if he was to right the wrongs done by his servants—wrongs he most certainly would correct if he only knew about them.<sup>174</sup> At the 1683 Diet, as a response to the newly issued Petitioners' Edict, the peasantry delegates fruitlessly complained that the decree would be detrimental to the poor, while those with status and access to the king would still be able to bring matters to his attention, and in turn oppress the poor. Karl XI, on the other hand, argued that he was saving a great many people a pointless journey to the royal court.<sup>175</sup>

Consequently, when the Estate of the Peasants in 1772, in the closing moments of the Age of Liberty, issued a proposal for general peasant privileges, they included access to the king next to such matters as taxes, *indelningsverket* (the allotment system, an administrative system based on territorial divisions that existed to finance the military), access to the higher rungs of public office, and so on. The peasantry argued that a sound and 'virtuous' relationship between Kungl. Maj:t and the people necessitated that the latter had access to the former, at least on the level stipulated by the Petitioners' Edict. Access to the monarch was access to the gracious and fatherly care of someone who kept a watchful eye on the Crown's servants, which would spur the subjects to piety and diligence.<sup>176</sup> In other words, the peasantry wanted to make the supplication channel one of their privileges so that they could always report wrongdoers among the Crown's servants. A satisfactory relationship between the king and his subjects required satisfactory access.

The corrective aspect of the face-to-face meeting—much like the county governors receiving supplicants personally—was also incorporated into the state's *modus operandi* and was a driving force in the extraordinary commissions of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Kungl. Maj:t periodically dispatched extraordinary commissions around the realm when the Swedish subjects showed alarming tendencies to unruliness or discontent. We can view them as an administrative and judicial embodiment of the Swedes' determination to hand over their supplications to the king personally when he travelled, but in this case to his peripatetic representatives. That they had a clear propaganda purpose that to some degree outweighed their judicial function is demonstrated in Marie Lennerstrand's studies of the commissions dispatched in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>177</sup> Claes Peterson similarly argues that the Chancellor of Justice's journeys around the countryside in the eighteenth century were conducted more to reassure the king's subjects that their ruler cared for them, rather than accomplishing any permanent, tangible change.<sup>178</sup>

That the idea of the face-to-face interaction between sovereign and subject stood strong in the eighteenth century is not only showed by the Chancellor of Justice's office, but also by the

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<sup>174</sup> Claréus, 'Primitiva bönder?', 45–46.

<sup>175</sup> Persson, *Servants of fortune*, 178.

<sup>176</sup> 'Ett dydigt, ärbart och uprigtigt förhållande mot alla människor gifwer ej mindre hwar och en af de trenne rikets odalstånd än alla Kgl. M:ts trogne undersåtare i gemen obehindradt tillträde til Kgl. Maj:ts person samt fri tillgång till Dess kongl. thron i deras åliggande angelägenheter, sollicitationsplacaterna dock likmätigt. Kongl. Maj:t försäkrar hwar och en nådeligen derom och at wilja alla Dess trogne undersåtare på ett hult och faderligt sätt med nåd och rättvisa i det goda styrka. Kongl. Maj:t förväntar det ock med säkerhet af alla Dess ämbets- och tjenstemän, och at de ej allenast handhafwa hwar och en wid detta Kongl. Maj:ts nådiga privilegium utan ock wid alle andre dem i förordningar och resolutioner gifne förmöner och rättigheter samt at de i öfrigt så föregå folket i alla orter och landsändar, at det må beständigt upmuntras till gudsfruktan, flit, arbetsamhet och sedlig lefnad', Project till bondeståndets privilegier § 23, BdP 12, p. 603.

<sup>177</sup> Lennerstrand, *Rättstrisans och allmogens beskyddare*.

<sup>178</sup> Peterson, "En god ämbetsman är bättre än en god lag", 318–321.

monarchs themselves. During his *eriksgata*, the tour of the realm undertaken by all Swedish monarchs after their coronations, Fredrik I (1720–1751) wanted to drum up political support and so advertised that he wanted to receive complaints from his subjects. He then rejected all of them, a symbolic act indicative of his lack of power.<sup>179</sup> His successor Adolf Fredrik (1751–1771) received supplications on his travels in Finland in 1752, most likely a symbolically important act, given that he was the first king to set foot on Finnish soil since 1616.<sup>180</sup>

Gustaf III (1771–1792) also knew how to make the most of the stereotype of the benevolent king. Before the 1769–70 Diet he travelled around the mining region of Bergslagen, northwest of Stockholm, in what we would now call a publicity stunt. During the trip he too gathered in supplications that he then handed over to the Council of the Realm when he came home.<sup>181</sup> After his father's death in 1771, he announced he would be receiving supplications three days a week from anyone.<sup>182</sup> He, the Council of the Realm, and the Chancellor of Justice Johan Rosir discussed what to do, and concluded that Gustaf III would give all supplications to Rosir, who in turn would draw up lists and then refuse or further the supplications according to the Petitioners' Edict.<sup>183</sup> For the first few days these lists were kept with a certain detail and we therefore have a taste of Gustaf III's interaction with supplicants. In the afternoon of 23 July 1771, for example, Gustaf III met several supplicants in Kungsträdgården, the park close to Stockholm Palace, among them Ingrid Bengtsdotter from Bohuslän and Conrad Nisser from Halmstad. What they wanted is not noted, but their supplications ended up in the hands of the Judicial Audit and the Board for Public Land and Funds, respectively. The next day Gustaf III received several people in the Royal Palace, and two days after that he among others met one Beata Oxe who sought a pension.<sup>184</sup>

Gustaf III's astute understanding of the supplications' political power was very evident during the Russo-Swedish War of 1788–89. At this point, when the King faced perhaps his most severe political crisis, he employed the tactic of journeying around Finland to muster support, again receiving supplications.<sup>185</sup> Gustaf III's successors also continued to travel and receive supplications. His brother Karl accepted supplications on at least one occasion after he assumed leadership of Gustaf IV Adolf's regency, and Gustaf IV Adolf (1792–1809) himself took to accepting supplications during his extensive travels around the kingdom in 1801, 1802, and between 1805 and 1807.<sup>186</sup>

## Supplications internationally

As we have seen, the term 'supplication' originated in Rome and the papal curia, applied to a practice that was already in place. It had been an important part of the Roman emperors' duties to receive petitioners, and it continued to be so after the demise of the Western Roman Empire.

<sup>179</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 351.

<sup>180</sup> Vol. 31 1752, Inrikes civilexpeditionens ingående diariéer C1a, RA; Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk*, 302.

<sup>181</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 52, 55; Tandefelt, 'Prins Gustafs resa i Bergslagen år 1768', 249.

<sup>182</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 216.

<sup>183</sup> 10 July 1771, pp. 213–234, vol. 96, Inrikes civilexpeditionens rådsprotokoll A1a, RA.

<sup>184</sup> Suppliker mottagna 23, 24, & 26 July 1771, vol. 1 1771–1774, Justitiekanslersämbetets supplikdiarium C1d, RA.

<sup>185</sup> Vol. 71 1789–90, Inrikes civilexpeditionens ingående diariéer C1a, RA.

<sup>186</sup> Vol. 76 1793–95, 1800, vol. 85 1801–02, 1805, vol. 90 1805–07, Inrikes civilexpeditionens ingående diariéer C1a, RA.

Among the Franks, Lombards, and other descendent kingdoms, the kings—themselves or together in an assembly with their followers—adjudicated legal disputes among their retainers and others of high standing.<sup>187</sup> The legal continuity is thus clearer on the Continent because of the direction connection to the Roman and post-Roman legal traditions. That, on the other hand, did not mean that the right to submit supplications existed in written law. According to Henk van Nierop, the right to petition in the early modern Netherlands rested on ‘customary law, a tacit agreement between citizens and regents. The former could freely draft and present petitions; it was the duty of the latter to consider these seriously, and—if a request was reasonable—to grant whatever was asked.’<sup>188</sup>

The right to seek adjudication from one’s lord thus continued from late antiquity into the high and late Middle Ages. According to Alan Harding, the English and French kings kept their judicial role despite delegating their powers to vassals by being able to keep a lofty ideological position, above worldly entanglements. They also tried to maintain control over their servants, and in England in 1289 and 1340 the king’s subjects were encouraged to petition him whenever the clergy or royal servants misbehaved or broke the law.<sup>189</sup> The King-in-Parliament furthermore acted as a high court for anyone with an errand within its jurisdiction, and of course the energy or the money to bring a case before the assembly. Established between 1230 and 1250, the English Parliament was petitioned largely by individuals until the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the so-called common petitions overtook them.<sup>190</sup> Neither were petitions something peculiar to the English kingdom. According to John Watts, the treatment of petitions remained an important—and sometimes main—method for fourteenth-century monarchs across Europe to exercise their judicial responsibilities. Charles the Bold of Burgundy (1467–1477), for example, held sessions three times a week where his people could present their petitions to him at court where he would decide upon them, all the time being surrounded by his vassals whose presence was mandatory.<sup>191</sup>

However, it was not necessarily the case that judicial responsibility went hand in hand with judicial functions. Mons Sandnes Nygard argues that the judicial position of the king in medieval Sweden was the closest to the Frankish ideal, where lords oversaw justice and adjudicated disputes. Medieval Denmark had certain similarities as well, but in medieval Norway the king had little jurisdiction and mostly acted as the general overseer of the exercise of justice. With the union of the three kingdoms in 1397, however, Swedish and Danish jurisprudence came to have a direct influence on Norwegian legal thinking.<sup>192</sup> Neither did, as we saw earlier, petitioning one’s sovereign necessarily mean that it was part of the formal judicial system, even if *de facto* grew to become just that (p. 7).

Just as in Sweden, medieval and early modern Europe saw the centralization of justice with the transition from a peripatetic to a stationary central administration. As Antonio Padoa-Schioppa puts it, the establishment of a central, hierarchical judicial system did not necessarily

<sup>187</sup> Harding, *Medieval law and the foundations of the state*, 10–22; Wickham, *The inheritance of Rome*, 144, 188.

<sup>188</sup> van Nierop, ‘Popular participation in politics in the Dutch republic’, 284.

<sup>189</sup> Brand, ‘The formation of the English legal system, 1150–1400’, 115; Harding, *Medieval law*, 64–68, 109–113.

<sup>190</sup> Diestelkamp, ‘Die höchste Gerichtsbarkeit’, 21–26; Zaret, ‘Petitions and the “invention” of public opinion’, 1509–1510.

<sup>191</sup> Huizinga, *Ur medeltidens höst*, 44–45; Watts, *The making of politics*, 208–210.

<sup>192</sup> Nygard, ‘Den högste domsmakt i dei nordiske land’, 65.



**Figure 3.3** Charles the Bold at court, surrounded by his vasalls who were seated according to rank. On days when he received petitions, a staff of four people, including two *maître des requestes* (lit. master of requests), would present them to him and then deal with the requests according to his bidding.

mean that other, independent jurisdictions ceased to exist, but it certainly represented the ‘pre-eminence of royal justice over other types of judicial authority’. It also offered subjects a predictable system that would ultimately bring them before either the king or his appointed royal bench, and it supplied rulers with the means to supervise their more lowly servants.<sup>193</sup>

Neither did centralization spell the end of supplications as an institution, although they became increasingly formalized. A good example is Philip II of Spain (1556–1598). Although

<sup>193</sup> Padoa Schioppa, ‘Conclusions’, 358–359, quote at 358.

the image of him toiling away in El Escorial is an exaggeration—the king did travel—he was not as well travelled as his great-grandmother Isabella I of Castile (1474–1504) had been, who heard court cases as she travelled her kingdom. As John Elliot aptly puts it, the petitions Philip received were survivals from an earlier age ‘of much closer personal relations between a king and his subjects’, although by his time they had to be channelled through at least one of fourteen royal councils before they received the king’s consideration, unlike the five councils during Isabella’s reign. The petitions alluded to the days of closer relations with their written acts of kissing the sovereign’s hand, for example, but the petitioners had to adapt to administrative realities. Tellingly, Philip’s busy schedule meant that people submitted short petitions, around 150 words at most. Philip, for his part, still retained an active role in petitions and justice alike and thought his role as supreme adjudicator important. Those who lived around him attested to his great respect for law and justice.<sup>194</sup>

Likewise in France, the king’s role as a fair arbiter can be seen in the centralization of the judicial system. In her study of remissions for pardons in the sixteenth century, Natalie Zemon Davies describes supplicants as ‘integrated into the larger drama of the build-up of monarchical power. By the end of the fifteenth century the king had largely established his monopoly over the right to pardon for homicide or for any other capital crime.’<sup>195</sup> The French early modern political theorist Jean Bodin (1530–1596), a staunch believer in the absolute power of the monarch, perhaps best explains this idea of royal justice. To his mind, a monarch’s justness stemmed from his absolute power to legislate, but also to act as the highest court of appeal, because ‘it is of greatest importance for the preservation of the commonwealth that whoever exercises sovereign power should himself dispense justice.’<sup>196</sup> Petitioning, by extension, preserved the commonwealth, made relations between rulers and subject more harmonious, and increased royal legitimacy.

However, formalization did not only result in restricted access to the prince. Cosimo I de’ Medici of Florence (1537–1569) established himself as a just arbiter and renderer of efficient justice, and seemingly enjoyed receiving supplications. In a letter to the Supreme Court in Florence in 1568, after he had retired from power, he wrote:

Any kind of person, for comfort and facility in negotiating, could write to us and have the letter arrive in our hands. From this many good results ensued. Everyone could always reach us and they could be certain that no one would ever come to know what which was written ... in this way ... they could speak their mind without anyone else, except for us, knowing it ... From this it followed that, once we understood what was

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<sup>194</sup> Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469–1716*, 180–181, 249–251, quote at 180; Kamen, *Empire*, 8; Corteguera, ‘Encuentros imaginados entre súbdito y monarca’, 35; Parker, *Imprudent King*, 61–79.

<sup>195</sup> Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the archives: pardon tales and their tellers in sixteenth-century France*, 52–53; for a similar development regarding pardons in sixteenth-century England, see Kesselring, *Patriarchal and authority in the Tudor state*.

<sup>196</sup> Bodin, *Six books of the commonwealth*, 133, 207; see also Collins, *The state in early modern France*, xix.

necessary, we provided as we thought best for the common and individual good of those who wrote us.<sup>197</sup>

As in early modern Sweden, supplications were also incorporated into the administration of the growing early modern state and its practices. In 1696, the English admiralty handled no fewer than 10,000 petitions, all as meticulously entered into their books as any other business.<sup>198</sup> In the landgraviate of Hesse-Kassel, the central authorities received 1,000 supplications yearly at the end of the sixteenth century and 4,000 a year two centuries later.<sup>199</sup>

In Denmark–Norway, the administrative formalization of supplications occurred at the same time as in Sweden. Seventeenth-century Danish kings wanted their subjects to send them supplications, but they wanted regional civil servants to handle the initial workload. After 1632, Their subjects had to submit their supplications to regional representatives. These regional civil servants would examine the supplications and refer them to the king or resolve the grievances themselves, depending of the nature of the request. This regulation was an attempt to create a barrier for all those supplicants who turned to the king with business that could be resolved locally.<sup>200</sup>

Like the Swedish and Danish rulers, other European princes wanted to receive supplications, but also wanted to keep their work burden within reasonable limits. We see this pattern in, for example, the judicial reforms of Louis XIV (1643–1715), which cut the number of court cases referred from the *parlements* to the royal councils.<sup>201</sup> In Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm I (1713–1740) stipulated certain rules for what counted as legitimate supplications, while in Schleswig-Holstein a 1719 decree established that a supplication could only include one errand at a time in an attempt to assuage the stream of grievances.<sup>202</sup> In Hesse-Kassel, a 1539 decree stipulated that supplicants had to procure signatures from local civil servants in order to petition the prince, and additional signatures were required depending on the nature of the request—those asking for financial relief had to get their parish priest to sign the supplication along with two or three upright Christians living in the same community, legal attorneys had to countersign supplications concerning cases involving their client, and so on.<sup>203</sup>

Thus, the centralization of judicial and political power, and the formalization of the judiciary and the bureaucracy across Europe, did not put an end to supplications and petitions. They survived, and in as different places as Sweden, Prussia, Britain, and Florence were ingrained into the new judicial and administrative structures. An anonymous government official in 1730s Parma succinctly wrote ‘Those who think to do away with petitions would overthrow the entire system of the State’.<sup>204</sup> He was indeed correct.

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<sup>197</sup> Quote translated in Shaw, ‘Writing to the Prince’ 56–57, quote at 57.

<sup>198</sup> Brewer, *The sinews of power*, 84.

<sup>199</sup> Kümin and Würgler, ‘Petitions, Gravamina and the Early Modern State’, 44.

<sup>200</sup> Supphellen, ‘Supplikken Som Institusjon’, 156–157.

<sup>201</sup> Collins, *The state in early modern France*, 136–137.

<sup>202</sup> Ulbricht, ‘Supplikationen als Eko-Dokumente’, 154–155.

<sup>203</sup> Neuhaus, ‘Suppliken als landesgeschichtliche Quellen, i, 133–134; Fuhrmann, Kümin and Würgler, ‘Supplizierende Gemeinden’, 307–308.

<sup>204</sup> Nubola, ‘Supplications between politics and justice’, 35.

## European princes as patriarchs

The idea of the merciful and benevolent prince who also met his supplicants in person was strong across the whole of Europe. In France, Louis IX's (1226–1270) image was one that personified the dutiful ruler who not only took his judicial duties seriously, but who also regularly met his subjects 'after mass at the foot of his bed, or in his Paris garden, or with his back against an oak tree in the wood of Vincennes' accompanied by his councilors. In early modern times, Louis XIV also thought it important to portray himself as accessible to his people, like a father to his children, and was likened to Louis XI.<sup>205</sup>

According to Michael Bregnsbo and Steinar Supphellen, the Danish supplications were an institutionalized form of the ideal of the king as the protector of his people, of his weak subjects. Danish rulers also identified supplications as a good method to project an image of them as caring, protective, and merciful.<sup>206</sup> They paid the same price for this tactic as their Swedish counterparts, though: people refused to comply with the legislation. People wanted to meet the king. In 1685 and 1687 new decrees again forbade people from travelling to Copenhagen to meet the king in person, and in the early eighteenth century this was repeated yet again. It was especially the Norwegian peasantry who seem to have thought it essential to travel to Copenhagen, although there are of course examples of Danish peasants seeking a meeting with the king. New ordinances followed in 1717, 1722, and 1725, all of them reminding supplicants of their scribes' obligations to countersign supplications and not to circumvent the judicial and administrative hierarchy.<sup>207</sup>

Similarly in Hesse-Kassel, the authorities had to endlessly repeat the strict provisos for supplications, as the supplicants themselves did not obey them, and to some extent seem to have got away with flouting the rules. In 1733, Fredrik I of Sweden had to issue a decree in his landgraviate of Hesse-Kassel, warning all supplicants that they were strictly forbidden to travel all the way to Sweden in search for a pardon or the like. His brother and de facto ruler, Wilhelm, would serve as his deputy. In 1739 the decree had to be repeated. How many supplicants actually went to see Fredrik, however, remains a question for further research.<sup>208</sup>

At the same time, the problem with supplicants was not only caused by the supplicants themselves. In Denmark–Norway, it was the actions of the staff and courtiers at the royal court, the chancery staff, and the kings themselves which ensured that supplications that had ignored the prescribed path could still receive a proper examination and verdict.<sup>209</sup> A similar problem seems to have existed in Württemberg, where a decree issued in 1569 'expressly' forbade chancery staff from entertaining any supplicants who had not passed through the lower reaches of the administration first.<sup>210</sup> Thus, rulers, civil servants, and subjects could together undermine the various rules and regulations of the supplication systems. Otto Ulbricht has furthermore shown how supplications' patriarchal aspect was used by both prince and subjects to combat the

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<sup>205</sup> Quote from Harding, *Medieval law*, 161–162; Burke, *En kung blir till*, 51; see also Gaposchkin, *The making of Saint Louis*, 42–47.

<sup>206</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 160–161; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 18, 84.

<sup>207</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 161–167; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 41–43, 47–48.

<sup>208</sup> Fuhrmann, Kümin and Würgler, 'Supplizierende Gemeinden', 310, 313–314.

<sup>209</sup> Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*; 26, 61–63, 125; Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 134; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 213–214. According to Bregnsbo, the king's involvement waned throughout the eighteenth century.

<sup>210</sup> Fuhrmann, Kümin and Würgler, 'Supplizierende Gemeinden', 298.



increasing ambitions of the manor owners in the duchy of Schleswig-Holstein in the early seventeenth century. Here, peasants and others from the lower strata of society who had left their landlords, sometimes decades ago, submitted supplications to the prince asking for help against landlords who wanted to return them to serfdom.<sup>211</sup>

In Bavaria, the early modern centralization of the principality resulted in a situation where the prince's council was far more involved in the handling of supplications. According to Blickle, the establishment and subsequent growth of the *Hofrat* (court council) was even a direct consequence of the constant flow of supplications to the prince. Some sort of order had to be created out of chaos. The establishment of a formalized, hierarchical judicial system notwithstanding, the Bavarian prince-electors Maximilian I (1597–1651) reserved the right to continue to receive supplications outside the regular, formal channels as well.<sup>212</sup> Thus a possible direct connection between ruler and subject was preserved.

Political ideologists of the early modern era identified the clash between the formalized state administration and the image of the gracious king. The authors of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *principum specula*, or mirrors for princes, were united in their belief that it was important that rulers adjudicate disputes and meet poor people. Not only would this interaction confirm the prince's moral stature, it was the prince's duty to hear the grievances of his subjects and, of course, to mitigate unjust consequences and show his benevolence. As the Jesuit Andrés Mendo wrote in 1657, 'The judge is inferior to the law and has to obey it; the prince is above the laws, and can moderate them.' Where these meetings would take place differed, but hunts, for example, were considered splendid occasions for princes to meet their lowliest subjects. Andreas Holenstein has shown that a prince's spa visit also presented a formidable opportunity for subjects to present their grievances to their lord.<sup>213</sup>

Bodin also recognized the political and ideological importance of face-to-face encounters:

when subjects see their prince giving judgment in person, they are by this mere fact already half satisfied, even though he does not thereupon grant their requests. They reflect that at any rate the king has attended to their petition, heard their complaints, and taken pains to judge the matter. It is extraordinary how uplifted and delighted subjects are to be seen, heard, and attended to by a prince even of very modest virtues, or of some mild degree of amiability.<sup>214</sup>

Someone who definitely would have served well as an exemplification for Bodin's theory was Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor (1765–1790). He was renowned for his travels—at least among historians—which reflected his determination to familiarize himself with his realm and his

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<sup>211</sup> Ulbricht, "Angemaßte Leibeigenschaft".

<sup>212</sup> Blickle, 'Laufen gen Hof'; Blickle, 'Supplikationen und Demonstrationen', 272–273; Blickle, 'Peasant protest', 186.

<sup>213</sup> Blickle, 'Supplikationen und Demonstrationen', 289–296; Holenstein, 'Bittgesuche, Gesetze und Verwaltung'; Mendo's quote reads 'El Juez es inferior a la ley, y ha de obedecerla; el Príncipe es superior de las leyes, y puede moderarlas.' Quoted in Corteguera, *Encuentros Imaginados*, 36.

<sup>214</sup> Bodin, *Six books of the commonwealth*, 133–134.

subjects, and to receive supplications. In 1768 he travelled around the Banat and collected hundreds of supplications, which he then submitted to his central administration when he got home. In 1769 he travelled to his Italian regions and received thousands of supplications, of which he forwarded almost all. And so on. According to Derek Beales, Joseph II thought it important that people could circumvent the local administration in order to reach him, as he often did not trust his local servants. Receiving supplications was also part of his carefully cultivated image as the people's emperor—hence him taking a turn with a peasant's plough as he passed by on one of his travels. On another occasion he arranged for a sackful of supplications to be hung from the back of his carriage so that people could see his benevolence (and power).<sup>215</sup>

## Conclusions

This chapter has considered the three key aspects of the supplication institution. The first is the judicial aspect, which encompassed the ideas that the king was the apex the judicial hierarchy and should monitor and guard his subjects' rights and immunities, as well as the righteous execution of justice. Supplications thus served as much as an instrument the king as for his subjects, enabling him to audited his servants. As the early modern states grew more and more complex, the idea of the judicial hierarchy with the king and his council at the pyramid's apex was further formalized.

The second aspect, the administrative, refers to the incorporation of supplications into the state's *modus operandi*. At the same time as the complexity of the state's organization increased, supplications were incorporated into the state's practices and procedures. In Sweden, county governors and government boards had to receive supplications, the former keeping special rooms in their residences where they could receive supplicants according to regulations. Supplications became part of standard administrative procedure. At the same time, the administrative aspect also refers to administrative instruments, implemented in order to guide and temper supplicants' access to the supplication channel and to stop them from disregarding formalities.

Thirdly, the idea of the gracious and merciful king constituted the patriarchal aspect. The king was supposed to legitimize his political power by acting generously towards his supplicants. Even though they might not have followed procedure or paid the right fees, they hoped or even expected the king to hear their pleas anyway. Thus, supplicants, civil servants and rulers alike did not necessarily follow proper procedure.

Part of the idea of the gracious king was also the chance to meet him. Kings encountered subjects along their travels and received their pleas. They also used the idea to their advantage and purposefully sought to receive supplications at the roadside in order to legitimize their rule and strengthen their political support. Sweden's extraordinary commissions and the Chancellor of Justice who travelled the countryside was one incarnation of this idea, the county governors's reception rooms for supplicants another. The king could not be everywhere to keep his servants in check, but his deputies could, thus protecting and serving his subjects. The meeting between sovereign and subjects through the delivery of a supplications is of course described correctly by Renate Blickle as a stylized remnant. However, this remnant did not lose its importance.

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<sup>215</sup> Beales, *Joseph II*, 242, 246–251, 267–271, 338, 342, 361–362; see also Luebke, 'Naïve monarchism and Marian veneration.

International comparisons show that these aspects can be found across medieval and early modern Europe. Thus, the Swedish experience was connected to similar Continental developments, in as much as medieval and early modern princes also asserted their judicial primacy, incorporated supplications and petitions into their administrative practices, and acknowledged the demands and possibilities of the patriarchal aspect. Sweden was not unique.

Early modern sovereigns had to walk a proverbial tightrope. They wanted to use supplications to safeguard their subjects' rights and immunities, legitimize their rule, strengthen their political positions, and audit their servants, but on the other hand their administration could only handle so much business. This contradiction was also visible in that the patriarchal aspect mitigated the administrative and judicial aspects. Subjects and kings circumvented the formal procedures and hierarchies. As such, the institution of supplications was built on ideas whose application to some extent negated each other. The inner logic of the administration by which kings ruled their realms was undermined by the political ideas that justified their claims to control said administration. Efficiency versus grace.

On the other hand, the examples of the Swedish extraordinary commissions and Joseph II the Holy Roman Emperor show that circumventing the formal hierarchies could also be a deliberate strategy to audit more efficiently and, ultimately, to legitimize one's political rule. Thus, efficiency and grace also could complement each other given the right circumstances, and although this tension can perhaps be viewed as unavoidable, the different aspects could also be mutually reinforcing.

The ambiguity of the supplication channel both validates and confutes its characterization as solely an administrative concern, as Gustafsson and Bäck see it for example.<sup>216</sup> Yes, the administrative aspect was very obvious in its implementation, in the sense that supplications became incorporated into standard administrative procedures and that administrative measures were taken to lessen the onslaught of supplications, yet the drawback is that they have disregarded the use of supplications as legal instruments. Perhaps more importantly, the patriarchal aspect highlights that not only could supplicants use supplications for political purposes, but that this channel was seen as an essential part of the sovereign's political position. Something which rulers across medieval and early modern Europe recognized, and used to legitimize and strengthen their political claims.

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<sup>216</sup> Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeflykt under frihetstiden*, 35–36; Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 106–107, 112–118; Mats Berglund considers supplications a way of exercising influence somewhere between gravamina submitted at the Diets and printed newspapers, Berglund, *Massans röst*, 42.

## 4 The Age of Liberty and the Swedish Diet

This chapter provides the background to the empirical analysis, and falls into two sections. The first is an account of the main domestic and foreign events of the Age of Liberty. Then, because the Diet itself is of relevance for this study as I want to examine the Diet's supplication channel, the second section thus accounts for the Diet's roots, organization, and development during the Age of Liberty, including the Estates' composition and the different methods people used to initiate suits or communicate with one another. I conclude with an account of the establishment of the Diet's supplication channel. This second section largely builds on Fredrik Lagerroth's and Karin Sennefelt's studies of the Diet in this period.<sup>217</sup>

### The early days of the Age of Liberty

The glory of our age is dead and gone;  
We to our former nothingness are fated.  
King Charles is in his grave; King Frederick's consecrated;  
And Sweden's clock has moved from XII to I.<sup>218</sup>

The poem by Cederhielm captures something of the decline of the Swedish state after the Treaty of Nystad of 1721, which ended the Great Northern War (1700–1721). The Swedish Baltic Empire, with provinces in northern Germany, around the Finnish Gulf, and in the Baltic proper, had come to an end. The provinces conquered on the Scandinavian peninsula and some of those in northern Germany remained; the rest were gone. Eclipsed by Russia in northern Europe, Sweden went from a great power to a second-rank has-been.

Cederhielm's poem also captures the diminished political role afforded the monarchy, which forfeited much of its political power and was forced into a backseat position between 1719 and 1772. The period was referred to as the Age of Liberty, even in its own time, because the country was liberated from the autocracy of the Caroline monarchy and especially Karl XII. Most of his reign had gone in continuous and costly warfare. He had prevented the Estates from gathering, while at the same pushing the country over the brink of financial collapse and domestic chaos, despite several chances to end the war. His death effectively ended absolute royal power and paved the way for the Estates' ascendancy.<sup>219</sup>

The balance of power between the king, the Council of the Realm, and the Diet was primarily established in *Regeringsformen* (the Instrument of Government) in 1719 and updated in 1720, and in *Riksdagsordningen* (the Diet Act) of 1723, and *Konungaförsäkringarna* (the Royal Assurance and Oath) that all Swedish monarchs swore on their accession. Other documents issued throughout the period elaborated on these laws, as we will see. Without going into the finer constitutional and jurisdictional details, the Diet took control of taxation, the national debt, legislation, and foreign policy in the course of the first decade of the Age of Liberty. The Council of the Realm functioned as the Diet's delegates between Diets and had to make sure the king

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<sup>217</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*.

<sup>218</sup> Poem by Carl Germund Cederhielm, quoted from Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 13.

<sup>219</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 9–53; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vol.1, pp. 1–130.

did not transgress his constitutional limits. Additionally, the Estates took upon themselves to audit Kungl. Maj:t, the government boards, and the regional administration when they were in session. The audit's *raison d'être* was to keep the king and his servants in check and make sure that absolute monarchy was not reintroduced.<sup>220</sup> The Diet thus not only assumed responsibility for many of the central political activities, it also took upon itself to supervise the state.

That is not to say that the monarchy lost all its power. The Diet convened every third year or so, and in between Kungl. Maj:t was left in charge under the restrictions imposed by the Estates' instructions from the previous Diet and the agreed budget. Kungl. Maj:t's decisions were made on the basis of a majority vote, and with the king having two votes thus meant that he had to conform to votes where most of the councillors went against him. For minor business the king did not need to gather the entire Council, but was still accompanied by two councillors whose duty it was to ensure that he obeyed the law, and all decisions were examined by the Council. On top of this, the Estates scrutinized all Council minutes when they met to make sure that everything was in order. Kungl. Maj:t could also issue laws and decrees while the Diet was not in session, but the Estates were supposed to examine these when they reconvened.<sup>221</sup> Thus, the checks on the king were considerable.

As a symbol, however, the monarchy retained its political clout. Although the Estates ate away at the royal prerogatives and the power balance they were intended to maintain, Kungl. Maj:t remained the *de jure* ruler of Sweden. The King afforded the realm its sovereignty in international relations and issued all privileges. The Diet could formally only recommend Kungl. Maj:t issue a law or a resolution. As an example, the general gravamina had previously been submitted by the respective Estates to Kungl. Maj:t, addressed to the king; however, in 1723 the Estates started examining and deciding on general gravamina themselves. Nonetheless, just like any other decision made during the Diets, their decisions on the general gravamina were sent to Kungl. Maj:t for official ratification. These decisions were then circulated around the country as they had been made by Kungl. Maj:t, although it was really the Estates who had come to the decision.<sup>222</sup> Thus, constitution and procedure distinguished between the formal powers of the Diet and the king, although the king followed choreographed procedure.

The task that Karl XII had left to the people of the Age of Liberty was not a simple one. In 1719, the Swedish state found itself in dire financial straits, facing shrinking revenues and a crippling mountain of debt after the war. Russian troops had occupied Finland for several years and had had a free hand ravaging the coast of Sweden proper.<sup>223</sup> The economic policy of Sweden's powers-that-be thus sought to kickstart the economy again, with tax exemptions married with large sums of money distributed to manufactories through subsidies or loans at advantageous rates of interest. That the state was supposed to take an active role in the minutiae of the economy—an economy that needed to be heavily regulated in order to benefit the common good—was part of the general consensus at the time.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 12–59; Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, 27.

<sup>221</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 195–199; Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, 29–30, 39–41.

<sup>222</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 95–98; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 260; Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', ch. 3 12–13; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 190, 199; Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, 39–40.

<sup>223</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 119–122, 154–180; Åmark, *Sveriges statsfinanser*, 675.

<sup>224</sup> Melkersson, *Staten, ordningen och friheten*, 152–158; Karonen, 'Coping with peace after a debacle', 211–213.

## The heyday of the Age of Liberty

Kanslipresidenten (Chancery President) Arvid Horn (1664–1742) was at the country's helm for most of the 1720s and 1730s. At the 1726–27 Diet he established himself as the de facto leader after he quelled the opposition to his foreign policies.<sup>225</sup> However, the birth of the political parties would spell the end of his reign. The political faction known as the Hats espoused an aggressive foreign policy, in the form of reconquering the Baltic provinces lost to Russia and cornering a greater share of the international market with Swedish manufactures, subsidized and supported by the state, and protected by high tariffs. Their opponents, the Caps, supported a policy of peaceful coexistence with Russia and the development of prosperous, but less state-funded industry and trade. Besides certain constitutional, foreign, and economic policies, however, the parties did not possess anything resembling true party programmes. According to Ulla Johanson they were 'loosely composed groups' formed around certain questions and opinions. Vested Estate interests and other corporate interests remained important, perhaps more important. Patrik Winton describes these proto-parties as derogatory 'discursive constructs' rather than coherent political constellations.<sup>226</sup>

The Hats succeeded in their endeavours. In 1738–39, the Hats got Horn to resign and ousted several of his supporters from the Council of the Realm with the use of a process known as *licentiering* (impeachment). This process in turn required the support of at least three Estates, which meant that councillors were de facto subjected to a vote of no confidence. Considering their replacements had to procure the support of the Estates to get elected, the Hats instated a variant of parliamentarianism. As a consequence, the Council of the Realm ceased to play an independent role in Swedish politics. It was made completely dependent on the benevolence of the Estates, subject to their authority.<sup>227</sup> What remained was a system with two contenders for power, the Diet and the King, and the former had the latter under their thumb. This imbalance in the political system would come under increased scrutiny in the last decades of the Age of Liberty.

In the meantime, the Hats faced a series of challenges both of their own and others' making. Sweden went to war with Russia (1741–1743) with the aim of reconquering the lost provinces, but things did not go as planned, and Russian troops had soon brushed aside the Swedish troops and occupied the whole of Finland. At the same time Dalupproret, a peasant revolt that started in the Dalarna region, enveloped Stockholm as thousands of peasants marched on the capital. In the end the revolt failed after troops entered the city to re-establish order.<sup>228</sup>

When Adolf Fredrik succeeded to the throne in 1751, he started causing problems. Together with his queen Lovisa Ulrika, Adolf Fredrik quickly showed that he would not be content with the same limitations imposed on his predecessor. He especially considered appointments important, and abhorred the idea that he could not appoint those he saw fit and competent. His opponents on the Council and in the Diet managed to thwart his ambitions at the 1755–56 Diet, however, and a coup to reinstate monarchical power was nipped in the bud. Among the many

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<sup>225</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 59–61; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 131–137.

<sup>226</sup> Johanson, 'Hattar och mössor i borgarståndet 1755–56', 305.

<sup>227</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 128–131; Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 310–312, 317–321; Lagerroth, 'Positiv rätt eller naturrätt?'; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 112–115.

<sup>228</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 1–97; Sennefelt, *Den politiska sjukan*.

fresh insults and restrictions on royal power the king faced, the Estates issued *Tjänstebetänkandet* (the Report on Service) in 1756. It further limited the influence the king could have on appointments and on who sat in the Council of the Realm.<sup>229</sup> As we will see in Chapter 6, the decree had drastic implications for the supplication channel as well.

The Hats survived the challenge from the royal couple, and indeed seemed able to manage almost everything thrown in their path. Not only that, but the economy, the population, everything was pointing upwards and onwards, which seemed to vindicate the Hats' economic policy of production subsidies, protectionism, and export premiums.<sup>230</sup>

### The last years of the Age of Liberty

Then came the Pomeranian War (1757–1762), a grave miscalculation. Sweden had joined the massive coalition against Prussia in the Seven Years War and everyone anticipated fast and resounding victory. In the event, Prussia proved disappointingly resilient and endured the war with no territorial losses. Instead of adding to the Swedish realm's glory and restoring its territories, the war drained Sweden's coffers dry and caused inflation to a degree that would plague the Swedish economy and state budget for the remainder of the Age of Liberty. In the early 1770s, Sweden experienced crop failure, which exacerbated the already precarious situation.<sup>231</sup> Just like for the other belligerents, the price of participation in the Seven Years War proved very steep and at the 1765–66 Diet the Caps gained control, whereupon they did away with many of the economic policies of the previous decades. Bankruptcies ensued when the government's manufacturing support diminished.<sup>232</sup>

This Diet also spawned a Freedom of the Press Act, the perhaps logical conclusion of a development that saw the political agents of the time conduct politics in public through print. The Estates had made a habit of publicly communicating not only their decisions after each Diet had ended, but also many of the transactions during each meeting. Bo Lindberg describes the political debate of the 1740s onwards as one where politics evolved from something of an arcanum for the select few to a public concern, and where the Swedish language, no longer wholly dependent on Latin, grew into a potent and serviceable political language of its own. During the 1750s and 1760s the power struggles between the Estates and the king on the one hand, and the competing groups in the Diet on the other, had resulted in an increase in published material from the Diets. All tried to curry favour with the populace as best they could. During the 1755–56 Diet, for example, the Hats attempted to discredit the royal family and credit themselves with successfully proposing that the Estates start publishing current transactions in a publication series called *Handlingar rörande grundlagarnas verkställighet* ('Proceedings of the Implementation of the Constitution'). Later they started printing a gazette, *Riksdagstidningen*, a publication issued during every Diet for the remainder of the period. Its main purpose was to report the Diet's proceedings, and thus it also included various types of information, not only

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<sup>229</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 146–157, 165, 172–200, 209–246; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 164–176.

<sup>230</sup> For examples of the Hats' continued trade policy, Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 67–72, 247–254.

<sup>231</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 23–29, 34–35, 124–135, 152–155, 170–173, 320–339; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 179–180.

<sup>232</sup> Sundberg, *Partipolitik och regionala intressen*; Melkersson, *Staten, ordningen och friheten*, 159–172; Magnusson, *An economic history of Sweden*, 61–70.

material which directly concerned the political cut and thrust.<sup>233</sup> The 1766 Freedom of the Press Act thus represented the culmination of this practice of publishing information about political events, and further increased the intensity of the political debate in print.

At the same time, the question of the balance of power between the Diet and the king was raised again. Like the other participants of the Seven Years War, Sweden saw a public debate about reforms of the state in the wake of the peace, a debate also fuelled by the royal couple, whose ambitions had not abated since in the 1750s.<sup>234</sup> Proponents of a stronger monarchy first clashed with those who defended the Diet first clashed at the 1765–66 Diet, with the latter as winners. Not only had they managed to hinder most advances made by the monarchs, they also successfully implemented reforms based on their viewpoints. In the eyes of those who supported a strong Diet, corrupt Crown servants were a bigger threat to the Swedish people's liberties than an unchecked Diet would be. Thus, the Chancellor of Justice in 1766 became an elected office, and monitored by the Estates and not by Kungl. Maj:t. Furthermore, the Diet's supporters successfully proposed that the Estates be able to change the Swedish constitution, but a constitutional change would only pass if approved by two Diets with an election in between. Thus, the Diet's electorate, now responsible for accepting or rejecting any constitutional changes proposed by the Estates, would serve as the check on politicians bent on decreasing their liberties. Their debates would furthermore be facilitated by the Freedom of the Press Act.<sup>235</sup>

An even more heated debate followed at the 1769–70 Diet, which, as we will see in Chapter 6, had direct relevance for the Diet's supplication channel. Supporters of the monarchy proposed a thoroughgoing reform of the constitution. Their proposal, *Säkerhetsakten* (the Security Bill), took a clear stance against the confusion of executive powers with legislative powers, and claimed that legislation was needed because anyone who mixed the two would be above the law. The bill proposed that the Estates stop changing Kungl. Maj:t's resolutions, not engage in any executive action, and that the Diet be forbidden from instituting extraordinary legal courts. The Diet had to limit itself to issuing legislation. The Security Bill, however, failed.<sup>236</sup>

If anything, the opponents of the Diet's position seemed to be fighting a losing battle as some the Age of Liberty's idiosyncrasies came to fruition during the last decades. Many had by this point come to accept political parties as legitimate parts of the political playing field, whereas they had formerly been viewed as something that threatened the harmony and balance of politics. The Caps' successes in the last years of the Age of Liberty furthermore built on the fact that their following was strong among the commoner Estates who increasingly came to impose their will on proceedings to the detriment of the nobility. At the beginning of the Age of Liberty, the nobility had dominated the Diet both in numbers and influence. Towards the end of the period, the commoner Estates started coordinating their actions without regard for the nobility, and had often decided an issue before the nobility had finished discussing it. Thus, the commoner Estates

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<sup>233</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 206–207, 283–284, 355, 403–404, 454; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 181–185; Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 422–425; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 159–164; Burius, *Ömbet om friheten*, 218–219; Lindberg, *Den antika skenbeten*, 30–32; The amount of printed texts should however not be exaggerated, illicit handwritten pamphlets and the like played an equally important role. See Bodensten, *Politikens drivfjäder*, ch. 3 and research cited therein especially.

<sup>234</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 235–236; Lönnroth, *Den stora rollen*, 9, 16, 22.

<sup>235</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 408–413; Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 581–594; Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish party politics*, ch. 7 especially; Gustafsson, *Makt och människor*, 193–208.

<sup>236</sup> Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 613–633; Rudelius, 'Författningsfrågan i de förenade deputationerna 1769', 332–339, 347–350.



often left the nobility trailing, and their increased influence also led to an increase of commoner Estate-initiated business in the Diet.<sup>237</sup>

Then, in the last years of the Age of Liberty, two things happened that brought things to a head. The first was that a commoner was turned down for an appointment in favour of a noble candidate in 1770. As we have seen, the nobility had been granted the right to all higher public office (see ch. 2); enraged, the commoner Estates proceeded to rally around this issue at the next Diet in order to obtain access to all offices and commands. The second thing was that Adolf Fredrik died. His successor Gustaf III made one last attempt to arrive at some sort of constitutional compromise at the 1771–72 Diet, but unsuccessfully. The commoner Estates pressed on with their demands to revoke part of the nobility's privileges. At this point, Gustaf III successfully executed a bloodless coup in the summer of 1772 and put an end to the Age of Liberty. Although he would later abandon them to seek support from the commoner Estates two decades later, the King had saved the nobility from the commoner Estates and maintained their privileges. Surprisingly smoothly perhaps, Gustaf III assumed power under a new constitution, the Diet was disbanded, and its delegates went home. The Age of Liberty had come to an end.<sup>238</sup>

### The Diet in the Age of Liberty

The Swedish Diet as an institution crystallized between the late medieval period and the seventeenth century. Although it had never occupied such a powerful position as it did during the Age of Liberty, the Diet as an institution had a long history of political importance, where Swedish monarchs summoned it to legitimize their policies, and in return examined the delegates' grievances.<sup>239</sup> It was a tetracameral organization, consisting of four Estates: the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasantry.

To count as a nobleman, your father had to be a nobleman or you had to be ennobled. To be a Diet delegate for the nobility two paths stood open: the first was to be the male head of your family, in other words the oldest living male family member in the male line. This method of determining which family member could represent the family was the practice for the entire Age of Liberty, but was only formally ratified in 1762.<sup>240</sup> If your father was still alive or your place in the family tree disqualified you, the second path stood open to those who could gain a proxy through familial ties, acquaintances, or purchase. The proxy would come from someone who was the male head of his noble family, but could not attend the Diet for whatever reason. It should be remembered that each noble delegate had to pay for his stay in the capital during the Diets, something not everyone could afford—and the price of lodging, fuel, and food increased markedly when the Estates convened. One effect of this was that noblemen from Stockholm sometimes constituted as much as a third of the Estate's delegates. From the 1730s

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<sup>237</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 285–286, 433–435; Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 484–485, 558–561, 594–598, 645–674; Lagerroth, 'Frihetstidens parlamentarism och nutidens', 314; Lagerroth, 'Positiv rätt eller naturrätt?', 295–299; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 131–132; Metcalf, 'Hattar och mössor 1766–72', 42–43; Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik*.

<sup>238</sup> Lönnroth, *Den stora rollen*, 52–56, 194–207; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 189–205.

<sup>239</sup> Schück, 'Sweden's early parliamentary institutions'; Rystad, 'The Estates of the realm'; Scherp, *De ofrälse och makten*, 48–58.

<sup>240</sup> Riddarhusordningen § 2, Aug 10 1762, in Brusewitz, ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 368–369; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 219.

onwards it was not uncommon for people to sell their proxies to the various warring parties and groupings within the Diet, and they would then give the proxy to someone loyal to their cause.<sup>241</sup>

The clergy, who in Sweden counted as a commoner Estate, were a mix of unelected and elected delegates. Alongside the 15 bishops of the realm who participated by virtue of their position in the Church, the dioceses and their major subdivisions returned a further 36 Diet delegates. These delegates were either professors, vicars, or deans. Together these 51 clerical delegates represented the Church and its employees at the Diet, and had their expenses paid for by their electorate. The lower clergy—chaplains or ordinary parish priests—could elect their own delegates, but then also had to foot the bill for these extra delegates. They did not exercise this right very often.<sup>242</sup>

The burgher Estate consisted of elected delegates, returned from one or several towns which then paid for their stay in Stockholm during the Diet. From 1731 and 1748 legislation regulated the maximum number of Diet delegates per town. Guildsmen from several towns had demanded that they be able to send their own delegates, but regulations forbade it. At the beginning of the Age of Liberty, the urban electorate consisted of all franchised merchants, including *skeppare* (shipmasters) and guildsmen. From the 1730s, manufactory owners were also included and could thus vote and run for election. Also eligible for election were non-franchised members in the town administration. The elected Diet delegates often held positions as mayors or *rådmän* (town councillors), although the proportion of merchants and guildsmen Diet delegates who did not hold office in their town administration increased towards the end of the period. The burgher Estate did not represent unenfranchised business owners, like the ironmasters, nor all business owners in the towns, like lawyers or apothecaries.<sup>243</sup>

Peasant delegates were elected and, like the clergy and burghers, received money for their expenses from their electorate. The peasantry only represented freeholders and leaseholders, not, for example, leaseholders of land owned by noblemen. Neither did the Estate of the Peasants include landowners or tenants who previously or currently worked in another profession.<sup>244</sup> Ragnar Olsson argues the delegates came from the socially elevated strata of the peasants, and his thesis is supported by Peter Lindström, who argues that social capital and trust outweighed fortune when peasants chose their political champions. Erland Alexandersson has shown that about 60 per cent of the peasant Diet delegates in the 1760s had experience as *nämndemän* (lay judges) in the district courts. When it came to wealth, Gustafsson argues that the peasants' political representatives were not drawn from among the rural poor.<sup>245</sup>

For all these commoner delegates, becoming a delegate came with certain responsibilities, for they operated in accordance with an imperative mandate. Upon election, they entered into a contract with their electorate. As we have seen, the electorate's part of the deal meant they paid

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<sup>241</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 219; Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish party politics*, 3–4; Johanson, 'Ridderskapet och adeln vid 1755–1756 års riksdag'; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 44–45, 130–134.

<sup>242</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 226–229; Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik*, 65–66.

<sup>243</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii, 405; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 258–259; Ericsson, 'De svenska bergsstäderna under frihetstiden', 296–298; Fällström and Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', 228–237.

<sup>244</sup> Olsson, *Riksdagsmannavalen till bondeståndet*, 11–13.

<sup>245</sup> Olsson, *Bondeståndet under den tidigare frihetstiden*, 53; Olsson, *Riksdagsmannavalen till bondeståndet*, 109–110; Alexandersson, *Bondeståndet i riksdagen*, 26–29; Lindström, 'De mest trätögirige?'.

for their delegate's upkeep in Stockholm. This paid upkeep was absolutely necessary but for the wealthy, and the payments did often not suffice anyway. In return for this remuneration, the delegate had to do everything possible to further his electorate's interests. On a general level, the delegates were given a reasonably free hand in matters concerning the entire realm, while more specifically they had to work for the fulfilment of as many as possible of the gravamina they brought with them from their constituency.<sup>246</sup> An electorate could keep in touch with a delegate through letters or visits, and the delegate could contact his electorate about difficult issues. Success could be met with rewards when the delegate returned home; failure to live up to the voters' expectations could mean that his constituents refused to send more money or pay for the costs the delegate had incurred. Furthermore, Diet delegates perceived as unsuccessful could face hardship upon returning home as they had to continue to live among their electorate. The imperative mandate was in turn connected to *principalatsläran* (the principal principle), a doctrine that held that delegates represented a local community and their responsibility lay in abiding by the community's wishes. Although it was declared illegal at the 1746–47 Diet, its tenets remained strong within at least certain parts of society throughout the period.<sup>247</sup> Consequently, commoner delegates faced a great deal of pressure from home to perform.

The turnover in burgher and peasant delegates was high. For example, at the Diet of 1771, 44 burgher delegates out of 121 were attending their first Diet, and another 44 their second. During the last decade of the Age of Liberty—a period where the continuity in the commoner Estates increased—the median of completely inexperienced Diet delegates for the peasantry lay at about two-thirds and about half for the burghers.<sup>248</sup> While the political leadership and core of these Estates consisted of experienced people, the common run of delegates often only visited one or two Diets at most. The nobility and clergy had a far greater degree of continuity.

The Estates varied in size. The nobility remained the largest Estate throughout the period, and while its size often shrank dramatically after the initial votes and then fluctuated over the course of each Diet, it could number up to a 1,000 delegates. The other Estates were much smaller. The peasantry numbered roughly 120 and 140, increasing during the last decades of the period and peaking at 169 delegates. The burghers numbered around 90 at the beginning, but similarly increased to 117 delegates at the period's last Diet. The clergy provided the starkest contrast to the nobility with about 50 members throughout the entire period.<sup>249</sup>

Besides these Estates, the armed forces sent representatives that convened as a silent quasi-Estate throughout the Age of Liberty, referred to as *krigsbefälet* (the army command). They were allowed to convene and submit general gravamina, and acted as an instance of referral whenever the Estates discussed military issues, and so counted as an Estate of sorts, but a silent one, because they possessed no voting rights—they could only argue for their opinions, not vote for them. At first, the army command merely consisted of representatives from the allotted

<sup>246</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 105–106; Johanson, 'Borgarståndsledamöternas traktamenten'; Vuorensola, 'Det imperativa mandatet'; for proxies and similar problems when parishes sent delegates to compose the Diet gravamina, see Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', ch. 2 and 31.

<sup>247</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 151–163; Vuorensola, 'Det imperativa mandatet', 341–342; Jonas Nordin, 'Frihetstidens radikalism', 60–61.

<sup>248</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 245; Alexandersson, *Bondeståndet i riksdagen*, 49–53.

<sup>249</sup> Olsson, *Bondeståndet under den tidigare frihetstiden*, 62; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 241–242; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 43–44.

regiments, but in 1727 they were joined by representatives from the enlisted regiments. From 1738, the navy also sent one representative each from Karlskrona, Gothenburg, and Stockholm.<sup>250</sup>

From the 1738–39 Diet, representatives for the ironmasters were also allowed to convene, regardless of their Estate, forming *bruksriksdagen* (the Ironmasters' Diet). They discussed issues pertaining to their industry, in time seemingly grew to become an integral part of the Diet. They even elected speakers.<sup>251</sup> However, the ironmasters did not constitute a full Estate because, unlike the army command, they had no right to submit *gravamina*. Lastly, non-noble civil servants tried to gain recognition as an Estate in the early Age of Liberty, similar to the army command, but the Estates did not acquiesce.<sup>252</sup>

### ***Proceedings***

The Diet met every third year or so, sometimes more often. In total, it convened 16 times during the Age of Liberty: 1719, 1720, 1723, 1726–27, 1731, 1734, 1738–39, 1740–41, 1742–43, 1746–47, 1751–52, 1755–56, 1760–1762, 1765–66, 1769–70, and 1771–72. Stockholm was the regular meeting place, and 15 out of 16 Diets convened here. Moving the Diet, however, remained a constant topic of discussion. Those in favour of a move wanted to avoid the diplomats and foreign envoys who intervened in political business. Those in favour also thought that by moving the Diet, the Estates would not waste as much time discussing so many minor matters, and that Diet delegates would not be corrupted by Stockholm. On the one occasion the Diet met outside in Stockholm—in Norrköping in 1769–70—the foreign emissaries tagged along anyway. Logistical reasons then forced the Estates to give up and move back to Stockholm.<sup>253</sup>

On the official first day of the Diet, a herald rode around the city accompanied by trumpeters and drummers, announcing that the Diet was to open. The Estates convened in their respective assembly halls, where they elected their marshals, examined the delegates' proxies, and heard the constitution read aloud. Then, one or several days later, it was time for the grand opening ceremony. First, the Diet delegates marched to Storkyrkan (Stockholm cathedral), where they were joined by the king and the Council of the Realm. After the sermon, the congregation moved across the road to the Royal Palace and Rikssalen (the Throne Room), where the Estates' marshals and the king gave speeches. When the Diet closed, a similar ceremony took place.<sup>254</sup>

The work of the Diet was conducted in the Estate assemblies or the Diet's committees, scattered across the city centre (Fig. 4.1). Sometimes all four Estates convened to discuss certain matters, but most of the time they met separately, in different places. The clergy always met in the cathedral. The burghers met nextdoor in Rådstugan (the old city hall), while the peasantry usually convened in Gillestugan, to the southeast of the city centre. In 1765 a new city hall was

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<sup>250</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 223–225; Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-Talet*, 94–95. The difference between Sweden's allotted and enlisted regiments, which were all part of the standing army, was in their recruitment and maintenance. The allotted regiments, which were county-based, were recruited by involuntary conscription, and rather than cash wages the men received land and allowances under Sweden's complex allotment system. The enlisted regiments, which were not primarily county-based, were garrisoned in cities and recruited by voluntary conscription, and the men had cash wages from the Crown.

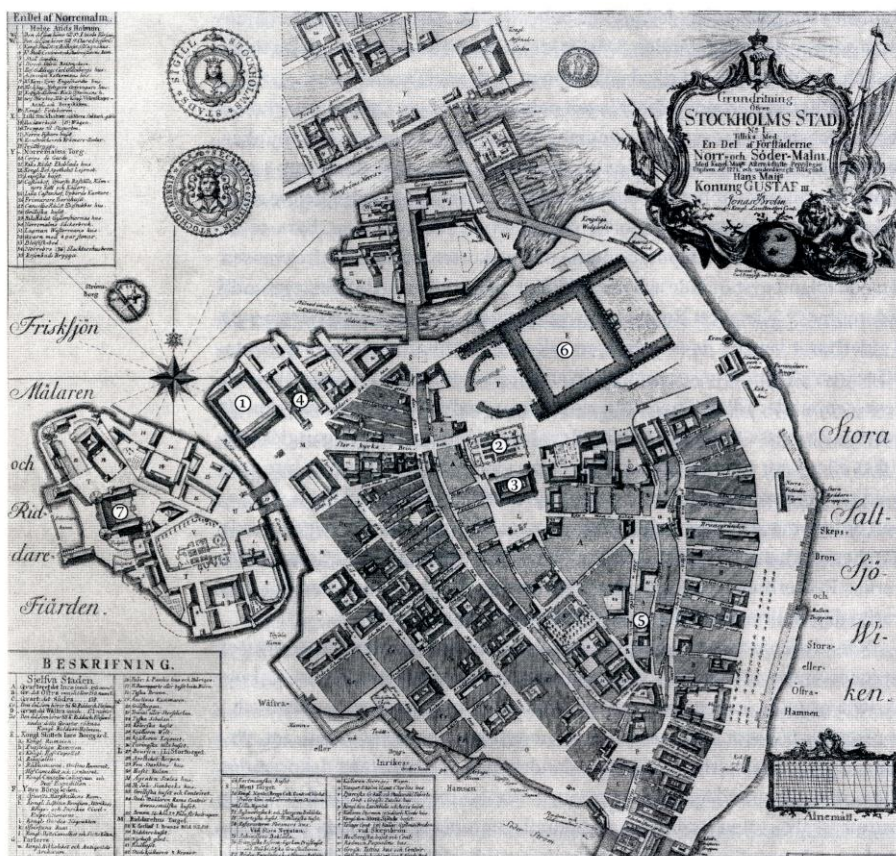
<sup>251</sup> Boëthius and Kromnow, *Jernkontorets historia*, 68–70.

<sup>252</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 52–53.

<sup>253</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii, 282; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 9–16; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 38–39.

<sup>254</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 29–30; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 72–77.

finished in Bondeska palatset (the Bonde Palace), to which the burghers moved to join the peasantry, who had begun to meet there in 1755 while it was still being built. Across the square, the nobility met in the main hall of Riddarhuset (the House of Nobility). Because they met separately, the Estates communicated with one another by messengers or official delegations, numbering between 2 to 48 people depending on the importance of the message.<sup>255</sup>



1. Riddarhuset, the House of the Nobility
2. Storkyrkan, Stockholm cathedral
3. Gamla rådhuset, the old city hall
4. Nya rådhuset i Bondeska palatset, the new city hall
5. Gillesstugan
6. The royal palace. The council of the realm met here and the royal family lived here from 1754. Functioned as Rikssal, throne room, from 1751
7. Kungärbuset i Wrangelska palatset, the royal residence until 1754. Functioned as Rikssal 1719–1754

**FIGURE 4.1** Central Stockholm with the location of the Estates' assemblies marked. When the peasantry and the burghers moved into the new city hall it brought three of the four Estates into close proximity, where before they had been spread out across the city centre.

<sup>255</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 16–24; Sennelfelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 55–62.

As the Age of Liberty progressed, Riddarhuset and the public square to its south became the centre of the capital's political geography when the Estates met. Most of the Diet's committees met in Riddarhuset, while the square was a hub for information, rumour, and gossip. People met and exchanged pleasantries or engaged in political networking. Notices for the Diet delegates were nailed up on Riddarhuset's main gate, while a fence on one side of the square was used by Diet delegates and town-dwellers for bills and flyers that spread gossip, information, propaganda, or slander.<sup>256</sup> This gravitational pull presumably increased further when the peasantry and the burghers moved here.

The Diet's work was divided between its committees and Estate assemblies, so that in theory at least the committees examined errands and offered the Estates a formal opinion upon which the Estates then voted. When committees voted on what to recommend to the Estates, and when the Estates voted on the committees' referrals, each Estate had one vote. Each decision thus required the support of three Estates. Constitutional issues or issues that concerned an Estate's privileges required unanimity. Each decision was then forwarded to the Expediting Deputation, tasked with making the Estate's decisions into instructions or resolutions. Because the committees were made up of Diet delegates, the Estates and the committees convened at different times of day: committees often met in the afternoon, while the Estates met in the morning, although the Estates did not assemble every day. The lion's share of the work took place in the committees, with each committee usually consisting of 30 to 100 seats. Although each Estate only had one vote, the nobility occupied more seats—two-fifths—than the other Estates, who had one-fifth each. The number of committees was constant at around 12–13, although several committees had one or more subcommittees.<sup>257</sup>

The number of committee seats did not harmonize with the number of delegates in the commoner Estates. The clergy, being so few, had particular problems filling their seats, but the other commoner Estates experienced problems as well. Sometimes work in the committees stopped altogether because too many delegates were missing.<sup>258</sup>

The Diet was tailored to the nobility not only in size, but in other aspects as well. For example, noblemen chaired all committees.<sup>259</sup> But the clearest sign of the nobility's dominance was their position in the crown jewel of the committees, *Sekreta utskottet* (the Secret Committee). Here, the noble contingent of 50 comprised half of the committee members and a third of the vote, with the clergy and the burghers having 25 places each and the peasantry none, much to their discontent. Peasants were perceived as naïve and gossip-prone, and not to be trusted with the weighty matters that lay within the Secret Committee's jurisdiction—the armed forces, foreign policy, the state budget, and taxation. What transpired during the committee meetings had to be kept secret. The committee furthermore had the authority to pass resolutions without consulting the Estate assemblies, a prerogative which made it even more of an exception. It convened, of course, in Riddarhuset.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 53–55, 63–72.

<sup>257</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 98–100; Ludwigs, *Riksarkivets beståndsoversikt*, ii, 42; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 52–53.

<sup>258</sup> Olsson, *Bondeståndet under den tidigare frihetstiden*, 62–63; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 52–53.

<sup>259</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 114; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 99.

<sup>260</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 71–76; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 31–48; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 123–124.





**FIGURE 4.2** Central Stockholm in 1768, with some of the Diet's key buildings visible. The large white building on the left is Bondeska palatset; to its right is Riddarhuset.

This domination by the nobility should not be forgotten when examining the Age of Liberty. For most of the Swedish population at the time, the Estates were their socioeconomic and political superiors, and because of the Diet's tetracameral system, three-quarters of the votes—the nobility, the clergy, and the burghers—were controlled by delegates who represented less than 4 per cent of the population. In the Secret Committee they controlled all of the votes.<sup>261</sup> It would not be until the end of the Age of Liberty that the nobility's grip was broken.

Lastly, the Diet was something of a social event. The Diet delegates had to live and eat somewhere, and Stockholm saw innumerable dinners, banquets, and feasts in its many mansions, political clubs, inns, wine cellars, coffee houses, and other semi-public arenas, a social culture further fuelled by the struggles between political factions and the money foreign ambassadors in an attempt to secure support for their desired foreign policy.<sup>262</sup> Although these different types of gatherings mostly kept to the demarcations of the social culture at the time, the Age of Liberty Diets still generated possibilities for people to cross social barriers. The formation of the Hats in the 1730s seems to have been especially conducive to this. One of the central figures in the Hats, Carl Gyllenborg (1679–1746), was seen treating both burghers and peasants as his equals as he sought support. However, people crossed social boundaries for other reasons as well, while middlemen—those who could connect people with one another—and geographic allegiances could also facilitate less strict social intercourse.<sup>263</sup>

<sup>261</sup> Statistics from Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 191–192.

<sup>262</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 93–96, 126, 129, 134–141.

<sup>263</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 245–251, 256–259; Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish party politics*, 260–264; Sennefelt, 'Stockholmsliv'; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 90–91, 143–149, 160–167, 184–187, 191–193, 196–199, 218–222, 237–239.

## Duration

A recurring complaint throughout the period was the Diets' length. As early as 1727 the Estates had tried to remedy the problem by stipulating that a Diet could not last more than three months; however, this vision of shorter meetings never materialized. Some Diets, like those of 1760–62 and 1765–66, were in session for almost two years.<sup>264</sup> Complaints from Diet delegates about long Diets can be found in the minutes throughout the Age of Liberty, although some of them should be taken with a pinch of salt. There are several instances when delegates or others urged the Estates to close the Diet in order to prevent an unwanted outcome, or were accused of harbouring such motives.<sup>265</sup>

Nonetheless, the complaints reflected a very real problem. At the 1726–27 Diet, 39 out of 146 peasant delegates left before the Diet closed because it had gone on too long. The lengths of the Diets moreover hampered the Crown's organization. Not only did noblemen leave their military or civilian posts to attend, but non-noble administrative personnel had to do the same, and often at considerable personal cost. Towards the end of the Age of Liberty, Kungl. Maj:t decided that those who were to attend the Diet had to hire a substitute to provide cover while they were gone. Furthermore, when in session the Estates demanded a great of information and documents from the administration, which took its toll on the remaining personnel.<sup>266</sup>

Besides the lack of delegates to fill the wide selection of committee seats, there were at least three other structural issues that prolonged the Diets: the quantity of business to get through; the lack of coordination; and the many ways to initiate errands.

The Diet handled a great deal of business. When the Estates met, they examined, discussed, and decided on foreign affairs, the state budget, taxation, Bills from Kungl. Maj:t (which are described below), the Estates' general gravamina, and other questions.<sup>267</sup> Moreover, the Estates saw it as an important part of their job to audit the government administration. Therefore they scrutinized Kungl. Maj:t's minutes, and progressively during the 1720s and early 1730s started to examine the administrative boards' and diocesan minutes. During roughly the same period, the Estates also started requesting that the administrative boards, the dioceses, the county governors, and the chancellor of justice submit reports of the exercise of their duties since the last Diet—including how they had received and handled people's supplications. Finally, as Kungl. Maj:t could only issue temporary decrees in between the Diets, when the Estates met they had to examine these decrees and either ratify, change, or discard them, although Lagerroth argues they only arbitrarily upheld this aspect of their duties.<sup>268</sup>

Thus, the Estates not only met to legislate and decide policies, but also to bring Kungl. Maj:t and the central and regional administrative organs to account. In addition to its legislative function, the Diet therefore acquired a judicial and administrative role, the latter characteristic being strengthened by the existence of the Estates' many administrative organs and funds.

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<sup>264</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 154–156.

<sup>265</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 144–146, 208–209; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 153; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 298; Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish party politics*, 7, 167–168.

<sup>266</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 85, 161–162; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 399–407; Olsson, *Bondeståndet under den tidigare frihetstiden*, 62–63; Nordström, *Reformer och rationalisering*, 104.

<sup>267</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 71–79.

<sup>268</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 199–217, 246–253, 355–360; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 252–253; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 76–80.



Among them were Manufakturkontoret (the Manufactories Office), which managed the economic support supplied for Sweden's manufactories, and Ständernas kontor (the Estates Office), which oversaw the national debt.<sup>269</sup>

A second factor that prolonged the Diets was the lack of coordination. There were no official rules for the distribution of labour and responsibility between committees and subcommittees. The Estates' speakers found it hard to synchronize their respective Estates' order of business with the other Estates, a problem that only increased towards the end of each Diet, when the Estates hurried to pass as many resolutions as possible. The coordination issues were exacerbated by the Estate chambers' different locations around the city centre, which forced them to communicate with one another by the many messengers or delegations. The same distance also encumbered the voting process. When one Estate voted, its secretary noted the decision in *löparen* (lit. the runner, the running record), which contained the official proposition or recommendation from the committee and any other Estate as well as the other Estates' decisions. The runner was passed from one Estate chamber to the next before being handed in to the Expediting Deputation; however, the runners regularly got lost, stuck in one of the Estates' chanceries, or even went home with individual Diet delegates. The other Estates were then forced to make enquiries, either via messages to one another or by 'repeated placards at Riddarhuset's gate'. On occasion, documents were even stolen in order to obstruct unwanted decisions.<sup>270</sup>

A third factor behind the long Diets, which clearly related to the first two, was the virtually unlimited possibilities to initiate business. When the Diet came into existence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the four Estates functioned as dynamic opinion surveys writ large, expressing their different views on the king's proposals and in exchange they submitted gravamina for the king to rule on. The right of initiative was vested firmly in the monarch. Fast forward to the Age of Liberty, and things had changed so much that, according to Lagerroth, the right to initiate business 'was exceedingly extensive. All administrative organs as well as all individual persons were able to turn to the Diet with their requests.'<sup>271</sup> In other words, the procedures were more dynamic, but the tetracameral system was the same as a century earlier, with a complex network of committees and subcommittees that further tangled matters. It is to the various ways by which errands entered the Diet that I will now turn.

Kungl. Maj:t submitted one or several Bills to the Estates at the beginning of each Diet. These concerned different areas that Kungl. Maj:t considered important. Kungl. Maj:t also referred business to the Estates during Diets, asking them to make decisions on individual cases. This habit caused such annoyance that a 1727 decree forbade Kungl. Maj:t from referring errands that could be resolved elsewhere.<sup>272</sup> This did not impede Kungl. Maj:t, however, although it remains uncertain how many referrals the Diet actually faced. A quick survey of the 1765–66 *Riksdagstidningen* shows that the Estates received more than 150 referrals on individual errands

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<sup>269</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 38–41; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 363–367.

<sup>270</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 59–61, 63–64, 141–143, quote at 142–143; Alexandersson, *Bondeståndet i riksdagen*, 203–204; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 57–58.

<sup>271</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 71; Schück, 'Sweden's early parliamentary institutions', 43–45; Rystad, 'The Estates of the realm', 69; Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt*, ch. 4.

<sup>272</sup> KF1727, § 1, in Brusewitz, ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 433–434.

from Kungl. Maj:t.<sup>273</sup> If that is a representative number or not remains an issue for further research.

The Estates' general gravamina were another permanent fixture from 1723 onwards. All Estates were permitted to submit gravamina, but it seems the nobility did not utilize this opportunity to the same extent as the others did. According to Lagerroth, they failed to submit their gravamina at several Diets, including the 1726–27 Diet sampled in the present study. After 1738–39, they only presented general gravamina on two occasions, 1751–52 and 1765–66, but retracted them on both occasions.<sup>274</sup>

In the commoner Estates, each delegate brought *riksdagsbesvär* (Diet gravamina) from their constituencies to the Diet. Their own Estate first scrutinized the gravamina, and decided which errands they should support as general gravamina, backed by the entire Estate. Gravamina backed by the Estate were sent to *allmänna besvärdeputationen* (the General Gravamina Deputation), probably the second most important governmental committee in the Age of Liberty Diet next to the Secret Committee. All the commoner Estates had people from their chanceries who sat in that committee. The reason for the General Gravamina Deputation's clout was that it examined all general gravamina, decided which committee should examine each in turn, and then communicated the outcome back to the Estates. It thus controlled the flow of the general gravamina. It also seems like the General Gravamina Deputation delegates slipped in their own recommendations before the voting process, to the chagrin of delegates on other committees. In 1751, the General Gravamina Deputation was forbidden to disclose its thoughts on other committees' recommendation.<sup>275</sup>

Besides the general gravamina, an Estate could also try raise an issue with an *extraktprotokoll* (an Extract from the Minutes), which they distributed to the other Estates to start an inquiry or a vote. A delegate could also deliver a so-called memorial to his Estate, asking his fellow Estate members to accept his request as their own. If the Estate obliged, a delegation was sent to the other Estates.<sup>276</sup> The Diet Act allowed a delegate to present his memorial in another Estate as long as he had the permission of his Estate's secretary. Thus, it is possible that delegates who did not find support for their grievances still had a chance of getting them heard if he could persuade other Estates to accept his memorial.<sup>277</sup> Although they were supposed to only examine issues delivered to them from the Estate chambers, the committees could also raise issues. Therefore, Diet delegates went to the committees in order to get them to receive and handle errands.<sup>278</sup>

Thus, any grievance not accepted as a general gravamina could still be made the Estates' responsibility by several other means. Although the errands left out of the general gravamina were supposed to be submitted to Kungl. Maj:t as *enskilda besvär* (particular gravamina), both burghers and peasants complained about the royal administration's dilatory pace during Diets.

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<sup>273</sup> RT 1765–66, no. 98, Mar. 19 1766, 394.

<sup>274</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 257, 261.

<sup>275</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 59, 254–262.

<sup>276</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 74–75.

<sup>277</sup> RO, § 11, in Brusewitz, ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 239.

<sup>278</sup> RO, § 14, in Brusewitz, ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 242; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 77–79.

Hence, a number of delegates pursued other tactics to get their errands tabled in the Diet when the general gravamina option was closed to them.

Lastly, there were the supplications. Throughout the period, the antechambers or corridors of the Estates' assemblies were populated by supplicants, waiting to have their cases heard.<sup>279</sup> Standing outside a committee meeting room or an Estate probably worked to a certain extent, perhaps even more so than submitting a supplication to the Screening Deputation. However, these were not official routes, and they certainly did not exist in law. These methods should rather be compared with networking, bribery, or any other informal way of gaining formal support for one's goals.

In 1720 the Diet was so deluged with supplicants that some form of regulation was needed, regulation that eventually became incorporated into the Riksdagsordningen (the Diet Act) of 1723. Among a long list of measures, the Act created the Screening Deputation, whose job was to receive supplications and which had complete control over which errands had the right to be heard in the Diet. The Act also forbade waiting outside assembly halls or committee meeting rooms. Thus, the Estates voted to add a new level to the Swedish supplication channel. From now on, there was one formal point of entry open to all supplicants. There seems to have been two exceptions to this rule, though. In 1731 the Estates voted to allow people wronged by the Council of the Realm to have unrestricted access to Sekreta Deputationen (the Secret Deputation), the committee with oversight of the Council's minutes. And at the 1742–43 Diet, the Estates appointed a committee to receive supplications from Finnish refugees in the wake of the war.<sup>280</sup>

## Conclusions

The Age of Liberty Diet attained a powerful position, then unmatched in its history. The Diet de facto assumed a political, judicial, and administrative position simultaneously. At the same time, the four chambers remained the same: spread out across the Stockholm city centre, difficult to get an overview of, and difficult to synchronize. The Estates legislated and made policies, but their meetings also functioned as audits, where they demanded Kungl. Maj:t and other administrative organs submit documents to them for scrutiny. There were several possible ways for Diet delegates and supplicants alike to have their errands examined by the Estates, some of which were against regulations. For supplicants, the accepted method from 1723 onwards was to go to the Screening Deputation and submit one's supplication there. The Screening Deputation was now part of the Swedish supplication channel.

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<sup>279</sup> See, for example, Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 56, 60.

<sup>280</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 138; Blomstedt, 'Lantadministrationen i Finland på 1700-talet', 290–291.

## 5 Legislation

In this chapter, I first examine the content of the legislation and regulations concerning the Diet's supplication channel. The centrepieces of the period were the 1723 Diet Act, the decrees for shortening the Diets issued in 1727 and 1738, and the permanent instructions for the Screening Deputation from 1748 and 1760. Other regulations concerning Diet supplications were issued or agreed in 1734, 1738, 1751–52, 1755–56, 1759, 1765–66, 1768, and 1770. Several decrees also contained repeats of previous regulations and such instances have generally been left out of the discussion here. I then examine the discussions about the Diet's supplication channel to glean what type of motives and ideas lay behind its development. As many of them were presented in connection with specific measures—‘I think we should apply measure X because of argument Y’—it is simpler to first present the content of the regulation before presenting the reasons to avoid jumbling them up. There is one exception: the discussions about appeals against the Judicial Audit are raised in the regulation section because of the complexity of the issue. The last portion of the chapter considers the printing of the regulations and supplications.

### Regulations

#### 1723

The right for individuals to submit supplications to the Diet was constitutionally established in the 1723 Diet Act, §§ 13 and 15. Anyone who could show that he or she had been legally wronged and had substantial evidence for any accusation made against a servant of the Crown was welcome to petition, but faced punishment if the evidence proved insufficient. Moreover, an errand that could not be resolved elsewhere could be brought to the Estates. § 16 further stipulated that any document signed by multiple persons had to come from a guild or society of some sort and pertain to their area of activity, otherwise the supplication would constitute a conspiracy and would be punished accordingly.<sup>281</sup> Thus, the decree stipulated that supplicants could bring errands without clear jurisdiction, and could appeal cases where errors had been made by Kungl. Maj:t or other servants of the Crown, and nothing else.

However, it does seem that this latter stipulation only applied to appeals against the Judicial Audit, where appeals were furthermore only possible in civil cases.<sup>282</sup> In other words, appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's other offices could be made on the basis of the case matter and not only procedure, as when appealing from the Judicial Audit. This conclusion stems from an exchange that took place when the Diet Act was being drafted. The Estate of the Burghers proposed that the Diet Act should give Diet jurisdiction to change verdicts from the Judicial Audit. The committee responsible for scrutinizing the Judicial Audit, Justitiedeputationen (the Judicial Deputation), argued that this would undermine the authority of Kungl. Maj:t and make the Diet into a permanent legal institution; however, the debate made no mention of Kungl. Maj:t's other offices, which implies that changing their verdicts was not seen as equally threatening. Thus,

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<sup>281</sup> RO, §§ 13, 15 & 16, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 240–241, 243–244.

<sup>282</sup> This brings to mind Hultin the butcher in Chapter 3. Lagerroth notes that the Estates did involve themselves in criminal cases at the very last Diet of the Age of Liberty, but only in cases where crimes were suspected to have been committed against a servant of the Crown. Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 349.

appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's other offices could be made on the basis of the verdicts themselves, but appeals against the Judicial Audit on erroneous procedure. This distinction was not upheld in practice. Although the Estate of the Burghers in the end did not get what it argued for, throughout the Age of Liberty the Judicial Deputation would issue recommendations on the verdicts or on procedure when its delegates found something they thought wrong. They sent these recommendations to Kungl. Maj:t, which acted accordingly, de facto making the recommendations into new rulings.<sup>283</sup> Thus, the Diet became the supreme court of Sweden. Although the king's formal position as the guardian of the law and the fundament of the Swedish legal system remained formally unchallenged, it was informally undermined.

Where to submit supplications was further elaborated in § 15 of the Diet Act. A committee for 'riksdagssärendernes åtskillande', the screening of Diet business, was to be appointed. It was tasked with receiving and examining every 'supplique eller memorial' ('every supplication and memorial') and distinguish those that fell under the Diet's jurisdiction from those that could be resolved elsewhere, meaning by the government bureaucracy or in other forums. That the Screening Deputation was an extension of the supplication channel also made clear in the 1748 instructions, which stipulated that appeals could only be made to the Estates if their regulations as well as the Petitioners' Edict had been followed.<sup>284</sup>

From at least 1746–47, supplications were submitted to riddarhuskansliet (Riddarhuset's chancery), who in turn forwarded them to the Screening Deputation. That committee referred the accepted supplications to other committees for further examination and dismissed the rest, denying them access to the Diet. Furthermore, it was clearly stipulated that all incoming supplications not congruent with the current form of government or the constitutional laws would result in the supplicant being punished. Supplicants could only submit their requests in the first month after a Diet had opened.<sup>285</sup>

Incoming communications were numbered in the chronological order in which they trickled into the Screening Deputation. When the committee members set about examining them they did so in numerical order, beginning with number 1, then 2, then 3 and so on. Likewise, the committees the supplications were referred to were also supposed to examine them according to their enumeration. This system was in all likelihood borrowed from the government administration; the Board for Public Lands and Funds, at least, followed the same enumeration-guided procedure. The Screening Deputation thus mimicked administrative practices from the Crown's bureaucracy.<sup>286</sup>

## 1727

Only parts of the 1727 regulations pertained to supplications; mostly they concerned other Diet procedures, differentiating between the Estates' and Kungl. Maj:t's jurisdiction and strengthening the Estates' control of the courts.<sup>287</sup> Consequently, the purpose of this decree was

<sup>283</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 109–113; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 346–349.

<sup>284</sup> RO, § 15, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 243; UI1748, § 12, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 274; see also *Projekt till instruktion*, § 12, R893, PrA, RA.

<sup>285</sup> RO, § 15, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 243; UI1748, §§ 6 & 8, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 272–273; for more information on the Palace of the Nobility chancery, see Hallendorff (ed.), *Sveriges riddarhus*, 429–435.

<sup>286</sup> RO, § 15, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 243; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 252.

<sup>287</sup> KF1727, §§ 3–5, 7, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 434–435.

not only to limit the Diet's burden, but also to more clearly define the Estates' position at the top of both the bureaucratic and judicial apparatus of government. The decree's content therefore shows that people did not perceive supplications as the sole cause of the long Diets. Nonetheless, a stated purpose of the decree was to ease the burden of the 'many private applications' that had continued to eat up the Diet's time.<sup>288</sup>

The decree forbade supplicants to bypass the Screening Deputation, adding a 50 dsmt fine as a deterrent. The decree made specific mention of those who had claims on the state, telling them not to submit supplications to the Diet, but rather to await reimbursement. The decree allowed supplicants to appeal rejections from the Screening Deputation, potentially strengthening their position. Although anyone game enough to appeal a rejection without just cause had to pay a 50 dsmt fine, this stipulation allowed them a way into the Diet despite having been rejected by the Screening Deputation. Lastly, the individual Estates were forbidden from informing supplicants about the result of their vote on supplications. The supplicant had to wait for the Expediting Deputation's ratification.<sup>289</sup>

### 1734

Seven years later, the Estates wanted to ease their investigative burden caused by proposals brought to them by people with larger requests. Proposals pertaining to the 'rural economy, farming, plantations, or any other matters, such as the betterment of the exercise of justice, and the like' had to be submitted to the administrative boards, which would decide if the proposals were worthy of consideration.<sup>290</sup>

The Estates additionally underlined that Swedish subjects could only appeal an unlawful process or an injustice incurred by the Judicial Audit, and only in civil cases. Various Diet delegates complained that supplicants appealed the cases themselves and not any wrongdoing, and that the Estates meddled in the verdicts themselves and not only examined judicial conduct. These Diet delegates were not comfortable with the Diet assuming this judicial position, and the ensuing debate resulted in a paragraph in that year's Diet resolution, although in reality it went no further than maintaining the status quo.<sup>291</sup>

### 1738

Unlike the 1727 regulations, the 1738 decree for the shortening of Diets only focused on supplications and contained several restrictions. It specified that appeals could only be made against verdicts passed during or after the previous Diet.<sup>292</sup> For example, a supplicant who came to the 1738–39 Diet could only appeal verdicts handed down during or after the previous Diet in 1734.

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<sup>288</sup> 'mångfaldige private ansökningar', KF1727, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 433.

<sup>289</sup> KF1727, §§ 1, 2, 6 & 8, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 433–436. For more on the Estates' debt management, see ch. 14.

<sup>290</sup> 'Landthushållning, Åkerbruk, Planteringar, eller i andra mål, såsom til Rättwisans beqwämligare handhafwande, med mera', Riksdagsbeslutet 1734, § 13, in Modée, ii. 1158–1159, quote at 1158.

<sup>291</sup> 'Rikens ständers beslut angående besvär hos ständerna över justitierevisionens domar' (14 Dec. 1734), in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 436; Erasmus Trädgårds memorial, PrP 8, 25 July 1734, pp. 523–525. Both Malmström and Lagerroth, long apart in their view of the Age of Liberty's merits, agree that many in the Estates vacillated about what to do concerning appeals against the Justice Revision; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 221–222; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 338–343, 352–353.

<sup>292</sup> KF1738, § 3, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 437.

Furthermore, the decree forbade supplicants from resubmitting a supplication a second time if it had been rejected in the first place, unless they could add new information of consequence. A 100 dsmt fine awaited those that persisted. Neither could supplicants include several grievances that fell under different committee's jurisdictions in the same document; scribes who had helped writing the supplication had to countersign the supplication, and people submitting supplications in other peoples' names had to hold formal proxies. Lastly, the decree stipulated that no original documents—such as contracts, verdicts, and so on—be submitted as attachments, as the Estates seemingly did not wish to be responsible for precious documents.<sup>293</sup> The Screening Deputation pointed out, forcing representatives to carry formal proxies and scribes to countersign supplications was established practice in the courts; these proposals thus harmonized the Screening Deputation's rules with accepted legal practice.<sup>294</sup>

The regulations also included one further let-out. Supplicants delayed by dilatory bureaucracy could seek exemption from the mandatory one-month deadline, if they could prove that the matter would not prolong the Diet. If the committee rejected the supplicant's request he or she could appeal, although frivolous appeals carried a 50 dsmt fine. Both the clergy and the Screening Deputation's delegates argued that abiding by the one-month term was imperative for keeping the Diets shorter, but their resistance was in vain.<sup>295</sup>

The Estates also issued another decree that further elaborated on their relationship to the Judicial Audit and contained strict provisos for those appealing its verdicts. Firstly, after a debate about the interpretation of the word '*domvilla*' (miscarriage of justice), in the 1734 decree, a majority of the Estates voted in favour of not only allowing appeals on the grounds of unlawful procedure or injustice, but also in cases where Kungl. Maj:t had issued a verdict in clear violation of the law. As Lagerroth remarks, this decision paved the way for appeals not only on the basis of procedure, but also the matter at hand, although he claims that the high risks deterred people from making such appeals.<sup>296</sup>

Secondly, the decree also stipulated that any supplicant who wanted to challenge a verdict from the Judicial Audit had to inform Kungl. Maj:t within three to six months of the date of the verdict, and if the supplicant then decided to withdraw the appeal or if the appeal lacked due cause, hefty fines of 500 dsmt and severe punishment could ensue. If the supplicant pursued his or her chances in the Diet without proving any errors, the supplicant faced even higher fines and harsher punishments, even death. The threat of death lingered because rash appeals against the Judicial Audit were considered to call the competence of the king and his servants into question; however, as Jonas Nordin has shown, death sentences issued for the crime of lese-majesty were almost always commuted.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> KF1738, §§ 5–6, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 438

<sup>294</sup> Urskillningsdeputationens extraktprotokoll, 24 July 1738, R1250, BrA, RA.

<sup>295</sup> KF1738, § 1, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 437; Prästerståndets extraktprotokoll, 15 July 1738, R1256, BrA, RA; Urskillningsdeputationens extraktprotokoll, 24 July 1738, R1250, BrA, RA.

<sup>296</sup> 'Kungl. Förordning angående besvär hos riksens ständer över justitierevisionens domar' (22 Nov. 1738), §§ 4–6, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 439–440; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 343–346.

<sup>297</sup> 'Kungl. Förordning angående besvär hos riksens ständer över justitierevisionens domar' (22 Nov. 1738), Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 438–440; Nordin, *Fribetstidens monarki*, 261–264.

## 1748

The instructions of 1748, issued that year but drawn up during the 1746–47 Diet, were the lengthiest decree regarding the Screening Deputation's work to date, totalling 26 paragraphs. The 1734 decision that restricted people's opportunities to propose general reforms of agriculture or the judicial system disappeared, for example, but it is unclear if this omission meant that such supplications were once again acceptable.

The regulations gave supplicants one more opportunity. Those who had not been promoted to an available post that had subsequently gone to someone less competent were now allowed to bring their case to the Diet—they could appeal instances of prejudice (see pp. 97–100). The Estates justified tinkering with § 40 of the Instrument of Government, which specified that the Estates had to examine all appointments made since the last Diet. People had appealed against prejudice before 1748, and including prejudice in the instructions merely ratified and institutionalized the practice, as well as advertised this possibility to aggrieved civil servants and officers.<sup>298</sup>

The instructions, however, mostly focused on restrictions. It made mention of the fact that it was not allowed to bring matters to the Estates that were still under examination in lower instances, and it increasingly emphasized the punishment for those who broke the rules. Fines for bypassing the Screening Deputation and for unwarranted appeals against the Screening Deputation's rejections increased from 50 to 100 dsmt, while fines for returning with the same supplication a second time increased from 100 to 200 dsmt.<sup>299</sup> From 1748 supplicants also faced punishment if they came back to the Estates to appeal against a verdict issued before the previous Diet (200 dsmt); when supplicants from among the Diet delegates resubmitted a rejected supplication through an Estate's general gravamina (300 dsmt); and when supplicants submitted a previously refused supplication in an unaltered form and at the same time bypassed the Screening Deputation (300 dsmt).<sup>300</sup> There were very high fines of 1000 dsmt for legal breaches previously unlisted in the regulations for this channel, although certainly illegal throughout the entire Age of Liberty: for those who attempted to obtain a promotion of title or character (meaning not the actual command or office, but the rank of that command or office); for those who treated their public office as a commodity to trade or sell; and for those who importuned the Estates to create new public offices which they would then be appointed to.<sup>301</sup> By including these issues in their regulation, it is likely the Estates tried to show an increased seriousness in trying to temper these types of supplications.

In another measure to discourage criminal intent, the responsibility for collecting fines shifted from the Estates themselves to fiskalen (the fiscal) of Riddarhuset. He was to keep a third of everything he collected while the rest went to the poor.<sup>302</sup> Lastly, the jurisdiction in cases

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<sup>298</sup> UI1748, § 14, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 274; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 368.

<sup>299</sup> UI1748, §§ 5, 9, 12, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 272–274.

<sup>300</sup> UI1748, §§ 4, 13, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 272, 274.

<sup>301</sup> UI1748, §§ 15–17, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 274–275; 'Kunglig förordning angående karaktärs förbudande och subordinationens iakttagelse' (20 Sept. 1723), § 10, Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 145; RF, §§ 42–43, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 40–41.

<sup>302</sup> UI1748, § 26, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 277.



of defamation of public servants was stipulated: from now on, the committee to which the Screening Deputation had referred the supplication would investigate the matter.<sup>303</sup>

Life was also becoming harder for blameless supplicants who faced higher costs in both time and money when the Estates also made it obligatory for supplicants to write their supplications on stamped paper. Stamp duty was already obligatory for supplications to other instances. The fees for submitting supplications to the Diet were not only included into the 1748 instructions, but also the revised *charta sigillata* ordinance, duly updated and reissued in 1748. Exempted from the stamp tax were the poor and peasants, who still had to procure a stamp but did not have to pay for it.<sup>304</sup> As a comparison, the price of the first sheet in a supplication—16 öre or 0.5 dsmt—would buy 48 loaves of wheat bread, while the price for the third document onwards—1 dsmt—roughly equalled the price of a pair of green socks in 1750.<sup>305</sup>

The instruction also set down the the Screening Deputation's working procedures and its relationship with the rest of the Diet. From now on, all general gravamina had to pass through the Screening Deputation to avoid Diet delegates submitting their gravamina to both the Screening Deputation and as General Gravamina, potentially creating work for several committees, which might reach different conclusions unbeknownst to one another. The Screening Deputation was to communicate the supplications it had accepted or rejected to the Estate assemblies after each meeting, a practice that seems to have been in place in 1746. Likewise, the Screening Deputation had to communicate with the General Gravamina Deputation which errands they had examined and referred.<sup>306</sup> Given the Age of Liberty Diet's coordination issues, the legislation's authors clearly intended to preclude overlaps, with several committees spent time examining the same issues, and to ferret out supplicants who were knowingly breaking the law. Additionally, this measure and the fact that the Screening Deputation from now on had to keep minutes whenever disagreements arose, increased the liability of the committee by way of increased oversight.

### 1751

It did not take long before the practice of sending the general gravamina to the Screening Deputation ceased. Although the nobility protested, the other Estates voted to revert to pre-1748 praxis.<sup>307</sup> This particular loophole in the Diet's construction was reopened, and was never closed again. In order to keep a weather eye open for delegates intent on manipulating the system by submitting the same grievances twice, the Estates had to rely on the screening lists forwarded by the Screening Deputation.

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<sup>303</sup> UI1748, § 10, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 273.

<sup>304</sup> UI1748, § 21, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 275–276; stamped paper could be procured from the magistrates, the county governors' offices, and the district judges or their equivalents in the mining districts. The royal decree of 1748 was the first *charta sigillata* decree to specify where the stamped paper was collectable but there is no reason to believe the eighteenth century procedure changed dramatically before or after 1748. See *Kongl. Maj:ts Nådiga Förordning, Angående Stämplat Papper* (14 Jan. 1748), § 26, *ÅT*.

<sup>305</sup> Lagerqvist, *Vad kostade det?*, 128, 166–167.

<sup>306</sup> UI1748, §§ 6–8, 22–25, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 272–273, 276–277; for proof that the communication procedure existed in 1746–47, see PrP 12, 25 Oct. 1746, p. 82; RaP 15, Oct. 1746, pp. 119–120.

<sup>307</sup> BdP 7, 12 Dec. 1751, p. 84; PrP 13, 12 Dec. 1751, pp. 113–114; RaP 18, 6 Nov. 1751, pp. 168–169; the decision was officially ratified in 1752, see UI1760, § 19, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 283.

## 1755–56

The following Diet of 1755–56 brought further changes, the first being of direct benefit to Diet delegates. The Estate of the Burghers proposed, and the other Estates approved, extending the window for submitting supplications to the Screening Deputation from one month to six weeks for Diet delegates, so that they could submit any *gravamina* that had been denied inclusion into the Estates' General *Gravamina* as supplications to the Screening Deputation. Only supplications that concerned a *menighet* (a populace or community) were covered by this.<sup>308</sup> The six-week limit was taken from § 24 of the 1748 instructions, which stipulated that general *gravamina* had to be submitted to the Screening Deputation within six weeks of the opening of the Diet. As we saw above, the Estates had voted to nullify this paragraph, but explicitly based the decision to keep the Screening Deputation open longer for its Diet delegate members. Not only that, but although § 24 was struck from the updated 1760 instructions and no new stipulation of the six-week limit was made in the 1760 instructions, the Estates kept the later deadline for Diet delegates for the rest of the Age of Liberty, something which was also plainly visible in the printed screening lists.<sup>309</sup>

Further requirements and punishments were announced. The Screening Deputation successfully proposed that supplicants submit two copies of each sheet of paper handed in to Screening Deputation, although one set of copies did not have to bear stamps.<sup>310</sup> Those who submitted any of the illegal employment requests mentioned in the 1748 instructions risked the sack and would lose their chances at future appointments. Diet delegates who helped such evildoers would lose their seat in the current Diet and possibly all future Diets. However, this decree did not spell the end to the Estates' involvement in appointments to offices and commands. On the contrary, The Estates still allowed appeals on grounds of prejudice; they maintained the right to reward deserving people with appointments; and the Estates reserved the right to recommend officials toiling in the Estates' administrative organs for public office. Additionally, they also issued the Report on Crown Service, which reiterated the right for people to appeal on grounds of prejudice.<sup>311</sup>

## 1759

In 1759, Kungl. Maj:t issued a decree to ensure that appeals against the other offices of Kungl. Maj:t would be as formal and burdensome as appealing from the Judicial Audit. Appellants now had to inform the king that they would appeal a verdict to the Estates, and that within a certain timeframe.<sup>312</sup> Consequently, all appeals against Kungl. Maj:t now followed similar rules.

However, it was not the Estates that had issued this decree. Because Kungl. Maj:t could only issue temporary decrees, the decree awaited final ratification, and when the Estates convened in

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<sup>308</sup> PrP 14:1, 27 Oct. 1755, pp. 46–47, 29 Oct. 1755, p. 49; Lagerroth claims that the populace or town restriction was first introduced in 1765, but it seems it was merely reiterated at that point. Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 262.

<sup>309</sup> See, for example, RT 1765–66 no. 98, 19 Mar. 1766, p. 394; RT 1769–70, no. 59, 12 May 1770, p. 236.

<sup>310</sup> Urskillingsdeputationens betänkande, angående befordran af skyndesam- och redighet uti Deputationens arbete, 6 Nov. 1755, R1884, BdA, RA; BdP 7, 8 Nov. 1755, p. 483; PrP 14:1, 10 Nov. 1755, p. 78; the 1760 instruction then ratified this procedure. UI1760, § 6, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 279.

<sup>311</sup> 'Kungl. Förordning angående befordringsansökningar hos riksens ständer' (17 Dec. 1756), in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 442–443; TB1756, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 191–207, especially § 16, p. 201.

<sup>312</sup> Kongl. Maj:ts nädige förordning angående fatalier i Politic- och Oeconomic-mål. 10 Jan. 1759, § 8 especially, *AT*.

1760 they declared the decree temporarily void while they examined it.<sup>313</sup> Then, when the Estates ratified the 1760 instructions, they did not include the 1759 decree. In fact, they never ratified it, and were still discussing its validity at the 1771–72 Diet. Sometimes the Screening Deputation ground to a halt because of disagreements.<sup>314</sup> At the same time, the third sample of the present study does contain instances, albeit only four of them, where the Screening Deputation used the 1759 decree to deny people access to the Diet.<sup>315</sup> It is therefore uncertain if the Screening Deputation ever enforced the edict completely. Its legal status remained uncertain to say the least.

### 1760

In many ways the updated instructions of 1760 were good news for potential supplicants. Firstly, it encouraged certain supplicants and expanded the channel's scope. The Estates extended an invitation to anyone with proposals, grievances, or requests pertaining to 'manufactories, factories, or any other establishment beneficial to the realm' to bring them to the Diet, when its jurisdiction was unclear or was non-existent. The Estates also welcomed complaints against the newly established pension fund.<sup>316</sup> Secondly, the instructions assured supplicants that if their request was accepted but not resolved by the end of the Diet, they could return with it to the next Diet. Thirdly, supplicants could plead lawful cause if they showed up with their appeals at a later Diet than the law prescribed. For example, if Kungl. Maj:t handed down a negative verdict in 1764 and the supplicant failed to submit an appeal at the 1765–66 Diet, the supplicant could still appeal the verdict if he or she had an acceptable cause of absence.<sup>317</sup>

On the other hand, supplicants faced both old and new limitations. The 1734 regulations that had disappeared in 1748 returned twelve years later, and once again supplicants with sweeping proposals had to turn to the administrative boards, not the Diet. The 1760 instructions also circumscribed some of the supplicants' legal rights. Appeals against the Judicial Audit would from now on be permanently turned down if two of the Estates in the Screening Deputation wanted it, and although the right to appeal any rejection by the Screening Deputation's remained, supplicants now had to appeal within one month.<sup>318</sup>

The Estates lowered the fines for some first offenders, including those who appealed verdicts issued before the previous Diet (50 dsmt); those who treated their post as a commodity (100 dsmt fine); and those who tried to obtain a promotion of title or character, or requested the Estates create new posts to which they themselves could be appointed (200 dsmt). The minimum fine, however, remained a fairly steep 50 dsmt, and recidivists had to pay the higher sums stipulated in the 1748 instructions. Furthermore, supplicants who took advantage of the let-out clause to return if a Diet ended before an accepted supplication had been decided now faced a 50 dsmt fine if they did so after the next Diet, with repeat offenders facing a 200 dsmt

<sup>313</sup> BdP 8, 7 Nov. 1760, p. 54, 13 Nov. 1760, pp. 63–64; RaP 20, 11 Nov. 1760, pp. 120–125.

<sup>314</sup> Remisser från Urskillningsdeputationen, ärende 21 & 62, R1418, BrA, RA.

<sup>315</sup> See ärende 255 & 259, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; ärende 126 & 132, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>316</sup> 'manufaktur, fabriquer eller andre för riket nyttige inrättningar', UI1760, §§ 10, 15, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 280, 282, quote at p. 280.

<sup>317</sup> UI1760, § 12, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 280–281.

<sup>318</sup> UI1760, §§ 11–13, 20, in Brusewitz ed., *Fribetstidens grundlagar*, 280–281, 283.

fine. Supplicants who turned to the Screening Deputation without first going to the correct instances in the royal bureaucracy were no longer just rejected, but also fined 50 dsmt.<sup>319</sup>

The instructions also made it clear that just because people who libelled the Crown's servants had their requests refused it did not mean that they went unpunished. From now on, rejected supplications containing libellous remarks were forwarded to the committee they would have been referred to, had they been accepted.<sup>320</sup> In all likelihood, the authors behind the new phrasing wanted to avoid any uncertainties that might have existed. Lastly, the Screening Deputation's workload increased further as from now on it had to keep minutes of all its proceedings, not only those occasions when there was disagreement between committee members.<sup>321</sup>

### 1765–70

At the 1765–66 Diet, the Estates repealed the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice. As we will see, the right to adduce prejudice, in combination with clearer and simpler rules for gauging merit, had brought a substantial increase in the Screening Deputation's and the Estates' workloads. With the 1766 *Förordning om lagarnas verkställighet* (Ordinance for the Better Execution of the Laws), the Estates tried to reduce this particular class of business by banning the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice; however, they did not completely disengage from all appointments, as they reserved the right to interfere in any wrongful or suspicious appointments they found whilst scrutinizing Kungl. Maj:t's minutes.<sup>322</sup> It was consequently not a principled decision that appointments had to be dealt with elsewhere. Additionally, they also advertised a 200 dsmt reward for anyone who at the next Diet submitted proposals for improving legislation on, and administration of, public lands.<sup>323</sup> Lastly, the price of the stamp duty rose. The 1760s saw rampant inflation for several reasons, with the result that stamp duty was raised by 50 per cent in 1768.<sup>324</sup>

### Motives

Turning to motives, it should first be pointed out that there is little controversy to be found in the Estates' minutes. They might have disagreed on a specific wording or the extent of a punishment, but the minutes mostly display either tacit or explicit agreement.<sup>325</sup> This lack of discord might very well highlight a coherence in the political opinions of Diet delegates on this

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<sup>319</sup> UII1760, §§ 11–13, 15–17, 20, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 280–283.

<sup>320</sup> UII1760, § 7, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 279.

<sup>321</sup> UII1760, § 3, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 278.

<sup>322</sup> FLV1766, § 12, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 223–224.

<sup>323</sup> FLV1766, § 10g, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar* 1916 pp. 222–223.

<sup>324</sup> Kongl. Maj:ts Nådige Kundgiörelse, Angående Femtio Procents Förhöjning uti Chartae Sigillatæ eller Stämplade Pappers Afgiften, enligt Kongl. Förordningen af then 14. januarii 1748, För Åren 1768, 1769 och 1770 (11 Aug. 1767), *AT*; Kongl. Maj:ts och Riksens Cammar-Collegii och Stats Contours Kundgiörelse, Angående Stämplade Papperets förhöjning til 50 proCent (2 Nov. 1767), *AT*; Kungl Maj:t then prolonged the 50 percent increase of the stamp duty in 1770, Kongl. maj:ts Ytterligare nådige Kundgiörelse, Angående 50 ProCents förhöjning uti Chartæ Sigillatæ eller Stämplade Pappers Afgiften (18 Jan. 1770), *AT*.

<sup>325</sup> This was certainly the case in 1727, 1738 and 1746–47. 1727: Utkast till 1727 års reglemente för riksdagars förkortande, R2529, EdH, FU, RA; Allmänna besvärdeputationens extraktprotokoll, 14 June 1727, R2529, EdH, FU, RA; BdP 1, 27 June 1727, pp. 658–659, 5 Aug. 1727, p. 738; PrP 7, 11 July 1727, p. 387, 7 Aug. 1727, p. 470;

1738: RaP 9, 19 July 1738, pp. 215–216, 26 July 1738 pp. 237–238.

1746–47: Rap 15, 25 Oct. 1746, pp. 120–121; RaP 17, 10 Dec. 1747, pp. 291–293; BdP 6, 11 Dec. 1747, p. 722; BrP 9:2, 3 Dec. 1747, pp. 812–813; PrP 12, 11 Dec. 1747, p. 588.

issue—that supplications were indeed part of a logic of appropriateness. Although unlikely, they were perhaps not considered that important; on the other hand, it might be a sign of how the Estate assemblies only functioned as forums for certain dissenting opinions, or how poorly the minutes recorded dissent. Nonetheless, the following section does contain some speculation, but none that is out of line with what the sources hint at or that can be deduced from the findings in the literature.

### ***Legal rights and audit***

Firstly, the supplication channel existed to allow subjects the right to defend his or her privileges and immunities. This idea is explicitly mentioned in the Diet Act § 13. Furthermore, the several provisions granted by the regulations can be interpreted as an expression by the regulation's authors of their determination to safeguard the supplicant's legal position and the supplicant's right to appeal.

Closely connected to subjects' legal rights was the audit. One of the Age of Liberty Diet's main preoccupations, after all, was to audit Kungl. Maj:t and the royal administration (see ch. 4). Towards the end of the Age of Liberty, they even transformed the Chancellor of Justice—the overseer of the state administration and any wrongdoers among the Crown's servant—from a royal servant into a servant of the Estates. The audit also served the purpose of keeping the king in check and preventing the resurgence of the despised absolute monarchy. Any increase in the Estates' auditing power meant a weakening of the king's power.

The connection between the audit and the supplication channel is explicit in the Screening Deputation's regulations. Appeals against at least the Judicial Audit were only allowed when people had been subject to incorrect treatment at the hands of the Crown or its servants. More particularly, the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice, for example, built on the Estates' prerogative to scrutinize Kungl. Maj:t's promotions and fitted with the Estates' desire to audit Kungl. Maj:t. The audit is also visible in the decision to open the supplication channel to any complaints against the pension fund. With such invitations, the Estates' legislation pinpointed certain areas of special interest where the wisdom and ideas of Swedish subjects were sought.

That the Diet's audit was considered dangerous by some Diet delegates was plain, as the descriptions of the 1734 and 1738 regulations for Judicial Audit appeals show (see pp. 80–81). These Diet delegates opposed the fact that the Estates received and considered appeals against the Judicial Audit's verdicts that did not appeal on the basis of faulty procedure, but rather the matter at hand. This was not the proper role of the Diet. Even those who supported the acceptance of Judicial Audit appeals did not want to overstep what they perceived as the limits of the Diet's authority. Although the Diet in practice became a supreme court when it convened, the Diet Act and its additions never granted this prerogative. This tension was also visible in the question of prejudice appeals, which allowed the Estates to make ensure the king and the Council of the Realm did their jobs properly. At the same time, the Estates undermined one of the king's last prerogatives by changing these appointments.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Another example is a proposal from the General Gravamina Deputation in 1727, which would have granted supplicants the possibility to turn to the Estates when they had complaints about their county governor. This provision would have formally connected the Diet's supplication channel to Sweden's localities. However, the peasantry successfully proposed that such complaints about the county governor, or about any of the Crown's servants for that matter, be brought before Kungl. Maj:t instead. If anyone was still aggrieved after Kungl. Maj:t had examined the case, they could turn to the Estates. The 1727 decree more or less follows the

The debate about the balance of power and the seemingly limitless reach of the Diet became increasingly heated in the last decade of the Age of Liberty. With the 1769 Security Bill, the royal couple and their supporters tried to establish a new relationship between the king and the Diet—one in which the Diet would not entertain any particular errands and would only make laws. Had the Security Bill garnered sufficient support, it would among other things have spelled the end of the Screening Deputation. It failed, however, and in part because of the objections raised against its position on legal rights and the audit.

One of the constitution's staunchest advocates, the nobleman Carl Fredrik Pechlin, argued that in order to protect those wronged by injustice 'there was no one more skilled to look after and scrutinize the exercise of the law than he who had drafted and enacted the law.'<sup>327</sup> Reminiscent of Johan Skytte and Axel Oxenstierna in his reasoning, the danger according to Pechlin did not lie in the mixing of legislative and executive powers, but in their separation. The peasantry, for their part, remembered cases when the Estates' intervention had saved leaseholders, and also argued that if they voted in favour of the Security Bill, civil servants would be able to treat them as they pleased, and there would be no recourse.<sup>328</sup> According to the peasantry's logic, the Estates provided Swedish subjects with legal protection and an opportunity to defend their rights. The Diet should not rob them of law and order. Together, the peasantry and Pechlin espoused the ideas of the audit and the protection of subjects' rights by way of supplications.

### ***Self-interest***

It was not only fear of rampant Crown servants that lay behind the supplication channel's development. Beginning at the Diet of 1751–52, the clergy proposed that general gravamina approved by the Screening Deputation should be sent directly to the committee concerned for examination, not to the General Gravamina Deputation; however, the peasantry argued against this, because it would mean their gravamina would go straight to the Secret Committee where they had no seats.<sup>329</sup> Obviously they thought their gravamina stood a better chance in the General Gravamina Deputation. They prioritized Estate interests over any potential efficiency. The commoner Estates keenness to put their interests above efficiency can be seen in the 1755–56 decision to extend the period during which Diet delegates could submit supplications to six weeks, which greatly benefitted Diet delegates.<sup>330</sup>

With this in mind, the provisions and legal rights of supplicants as stated in the decrees concerning the Screening Deputation clearly not only served the audit and safeguarded principles; they also benefitted Diet delegates and their constituents who wanted to use the Screening Deputation.

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peasantry's proposed wording. The respect for the King's sovereignty most likely moderated the supplication channel's jurisdiction in this instance as well, although it is of course also possible that the peasantry on this occasion trusted Kungl. Maj:t more than they did their fellow Estates. BdP 1, 27 June 1727, pp. 658–659; KF1727, § 3, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 434.

<sup>327</sup> 'ingen kunde vara skickligare att efterse och döma öfwer lagens handhafvande än den, som gjort och stadgat lagen.' Pechlin quoted in Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 146; the supporters of a strong Diet also, rightly, argued that the Estates possessed more legal competence than Kungl. Maj:t, where the lion's share of the councillors were mere laymen. Rudelius, 'Författningsfrågan i de förenade deputationerna 1769', 352–355.

<sup>328</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 148.

<sup>329</sup> BdP 7, 19 Oct. 1751, pp. 48–49.

<sup>330</sup> See, for example, PrP 14:1, 27 Oct. 1755, pp. 46–47.

### *Time and efficiency*

Many Diet delegates voiced concerns that the Diets were too long. Supplicants were at the heart of this issue, as many members of the Estates felt that many of the grievances or appeals were irrelevancies. The complaints by the speakers of the commoner Estates were one of the driving forces behind the setting up of the Screening Deputation and its inclusion in the Diet Act. But despite the advent of the Screening Deputation, the number of supplications submitted to and referred from it was still thought staggering at the following 1726–27 Diet. Not only that, supplicants still successfully infiltrated the Diet without consulting the Screening Deputation first. And the problem appeared intractable, with new legislation in 1727 and again in 1738.<sup>331</sup>

The search for efficiency was also behind the abrogation of the Screening Deputation's regulations concerning the submission and examination of general gravamina. Despite the nobility's protests, the commoner Estates decided a double examination of cases, first by the Screening Deputation and then by the General Gravamina Deputation, would prolong the Diets, contrary to the intention of the instruction. In order to convince a wavering clergy, the peasantry promised to do their utmost to trim their general gravamina and not prolong proceedings.<sup>332</sup> Thus, the peasantry's self-interest was in this instance supported by arguments about efficiency.

Time constraints also lay behind the Screening Deputation's proposal for supplicants to submit two copies of their supplications in 1756. The committee delegates lamented that although they had already examined and decided on supplications, they had to hold on to them in order to make proper summaries in their Screening Lists. Equipped with double copies, the committee could refer them on as soon as they had been accepted and still have a basis for their screening lists.<sup>333</sup>

Lastly, time and efficiency lay behind the 1766 decision to abrogate the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice. The possibility to petition in other errands and even the Estates' right to interfere in appointments remained, as they did not take too much time and thus did not risk prolonging the Diets. Prejudice supplications, on the other hand, stole time from more pressing matters.<sup>334</sup>

Thus, these concerns played a part in the design and development of the Diet's supplication channel. Although the right to petition was deemed important enough never to be abolished, some Diet delegates often thought that it impinged too much on the Diet's work. This concern lay behind the increase of requirements and conditions that supplicants had to meet. Everyone was guaranteed the right to submit a supplication, but only those who complied with Screening Deputation's screening gained access.

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<sup>331</sup> See, for example, RaP 9, 19 July 1738, pp. 215–216, 26 July 1738 pp. 237–238; Rap 15, 25 Oct. 1746, pp. 120–121; RaP 17, 10 Dec. 1747, pp. 292–293; Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 79–80.

<sup>332</sup> BdP 7, 6 Nov. 1751, pp. 59–60, 12 Dec. 1751, p. 85; BrP 10, 19 Oct. 1751, pp. 55–56, 2 Nov. 1751, pp. 341–342, 6 Nov. 1751, p. 70, 13 Nov. 1751, p. 91.

<sup>333</sup> Urskilningsdeputationens betänkande, angående befordran af skyndsam- och redighet uti Deputationens arbete, 6 Nov. 1755, R1884, BdA, RA.

<sup>334</sup> 'hålst sådane mål icke äro till antalet så många, att the något merkeligt hinder the allmänne riksdagsärender förorsaka', FLV1766, § 12, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 223.

### *Business of varying importance*

Closely connected to the moves to increase efficiency and shorten Diets was the ambition to distinguish between important and less important business. This was first noted in the 1720 Instrument of Government, which stated that errands of common interest had to go before other errands in the Estates' discussions and votes.<sup>335</sup> But the matter of priorities remained an issue nonetheless. The 1738 Diet delegates proposed ad hoc measures to prioritize all errands in order to quicken the Estates' pace. In 1746–47 people in the nobility claimed that the different acts and regulations that hitherto guided the Screening Deputation's work confused both the delegates of the committee and the supplicants. This confusion resulted in a mass of 'less urgent and unnecessary' supplications. They successfully proposed that the Estates compile and ratify an instruction for the Screening Deputation, which led to the 1748 instructions.<sup>336</sup>

These instructions, however, failed to lay the problem to rest. Diet delegates continued to make the connection between the ponderous pace of their work and the endless stream of irrelevancies brought into the Diet. Protesting against the decision in 1751 to not let the Screening Deputation handle general gravamina, the nobility argued that unnecessary errands would clog the Diet.<sup>337</sup> Likewise in 1772, the clergy lamented that the Estates had met for seven months and still had not made many decisions in matters of common concern, despite the precarious economic situation. One of their proposals to resolve this situation was to prevent particular errands from standing in the way of their working on more important issues.<sup>338</sup>

What they meant by necessary and unnecessary errands was seldom clear in any practical sense. The Diet Act, the 1727 and 1738 decrees, and the 1748 and 1760 instructions only stipulated that correct appeals and errands without clear jurisdiction were acceptable. In contrast, general gravamina received a lengthier and more comprehensive—albeit not necessarily that much clearer—definition in the legislation. General gravamina could contain 'only that which concerns an entire Estate's, a county's and a populace's interests and which would require either a new law or a clarification of an old, and thus the Estates general gravamina must not contain any particular errands or errands on behalf of any particular persons'.<sup>339</sup> Such a general definition never existed for supplications, perhaps because their scope in some respects was even wider than general gravamina. In theory, they could stretch from issues that concerned a single person to issues that concerned the entire nation. Perhaps the vagueness was intentional, so that the supplication channel could be more readily adapted depending on the situation. Nonetheless, this search for the proper equilibrium between important business and mere distractions plagued the Diet throughout the Age of Liberty. The Estates' concerns led to restrictions put in place to hinder supplicants.

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<sup>335</sup> RO, § 16, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 243

<sup>336</sup> BdP 3, 23 Aug. 1738, p. 134; RaP 9, 25 May 1738, pp. 29–30; quote from RaP 15, 8 Nov. 1746, p. 186; for another example, see Urskillningsdeputationens memorial, 3 Jan. 1747, R893, PrA, RA;

<sup>337</sup> RaP 18, 7 Oct. 1751, pp. 96, 99–100, 6 November 1751, pp. 168–169. See also BdP 9, 27 Feb. 1762, p. 207.

<sup>338</sup> Prästerståndets extraktprotokoll, 15 Jan. 1772, R1414, BrA, RA.

<sup>339</sup> 'Böra allenast innehålla sådane mål, som röra ett helt ständs, landskaps eller menighets intresse och hvaröfver fordras antingen en ny lag och förordning eller förklaring öfver de förra, så måste uti ständens allmänne besvär inge speciele mål indragas eller deribland inblandas particuliere personers interessen' KF1727, § 3, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 434.



## Publishing legislation and supplications

The Age of Liberty saw the first relatively extensive publication of political dealings and transactions in Sweden, as well as the use of appeals to the public in political debates. The different parties and groups struggling for power took to the presses to champion their cause and undermine their adversaries. Both the regulation of vthe Diet's supplication channel and its proceedings became part of this phenomenon larger phenomenon where politics, in a wide sense, was communicated publically.

The regulation of the Diet's supplication channel was communicated in already established ways. All enacted legislation—which included the legislation concerning the Screening Deputation—was announced throughout Sweden in *Årstrycket* (see ch. 2). *Årstrycket* was distributed to public places in the country, including churches, where they were read aloud in the pulpits by the local parish priest and put on display to be read (Fig. 5.1).<sup>340</sup> All regulations pertaining to the supplication channel were also read from Stockholm's church pulpits before the Diet started. This ritual started at the 1731 Diet, the Estates' first meeting after the 1727 ordinance.<sup>341</sup> From 1748, and perhaps earlier, notices informing supplicants of the start and end dates for the submission of supplications had to be nailed to the gate of Riddarhuset and to the door to the room where the Screening Deputation convened.<sup>342</sup>



FIGURE 5.1 Wooden board on which *Årstrycket* was displayed in churches and other public places.

<sup>340</sup> For more on the distribution of information through the Royal Proclamations, see Reuterswärd, *Ett massmedium för folket*.

<sup>341</sup> PrP 7, 23 Jan. 1731, p. 545; also see RaP 9, 25 May 1738, p. 26–27; RaP 15, 25 Sept. 1746, p. 15.

<sup>342</sup> UI1748, § 1, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 271.



FIGURE 5.2 Excerpts from *Riksdagstidningen* published during the 1769–70 Diet, issues 5 and 6. The last page of issue 5 (left) gives the supplications numbered 4 to 11.

The supplications themselves, as well as their fate in the Screening Deputation, became a public concern. From 1738, the Estates published the screening lists in *Arstrycket*. This proposal came from the Estates' speakers, who also proposed announcing all verdicts made by the Estates on a weekly basis, as a way of currying favour with the Swedish population. Of particular concern for the supplication channel, the Estates wanted to inform supplicants and prevent unfounded rumours.<sup>343</sup> It is also probable the Estates nailed these lists too to the gate of Riddarhuset, considering the centrality of the building and its square to political life (see ch. 4). Once *Riksdagstidningen* started coming out, the publication of screening lists shifted there (Fig. 5.2). Thus, the Screening Deputation's initial examination of the supplications became a part of the Diet's information machinery in which the Estates sought to communicate their actions to the public.

Supplications also reached the press in other formats. A weekly magazine called *Nytt och Gammalt* ('New and Old') treated readers to choice content from the supplications. In the one example I stumbled across, people could read two supplications verbatim. The plaintiff, one Hans Fredric Holméén, was a foundry inspector who claimed he had been physically assaulted by his former employer, the ironmaster and undersecretary at the Royal Chancery, Baron Carl Ludvig Siegroth. To make matters worse, Siegroth had successfully sued Holméén for unpaid debts, and the publication in the newspaper was based on the latter's appeal to the Chancellor of Justice and a county governor. Holméén then used offprints from *Nytt och Gammalt* as attachments when he petitioned the Diet in 1771–72.<sup>344</sup> The press was not the only medium for

<sup>343</sup> RaP 9, 29 July 1738, pp. 248–249; BrP 6, 29 July 1738, p. 113; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 161–163.

<sup>344</sup> *Nytt och Gammalt*, no. 77–78, 1767, KB; Ärende 492, R3643, UdH, FU, RA. According to himself, Holméén quit his position at Siegroth and was set to depart at Michaelmas Day 1766, and before he left he wanted to hold an auction to generate funds. During the auction Siegroth barged in, claimed everything on sale belonged to him, and assaulted both Holméén and the auctioneer. Holméén fled

printed supplications. Samuel Bring's bibliography of court records printed between 1700 and 1829 may not include Holméén's dispute with Siegroth, but it does contain other supplications, among them army chaplain Olof Collin, who printed the prejudice appeal which he submitted to the 1765–66 Diet.<sup>345</sup>

The total number of supplications submitted to the Diet that in one way or the other ended up in print is beyond the scope of this study. Bring's bibliography of court records surely contains several more, for example. Yet it is worth considering why any of this was published in the first place. In her study of printed court records from lawsuits in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Maria Ågren argues that these printed records piqued public interest because of the insights the records provided into private affairs and secrets. They also tended to be matters of public concern too, such as the handling of bankruptcies, disputes over wills, and so on. Additionally, people printed court records in order to vindicate themselves or sully their adversaries, using a public appeal in their rhetoric.<sup>346</sup> The same could be said of Holméén's supplication. It provided readers with the gruesome details in a dispute that involved both money and violence, but at the same time it also touched on the public interest, as most Swedes were probably keen to see justice administered correctly and fairness prevail. And then, of course, there was the entertainment value of Holméén attempting to clear his name by dragging Siegroth's through the mud.

## Conclusions

The Estates issued several decrees and regulations that completely or partially concerned their supplication channel. Although one can imagine that the writers of the 1723 Diet Act hoped that their stipulations would not need any clarifications or updates, this proved to be far from the case. In the event, the supplication channel accumulated quite an extensive legal framework that can be divided into three themes.

The first theme revolves around the matters people could petition about. By maintaining the principle from the Petitioners' Edict and the Diet Act, the regulations only allowed appeals against Kungl. Maj:t or errands without a clear jurisdiction. Appeals against the Judicial Audit were conditional on the circumstances, and towards the end of the period the regulations stipulated similar procedures for all other appeals against Kungl. Maj:t. On the other hand, the Estates' legislation seemingly loosened this principle during the last decade or so of the Age of Liberty. They abolished prejudice appeals on the grounds that they took up too much precious time, and they welcomed supplications concerning manufactories or the legislation or administration of public lands even if they had not passed the proper instances first.

As a second theme, the regulations stipulated the supplicants' duties and entitlements. The regulations were definitely lopsided, being heavy on responsibilities and light on rights, and increased the supplicants' costs in know-how, resources, and time. Duplicate copies of attachments, official proxies, stamped paper, countersignatures from hired scribes: all became

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to Eskilstuna, where a member of the city magistrate court, Martin Stenström, took pity on him and his family. Stenström accompanied the former inspector back to Siegroth to settle the dispute, but Siegroth had by now put out a warrant for Stenström and showed little remorse as he once again assaulted Holméén as well as his burgher companion.

<sup>345</sup> Bring (ed.), *Rättgångshandlingar*, 37.

<sup>346</sup> Ågren, 'Hemligt eller offentligt?'.

part and parcel of the supplication channel. Add to that a host of fines and punishments for those who were caught breaking the rules. As it developed over the years, the channel's jurisdiction certainly became less welcoming for people below a certain economic or social threshold: society's lower strata did not own factories and neither did they hold military commands, and procuring copies of all documents or taking the risk of an appeal was forbiddingly expensive.

On the other hand, the Estates provided law-abiding supplicants with a stronger position in 1748 or 1760 than in 1723. The most conspicuous stipulation here insured supplicants from the Estates' tardiness. The formal legitimacy of the supplication channel also increased when the Estates decided to inform people about the regulations as well as who submitted supplications, what they concerned, and how they fared. It is probably also safe to say that the Diet's supplication channel gained even more formal cachet than it had possessed before with the permanent instructions and the implementation of the stamp duty. Anything ascribed a permanent position in the political system, and taxed at that, had become normal if not legitimate. This in turn made the supplicants' position more accepted.

The third theme of the regulations was the establishment of proper procedures for the Screening Deputation and supplication proceedings in the Estates. The Diet Act and subsequent regulations repeatedly maintained that the Screening Deputation was the Diet's only entry point for matters that fell outside the general *gravamina* or had to go straight to the Secret Committee for reasons of secrecy. As time went by, the stipulations for the Screening Deputation's procedures grew more detailed, and made the committee members liable for their actions by forcing them to keep minutes and communicate their dealings with the rest of the Diet on a regular basis.

There were different motives for this legislation. Throughout the period, supplications remained a right to exercise and a helpful tool, but also a problem to solve. The audit ideal as well as the right for subjects to defend their rights were explicitly and implicitly the foundations of the supplication channel as seen in the debates and indeed in the regulations; however, the audit and the king's subjects' immunity had to be balanced against other concerns. For some, oversight of the Judicial Audit infringed *Kungl. Maj:t's* prerogatives and made the Diet a supreme court without a legal mandate.

Explicit self-interested cynicism or realism definitely played a part in the legislation as well. The commoner Estates wanted to keep the examination of supplications and general *gravamina* separate, and the peasantry did not fancy their chances in the Screening Deputation. The decision to grant Diet delegates an extra fortnight in which to resubmit Diet *gravamina* as supplications also reveals a degree of self-interest, as it gave Diet delegates a better opportunity to bring as many of their grievances as possible before the Diet.

A recurring complaint about the supplications was that they were time-consuming and delayed other, more important matters. With the many restrictions and caveats, the regulation's authors attempted to fit the Diet's supplication channel to the Estates' capabilities and to make the daily running as efficient and smooth as possible. The recurring talk of too many supplications and unwarranted errands that did not belong in the Diet also highlighted that many imagined a distinction or scale in supplications, which distinguished between errands of differing

relevance to the Estates and the realm. Nonetheless, a positive, encompassing and clearly stated definition of what a supplication could contain never materialized.

Thus, the audit and subjects' rights comprised the supplication channel's *raison d'être*. To an extent, the Estates used it to gather information about specific areas of interest, but audit and immunity constituted the regulations' main ideological foundations. They were the bearers of its appropriateness and that they were taken for granted is the likely explanation why there was no attempt to abolish supplications from the Diet before 1769, despite recurring complaints about the many irrelevant errands burdening the Diet.

The boundaries for that appropriateness seem to have been the perceived infringements of the king's symbolic sovereignty. This is not surprising, as this thought ran like a common theme throughout the Age of Liberty, even during the monarchy's weakest moments.<sup>347</sup> Those who wanted the law to explicitly state that supplicants could appeal verdicts from the Judicial Audit faced resistance. Although it must have been known throughout the Diet that verdicts were still overturned, such actions could not be supported by law. Such an idea clearly fell outside the bounds of institutional appropriateness. Similarly, perceived infringements of this sovereignty lay behind the one instance when there seems to have been no general agreement about the legitimacy of the Diet's supplication channel. Towards the end of the Age of Liberty, proponents of a stronger monarchy in favour of a more equal balance of power argued that the Diet should revert to its legislative role alone, and not deal with individual errands at all, including supplications. Nonetheless, a sufficient majority of the Diet delegates still thought the supplication channel valuable and voted against the proposal that would have abolished it.

A general agreement on what matters belonged in the channel's jurisdiction also seems to have existed among the channel's proponents; however, the notions of the audit and subjects' right to defend their privileges could be expanded and limited, depending on the context. After all, the ideas and templates for institutions do not come with explicit recommendations for action, and can be subverted too, as long as any action is considered to lie within the institution's remit. Thus, restrictions and demands on supplicants in order to limit the number of supplications were legitimate for reasons of time and efficiency. Likewise, opponents of the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice could successfully argue their case invoking efficiency and the constraints of time, no doubt supported by those who wanted to promote Kungl. Maj:t's powers at the expense of the Diet. On the other hand, specific invitations for supplications about the pension fund and the like fitted the institutional template.

This experience of the Estates' mimicked that of Kungl. Maj:t's (see ch. 3). Supplicants had to follow correct procedure and the proper path so as to shield the addressee, in this case the Diet, from an excess of supplications. The supporters of the supplication channel in the Diet had to weigh the judicial and administrative aspects against each other; there would not be enough time otherwise. The similarities between the Diet's supplication channel and Kungl. Maj:t's are underlined by the fact that the Estates' regulations borrowed from the royal administration's procedures. According to Michael Metcalf, the Estates' borrowings of elements of the state's procedures for keeping minutes and archiving rendered the Diet's proceedings more efficient. Although it has not been the object of this chapter to measure the regulations'

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<sup>347</sup> Lagerroth, *Fribetstidens författning*, 280–283, 415–416, 441–444; Nordin, *Fribetstidens monarki*, 35–36, 41–45, 56–57.

effectiveness, the findings certainly support the thesis that the Estates mimicked administrative procedures.<sup>348</sup>

That is not to say that there were no disagreements besides the debate about the power balance towards the end of the Age of Liberty. The 1759 decree that sought to harmonize all appeals against Kungl. Maj:t seemed to gather some support, but not complete backing. Perhaps more importantly, it does seem that Diet delegates and supplicants alike broke against the rules. As we have seen from their motives, Diet delegates continuously complained about less important errands being brought before the Diet, and although the rules formed an official code of conduct, a valid interpretation is that all or at least most of the rules were remedies for actual transgressions. Thus, the support shown when ratifying of the channel's regulations was seemingly not reciprocated in practice, at least by a proportion of Diet delegates and supplicants. The formal rules of the institution were perhaps not its reproductive rules.

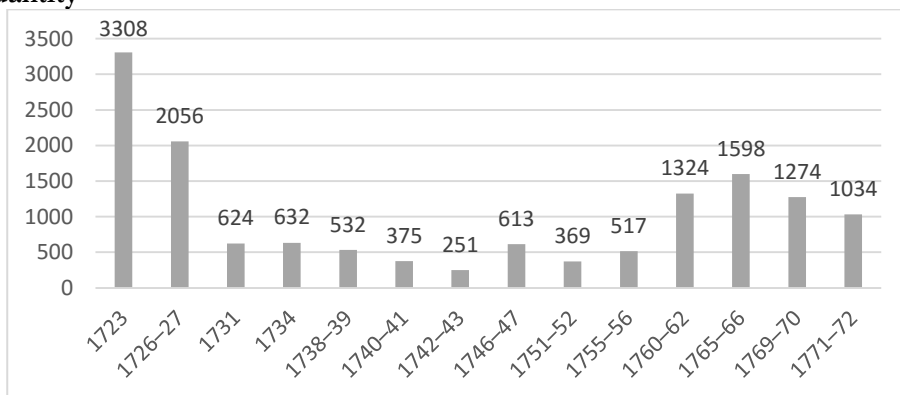
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<sup>348</sup> Metcalf, 'Parliamentary sovereignty and royal reaction', 162–163.

## 6 The effects of regulation

In this chapter I first examine the effect regulation had on the number of supplications and the behaviour of the supplicants, and then the general acceptance rate in the three samples that are the focus of the present study. Lastly, I take a closer look at the congruence between regulation and interaction in an attempt to find the reproductive rules of the supplication channel. Factors such as the Diet's organization and other structural elements are considered.

### Quantity



**Figure 6.1** The number of listings in the Screening Deputation's screening lists (by listings). *Sources:* R2458, R2522, R2576, R2643, R2727, R2804, R2856, R2944, R3033, R3126, R3258, R3420, R3538, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

Judging by the drop in the number of supplications (Fig. 6.1), the regulations issued in 1723 and 1727 had teeth. The number of errands fell from around 3,000 in 1723 to around 600 in 1731, a decrease of four-fifths. Malmström's remark that the creation of the Screening Deputation led to a continuous increase in the number of submitted supplications is thus not correct.<sup>349</sup> It is possible the 1738 decree caused the lower number of supplications at subsequent Diets, but it is as likely that the frequent Diets in those years were also behind the fall.

After the 1748 instructions the number of supplications again slightly decreased at the 1751–52 Diet, but at the 1755–56 Diet the number of supplications was on the rise. This increase continued to 1,300 in 1760–62 and 1,600 in 1765–66. From there was another fall: in 1771–72 the Screening Deputation received about 1,000 supplications. In other words, the 1748 instruction had a small short-term effect, but proved unable to stem the flood of supplicants in the long term. The increase continued after the instructions were updated in 1760. In comparison with the 1723 Diet Act and the 1727 decree, they seem to have been much less effective; however, the increase in supplications had little to do with these regulations and more to do with the impact of the 1756 Report on Crown Service.

### *The Report on Crown Service*

Much of the explanation for the rise in the number of supplications lay in the Report on Crown Service. As mentioned in the previous chapter, people appealed on the basis of prejudice when they felt that someone less competent than them had been promoted to a post they had also

<sup>349</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 423–424.

applied for. Before 1756, the law defined competence and merit in unclear terms. Although it stressed length of service and formal merits, it also highlighted vaguer qualities such as an applicant's skills and talents. Consequently, a person could gain precedence over his colleagues even though they had worked far longer than he had. This ambiguity was in turn connected to the fact that what counted as experience and merit was not particularly clear in the eighteenth century. Some argued years of service mattered more than formal schooling or talent, others the opposite. Formal exams and degrees slowly came into existence; civil servants did not have to have any specific degree before the mid eighteenth century, and it was not until 1792 that Sweden inaugurated its first permanent military academy. With the Report on Crown Service, time served became the only important factor—experience gained utter precedence.<sup>350</sup> Those who had lost out to someone else could determine whether the person who received the appointment had served longer or not, and if not, the case for prejudice was easy to argue.

To make matters worse, appointments were highly political affairs. Through public office, political or family ties were strengthened or broken and control was exercised. Thus, a post represented more than individual achievement. Wirilander shows that the Finnish officer corps were mostly related to one another, and certain families or networks of families controlled one or several regiments for considerable periods. Personal connections and already holding a post mattered more than formal merits and education when local bailiffs were appointed. At the government boards, applicants courted the higher positioned civil servants who then arbitrarily decided whether to forward the application or not. According to Ingvar Elmroth, 'personal recommendations and personal ties played a significant role in these matters.' The ties were perhaps also necessary because people had to pay very large sums of money—*accord* or composition sums—to the previous incumbent to take over their position. This was praxis even for fairly low posts such as copying clerk, and often required that the applicant borrow money from a wealthier benefactor.<sup>351</sup>

The danger, as the opponents of a stronger king saw it, lay in the potential to use these networks for the exercise of political power. Adolf Fredrik had already showed himself capable doing so since his appointment as *generalisimus*, formal supreme commander, over Sweden's armed forces by the 1746–47 Diet and his accession to the throne in 1751.<sup>352</sup> Adolf Fredrik and his Council increasingly disagreed on appointments as the king claimed the right to make the ultimate decision on appointments as his royal prerogative.

The royal couple lost the showdown with their opponents at the 1755–56 Diet and the issue of the Report on Crown Service was part of the loss. It made sure that the king—or anyone else for that matter—faced serious obstacles to creating a powerbase in the military or bureaucracy by favouring followers. With length of service the only criterion, arbitrariness had little room to manoeuvre, and when the king opposed a decision his Council would simply haul out the dry

<sup>350</sup> TB1756, especially § 16, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 200–202; Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 76–87; Norrby, *Ordnade eliter*, 136.

<sup>351</sup> Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 95–102, 164–166, 175–182; Elmroth, *Nyrekryteringen till de högre ämbetena*, 46–47; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 266–267, 270–272; Frohnert, *Kronans skatter och bondens bröd*, 88–90; Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 124–130; Thisner, *Militärstatens arvogods*, 141–151.

<sup>352</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 316; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 92–103.





FIGURE 6.2 *Ardua virtuti via*, the arduous path of virtue. At the top of the hill, glory awaits the soldier who has just set out on the winding path.

<b>Prejudice</b>	693	86.2%
<b>Other</b>	111	13.8%
<b>Total</b>	804	100.0%

**TABLE 6.1** Employment supplications submitted at the 1765–66 Diet, by prejudice or other (by listings). *Sources:* R3420, UdH, FU, RA.

stamp and sign it anyway.<sup>353</sup> The Diet’s auditing power and the possibility to appeal on the grounds of prejudice also afforded the opponents of royal power the possibility to catch appointments that slipped through the cracks. Consequently, the Report on Crown Service originated from a conflict over the balance of power.

However, the 1756 decree hampered the Estates’ proceedings at the following two Diets. According to Elmroth, more than 600 of the supplications submitted to the 1760–62 Screening Deputation concerned appointments in general, although Elmroth does not specify how many concerned prejudice. Thus, about half of the supplications at the 1760–62 Diet asked for help with employment.<sup>354</sup> At the next Diet, Edler claims that 1,400 of 1,600 supplicants—seven-eighths—pleaded prejudice and all of them successfully.<sup>355</sup>

However, I cannot agree with Edler’s figures. My examination of the 1765–66 screening list (Table 6.1) shows that the number of prejudice errands reached about 700, even when applying a generous criteria for which counted as prejudice appeals in order to avoid any discrepancies between Edler’s results and mine on the basis of different categorizations.<sup>356</sup> Together, employment requests constituted around half of the supplications submitted in 1765–66, the same proportion as Elmroth found from 1760–62. Furthermore, Edler’s claim that all 1765–66 prejudice appeals were accepted is not quite right, but he is correct in the sense that they stood a very good chance. About four out of five prejudice appeals were accepted.<sup>357</sup>

Thus, the Report on Crown Service in combination with public servants’ right to appeal to the Estates on grounds of prejudice increased the Diet’s work burden. Not only did people find it easier to identify and cite prejudice, the Pomeranian War probably compounded the situation. As we will see in more detail (see ch. 14), war brought chaos to the officers’ ranks when they returned from a leave of absence, injury, sickness, captivity, or the like, only to find a new incumbent occupying their previous command. Consequently, a majority at the 1765–66 Diet decided that they had had enough and forbade prejudice appeals. At the same time, the old criteria for measuring candidates’ competence were applied again.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>353</sup> Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 166–173; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 176–181; the Memorandum of services of course entailed many more details and intricacies, but I decided to focus on the parts relevant for the prejudice issue. Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iv. 7–8, 48, 92–100, 108–112, 146–157, 165, 185–191; the status of civil servants as the people’s servants or royal servants was especially debated during the latter half of the Age of Liberty, albeit never satisfactorily concluded before the coup. The Justice Chancellor was officially named as a servant of the Estates from 1766 but the rest of the state’s civil servants and state attendants remained royal employees. See Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, ch. 4.

<sup>354</sup> Elmroth, *Nyrökryteringen till de högre ämbetena*, 48, n. 48.

<sup>355</sup> Edler, *Om börd och befordran under frihetstiden*, 84.

<sup>356</sup> I have, for example, categorized supplications as dealing with prejudice when supplicants asked for the right for a promotion, albeit they did not mention any specific instance of prejudice.

<sup>357</sup> Attachment 49d.

<sup>358</sup> FLV1766, in Brusewitz ed., *Frihetstidens grundlagar*, 214–215; the effects of the Crown’s organization of this surge of prejudice appeals are not clear. On the one hand Sten Carlsson shows that the median age of civil servants fell during the years that the Report on Crown Service was in effect. If time served was the most important criterion, the median age should have risen. On the other hand, in a

This decision explains the slump in submitted supplications in the Age of Liberty's last two Diets (Fig. 6.1); however, the number of supplications even at the 1771–72 Diet was more than a third greater than at the 1755–56 Diet. The number of other supplications must have increased at the 1769–70 Diet, hidden by general trend downwards. Thus, the regulations issued in 1766 had partially tempered the circumstances of the early 1760s, but even when the Age of Liberty ended, the numbers were nowhere near 1750s levels. I will return to the possible reasons for this later.

## Effects of legislation on supplicants' behaviour

While successive regulations certainly impacted on the number of supplications, absolute numbers are not the only gauge of the legislation's effect on the supplicants. In this section I take a closer look at some other traits which, unlike fluctuations in the number of supplications, only become noticeable towards the end of the period in the third sample of the present study.

### Reservations

Hedvig Regina Stenbeck, the widow of an assistant vicar, had been locked in a struggle over a piece of land for more than a decade when the 1771–72 Diet convened. Back in 1758 Krigskollegiet (the Army Board) ruled against her when she asked to retain the farm of Härmelä in Åbo and Björneborg County, and instead passed it to the county governor. In 1770, Kungl. Maj:t ratified the Army Board's verdict, where upon Stenbeck appealed to the Estates; however, she did not have all the documents she needed. Thus, on 29 June 1771 she successfully applied for a reservation in order to be able to complete later. By mid January 1772 the Screening Deputation's secretary noted that Stenbeck had still not submitted all the necessary documents, but then she and her hired scribe Gabriel Flodman finalized her appeal. The Screening Deputation discussed her supplication on 14 February and again on 17 February, when they decided to accept her plea.<sup>359</sup>

Stenbeck's supplication was part of a general pattern where more people exercised their right to apply for a reservation towards the end of the Age of Liberty. As seen in Chapter 5, anyone

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Applied for a reservation</b>	3	0.4%	5	1.8%	123	34.3%
<b>Did not apply for a reservation</b>	753	99.6%	280	98.2%	236	65.7%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

**TABLE 6.2** Supplicants who made use of their right to apply for a reservation (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

1765 decree directed to the administrative boards and the county governors, Kungl. Maj:t warned them that the Memorandum could elevate incompetent people to positions they did not deserve. Furthermore, the Estates were not the only redress for people with prejudice concerns, as lower appointments was made locally or regionally. For example, regiments handled NCO and company officer vacancies internally, Kungl. Maj:t directly appointed only the highest positions. Thus both Kungl. Maj:t and the regiments faced a deluge of prejudice appeals, as probably did the regional civil instances. Wirlander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 164–166, 218; Carlsson, *Ständsamhälle och ståndspersoner*, 63–65; Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 79–82.

<sup>359</sup> Ärende 57, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; Supplik 57, R3637, UdH, FU, RA.

who for a good reason could not submit their supplication within the one-month term, and who could argue that accepting their supplication late would not prolong the Diet, had the right to ask for a reservation. The Estates issued this piece of regulation in 1738, but it had little immediate impact on the 1746–47 supplicants judging by my findings (Table 6.2) In the third sample, on the other hand, a third of the supplicants utilized the possibility to make reservations. The stipulation affected their behaviour.

### Resubmissions

The number of cases rose where supplicants resubmitted supplications accepted at the previous Diet but left without a verdict from the Estates' increased. The Screening Deputation's 1760 instructions had an impact of sorts (Table 6.3). The first and second samples contain a small number of supplicants who chanced a return, albeit without formal regulations on their side. In the third sample, however, about a fifth of all supplications in 1771 were from the backlog created at the previous Diet, and some even older than that. When *bovjunkaren* (valet de chamber at the royal court) Carl Estenberg returned to the Diet in 1771 to reiterate his complaint against perceived prejudice he actually did so for the *third* time, having submitted his original appeal at the 1765–66 Diet, when such appeals were still allowed.<sup>360</sup>

Looking at the Estate background of supplicants legitimately returning with unfinished business, most were burghers, noblemen, or commoners of rank.<sup>361</sup> Whether these groups were more inclined to use the 1760 let-out, or if their errands tended to take more time to examine, is a topic for future investigation. It seems unlikely that the later Diets of the Age of Liberty were more prone to leaving unfinished supplications than before, especially as the earlier Diets received many more supplications.

The self-assumed backlog nonetheless effectively counteracted the attempts to reduce the number of supplications by regulation. It also partially explains why the number of supplications increased at the Age of Liberty's last two Diets, when many of the supplications were resubmissions.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Unfinished and resubmitted</b>	12	1.6%	15	5.3%	70	19.5%
<b>Not unfinished and resubmitted</b>	744	98.4%	270	94.7%	289	80.5%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

**TABLE 6.3** Supplications that had been submitted to and accepted by previous Diets without a final verdict (by supplications).<sup>362</sup>  
Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>360</sup> Supplik 208, R3638, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>361</sup> Attachment 52b.

<sup>362</sup> The top category only contains supplications submitted to and accepted by the Screening Deputation but who for one reason or the other, never received a final resolution. I have not included any other resubmitted supplications, as if for example a supplicant illegally resubmitted a supplication that the Estates had rejected at a previous Diet.

## Appeals

Stenbeck's and Estenberg's supplications also highlight another trend in the material, namely that more and more supplicants appealed Kungl. Maj:t's rulings. Not only individuals, but also corporate bodies did this, such as the town of Vänersborg in the southwest of Sweden. At the 1769–70 Diet they had appealed Kungl. Maj:t's decision to grant the local regiment the use of a nearby meadow, and had had their appeal accepted and examined, but alas, the Diet closed before a verdict was reached. Thus they returned to the 1771–72 Diet with a notarized certificate, proving that their errand had been accepted at the previous Diet.<sup>363</sup>

A large number of the supplicants in the first two samples and majority of the 1771–72 supplicants used the Diet's supplication channel to lodge appeals, thus making the Estates into an appellate institution (Table 6.4). The proportion of appeals was more than twice as high in 1771–72 than in 1746–47, and almost twice as large in 1771–72 compared to 1726–27, despite the fact that the third sample was only half the size of the first. Something had clearly changed between the second and third samples. Moreover, this change also entailed a much greater proportion of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t. In comparison, the appeals found in the first sample mostly concerned other instance in the administrative and judicial hierarchy, not directly under the Diet.<sup>364</sup> Thus, the Estates not only functioned as an appellate institution to a higher degree than before, but also as the highest such instance in Sweden.

Moreover, appeals against Kungl. Maj:t stood a fairly good chance of being accepted by the Screening Deputation and thus receiving further examination by the Diet (Table 6.5). Even at the 1771–72 Diet, when such appeals faced their lowest acceptance rate, more than two-fifths of the supplications made it through the Screening Deputation's scrutiny.

Meanwhile, two-fifths of the supplicants categorized as lodging appeals did not actually use the opportunity to appeal (Table 6.5). In many instances, the supplicants were merely hedging their bets, a tactic that is evident in the screening lists. For example, Carl Gustav Hård was awaiting a verdict when he had sued for damages, but in case Kungl. Maj:t found against him he reserved the right to be able to appeal it immediately to the Estates.<sup>365</sup> Thus, many supplicants were playing it safe in case Kungl. Maj:t left them disappointed. The Estates did not want people

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Appeals against Kungl. Maj:t</b>	30	4.0%	44	15.4%	171	47.6%
<b>Appeals against other instances</b>	72	9.5%	14	4.9%	22	6.1%
<b>Not appeals</b>	654	86.5%	227	79.6%	166	46.2%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

TABLE 6.4 Appeals against lower instances (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>363</sup> Supplik 270, R3640, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>364</sup> It is my impression that the first sample contains many appeals against decisions made on a local level and not so much a regional and central level. If my impression is true or not is a matter of further investigation though.

<sup>365</sup> Ärende 365, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

to appeal unless errors had occurred in the judicial procedure, at least concerning appeals against the Judicial Audit (see ch. 5). Although it might be the case that very few of the appeals found in the samples were indeed appeals against the Judicial Audit, the actions of Hård and others show that they were clearly appealing the matter at hand, not the procedure.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the Estates had repeatedly tried to streamline their supplication channel as a conduit for appeals since 1723 and 1726–27. The process was far from finished by the 1771–72 Diet, as a large number of supplicants did not use the channel for appeals. Regardless, both the number and percentage of supplications using the Diet as a court of last instance increased.

The literature has probably underestimated the number of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t. According to Lagerroth, only between 5 and 20 civil cases per Diet were appealed against the Judicial Audit between 1738 and 1772, including some referrals to the Estates by Kungl. Maj:t. Lagerroth concedes the possibility that the Judicial Deputation may have found cases of perceived wrongdoing or injustice when reading through the Judicial Audit's minutes, but does not delve any further into the subject. Appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's other offices are given a brief mention, but not much more.<sup>366</sup> The findings presented here show that a large quantity of appeals against all instances feature in all three samples, and that the number of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t had increased markedly when comparing samples two and three. The Estates thus acted as a supreme court to a much more frequent degree than was recognized by Lagerroth, albeit most of the supplicants might have appealed rulings from other offices than the Judicial Audit.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	18	60.0%	23	52.3%	78	45.6%
<b>Reservation</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	70	40.9%
<b>Rejected</b>	11	36.7%	21	47.7%	16	9.4%
<b>No response or retaken</b>	1	3.3%	0	0.0%	7	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	30	100.0%	44	100.0%	171	100.0%

**TABLE 6.5** Acceptance rates for appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's resolutions (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

### *Number of requests*

Evidence of supplicants having modified their behaviour because of regulations is also found in their submission of more streamlined supplications in the third sample. Since 1738 it had been forbidden to include two or more requests in the same supplication when they would be destined for different committees. The proportion of supplications containing two or more requests should therefore have decreased in the second sample if the supplicants had abided by the rule, as the chance that the Screening Deputation would find divergent requests increased the more requests a supplication contained; however, a slightly larger proportion of supplicants included two or more requests in their supplications in the 1746–47 sample (Table 6.6). Thus a supplication from clergy in the province of Östergötland included 21 requests, the burgher Franz

<sup>366</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 338–349.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
1	545	90.7%	177	87.2%	331	96.2%
2	32	5.3%	12	5.9%	12	3.5%
3–5	16	2.7%	10	4.9%	1	0.3%
6–9	3	0.5%	2	1.0%	0	0.0%
10+	5	0.8%	2	1.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	601	100.0%	203	100.0%	344	100.0%

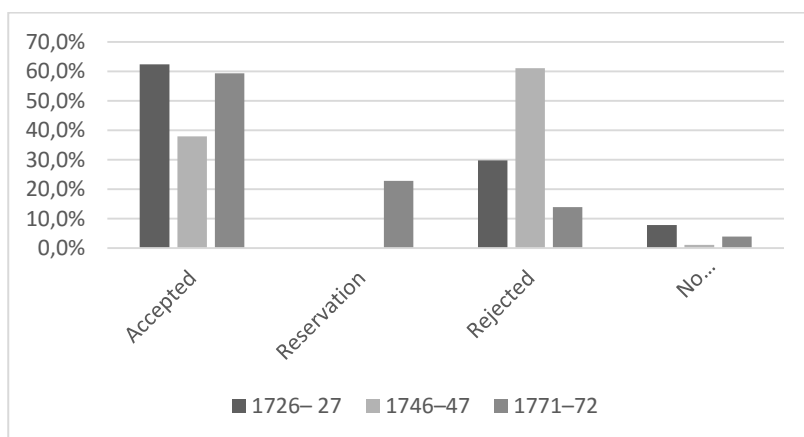
**Table 6.6** The number of supplications in each listing (by listings). *Source:* R2522, R2944, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

Cervin's 7, and a group of farmers allotted to support the regiment of Royal Dragoons 14.<sup>367</sup> The number of multi-request supplications receded in the third sample, however, with only one supplicant including more than 2 requests in his supplication—commodore Johan Adam Heldenhielm, who reserved the right to submit supplications in three different errands concerning two bankrupt estates and the guardianship of a female relative.<sup>368</sup> Thus, supplications grew less complex as supplicants progressively adapted to the rules.

### Acceptance rates

We have seen how legislation affected both the number of supplications and the behaviour of the supplicants; now for the question of how the regulations affected supplicants' and the Screening Deputation's behaviour.

Slightly fewer than two-thirds of the supplications from the first sample were accepted into the Diet (Fig. 6.3). At this point the political interaction between committee and supplicants was characterized by a high degree of tolerance from the committee, and supplications stood a good chance of being forwarded to the Diet for further scrutiny.



**FIGURE 6.3** The acceptance rate for supplications (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see p. 42. *Source:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>367</sup> Ärende 14, 39 & 309, R2944, UdH, FU, RA

<sup>368</sup> Ärende 106, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

Then the acceptance rate sank. A survey of the printed screening lists from the three Diets preceding the one which met in 1746–47 shows that although the acceptance rate was higher than in 1746–47—at best 50 per cent—it was lower than it had been in the late 1720s.<sup>369</sup> The Screening Deputation had thus started to be less generous towards supplicants at some point in the 1730s, which shows up in the 1746–47 sample. The general acceptance rate in the third sample, however, was similar to the acceptance rate in the first. The Screening Deputation’s attitude towards supplications went full circle in 45 years.

An additional 20 per cent of the supplicants successfully reserved the right to submit a supplication later during the Diet, but never used it. Taking a closer look at all reservations (Table 6.7), slightly fewer than a third did indeed return, and of those about three-quarters had their supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation.

Thus, the Screening Deputation’s lenience towards supplicants varied across the Age of Liberty, with a stronger inclination to accept supplications at the beginning and end of the period. Generally speaking, though, supplicants stood a good chance of seeing their supplication accepted for consideration. Two out of five was worse than three out of five, but the odds were still not bad.

<b>Accepted reservation, then accepted into the Diet</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25.2%</b>
<b>Accepted reservation, then nothing more</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>66.7%</b>
<b>Rejected</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>No response</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**TABLE 6.7** Outcomes for supplicants who applied for a reservation at the 1771–72 Diet (by supplications). Rejected includes supplications either rejected when applying for a reservation or rejected when the supplicant utilized his or her reservation. No response includes supplications that either did not receive a reply when applying for a reservation or when the supplicant utilized his or her reservation. *Sources:* R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Permissible and impermissible supplications

In this section, we take a closer look at the degree of congruence between the regulations and the actions of supplicants and the Screening Deputation. The most obvious way to measure the congruence with the Screening Deputation’s actions is to determine how many of the submitted supplications and accepted supplications could be considered permissible. I have used the word permissible and impermissible as the terms legal or illegal lose their meaning once a supplication was accepted by the Screening Deputation: at the point when a supplication entered the Diet’s machinery its congruence with regulations mattered little, and any favourable decision was in the end afforded legal status. The use of impermissible also corresponds better to several Diet delegates’ irritation about unnecessary matters being brought before the Diet.

Simply put, any supplication not displaying impermissible features has been categorized here as permissible. The dividing line between the two shifts because of the regulations’s development, however. For the 1726–27 sample, the Diet Act is the only gauge; for the 1746–47 sample, the regulations issued up until 1738 have been applied as a screen; and for the 1771–

<sup>369</sup> Attachment 39.



72 sample, the 1760 instructions for the Screening Deputation and the decrees from the 1765–66 Diet serve as benchmarks.

There are several caveats to what is after all only a rough estimation. With few exceptions I have not had access to the original supplications for the first two samples and some requirements are therefore impossible to check, such as attested copies. Furthermore, the screening lists never reveal whether or not the proper procedure for appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts had been followed, and the supplications only inconsistently. What I can determine, however, is whether a supplicant lodged an appeal. Thus a supplication—unless impermissible in another way of course—has been categorized as permissible if it was appealed.<sup>370</sup> The exception to this rule is supplications about manufactories and pensions in the third sample: unless impermissible in some other way, these supplications have been categorized as permissible even if they were not appeals against Kungl. Maj:t.

I have also categorized as permissible all supplications resubmitted because the Estates did not have time to arrive at a verdict during the previous Diet. The 1760 instructions did not differentiate between permissible or impermissible supplications in these instances. There are a few examples where attachments were missing, which would imply that the supplicant did not submit duplicates of all documents; however, it is not certain that this was the case and does not affect the categorization.<sup>371</sup> The third sample's results are more accurate than from the previous two, but should still be treated as approximations.

For the first two samples, the proportion of impermissible requests was high (Table 6.8). The dramatic fall in the number of supplications seen after the 1726–27 Diet did not mean that only those with legitimate concerns continued to use the supplication channel. Quite the contrary, the proportions of permissible and impermissible supplications remained similar in 1746–47.

Then things changed. As we know, the main increase in supplications in the 1760s was caused by a rise in the number of prejudice appeals, and these were permissible. But even after that wave subsided it seems the quantity of permissible supplications was higher than before. In the third sample, the proportion of permissible supplications had tripled when compared to the second sample, and both the number and proportion of impermissible supplications were lower than previously. Lastly, there do not seem to be any obvious trends as to which resource categories comprised the highest proportion of permissible supplications, and, generally

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Permissible</b>	163	21.6%	66	23.2%	222	61.8%
<b>Impermissible</b>	593	78.4%	214	75.1%	134	37.3%
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0.0%	5	1.8%	3	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

**TABLE 6.8** The legitimacy of supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>370</sup> Consequently, the uncertainty about whether or not the 1759 decree on all appeals against Kungl. Maj:t does not effect this result.

<sup>371</sup> See, for example, supplik 9 & 75, R3637, UdH, FU, RA.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	472	–	108	–	295	–
<b>Permissible</b>	120	25.4%	41	38.0%	206	69.8%

**TABLE 6.9** The legitimacy of accepted supplications (by supplications).<sup>372</sup> *Sources:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

speaking, those who submitted impermissible supplications were members of the groups most prevalent at the respective Diet.<sup>373</sup>

The same trend continued into the Diet, so to speak (Tables 6.8 and 6.9). Not only did the supplicants in the first two samples not abide by regulations, but neither did the Screening Deputation. In 1726–27, only a quarter of the accepted supplications should have been forwarded to the Diet. Twenty years later, there had been a change in the Screening Deputation's behaviour, but it still accepted a great many impermissible supplications. The numbers had improved, but more than half of the accepted supplications were seemingly still impermissible, and the harsher standards they applied can only partially be said to have stemmed from a stricter application of the rules. The discrepancy between the actions of the Screening Deputation and the import of the decree was still wide, although not as wide as in 1726–27.

A quarter of a century later a seemingly larger change had occurred somewhere along the way. The higher acceptance rate in 1771–72 compared to 1746–47 did not depend on laxer attitudes among the Screening Deputation's delegates. Almost twice as many of the accepted supplications adhered to the regulations. While the high acceptance rate at the beginning of the period went against the regulation of the supplication channel, it was more in line at the end.

At the same time, the increased rigour did not mean the Screening Deputation's delegates followed the letter of the law as they exercised their duties. They should not have accepted around a third of the supplications they referred on the Diet. The Screening Deputation also clearly indulged impermissible supplications to a higher degree if they originated from their fellow Diet delegates. As we already know, the second deadline, six weeks after the opening of the Diet, was only open to Diet delegates after all (see ch. 5). Tellingly, the frequency of permissible, accepted supplications at the 1771–72 Diet sank when comparing supplications accepted within the first and second deadlines (Table 6.10).

In conclusion, the congruence between behaviour and regulations increased over the period. Regulations did have an effect on business, and both supplicants and the Screening Deputation's members changed their behaviour over the period. At the same time, the distance between behaviour and regulations was wide at the beginning of the period, and although it decreased over time, a noticeable gap still existed. The problem was not only limited to the Screening Deputation, for as we saw in Chapter 5, people bypassed the Screening Deputation and went straight to the Estate chambers or other committees.

<sup>372</sup> Percentages represent the share of legitimate requests among all accepted requests; accepted includes supplications categorized either as accepted or as accepted reservation

<sup>373</sup> Attachments 55b–d. Compare with results in chapters 10 and 11.

	Deadline 1		Deadline 2	
Accepted	201	–	94	–
Permissible	156	77.6%	51	54.3%

**TABLE 6.10** The legitimacy of accepted supplications at the 1771–72 Diet, submitted within the first and second deadlines (by supplications). Percentages represent the share of legitimate requests among all accepted requests. Accepted includes supplications categorized either as accepted or as accepted reservation. *Sources:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Possible factors influencing the regulations

There are several possible explanations for the incongruence between interaction and regulations. Some can be revealed by studying the supplicants and their supplications, others by examining structural factors in and outside the Diet. By tracing the latter in this chapter and explainin their role in undermining or strengthening the regulations, we will come closer to some of the reproductive rules that guided the institution. Some of these factors have already been mentioned, including the Diet’s construction; the regulations guiding the Screening Deputation’s work; the high turnover in Diet delegates; the imperative mandate; and the informal social life surrounding the Diets. Not mentioned so far are the flexible attitudes towards regulations for reasons of morality; the trial and error character of the Age of Liberty; the domestic situation in the early Age of Liberty and Arvid Horn’s position in the Diet; the Screening Deputation’s personnel; and personal gain and nepotism.

### *Complexity, flexibility, and morals*

The categories ‘permissible’ and ‘impermissible’ are crude categories. Supplications could contain complex errands which defied any simple categorization, both for me as a modern observer and for the Screening Deputation in its various incarnations. To a degree, some errands could be classed as both permissible and impermissible depending on how a request was interpreted (see ch. 7). Attitudes towards the Screening Deputation’s regulations in all likelihood contained a degree of flexibility. For different purposes, such as the common good or a moral sense of what was right and wrong, exceptions could be made. In my opinion, the divergence between interaction and regulations thus probably contains several cases where regulations were indeed flouted, but other principles upheld. The authors of the regulations wanted to deter supplicants and force them to follow certain rules, but most likely did not intend to apply it with an iron fist. To a certain degree, the incongruence between regulations and behaviour was meant to exist. Regulations had to be reasonable.

In a revealing passage in his diary from 26 July 1738, the aristocratic Diet delegate Axel Reuterholm provides a glimpse of how morality could guide decision-making. On that day, one Colonel Thomsson had appealed the Screening Deputation’s rejection of his court case before the nobility:

a case ... examined by the Judicial Audit, which issued a verdict on his case despite it not yet being resolved in the royal court of appeal. It was decided that this was certainly a case worthy of examination, but because Thomsson had turned to the Screening Deputation without claiming wrongdoing, the Screening Deputation could not declare his case a matter for the Diet. Thomsson now appealed the Screening Deputation’s

verdict, but as his appeal was groundless, he was due the fines inflicted on those who unfoundedly appeal the Screening Deputation's verdicts, namely 50 dsmt. By the good offices of Lilljestierna [another nobleman] his fines were lessened or at least postponed until further resolution, and concerning his appeal, it was written on his memorial that he could turn to the Judicial Deputation, whose job it was to examine the Judicial Audit's minutes, as to if and why, and how, a yet unfinished court case in the royal court of appeal could be examined by the Judicial Audit.<sup>374</sup>

When the Estate weighed the regulations against the perceived righteousness of the appellant, the righteousness won. Not only did Thomsson receive a reprieve from his fines, the nobility referred his case for examination. Another example comes from the 1771–72 Diet, when former second lieutenant Johan Jacob Montell appealed against the grounds for his discharge and asked for a captain's pension, but his request was rejected for among other things including two separate matters in one supplications; however, the Screening Deputation spared him the fine because of his poverty, and explicitly intimated to him to not go to the Estate chambers.<sup>375</sup> In both instances, it is not certain these decisions undermined the legitimacy of the regulations. They may well have strengthened them.

To be sure, high fines could have worked as deterrents and probably did, although their application varied. The fines were set at a high or extremely high level, ranging from 50 dsmt to 1000 dsmt. In the 1740s, a yearly income of 150–200 dsmt was needed for basic subsistence, a sum which then rose because of inflation. The minimum 50 dsmt fine, for example, roughly corresponded to six years salary for a maidservant in 1740 and three months salary for a seaman in 1750. Inflation undermined some of the costs towards the end of the period, but even in 1770, 50 dsmt equalled about two and a half months of work for an unskilled labourer.<sup>376</sup> Thus, the high fines probably made Diet delegates hesitate before dealing out punishments. At least to a certain extent. Nonetheless, far from all rejected supplications that should have resulted in a fine received a pardon from the Screening Deputation.<sup>377</sup>

There are a couple of things to note about this, however. First of all, the fines were high from the perspective of anyone from the lower strata of society. If the Diet's supplication

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<sup>374</sup> Reuterholm, *dagboksanteckningar*, 70–71: 'et måhl ... [som] blifwit drageit tull Justitiae Revisionen, och där dömt medan det ännu var anhängigt och oafgjordt i Hof Rätten. Detta fans wäl wara ett måhl af nog wärde at efterse, men som Thomsson wändt sig därmed till Urskillningen och likwäl ej klagat de mall administrata Justitia kunde Urskillningen icke efter sin Instruction förklara det för Riksdags ärende. Thomsson klagade sig nu öfwer Urskillningen, men som hans klagomåhl fans obefogat, fans han nu förfallen til de böter som äro lagde på den som ohemult klagat öfwer Urskillningen neml: 50 dsmt. Han fick likwäl genom Lilljestiernas förbön eftergift eller åtminstone dilation med böterna, så att därom framdeles skulle resolveras, och hwad hans klagomåhl angik, skrefs på meorialet at han med en promemoria kunde wända sig til Justitiae Deputationen, som hade at efterse i Råds protocollen, om och hwarföre, samt på hwad sätt en i Hof Rätten oafgjord sak kommit at dragas til revision.'

<sup>375</sup> Ärende 68, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; for other examples, see Urskillningsdeputationens memorial, 3 Jan. 1747, R893, PrA, RA; Bdp 3, 15 July 1738, p. 105, 16 Aug. 1738, p. 130.

<sup>376</sup> Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 58–59; Lagerqvist, *Vad kostade det?*, 127–128, 130, 166.

<sup>377</sup> Looking at the screening list, I found 5 cases out of 50 rejected supplications at the 1771–72 Diet where the Screening Deputation spared supplicants from fines. Previous screening lists do not contain any cases where people did not have to pay fines, but in my opinion, it is likely these exemptions occurred previously as well. For the spared supplicants, see ärende 61, 68, 113, 242 & 261, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

channel was not intended to exist for their sake, they did not pose a legitimacy issue per se. Secondly, It should be noted that there were disagreements on at least one occasion about the right strategy for punishments. According to the clergy in 1738, this tendency to relieve supplicants of the fines they owed led to the ‘multiplication of errands’.<sup>378</sup> At that time at least, they did not agree that the Estates needed to show clemency; to their minds, clemency caused problems.

### ***Trial and error***

During the Age of Liberty, the delegates of the Swedish Diet found themselves in a new position. The Swedish Diet had come about during the late Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period as a forum where representatives of the people could respond to the king’s demands and present their complaints in the form of *gravamina*. Before 1719 the Diet had not possessed the political position it came to occupy as the *de facto* ruler of Sweden, and after 1772 it did not possess the same level of political power until the early twentieth century and the modern bicameral Parliament.

Even with constitutional laws in place there was considerable scope for experimentation and calibration. Although Metcalf argues that there were precedents and a regulated area of competence, it is certainly clear from the study of this particular parliamentary committee that the theoretical boundaries had an unclear practical application.<sup>379</sup> Furthermore, this uncertain practical situation was in all likelihood at its most unclear and at its most undefined in the beginning of the period. By extension, any regulations pertaining to the Diet’s committees and workings, such as the Screening Deputation, were unclear and undefined.

As the Age of Liberty Diet settled into its role, its generally increased organizational stability facilitated a higher degree of adherence to all types of regulations, including the Screening Deputation’s. Consequently, not only did the 1748 and 1760 instructions gather all relevant regulations in one document in order to increase lucidity, they also illustrated a further step in the formal institutionalization of the Diet at large as viewed from the Screening Deputation’s perspective.

This larger process of the institutionalization of the Diet was seen in several instances (see ch. 4). For example, the growing strength of the party organizations, the fact that parties became accepted parts of the political playing field, and, consequently, that the trade in noble proxies grew more elaborate towards the end of the period, are signs of this process. Moreover, Patrik Winton has shown that the acceptance of the Diet’s political position also became visible in the fact that clergy delegates from the 1740s onwards abandoned their previously ambivalent attitude towards participating; instead, a Diet delegacy became viewed as positive, something that provided opportunities both for affecting national politics and personal financial gain.<sup>380</sup> The institutionalization of the Diet’s organization was also visible in the short-lived experiment of moving it to Norrköping. While there, the Diet delegates renamed different locations in the town with their Stockholm equivalents—thus *Tyska torget* (German Square) became *Riddarhusorget* (House of Nobility Square)—this application of Stockholm’s geography to Norrköping was used

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<sup>378</sup> Prästerståndets extraktprotokoll, 15 July 1738, R1256, Borgarståndets arkiv.

<sup>379</sup> Metcalf, ‘Parliamentary Sovereignty and Royal Reaction’, 162–163.

<sup>380</sup> Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik*, 102–107.

in daily speech and in the Estate assemblies.<sup>381</sup> Thus, the Stockholm locations around which the Diet was de facto built had become ingrained into the Diet's procedures and organizational language. Together with the increased acceptance of the Screening Deputation's regulations, these examples show how a larger logic of appropriateness with several elements became established during the Age of Liberty.

As such, we would probably do well to see the issuing of regulations as part of a negotiation, a trial and error process. Incongruence between legislation and behaviour did not necessarily mean that a decree was unsuccessful, it might mean the decree and its contents were negotiated and tested. In the previous chapter, we encountered a great many repeated regulations and calibrations, a process of interaction–regulation–interaction. But, the low congruence at the beginning of the Age of Liberty and higher congruence between legislation and interaction towards the end of the Age of Liberty did not necessarily mean that legislation went on to be more successful in the last decades of the period; rather, the early and later Age of Liberty were parts of the same lengthy process, an interaction process in itself to sift out which parts of regulations were appropriate and practical, and which ones were not. A higher degree of consensus between regulations, Diet delegates, and supplicants grew out of this interaction.

### ***Political stability***

Arvid Horn established himself as the unchallenged leader of Sweden at the 1726–27 Diet (see ch. 4). Based on an examination of Kungl. Maj:t's minutes, Petri Karonen argues that 1726 was the year when the state's central organs finally began to focus more on 'routine matters' instead of constantly trying to solve one precarious situation after the other.<sup>382</sup> Horn's consolidation of power thus coincided with a more solid social and economic situation in the Swedish realm. From their stronger and more stable position, it is possible that Horn and his supporters thought the incentive to accept supplications to take the edge of social unrest and to gather support had decreased, something they signalled to supplicants with the 1727 decree. With the domestic situation under control, the powers-that-be successfully drove the amount down. Although the results discussed earlier in this chapter showed that they had little impact on the proportion of impermissible supplications submitted to the Diet, the 1727 and 1738 decrees worked, if we view them as shows of force or signals to deter supplicants around the realm.

### ***Oversight of the Screening Deputation***

Legislation not only put pressure on supplicants, but also brought the Screening Deputation under increased scrutiny. Perhaps the fact that the committee had to minute every disagreement from 1748, and then all transactions from 1760, spurred its members to increased rigour. Before, it was presumably harder to hold them accountable. Likewise, the stipulation that the committee send reports of its work to the Estate chambers possibly kept them in check. To be sure, the instructions might have made their job easier by putting all regulations guiding the committee in one single document, and the increased frequency with which supplicants submitted permissible supplications made the delegates' job easier. Nonetheless, it cannot be disregarded that

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<sup>381</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 39–40, 45.

<sup>382</sup> Karonen, 'Coping with peace after a debacle', 216–217.

regulations also made the committee delegates liable, and thus more given to acting in accordance with the regulations.

This change in behaviour cannot be explained by stability in personnel, at least when looking at the three sampled Diets. None of the delegates who manned the committee in 1726–27 can be found among its 1746–47 delegates, and none of the latter can be located among its 1771–72 delegates. As a matter of curiosity, the noblemen David Silvius, who is considered one of the main authors of the Age of Liberty constitution, was one of the delegates in 1726–27, while the clergy delegate Jacob Serenius, who we will encounter later in this chapter, sat in the committee in 1746–47.<sup>383</sup> Certainly, a survey of the committee staff at more Diets might reveal a stability in personnel that facilitated the growth of a logic of appropriateness in line with the regulations. The present findings, however, do not show any such stability.

### *The spatial structure of the Diet*

The Diet's construction undermined most attempts to enforce regulations by supervision. As we know, the Diet's four Estate assemblies and various committees were spread out across Stockholm's city centre in a structure determined by centuries of tradition. At the same time, these old structures housed the more dynamic workings of the Age of Liberty Diet, including a generous initiation right. Supervising the Estates was thus a spatial nightmare. It would have required a regiment of supervisors. Some committees convened in the same building, but between others, and especially between the Estate assemblies, any communication or supervision required a short walk. It is understandable why the responsibility for levying fines shifted to Riddarhuset's fiscal when the Estates continued to prove inept at upholding the very legislation they had enacted; however, he was given an impossible task. Possibly, the Diet's spatial cohesion improved when the peasantry and later the burghers moved to the new city hall in 1755 and 1765 respectively (see pp. 70–71). From 1765, they, the nobility, and several committees convened in buildings around the same public square. This situation to some extent allowed them to monitor one another.

Nonetheless, a change in the frequency of supplicants who went straight to the Estate chambers, thus bypassing the Screening Deputation, is visible from the Estates' minutes when comparing the early and later Age of Liberty. At the 1734 Diet, the nobility, clergy, burghers, and peasantry seem to have received between 50 and 120 supplications each, delivered either in person or by letter. To what extent the same supplicants showed up at different Estates is uncertain, but at least half of them, possibly more, received some sort of positive response in the form of a referral, monetary support from an Estate, and so on. The burgher and peasantry minutes for the 1755–56 Diet show a similar degree of success for the supplicants, but the number of supplicants was smaller, somewhere around 20–40.<sup>384</sup> This decrease of in the number

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<sup>383</sup> *Urskilningsdeputation, Den efter Kongl. Majestäts Nädigste Kallelse-Bref. Åhr 1726. Den 1. Sept i Stockholm wälpåbegannte och 1727. Den 5. Aug. hveckeligen ändade Sveriges Rikes högloft. Ständers Almänne Sammankomst Til Enwärdelig Aminnelse, Samt Dem af högberemelte Ständers Ledamöter, hwilcke sig til Riksdagen infunnit, och wid så högstangelägne Riksens wärdande Ärenden, så uti Secrete Uskättet, som andra wichtige Deputationer brukade blifwä, 1727, ÅT; Urskilningsdeputation, Riksens högloflige Ständers Ledamöter och Deputationer Wid Riksdagen, Som begyntes i Stockholm uti September Månad 1746, 1746, ÅT; Urskilningsdeputation, RIKSENS HÖGLIFLIGE STÄNDERS LEDAMÖTER, WID RIKSDAGEN, Som begyntes i Stockholm den 13 Junii 1771, 1771, ÅT.*

<sup>384</sup> BdP 2; BdP 7, BrP 5; PrP 7; PrP 8; BrP 10; RaP 7; RaP 8. I wish to thank students Emilia Hillman, Erik Olofsson and Lina Halling, who took History B during the 2014 autumn term, and Samuel Sundvall, who took History B during the 2016 spring term, for compiling and sharing these results with me.

of supplicants may have stemmed from the fiscal's supervision, but it could just as well have been the change in the Estates' attitude towards supplicants that lay behind it. Further research on this topic will be necessary to produce anything more than a speculative result.

### *Delegate turnover*

Another factor that possibly mitigated the effect of regulation was the high turnover in delegates in the Estates of the Burghers and the Peasants. Most delegates attended only one or two Diets, as we have seen (see p. 69). The high turnover among burgher and peasant delegates could have worked against the regulations, to the extent that members of these Estates were the main culprits in either facilitating supplicants who came straight to their Estate assemblies or in pushing impermissible supplications past the Screening Deputation. It might have undermined the chances for a proper code of conduct, a logic of appropriateness, to develop. On the other hand, it might be the case that the establishment of a code of conduct only required a core of more frequent Diet delegates, and that it was only thanks to the high number of first-time delegates that they could successfully implement it. Thus, it is possible to imagine that the turnover in commoner delegates aided a regulation-based logic of appropriateness, but equally that it undermined such a development.

### *The imperative mandate and self-interest*

The imperative mandate put the commoner Diet delegates under considerable pressure. With the creation of the Screening Deputation in 1723, they received a new outlet for their gravamina. As we saw in the previous chapter on legislation, a number of delegates first tried to submit Diet gravamina as supplications, and if that did not work, or even if it did work, they tried to introduce the same errands into their Estate's general gravamina. The publication of the Screening Deputation's screening lists meant that Diet delegates would have their attempts to work for their constituents advertised.

To accommodate their individual delegates with leftover gravamina, the Estates repeatedly extended the deadlines by which supplications had to be submitted. At the 1738–39 Diet, the Screening Deputation argued in vain that it was paramount to maintain the prescribed one-month period. The Estates continued to extend it with the 1755 decision to grant delegates an extra fortnight beyond that. In 1765–66, for example, the Estates were still bickering about whether to prolong or close the second deadline more than three months after it should have expired.<sup>385</sup> The commoner Estates manipulated the rules when the need arose, as they needed to dispose of Diet gravamina. And as we have seen, the Screening Deputation was more lenient towards supplications submitted for the second deadline (see p. 109).

While the imperative mandate drove Diet delegates to act in self-serving ways to further their constituents' interests, another type of self-interest also induced supplicants and Diet delegates alike to break the rules. A flabbergasted Malmström describes the Estates' meddling in appointments at the Diet of 1746–47 as motivated by nepotism or a determined attempt to curry

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<sup>385</sup> RaP 9, 26 July 1738, p. 237; BdP 10, 9 Mar. 1765, p. 53, 10 June 1765, p. 103, 9 July 1765, p. 113. See also BrP 9:1, 8 Oct. 1746, pp. 98–99; PrP 12, 15 Oct. 1746, p. 68; RaP 15, 15 Oct. 1746, pp. 106–107; PrP 14:1, 26 Nov. 1755, p. 136, 27 Mar. 1756, p. 285; BdP 8, 12 Jan. 1761, p. 101; RaP 24, 11 Feb. 1765, p. 45, 10 June 1765, p. 176; BdP 11, 29 May 1769, p. 97; BdP 12, 11 July 1771, p. 53, 15 July 1771, p. 56; another example was when county governor Ribbing successfully sought reprieve for his pending supplication at the Diet of 1738–39, BdP 3, 8 July 1738, p. 97.



favour with friends and allies. Displaying clear double standards, several Estates and individual delegates condemned the practice as unlawful and unfair, while blithely continuing to meddle in appointments. The clerical delegate Serenius—who as we remember sat on the Screening Deputation—recommended his brother for a promotion in March 1747, then warned his Estate about the dangers of tampering with the royal prerogative of appointing posts two months later. Despite people voicing misgivings about intervening in appointments as early as December 1746, the Estates continued to appoint people well into October 1747.<sup>386</sup>

What looks like opportunistic double standards were also on display at the 1760–62 Diet, when the Estates again got involved in various appointments, both general and individual. Their involvement seemingly peaked during the summer of 1761, a situation exacerbated by the fact that Kungl. Maj:t kept referring decisions on appointments to the Estates. In the end, a disgruntled nobility reacted by voting any involvement from the Estates in appointments as unconstitutional, and forced the other Estates at least not to accept any more employment errands. Malmström, however, claims that many noblemen who stood to gain from the Estates' participation in appointments secretly egged on the other Estates.<sup>387</sup>

Such opportunism could be facilitated by the relatively vibrant social culture around the Diet. Not only political party strategy, but also lesser goals could be achieved by the liberal use of drinks and favours. At one Diet, a delegate excluded by the peasantry tried to offer some of the other peasants drinks and tobacco in order to get them to act for his reinstatement. In another instance, one of the parties to an inheritance dispute invited the peasantry to a ball in order to sway them in his favour.<sup>388</sup> Although it is of course uncertain to what extent this informal political practice undermined the regulations's desired effect, it cannot be discounted. It is possible supplicants swayed a sufficient number of members of the Screening Deputation, or simply acquired the services of a persuasive person who used his talents in the committee or in his Estate assembly.

Thus, despite regulations and punishments, the Estates wilfully stretched or broke the regulations. Principled and cynical self-interest as well as bribes can explain their behaviour. The examples of Serenius in 1746–47 and the nobility in 1760–62 underscore the fact that while people could avow the importance of rules and principles, they would break them at the first opportunity if they felt it justified.

## Conclusions

The findings in this chapter show that the regulations issued for the Diet's supplication channel by all accounts did have an impact. Looking at the sheer number of submitted supplications, it fell markedly after both the 1723 and the 1726–27 Diets, increased after the 1756 Report on Crown Service made it easier to appeal on grounds of prejudice, and then decreased again when the Estates forbade prejudice appeals in 1766. It seems, all this was followed closely by potential supplicants.

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<sup>386</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 408–411; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 369; as an example of the impact this behaviour could have, Ingvar Elmroth has shown that no fewer than 15 of the Chancery Board's 25 employees received a promotion of some sort at this Diet. Elmroth, *Nyrökröteringen till de högre ämbetena*, 48.

<sup>387</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 9–12, 83–86, 95–103, 176–181, 183–184, 186–187, 202–204; see also Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 169, 174, 299–305.

<sup>388</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 149–150, 156, 196.

Legislation also seems to have affected supplicants' behaviour and framing of their supplications in the second half of the Age of Liberty. In the 1771–72 sample, a third of the supplicants tried to reserve the opportunity to submit their supplications later during the Diet, and a fifth of the supplicants resubmitted a supplication they had successfully submitted at the last Diet, but where the Estates had not had time to vote on it. More than half the supplicants appealed against verdicts from Kungl. Maj:t in the final sample, and supplicants also streamlined their supplications to an increasing extent. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, a majority of the 1771–72 supplicants submitted without violating the regulations. In the two previous samples, only about a fifth of the supplicants had abided by regulations.

Shifts in the Screening Deputation's behaviour can also be noted. At both the beginning and the end of the Age of Liberty, its members accepted three-fifths of the supplications they received, whereas the proportion of accepted supplications had fallen in the middle of the period to two-fifths at the 1746–47 Diet; however, the proportions of supplications congruent and incongruent with regulations—permissible and impermissible—were clearly in the latter's favour at the first two Diets. Thus, both supplicants and Diet delegates did not abide by the regulations in the majority of cases until towards the end of the Age of Liberty. At that point, more than a majority of all accepted supplications were permissible, compared to a third or a quarter in the previous samples. Thus, the higher acceptance rate at the beginning of the Age of Liberty was in spite of regulations, while the higher acceptance rate about 45 years later was in line with regulations.

However, even after 50 years of close regulation, a third of the accepted supplications continued to be found impermissible and the Screening Deputation should not have accepted them. The committee especially showed marked leniency towards supplications submitted by Diet delegates before the extended deadline. It is moreover uncertain to what extent supplications submitted to the Diet really were less numerous. The different Estates continued to receive supplicants in their chambers without punishing them, and also rewarded supplicants by granting their wishes; however, just as the Age of Liberty Diet witnessed a change in congruence between interaction and regulations in the Screening Deputation, it does seem fewer supplicants showed up on the Estate chambers' doorsteps, probably deterred by the more coherent workings of the Diet.

Either way, it is unlikely that the thousand plus supplications that disappeared from the Screening Deputation between 1727 and 1734 instead went to the Estate chambers. Despite the dents in the regulations the present study has identified, it was not ineffective. In the short and long term alike, the number of supplications submitted to the Diet fell until legislation and circumstance caused numbers to rise again, but tellingly, this increase took place within the confines of the regulations, not outside. In the long term, supplicants adapted to the regulations.

I have also suggested some possible explanations for how to understand these developments in the supplicants' and Diet delegates' behaviour. The complexity of some of the errands, compounded by common sense and moral compass, meant that a 100 per cent congruence of action and regulation was not possible. The trial and error character of the Age of Liberty Diet and the stabilizing domestic scene might also explain the differences between the early and latter halves of the period. In the latter half of the Age of Liberty the Diet as a whole probably enjoyed a legitimacy and respect that it might not have had in the beginning of the period, and the same

might be said in terms of constitutional role and function. The Screening Deputation's regulations were part of this process.

Further, the instructions of 1748 and 1760 made the Screening Deputation's committee members accountable for their actions, with the keeping of minutes and the communication of examined errands to the Estate chambers. This accountability might explain why they adhered to the regulations more closely in 1771–72 than before. Any changes in the Screening Deputation's behaviour did not seem to stem from stability in the personnel: no delegate could be found sitting on the committee at two or more of the sampled Diets.

Some factors probably only undermined the legislation's purpose by increasing the quantity of impermissible supplications and facilitating their entry into the Diet. Delegates sometimes stood to gain by breaking the rules, be it because of the imperative mandate or for one's own benefit or that of one's relatives or members of one's network. The Diets also took place amidst a buzzing informal political life in different venues, which might have been counter to the intended effects of the regulations. By soliciting Diet delegates in these venues by way of bribery or favours, a supplicant could improve his or her chances of having the supplication accepted and forwarded to the Estate chambers or the Screening Deputation. The turnover rate of the burgher and peasantry delegates might also have obstructed the establishment of a code of conduct in line with the regulations, but equally it could have aided it instead. Lastly, the Diet was spread out across Stockholm's city centre, making it hard to supervise anyone bent on disregarding the regulations.

From the perspective of a logic of appropriateness, the supplication channel in the Diet was governed by two sets of rules that to some extent contradicted each other. At least partly, this was the conflict between the judicial and administrative aspects on the one hand and the patriarchal aspect on the other. Thus, the Diet's supplication channel faced the same problems as Kungl. Maj:t's channel, and on the same grounds. Efficient conduct did not always constitute legitimate conduct, and vice versa. Over time, the formal rules—the administrative aspect—came to exert an increased influence over the institution, but at the same time, the Screening Deputation continued to act with marked lenience towards impermissible supplications submitted by Diet delegates. Thus, the double standards seemingly persevered, albeit in another form: in the beginning all supplicants encountered a Screening Deputation that was unhampered by regulations, whereas mostly Diet delegates benefitted from a flexible application of the formal rules at the end of the Age of Liberty. The reproductive rules of the logic of appropriateness at odds with the regulations were not the same.

At the beginning of the Age of Liberty the new political situation, with a constitutionally strong Diet, meant there was a wide interpretation of what was permissible. The Diet Act and newly issued decrees existed alongside other modes of conduct which were considered equally proper by a large proportion of Diet delegates. Although the 1746–47 incarnation of the Screening Deputation did heed the regulations to a larger extent than in 1726–27, less than half the accepted supplications were permissible. The institution contained two sets of rules, with the informal rules guiding interaction more than formal. Supplicants who understood this double set of rules still ventured to the Screening Deputation or the Estate chambers; those who did not understand that two sets of rules existed were deterred by the regulations and stayed away.

Thus, the number of supplications decreased while the congruence between interaction and regulations remained low.

In the second half of the Age of Liberty, the institution underwent further changes. A majority of supplicants submitted permissible supplications at the 1771–72 Diet, and two-thirds of supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation were permissible too. The unfamiliar political situation at the beginning of the Age of Liberty had grown familiar. As noble families, dioceses, townships, and peasant communities kept sending delegates to a Diet every third year or so, a Diet-wide logic of appropriateness developed that in turn generated a Diet-wide institutional clarity that had not existed in the 1720s. Thus, the Screening Deputation and the Estate chambers became less lucrative hunting grounds for supplicants with impermissible requests. At the same time, the spatial issue was partly resolved with the 1748 and 1760 instructions. The Estate of the Noble's fiscal supervised supplicants. The Screening Deputation kept minutes and communicated their examination of errands. To the extent that the Screening Deputation's delegates in 1726–27 and 1746–47 acted out of harmony with the rest of the Diet delegates, the possibility to do so after 1748 decreased markedly and another factor potentially undermining a Diet-wide logic of appropriateness based on formal rules disappeared.

The commoner Estates together managed to reverse the decision to have the Screening Deputation examine the general gravamina, and then institutionalized a second deadline during which they could submit their particular gravamina as supplications. Through these actions, the commoner Estates managed to control the flow of their gravamina into the Diet in a way they found satisfactory. Not only that, the Screening Deputation examined their errands with another set of standards than they did other supplications. Content with the explicit and tacit exemptions accorded to their supplications, it is probable the Diet delegates started supporting the Screening Deputation's regulations to a greater extent. When they had less reason to fear the effects of the regulations on their potential supplications, they could consider enforcing them. With their support, the formal rules started taking precedence, thus shaping the institution and its workings to a higher degree than before. A logic of appropriateness based on formal rules was established—one which only granted exemptions to Diet delegates and not to all supplicants.

In conclusion, then, the shift in attitudes towards supplications in the formal rules probably took place on the back of the stability of the constitution and the Diet's *de facto* political position, improved supervision of the Screening Deputation's work, and the actions of the commoner Diet delegates. According to Marsh and Olsen's theory, however, the institutional rules reaffirm themselves mostly voluntarily through repeated interaction. There is no need for supervision, for example, as the logic of appropriateness becomes ingrained in the people who interact in the institution. In all likelihood, however, supervision partially facilitated the shift in the nature of the interaction in the Diet's supplication channel. The extent to which we can therefore explain the development of the channel with the concept of logic of appropriateness is uncertain. Would its workings have remained more or less the same if the Screening Deputation had stopped keeping minutes? If a majority of Diet delegates had agreed to end the practice of the extended deadline, or dropped the laxer standards for Diet delegates' supplications, would future Diet delegates have accepted that? The Age of Liberty ended before any change in circumstances or conditions could have provided a test for the theory and

therefore we would do well to not discount other possible explanations than the logic of appropriateness.

Regardless, these remarks are only based on the development of regulations and whether the interaction adhered to the formal rules. In the next and penultimate part of this dissertation, it is time to examine the composition of the supplicants and their requests, and how they affected and were affected by the development of the supplication channel. In Chapters 7 to 14, findings concerning different aspects of the supplicants and their supplications are discussed: Chapter 7 is about the writing of supplications and the long process of waiting for one's supplication to be examined; Chapters 8–11 present findings about the supplicants' place of residence and social status: while Chapters 12–14 cover the findings about the requests and their scope. In Chapter 15, the key findings are further analysed with a view to explaining the chronological development of the supplication channel—an explanation based on the theory of the logic of appropriateness.

## 7 Writing and waiting

Having looked at the impact of legislation and the Diet's structure on the supplication process, I now turn to other structural elements such as literacy; the possession of legal competence; time; and distance. In the first section of this chapter I examine supplications as a literary genre and what supplicants could do to acquire the skills required. The use of attachments to strengthen their argument also receives attention. The second section considers the process supplicants faced when they received a positive verdict from the Screening Deputation. The trajectory of three supplications provides concrete examples of the process.

### The art of writing a supplication

According to Nils-Erik Villstrand, the ability to write grew in value not only with urbanization and commercial development, but also with state formation and bureaucratization.<sup>389</sup> Just as any other type of formal written communication, writing a supplication came with certain prerequisites. It was a genre where supplicants had to adapt to a submissive style and where the argument had to follow a certain structure—factors which could disqualify those not knowledgeable in the subject. Not all supplications were written, and it was not uncommon for supplicants to submit their requests orally. It was not for nothing all the Swedish county governors were recommended to have a special room within their chanceries where they could receive supplicants. Nonetheless, supplications submitted to the higher levels of the administration during the eighteenth century were more likely written, as were those submitted to the Screening Deputation. Therefore the skills of writing a supplication were an important issue.

Of relevance here is Nils-Erik Villstrand's proposal that we distinguish between possessive and accessive literacy. With this distinction, Villstrand argues that we can better appreciate premodern literacy rates on two levels: the proportion of people who themselves knew how to read and write, who possessed literacy; and the proportion of people who did not possess these skills personally, but who could still access that knowledge.<sup>390</sup> This perspective definitely applies to supplications, whose style was quantified and commodified for people who lacked that particular skill.

I first examine how supplications were composed along the lines set down in the *brevställare* (letter-writing manuals) of the period, before turning to the assistance available for those who for some reason required help with putting their grievances down on paper. Lastly, I take a look at attachments.

Beginning with the letter-writing manuals, these were published and sold to people in need of help with communication in general. In Sweden, Johan Biurman's manual—first published in 1729 and reprinted six times in the eighteenth century—contained instructions for documents ranging from wills to contracts, from love letters to the proper use of titles.<sup>391</sup> It also dealt with the issue of how to write a supplication, with Biurman dividing it into four sections. First came the *narratio facti*, the retelling of the circumstances that led the person to write the letter. This

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<sup>389</sup> Villstrand, 'Bokstäver, bönder och politik', 92, 95.

<sup>390</sup> Villstrand, 'Bokstäver, bönder och politik', 97; Villstrand, 'Memorialets makt', 196.

<sup>391</sup> Biurman, *En kort och tydlig Bref-Ställare*.



**Figure 7.1** Writing supplications on your own required not only literacy but equipment. Next to the letter-writing woman from the nobility one can spot tins with ink and sand.

part was followed by *jura in thesi* and then *jura in hypothesi*, describing the law and how it related to the case at hand. At the end came the *petitum* and *conclusion fyllogistica*, in other words the conclusion and, most importantly, the request. Biurman exhorted readers to present the case in a just light; to praise and thank the recipient's presumed grace and mercy; to be humble; and to allude to 'equity, necessity, rashness [if one was asking for forgiveness], destitution, poverty' and the 'satisfaction' of the supplicant's parents, family, and associates.<sup>392</sup> For a fully literate person without the necessary rhetorical and formal knowledge, a letter-writing manual would thus provided the necessary knowledge to compose a standard supplication.

Notaries and scribes also supplied their knowledge to those needing help with supplications and other letters and documents, as long as their clients could pay them. The use of scribes was not unusual. Their involvement can be seen in the differences between the proper handwriting and the poorly executed signatures, often not an actual signature, but an owner's mark. The involvement of professional writers does not seem to have affected the nature of the request, although they certainly streamlined supplications to fit the prescribed pattern. These hired

<sup>392</sup> 'billigheten, nödwändigheten, hastig öfwerlinning, armod, fattigdom ... föräldrars, slägts och anföwaners hugnad.' Biurman, *En kort titteoch tydelig Bref-Ställare*, 60–61.

scribes were often Crown servants toiling in the local and regional arenas of state—*sockenskrivare* (parish scribes), district judges, and clergymen. Arja Rantanen, looking at supplications submitted by peasants to the central organs of state, however, argues that many Crown servants refrained from aiding supplicants when complaining about Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts. Thus, connections to the right civil servant were necessary if one were to access the central levels of the supplication channel.<sup>393</sup>

Another aspect of writing a supplication was the attachments: documents designed to strengthen the supplicant's case. In 1726–27, for example, the Screening Deputation accepted Johan von Wulffen's attempt to settle a claim on the Crown with the Estates—he had paid too much rent for the lease of royal demesne in former Swedish Livonia. His chances were definitely not reduced by the fact that he could submit documentation of his claims.<sup>394</sup> Had he come to the Screening Deputation with nothing to show for his claim besides his own word, the committee would have had to make a judgement based on hearsay. When the justice of the supplicants case was more diffuse than with straightforward claims, other means had to suffice. In 1746–47, two peasants from the parish of Wallby close to the town of Örebro petitioned the Estates for a reward for their innovations in charcoal-burning, and they attempted to strengthen their case with written testimonials from several ironmasters.<sup>395</sup>

Ambitions varied. The city of Gothenburg appealed against a royal proclamation that gave two other cities in the region of Värmland a monopoly on the transport of iron across Lake Vänern. They attached a copy of the verdict itself.<sup>396</sup> Johan Jacob Kijk, member of the Mining Board, was much more ambitious. He had been locked in a dispute over part of a common in the Åbo and Björneborg County with bookkeeper Eric Camenius since 1754, and attached 32 printed attachments to his supplication: a copy of a supplication submitted to the previous Diet, verdicts handed out in the district and regional courts, Kungl. Maj:t's verdict on the matter, excerpts of minutes, verdicts from before 1754, appeals to the Chancellor of Justice, and finally, a map.<sup>397</sup>

The number of supplicants who supported their request with an attachment varied in all three samples (Table 7.1). In the third sample, the number had increased to almost 1726–27 levels. At all Diets, a majority of the supplicants submitted no attachments, however, the results

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Attachment</b>	123	16.3%	63	22.1%	109	30.4%
<b>No attachment</b>	633	83.7%	222	77.9%	250	69.6%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

**TABLE 7.1** The number of supplications submitted with attachments (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>393</sup> Ericsson, 'Från fällande dom till kunglig nåd', 9–13; Villstrand, 'Bokstäver, bönder och politik', 106, 108, 112, 121–122; Gustafsson, 'Att draga till Malmö och skaffa sig rätt', 87–88; Rantanen, *Penningförelse i periferin*, ch. 6; Villstrand, 'Memorialets makt', 215–221.

<sup>394</sup> Ärende 1055, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>395</sup> Ärende 434, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>396</sup> Ärende 548, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>397</sup> Supplik 473, R3639, UdH, FU, RA.



presented here should be treated with caution because of the source material. It is not certain to what degree the 1726–27 and 1746–47 screening lists consistently made mention of attachments. Copies of the original documents are available for 1771–72 and provide much more accurate information. Thus, the figures for 1726–27 and 1746–47 are minimums, while those for the later Diet are more accurate. It does seem that attachments provided supplicants with a higher acceptance rate, especially at the 1726–27 Diet.<sup>398</sup> Although the uncertainty about how many supplicants actually used attachments in the first two samples does not allow for any certain conclusions, the results hint that attachments helped, not surprisingly. They cost time and money to procure or draw up, and those without the means were presumably at a disadvantage.

Thus the prerequisites for writing a supplication possibly deterred the illiterate, but there were ways to overcome the literacy divide. Nonetheless, writing a supplication to the Estates required some basic capital, be it political, cultural, economic, or social.

### **The supplication process: three errands**

I will now turn to the destiny of three supplications, submitted by three different people and accepted by the Screening Deputation. All three, Erik Säfström, Nils Fredrik von Wallvijk, and Brita Maria Wenersand, submitted supplications at the 1771–72 Diet which opened 25 June 1771. I follow the supplications from when they were examined in the Screening Deputation to see how they fared, the purpose of the exercise being to exemplify what happened after a supplication was submitted, both in the Diet and afterwards, when supplications received approval and were referred to the state's bureaucracy. This section thus provides a glimpse of what could happen after the Screening Deputation accepted a supplication.

#### ***Erik Säfström***

Säfström, a notary at Kommerskollegium (the Board of Trade), asked that the Diet give him 1,000 dsmt on a yearly basis so that he could print various texts, decrees, publications, and verdicts concerning trade and manufactories. He had already proposed this in 1765 and had been on the verge of receiving a favourable response from the Estates, but the Diet ended before they could vote on his proposal. In 1767 Kungl. Maj:t approved his proposal, but Säfström did not receive any remunerations for his efforts. In 1769 he failed to return to the Diet, but resubmitted his proposal in 1771.<sup>399</sup> Technically, his supplication was impermissible. The rules stated that supplicants who had not received a verdict by the time the Diet disbanded could return the next time it convened, but not later. Failure to do so meant forfeiture of that right. Regardless, the Screening Deputation considered his request legitimate and of public interest, and forwarded it to Handels- och manufakturdeputationen (the Trade and Manufactories Deputation). That committee in turn issued a recommendation to grant Säfström's request on 24 October 1771.<sup>400</sup>

Säfström's request also passed the Estates' scrutiny, slightly watered down. While the Trade and Manufactories Deputation had recommended that Säfström be granted 1000 dsmt a year until the next Diet and given a leave of absence from his duties as a notary, Säfström only

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<sup>398</sup> Attachment 56b

<sup>399</sup> Supplik 239, R3638, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>400</sup> Ärende 239, 14 Aug. 1771, fol. 94, 16 Aug. 1771, fol. 98, R3636, UdH, FU, RA; Ärende 5, fol. 103, R3593, Handels- och Manufakturdeputationens handlingar, FU, RA.

received a partial leave of absence. Thereafter his supplication moved to the Expediting Deputation, whose delegates confirmed it on 10 December and dispatched to Kungl. Maj:t three days later.<sup>401</sup>

On 20 December the Civil Administration Office examined and granted several documents they had received from the Diet, Säfström's verdict among them. The Board of Trade in turn confirmed the office's referral at the beginning of the 1772 on 8 January.<sup>402</sup> A year later, 27 January 1773, Säfström's errand was discussed by the Board of Trade. By this point, Säfström had collected all the statutes concerning manufactories issued between 1720 and 1747 and had compiled a register of all privileges and verdicts issued between 1648 and 1748. The board granted him his next yearly payment.<sup>403</sup>

### ***Nils Fredrik von Wallvijk***

Wallvijk, a major in the Åbo county infantry regiment, had already petitioned the Estates in 1765, appealing on grounds of prejudice. His appeal was successful, but left Wallvijk unsatisfied, so in 1771 he demanded that his commission as a major be backdated to the point when a certain Palmstruch was promoted to major instead of him, namely 21 January 1757. He also demanded to be given priority whenever a promotion to lieutenant-colonel became available at the regiment.<sup>404</sup>

Wallvijk's supplication left the Screening Deputation divided. Prejudice supplications were not allowed since 1766 and some argued that this was definitely a prejudice supplication. A majority, however, argued that this was not a prejudice supplication per se, but rather an inquiry about how to interpret the decision made in the case of Wallvijk's 1765 supplication. The new supplication was accepted and sent to the Secret Deputation on 6 August, where it would lie for quite a while. The deputation's delegates seemingly disagreed. The issue was probably protracted because Reinhold Johan Jägerhorn, a captain of Wallvijk's regiment, got involved and claimed that he too had been exposed to prejudice when Palmstruch was made a major. He therefore requested to be given the rank of major, with his letter of appointment backdated to 21 January 1757, and to have priority over Wallvijk when the next lieutenant-colonelcy fell vacant.<sup>405</sup>

After half a year, on 14 February 1772, the Secret Deputation sent the Estates their recommendation and they voted to approve Jägerhorn's requests, meaning that both men received confirmation of their promotion to major on 21 January 1757 and that Jägerhorn retained priority for any further promotions. The Expediting Deputation dispatched Jägerhorn's and Wallvijk's errands under the same rubric to Kungl. Maj:t on 2 June 1772, and the following day Krigsexpeditionen (the War Office) approved these referrals. That was the official end of the supplication Wallvijk had submitted to the Estates.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> BdP 12, 20 Nov. 1771, p. 187; RaP 29, 27 Nov. 1771, p. 645; ärende 105, fol. 11, R3644, EdH 1771–72, FU, RA.

<sup>402</sup> 20 Dec. 1771, fols. 1660–1661, vol. 96, Inrikes civilexpeditionens riksrådsprotokoll A1a, RA; 8 Jan. 1772, fols. 24–26, vol. 4, Nya manufakturdivisionens manufakturprotokoll A1da, Kommerskollegium, RA.

<sup>403</sup> 27 Jan. 1772, fols. 175–176, vol. 6, Nya manufakturdivisionens manufakturprotokoll A1da, Kommerskollegium, RA.

<sup>404</sup> Supplik 218, R3638, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>405</sup> Ärende 218, 6 Aug. 1771, fol. 79–80, R3636, UdH, FU, RA; Jägerhorn's memorial om bibehållandet vid des tour, Memorial 141, R1420, BrA, RA.

<sup>406</sup> BdP 12, 28 Mar. 1772, p. 293; RaP 30, 7 May 1772, p. 616; ärende 306, fol. 21 R3644, EdH, FU, RA; 3 June 1772, fol. 366, vol. 81, Krigsexpeditionens riksrådsprotokoll A1aa, RA.

Wallvijk nonetheless quickly returned to the War Office, almost immediately benefitting from the Estates' decision as the lieutenant-colonelcy of the Jämtland county infantry regiment became vacant. On 30 June 1772 the War Office granted Wallvijk's new request to be appointed to the vacancy. Still not completely content, Wallvijk now requested that he receive a new retroactive date for his appointment to lieutenant-colonel. He thought that date should be the date when someone wrongly received a lieutenant-colonelcy instead of him, meaning he wanted his lieutenant-colonelcy backdated to 24 October 1769. On 15 July 1772, the War Office concurred.<sup>407</sup>

### ***Maria Wenersand***

Maria Wenersand, née Wallenia, came to the Screening Deputation to put in a reservation. She had already submitted a supplication to Kungl. Maj:t on her discovery of knowledge about diseases that were hitherto incurable, asking for support in consideration of her poverty. If Kungl. Maj:t rejected her request, she wanted to reserve the right to turn to the Estates instead. Kungl. Maj:t did indeed reject her request, and she submitted a supplication to the Screening Deputation. Unfortunately, that supplication is missing from the committee's archives.<sup>408</sup>

The committee accepted Wenersand's request on 26 September 1771 and referred it to Kammar-, Oeconomie- och Commerciedeputationen (the Treasury, Economy and Commerce Deputation) for further investigation. I was unable to locate the supplication here either, nor could I find the committee's discussions about it; however, the peasantry's minutes show that the committee, on 17 December 1771, recommended the Estates vote down her request. Wenersand had not proved her supposed discoveries, nor had she responded satisfactory to the questions of Medicinkollegiet (the Medical Board). The peasantry followed the committee's recommendation on 29 January 1772 and presumably the other Estates did as well: Wenersand's name does not appear in the Expediting Deputation's registers.<sup>409</sup>

### ***Observations from the three examples***

These three are brief examples of the possible outcomes that faced applicants after they had their supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation. Some aspects of the process stand out. Firstly, the time from submitting a supplication to receiving a decision varied. Säfström and Wenersand did not have to wait anything like as long as Wallvijk since first submitting their supplications at the beginning of the 1771–72 Diet, about six months rather than a full year; however, as Säfström was aware of since the first time he had made this proposal at the 1765–66 Diet, he could have received no answer at all.

Secondly, submitting a supplication to the Diet could be a part of a much longer process that did not necessarily end because of a positive verdict. Wallvijk first successfully appealed on grounds of prejudice in 1765, then returned six years later to ask for further improvements. When at least part of his request was granted, he quickly and successfully wrote to the War Office twice in order to obtain a lieutenant-colonelcy, and then to change the date of his

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<sup>407</sup> 30 June 1772, fol. 449–450, vol. 81, Krigsexpeditionens riksrådsprotokoll A1aa, RA; 15 July 1772, fol. 488, vol. 82, Krigsexpeditionens riksrådsprotokoll A1aa, RA.

<sup>408</sup> Supplik 450, R3639, UdH, FU, RA;

<sup>409</sup> Ärende 450, 26 Sept. 1771, fol. 220, R3636, UdH, FU, RA; BdP 12, 29 Jan. 1772, p. 229; fol. 5, R3644, EdH, FU, RA.

promotion to lieutenant-colonel. A skilled supplicant could successfully navigate the system if he or she knew how to.

Thirdly, Wenersand's case shows the complexity of the examination process and that supplicants could be called on to participate. Wenersand's supplication itself did not suffice and the Treasury, Economy and Commerce Deputation required her to further prove her knowledge. The involvement of other agents in the process is also highlighted by the fact that the Medical Board interacted with both the Screening Deputation and Wenersand herself.

## Conclusions

The aim of this chapter is to present structures and possibilities when composing a supplication and to give examples of what the process entailed after the Screening Deputation accepted the supplication. First of all, submitting a supplication to the Estates required basic literacy and knowledge about how compose such a document. Persons who did not possess these abilities could still access this knowledge—they possessed accessive literacy, in Villstrand's terms—either by reading a letter-writing manual or using the services of a scribe. Public officials and civil servants in local and regional government could also aid the effort. Moreover, several supplicants tried to improve their chances of receiving a positive response from the Screening Deputation by adding one or more attachments.

Lastly, the pathways taken by Säfström's, Wallvijk's, and Wenersand's supplications highlight that supplicants potentially had to wait a long time and also could be called upon to provide answers to additional inquiries and requests from both the Diet and government bodies. As the further destinies of Säfmark and Wallvijk show, however, those who successfully navigated the system and knew how to use it could very well meet with success in the end.

The destiny of Säfström's and Wallvijk's supplications also bear out the findings from the previous chapter. Säfström's supplication broke the rules, but was still accepted because his proposal would be to the common good. An application of the rules by the book would in this instance not have been beneficial or practical for society. Wallvijk's case, on the other hand, shows how difficult it was to apply the rules correctly. Was his supplication yet another prejudice appeal? It would be possible to argue that the supplication was permissible, equally that it was impermissible. In this and in many other cases, the Screening Deputation had to make a judgement call with the support of encompassing, but often terse, regulations. Although the Screening Deputation's minutes have not been used systematically in this study, their discussions and disagreements promise to be a fruitful object of further study.

## 8 Geography

In early modern times, distance was an obstacle on a basic level that most twenty-first-century residents of urban Sweden and Finland cannot begin to comprehend. Journeys that now take hours took days, weeks and months. Travelling in early modern Sweden was moreover a monitored enterprise. Therefore, the supplicant's origins are of interest in determining how accessible the Diet's supplication channel really was to Swedish subjects. In this chapter I take a closer at the impact that geographical distance could have on access. The chapter begins by accounting for the structures that framed early modern travel and then continues to the empirical results from the three sample Diets.

### Distance

Unlike supplicants who turned to their county governors, who generally lived a few days away at most, supplicants eager to solicit the help of the Estates often faced a much longer journey. The trip to Stockholm was quite arduous for most people who lived in Finland and the north and south of Sweden as well as Swedish Pomerania (Fig. 8.1). Those with means used some sort of transport—boat, horse, sledge—while the rest endured a long walk whenever the seasons permitted. As a point of reference, the prescribed speed for the royal postal service was 10 kilometres an hour on horseback for 'good road conditions', which meant that information from Kungl. Maj:t in Stockholm reached most corners of Sweden and Finland in about two weeks.<sup>410</sup> On foot the journey took longer, of course. Nor was it considered wise to travel: a prayer for travellers mentioned brigands, bad company, and thieves as additional dangers of travel.<sup>411</sup>

One could not simply decide to set off on a journey in eighteenth-century Sweden. Travel was a closely watched and restricted undertaking, and the authorities tried to keep a watchful eye on people's movement. Eighteenth-century Stockholm newspapers scrutinized the authorities' lists of incoming visitors and published the most renowned names, announcing their arrival to the public. But to even begin the journey required the signed consent of the county governor or local parish priest, clearly stating the purpose of the trip. Peasants had to stay put at their farms for long periods; maids and farmhands were tied to their employer's residence for most of the year.<sup>412</sup>

To what extent people sent in their supplications by mail remains uncertain. As a point of comparison, supplicants were seemingly expected to submit their supplications addressed to Kungl. Maj:t to the Royal Chancery in person as late as 1723.<sup>413</sup> Two decrees concerning stamp duty from 1732 and 1748 mention the possibility of mailing supplications to Kungl. Maj:t, but not whether that possibility existed for supplicants

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<sup>410</sup> Reuterswärd, *Ett massmedium för folket*, 58–59.

<sup>411</sup> Topelius (ed.), *På svenskt pass*, 17.

<sup>412</sup> Johanson, *Fattiga och tiggare*, 159–160; Harnesk, *Leggfolk*, 32–38; Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 41–42.

<sup>413</sup> Kongl. May:tz Nådiga Förordning, Hwar effter alla Sollicitanter sigh hafwa at rätta, förr än dhe någon ansökning hoos Kongl. May:tt göra, Aug 30 1680, *ÅT*; Kongl. Maj:ts Förnyade Förordning Och Påbud, Hwarefter Alle Sollicitanter sig hörsamligen rätta skola, för än de understå sig hos Kongl. Maj:t någon ansökning göra, 3 Oct 1723, *ÅT*. For mid seventeenth practice, see; Forssell, 'Kansliet från Gustaf II Adolf till år 1660', 33.

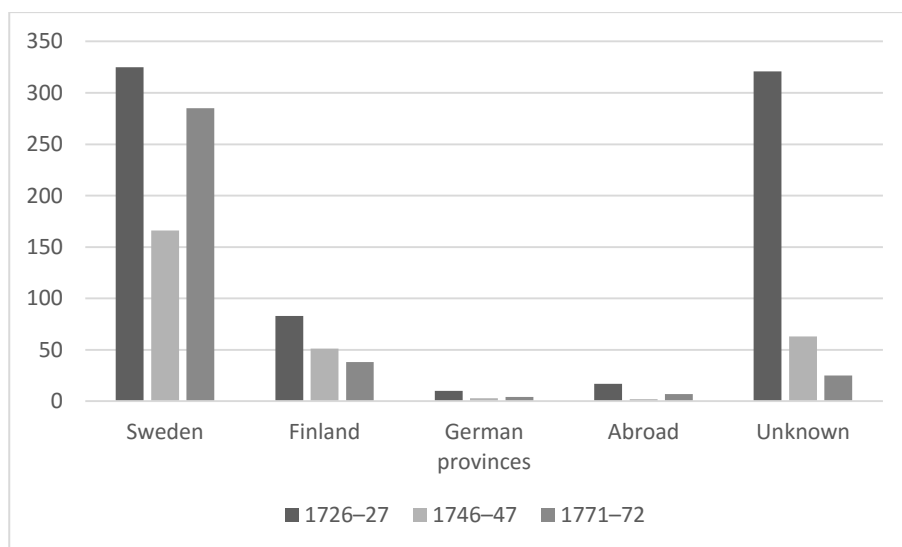


**FIGURE 8.1** The Swedish realm, showing the five regions and territories referred to in this study, including Swedish Pomerania and the town of Wismar, in 1723.

who sought the Estates' aid.<sup>414</sup> The examined Screening Deputation documents reveal only one clear instance where a supplicant had mailed his supplication to the committee. How representative that case was is difficult to ascertain because of the special circumstances which led to its discovery.<sup>415</sup> As we have seen, Stockholm's parish priests were required to read out the Screening Deputation's regulations at the beginning of each Diet from their pulpits, hinting that most supplicants were then in the capital (see p. 92 ). Those who could neither mail nor bring the supplication to Stockholm in person could simply give the documents to someone else travelling to the capital. Of course, for this option to exist they had to know people who would be going to Stockholm at the time of the Diet. A fair guess would be that these supplicants most often knew Diet delegates or people with travelling professions such as merchants, couriers, and the like. As we saw in Chapter 5, these people also had to carry proxies from 1738 on.

### Large-scale results

Most supplications came from Sweden proper (Fig. 8.2). Whether or not that was the case at the 1726–27 Diet remains unclear, but it was certainly the case in the 1746–47 and 1771–72 samples. At least three-fifths of supplicants in the second sample and four-fifths in the third sample came



**FIGURE 8.2** All supplicants' origins, large scale (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; Google Maps.

<sup>414</sup> Kongl. Maj:ts Stadga Och Förordning, Huru den så kallade Chartæ Sigillatæ Afgiften hädanefter skall betalas och erläggas, Dec 20 1732, § 25, *AT*; Kongl. Maj:ts Nådiga Förordning, Angående Stämplat Papper, 14 Jan 1748, § 24, *AT*.

<sup>415</sup> In this case, the 1746–47 reincarnation of the Screening Deputation distributed a report upon finishing their work, in which they berated the Estates for a number of things, including letting people submit appeals on resolutions older than the last Diet. This did however not stop the Screening Deputation from also noting they had decided to not fine Lady Elisabeth Back for submitting a supplication rejected at the 1738–39 and 1740–41 Diets: as the supplication had been submitted after the one-month deadline, the committee considered it unnecessary to fine Beck and instead not bother with her grievance at all. Suffice to say, the Screening Deputation did not leave many similar accounts of other supplications. It is possible that a survey of the Screening Deputation's minutes from the latter half of the Age of Liberty would yield more information on the matter. Urskifningsdeputationens memorial, 3 Jan 1747, R893, PrA, RA.

from Sweden proper. Likewise, the number of supplications from Finland decreased between the second and third samples, even though the third sample is bigger than the second.

There were a few supplicants from the German provinces in the samples. One of those who came from Germany, Ulrika Maria Cronman who was the daughter of a deceased major, asked the 1771–72 Diet for the pension her father had requested from Kungl. Maj:t before he had died. She wrote and signed her request in Stralsund. Also from Stralsund came captain M.J. Sjöholm's complaint to the same Diet about his terms of service, where he had to perform the duties attached to both his and another captain's job.<sup>416</sup> Thus, the possibility to petition the Diet also existed for Swedish subjects of the Crown living in northern Germany. For the German subjects of Swedish Pomerania and Wismar this opportunity did not exist, at least formally, as Sweden's German provinces came under the Holy Roman Emperor's jurisdiction.

Supplications from abroad were similarly rare. Some were submitted by people from Swedish provinces lost in the Great Northern War, like the claim on the Crown submitted by the heirs of the late merchant Jacob Monike from Riga. In 1708 and 1710 he had delivered shoes and boots to the Crown for a sum of 16,424 dsmt, on credit. With interest, the sum rose to about 38,000 dsmt by 1723, when Monike had acquired a verdict that urged Kungl. Maj:t to honour his debts. Three years later little had come of it except Monike's death. His heirs reiterated his claims on the Swedish government to the 1726–27 Diet via a certain Friedrich Schiffhausen, who acquired a referral to the Secret Committee to examine the matter. Whatever transpired at that Diet, the general outcome seems to have been less than satisfactory as the heirs returned again in 1771–72, now represented by a saddler, Peter Vicks.<sup>417</sup> Another supplicant with a long-outstanding debt was the Ottoman janissary Zieleby who had supplied Karl XII with money during the latter's sojourn in Bender. He visited Stockholm in 1746 to settle his claim, thirty years later.<sup>418</sup>

Other supplications from abroad came from Swedish subjects on foreign soil. Herman Cedercreutz, on a diplomatic mission to Russia in 1726, asked the Estates to raise his salary.<sup>419</sup> Others were in foreign service and wanted to return home, such as Clement Biörner, a lieutenant in the French army. In 1771 he appealed against Kungl. Maj:t's decision to deny him a lieutenancy in the Swedish army.<sup>420</sup> Thus, the abroad category contains different types of supplicants, ranging from Swedish subjects overseas and people living in former Swedish provinces to people from areas that had never been under Swedish control.

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<sup>416</sup> Ärende 567 & 635, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>417</sup> Ärende 201, R2522, UdH, FU, RA; Ärende 153, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

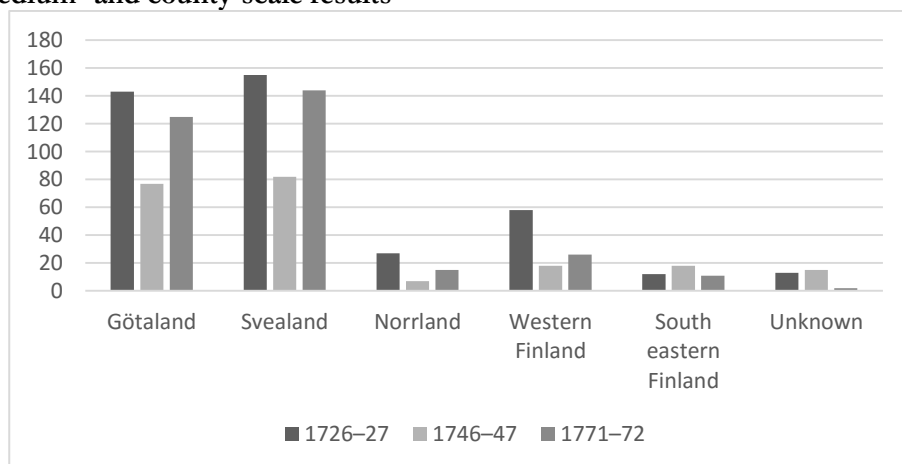
<sup>418</sup> Ärende 413, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>419</sup> Ärende 609, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>420</sup> Ärende 637, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.



## Medium- and county-scale results



**FIGURE 8.3** All Swedish supplicants' origin, medium scale (by supplications) (1726-27  $n=408$ , 1746-47  $n=202$ , 1771-72  $n=321$ ).  
Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; Google Maps.

Most supplicants evidently came from the Swedish regions of Svealand or Götaland (Fig. 8.3). These results need to be treated with caution as the figure does not account for the large number of supplications categorized as unknown. Those shown as unknown here are from somewhere in Sweden or Finland, but are not possible to categorize on the medium scale. Consequently, it is for example possible that the number of supplications from western Finland ran at the same level in the first and second samples.

Focusing on the third sample, more than half of the Svealand supplicants came from Stockholm county and four-fifths came from either the counties of Stockholm or surrounding Södermanland and Uppland (for the counties of Sweden-Finland, see Fig. 8.4). The counties of Gothenburg and Bohuslän, like Östergötland, home to the other two major towns of the era—Gothenburg and Norrköping—did not come close to the Stockholm region's share. About a fifth of the Götaland region's supplicants came from Gothenburg and Bohuslän, while a sixth of the supplications came from Östergötland. Lastly, about two-thirds of the supplications from western Finland came from the county of Åbo and Björneborg.<sup>421</sup>

## Conclusions

The results from the samples are difficult to interpret, given the large number of supplicants whose place of residence could not be ascertained, especially in the first sample and to some extent in the second. Nonetheless, most supplicants in the second and third samples came from Sweden proper. The number of Finnish supplicants decreased between the second and third samples, although the extent is unclear, and very few of the supplications came from abroad or Sweden's German provinces. Looking at the third sample, most supplicants who lived in either western Finland or

<sup>421</sup> Compare attachments 4-5.

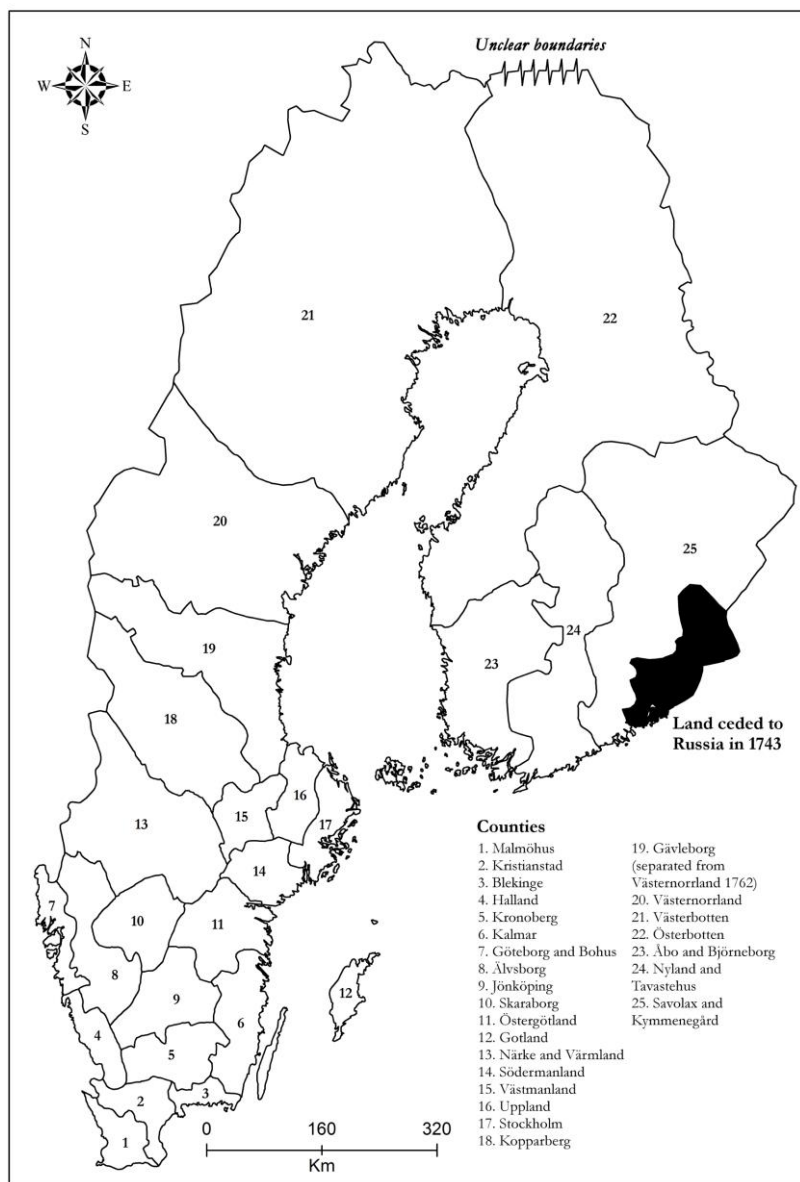


FIGURE 8.4 The counties of Sweden in the Age of Liberty.

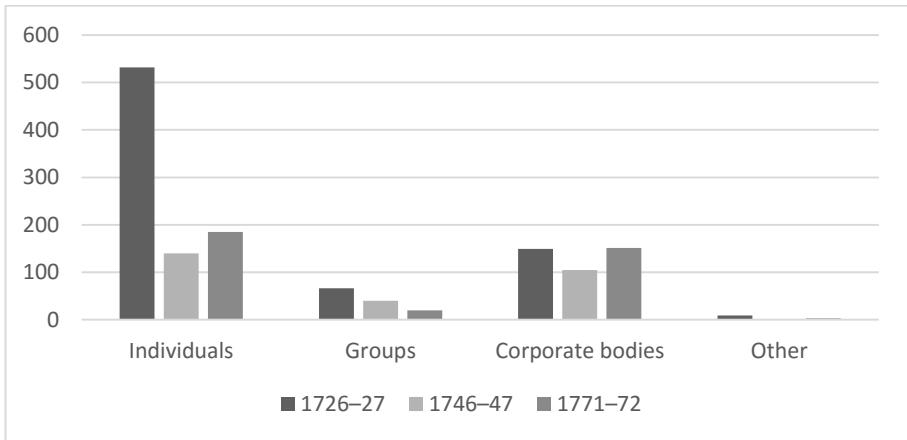
Svealand predominantly came from well-populated areas relatively close to the capital. Counties that lay further away from the capital together contributed a majority of the supplications, but only smaller proportion when considered county by county.

This geographical distribution might hint at different levels of integration into the realm for whatever reason; however, for a meaningful analysis to be possible, I would need to compare the number of supplications with population sizes. As a significant number of supplicants are impossible to pinpoint geographically with the methods used here, I have chosen not to pursue this line of enquiry here.

# 9 Type and gender

This chapter marks the start of the investigation of who the supplicants were. I start by examining the occupation and gender of the supplicants, as well as the acceptance rate as viewed in terms of these two categorizations.

## Type



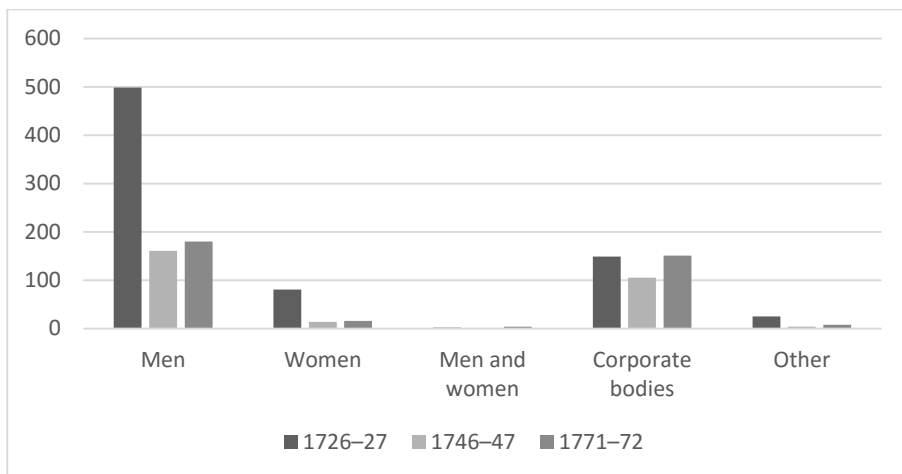
**FIGURE 9.1** Supplicants by type (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see p. 28.  
*Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

Most of the supplications were submitted by individuals throughout the period (Fig. 9.1): in the first sample about seven-tenths and in the latter two about half came from individuals. It does seem, however, that the large difference in sample size when comparing 1726–27 with 1746–47 affected the individual group the most. Neither group nor corporate supplications decreased as much. Unlike group supplications, the number of corporate bodies increased in the third sample and recovered to 1726–27 levels. The trend of the period is therefore one where supplications submitted by individuals persisted as proportionately the largest category, although it decreased in number, while the second and third samples saw an increase of first the share and then the number of supplications from corporate bodies.

## Gender

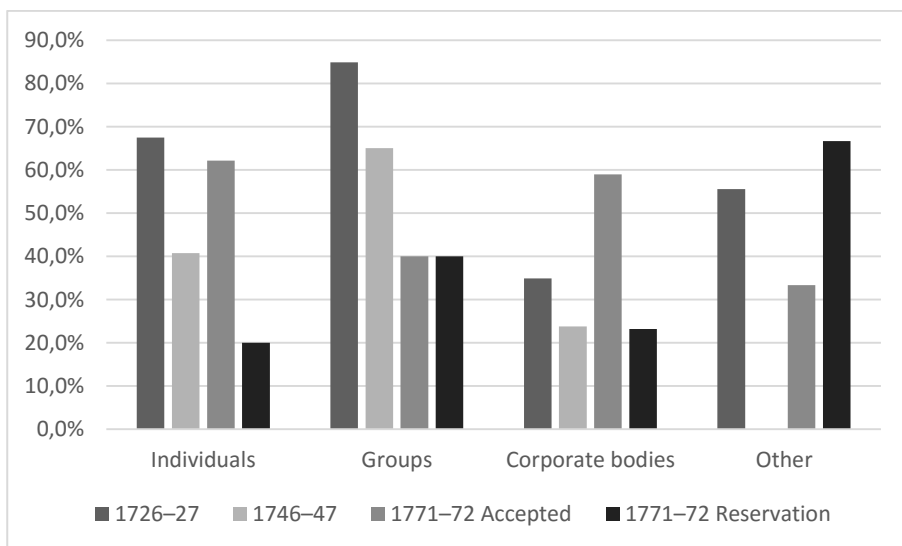
The increase of corporate supplications was of course also visible when categorizing supplicants by gender (Fig. 9.2). As can be seen, the number of male supplicants decreased more than the number of female supplicants, but on the other hand the number of male supplicants was much higher to begin with. When comparing the 1726–27 and 1746–47 samples, the number of women fell by seven-eighths and the share of women halved. An examination of the published screening lists from the 1738–39, 1740–41 and 1742–43 Diets shows this result is not an anomaly. The number of female supplicants at those Diets was similar to the number in the second and third samples.<sup>422</sup>

<sup>422</sup> Compare attachments 7–8

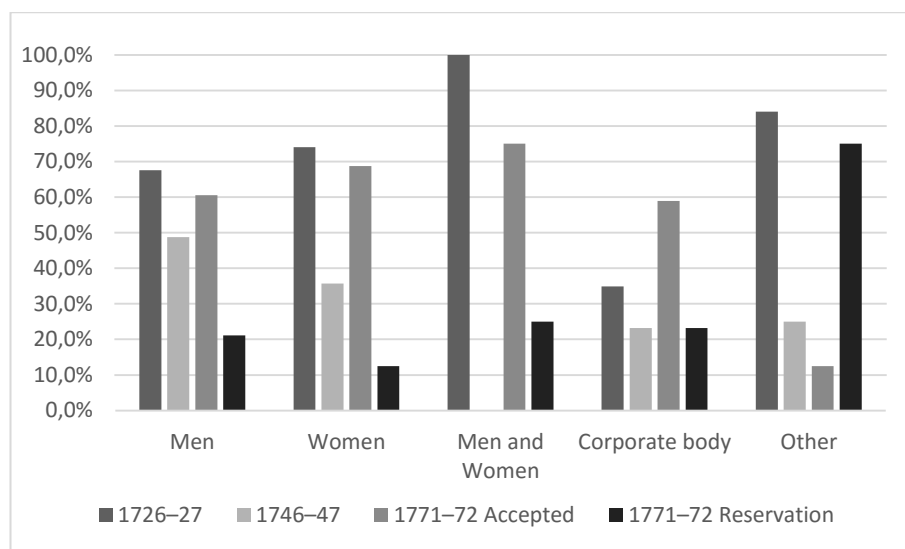


**FIGURE 9.2** Applicants by gender (by applications) (1726-27  $n=756$ , 1746-47  $n=285$ , 1771-72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see p. 29. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Acceptance rates



**FIGURE 9.3** Applicants' acceptance rate by type (by applications) (1726-27  $n=756$ , 1746-47  $n=285$ , 1771-72  $n=359$ ). Sources: R2522, R2944-R2945, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.



**FIGURE 9.4** Supplicants' acceptance rate by gender (by supplications) (1726-27  $n=756$ , 1746-47  $n=285$ , 1771-72  $n=359$ ). *Sources:* R2522, R2944-R2945, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

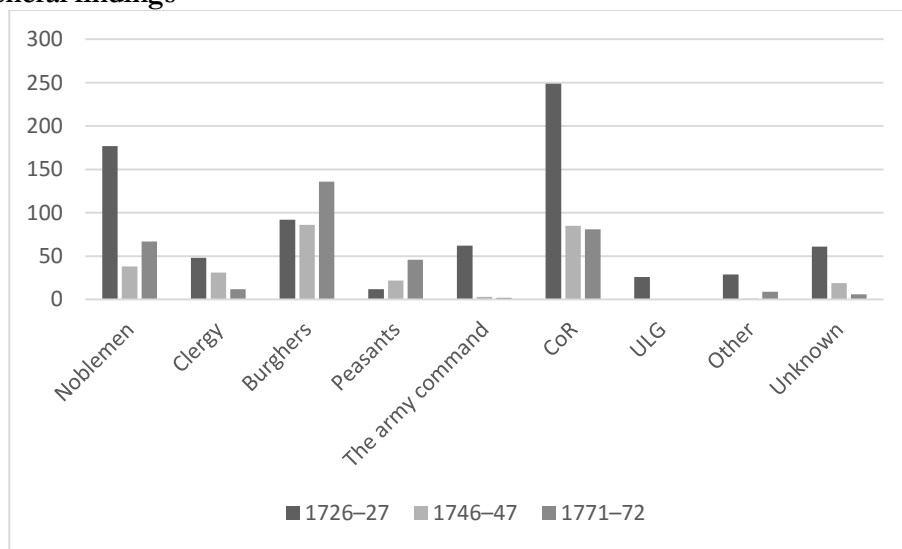
Individual supplicants found the Screening Deputation more kindly inclined towards them than to the average supplicant in all three samples (Fig. 9.3). Supplications from groups were greeted with an even higher acceptance rate in the first and second samples. Corporate bodies, on the other hand, had an acceptance rate that lay far below the average acceptance rate at the 1726-27 and 1746-47 Diets. Clearly, the Screening Deputation treated these supplications more harshly. This stance changed in the third sample, when the corporate bodies' acceptance rate was at more average levels. Thus, it seems that the 1726-27 and 1746-47 Screening Deputations were sterner with corporate bodies while the 1771-72 Screening Deputation accepted their presence in the supplication channel.

Both male and female supplicants reached an acceptance rate that was average or higher than average at all three Diets, albeit the number of women supplicants found in the second and third samples is fairly low (Fig. 9.4).

## 10 Social background

In this chapter, I first examine the general results if one categorizes the supplicants by Estate, and then focus on the corporate bodies, as well as Diet corporate bodies and Diet delegates, before rounding off by looking at their acceptance rates.

### General findings

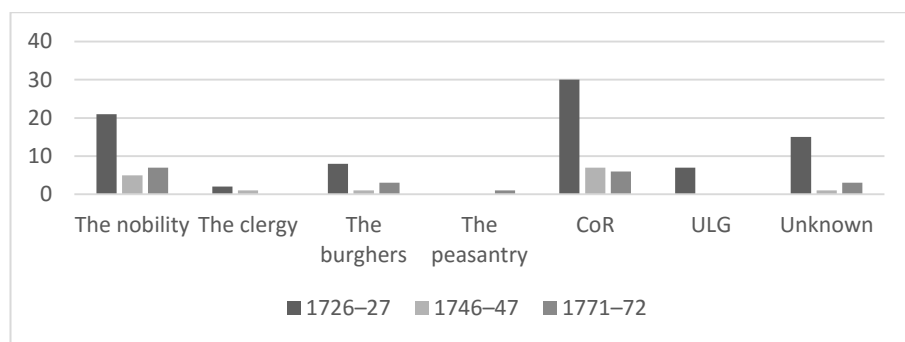


**FIGURE 10.1** Supplicants by Estate (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). CoR=commoners of rank, ULG=unrepresented lower groups. For the categories, see p. 32. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

Commoners of rank constituted the largest group in the first sample (Fig. 10.1). Every third supplication came from this group. On the other hand, about half of the 1726–27 supplicants belonged to the five Estates, with noblemen constituting half of those, or a quarter of the total sample. Noblemen actually constituted the second largest group of supplicants, behind the commoners of rank, and from there down there was a noticeable gap to the third- and fourth-largest groups, the burghers and army command supplications—177 compared to 92 and 62 respectively.

With the exception of peasant supplicants, the number of supplicants in each group decreased when comparing the second sample with the first. Commoners of rank and noblemen decreased the most. The large difference in size between samples one and two was thus mostly caused by the disappearance of these types of supplicants, together with army command supplicants. As for the latter, the result does not mean that the army command stopped submitting requests and complaints to the Diet, because they continued to do so for the rest of the period; they did, however, more or less stop submitting them to the Screening Deputation. Lastly, the small number of unrepresented lower-class supplicants in sample one did not show up in samples two and three.

As a result of the decrease of the aforementioned groups, the share of commoner Estate supplicants increased. Neither the burghers nor the clergy decreased as much as the noblemen and commoners of rank did, and the peasantry even increased; however, the clergy group in the



**FIGURE 10.2** Female supplicants by Estate (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=83$ , 1746–47  $n=15$ , 1771–72  $n=20$ ). CoR=commoners of rank, ULG=unrepresented lower groups. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

second sample should be treated with some caution as no fewer than 21 requests stemmed from one supplication submitted by the clergy of Östergötland.<sup>423</sup>

In the third sample, the number of clergy supplications had shrunk further, but the number of burgher and peasant supplications increased, clearly surpassing their numbers in sample one. At this point, it needs to be remembered that the share of commoners of rank and noblemen increased a great deal at the 1760–62 and 1765–66 Diets with the advent of prejudice appeals; however, by the time of the 1771–72 Diet they had reverted back to lower levels. Consequently, comparing the second and third samples, the number of noble supplicants had climbed a bit, whereas the number of commoners of rank was broadly unchanged.

Thus, the findings in the 1746–47 and 1771–72 samples show that the proportion of supplicants from the five Estates increased: first to above three-fifths in the second sample, and then to almost three-quarters in the third sample. This increase coincided with a shift within this group, from mostly noblemen to mostly burghers. Nonetheless, commoners of rank still constituted the second largest group of supplicants even at the 1771–72 Diet, submitting a fifth of all supplications.

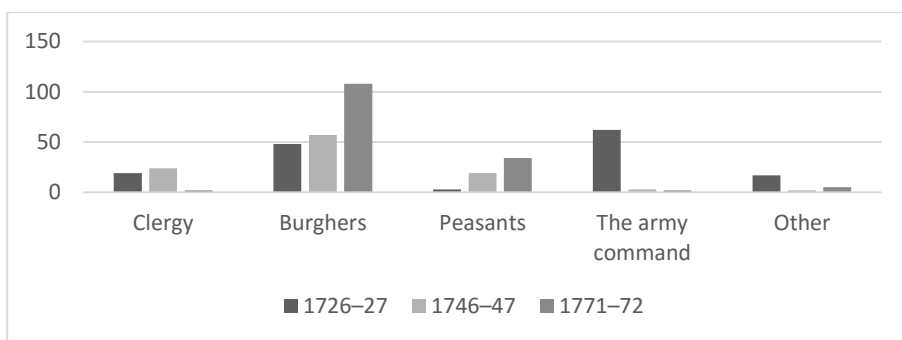
The lower number of supplications from commoners of rank and noblemen also explains the lower number from women. Most women who made use of this channel in all three samples were either of noble birth or were commoners of rank (Fig. 10.2). When these two bodies of supplicants submitted fewer supplications in general, so too did their female element.

## Corporate bodies

As seen in the previous chapter, the share of corporate bodies was much higher in the second and third samples compared to the first. At the 1771–72 Diet the number of corporate supplications even lay at a 1726–27 level, despite the large difference in sample sizes. The lower number of corporate supplicants in the 1746–47 sample, compared with the 1726–27 sample, was mostly caused by the near disappearance of army command supplicants from the supplication channel (Fig. 10.3). The number of corporate supplicants from the commoner Estates was actually higher in the second sample compared to the first, and even higher again in the third sample. At that point, the number of burgher and peasant corporate bodies had almost

<sup>423</sup> Årende 309, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.





**FIGURE 10.3** Corporate supplicants by Estate (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=149$ , 1746–47  $n=105$ , 1771–72  $n=151$ ). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

doubled compared to the 1746–47 sample, hiding the disappearance of clergy corporate bodies in the third sample. In 1771–72, the channel almost only featured corporate bodies from the peasantry and the burghers.

A larger proportion of the commoner Estate supplications stemmed from corporate bodies, when comparing samples two and three with sample one (Table 10.1). As many as four-fifths of the burgher supplications came from corporate bodies, with the share as high as five-sixths for the peasantry. Turning to the types of burgher and peasant supplicants, the rise of corporate bodies in the Estate of the Burghers meant a greater presence of towns in the supplication channel. Whereas artisans and merchants had been more given to petitioning without the aid of their town corporations in 1726–27, towns had supplanted them in this channel 20 and 45 years on. Thus, not only did the share of corporate bodies within the Estate of the Burghers increase, but the type of corporate body changed.<sup>424</sup>

For the peasantry, the rise of corporate bodies was driven by a variety of corporate bodies, ranging from parishes or villages to entire regions. The 1771–72 sample provide a taste of the variety, with supplications from the peasantry of Husby parish in the county of Kopparberg;

		Clergy		Burghers		Peasants		Total	
1726–27	Suppl	48	-	92	-	12	-	152	-
	FCB	19	39,6%	48	52,2%	3	25,0%	70	46,1%
1746–47	Suppl	31	-	86	-	22	-	139	-
	FCB	24	77,4%	57	66,3%	19	86,4%	100	71,9%
1771–72	Suppl	12	-	136	-	46	-	194	-
	FCB	2	16,7%	108	79,4%	34	73,9%	144	74,2%

**TABLE 10.1** The proportion of supplications submitted by clergy, burghers or peasants that were submitted by or on behalf of corporate bodies (by supplications).<sup>425</sup> Suppl.=supplications, FCB=From corporate bodies. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>424</sup> Attachment 11.

<sup>425</sup> The percentages refer to the portions of all supplications submitted by corporate bodies from that group. At the 1726–27 Diet for example, 48 supplications from clergymen were submitted and 19 of those, 39.6 per cent, stemmed from corporate bodies.

Asunda district in the county of Uppland, the county of Österbotten's northern district, and even the entire peasantry of Finland.<sup>426</sup>

## Diet corporate bodies and Diet delegates

	Diet corporate bodies		Diet delegate		None		Total	
<b>1726–27</b>	132	17.5%	101	13.4%	523	69.2%	756	100.0%
<b>1746–47</b>	103	36.1%	29	10.2%	153	53.7%	285	100.0%
<b>1771–72</b>	146	40.7%	33	9.2%	180	50.1%	359	100.0%

**TABLE 10.2** Supplications submitted by corporate bodies and Diet delegates (by supplications). For the categories, see p. 33. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; RaS 1727, RaP 5, p. 733–736; RaS 1747, RaP 17, p. 418–420; RaS 1772, RaP 31, pp. 79–87.

Most of the corporate supplications came from interests already represented in the Diet (Table 10.2). Besides the corporate bodies in the Diet, a portion of supplications were submitted by Diet delegates. Around 10 per cent of all supplications in all three Diets came from Diet delegates, mostly noblemen.<sup>427</sup> It is also likely that the number of Diet delegates increased to at least 1726–27 levels during the peak of supplications on grounds of prejudice in the 1760s, as the number of noblemen supplicants most likely increased.

Nonetheless, the balance between corporate bodies in the other Estates and Diet delegates from the nobility tilted towards the former in the second and third samples. The lower number of noblemen who submitted supplications consequently resulted in a lower number of noble Diet delegate supplicants: whereas the ratio of noble Diet delegate supplicants to corporate supplicants was 7 : 10 at the 1726–27 Diet, the ratio was down to somewhere in between 1 : 5 and 1 : 6 in the second and third samples, although the ratio was likely more even at the first Diets of the 1760s.<sup>428</sup> Nonetheless, the underlying long-term trend does seem to have been one where the proportion and then the number of supplications from Diet corporations increased, and the share of noble Diet delegate supplicants stagnated. On the other hand, Diet corporations and Diet delegates can be viewed as belonging to one group consisting of interests vested in the Age of Liberty Diet. If so, the share of noblemen in this joint group of vested interests decreased between samples one and two, grew in the 1760s, and then fell again.

## Appeals

The number appeals and reservations in order to lodge appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts was substantially higher in the third sample than in either of the two previous ones (see ch. 6). Looking more closely at which groups these appellants came from show that noblemen, burghers, and commoners of rank wrote most of the appeals in all three samples. At the last Diet, the much larger number of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings from three groups were joined by the peasantry. While commoners of rank submitted three-tenths of the appeal

<sup>426</sup> Attachment 12; Ärende 47, 218, 235 & 344, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>427</sup> Attachments 16b–d.

<sup>428</sup> Attachments 16b–d.

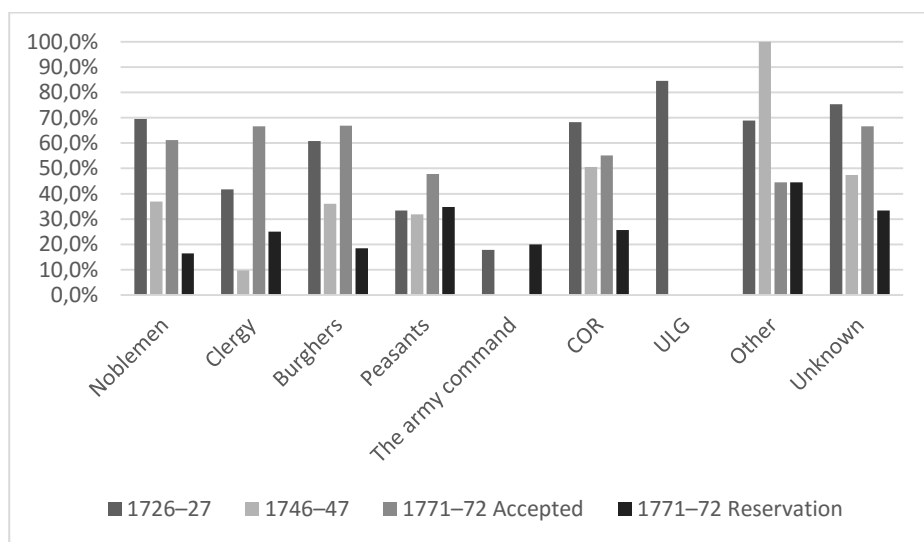
supplications, each of the other three supplicant categories submitted about a fifth each. Framed another way, with aid of the results from the section above on corporate bodies, it could also be said that about 40 per cent of the appeal supplications in the third sample were submitted from groups predominantly composed of corporate bodies.<sup>429</sup>

## Acceptance rates

It is evident that the most elusive group at the 1726–27 Diet was also one of the most successful (Fig. 10.4). Three out of four supplications from people of unknown background were accepted. The table further shows that both the nobility and the commoners of rank were treated more favourably than the average supplicant. The lower acceptance rate for corporate bodies is not noticeable among the burgher supplicants as a group, but definitely among the army command.

The results from the second sample to a large extent continue the trend from the first sample, albeit with a lower acceptance rate overall. The increased share of supplicants from the commoner Estates did not lead the Screening Deputation to accept more of these requests. While noblemen no longer received favourable treatment, commoners of rank still enjoyed better than average responses. Seeing as most prejudice appeals were written by commoners of rank and noblemen, and the prejudice appeals at the 1765–66 Diet enjoyed a four out of five acceptance rate, the generally good relationship between these two groups and the Screening Deputation continued into the first half of the 1760s.

At the 1771–72 Diet, however, things changed for the commoners of rank. Now they stood less chance of getting a positive decision from the Screening Deputation than the average



**FIGURE 10.4** Supplicants' acceptance rates by Estate (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). CoR=commoners of rank, ULG=unrepresented lower groups. Sources: R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>429</sup> Attachment 53b.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Accepted reservation	
<b>Diet delegates</b>	64	63.4%	16	55.2%	25	75.8%	5	15.2%
<b>Diet corporate bodies</b>	42	(31.8%)	25	24.3%	87	59.6%	33	22.6%

**TABLE 10.3** Acceptance rates for supplications submitted by Diet corporate bodies and Diet delegates (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=233$ , 1746–47  $n=132$ , 1771–72  $n=179$ ). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; RaS 1727, RaP 5, p. 733–736; RaS 1747, RaP 17, p. 418–420; RaS 1772, RaP 31, p. 79–87.

supplicant. Likewise, the peasantry faced slimmer chances. Noblemen, on the other hand, had a slightly better than average chance, while burghers enjoyed better odds. Indeed, the mainly noble Diet delegates received a better than average response in all three samples (Table 10.3). Comparing with the general acceptance rates for noblemen, noble Diet delegates received more favourable responses than other noblemen supplicants in 1746–47 and 1771–72, but not in 1726–27.

This highlights the known result that corporate supplications stood a poorer than average chance of reaching the Diet in the first two samples. Looking closer at the supplications' authors by Estate (Table 10.4), the results reveal that the Screening Deputation gave corporate bodies from all Estates a lower than average acceptance rate in the first sample; however, burgher corporate bodies stood a much better chance than the army command. In the second sample, the lack of success for burgher and clergy corporate bodies is another way of viewing the low acceptance rate for corporate bodies at this Diet (as seen in the previous chapter). In the 1771–72 sample, burgher corporate bodies met with a better than average acceptance rate, while their peasant equivalents did worse. Regardless, supplications backed by corporate interests represented at the Diet seemingly only gained an advantage in the third sample.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Accepted reservation	
<b>Clergy</b>	4	21.1%	1	4.2%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Burghers</b>	26	54.2%	17	29.8%	72	66.7%	19	17.6%
<b>Peasantry</b>	1	33.3%	7	36.8%	14	41.2%	13	38.2%
<b>Army command</b>	11	17.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%

**TABLE 10.4** Acceptance rates for supplications submitted by Diet corporate bodies, by Estate (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=132$ , 1746–47  $n=103$ , 1771–72  $n=146$ ). *Sources:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Conclusions

The Diet's supplication channel primarily catered to commoners of rank, noblemen, and people from the commoner Estates, mostly burghers. Commoners of rank constituted the biggest group and together with the nobility comprised the majority in the first sample; however, the decrease in the number of supplications after the 1726–27 Diet mostly came at their expense. Commoners

of rank nonetheless remained a big group—joint largest in the second sample and second largest in the third, submitting more than a fifth of the supplications. One also has to consider the prejudice peak, when the numbers of noblemen and commoners of rank increased once again.

The nobility and commoners of rank were nonetheless overtaken by the commoner Estates in the third sample. The number of commoner Estate supplicants did not decrease as much as noblemen and commoners of rank when comparing the first and second sample, and increased to a larger extent when comparing the second and third samples. Moreover, most of the increased number of corporate supplications mentioned in the previous chapter came from the burghers, but also the peasantry and clergy. Of the burgher corporate bodies, the share and number of town corporations increased over time.

As exemplified by the towns, it was a trait of the Diet's supplication channel to accommodate interests represented in the Diet or even part of the Diet. This became more pronounced in the second and third samples. In addition to the Diet corporate bodies, a tenth of the supplications in all three samples were submitted by Diet delegates, mostly noblemen. Consequently, not only did three-quarters of the supplications in the third sample stem from people belonging to either one of the five Estates, but a large share of those three-quarters stemmed from Diet delegates and strong corporate interests in the Diet.

As we know, Diet delegates who wanted to submit supplications on behalf of their constituent corporate bodies were able to do so a fortnight after the usual deadline (see ch. 5). The results from the third sample shows that it was mostly burgher and peasant Diet delegates who used this opportunity. The clergy delegates seem to not have bothered, as their numbers were lower in 1771–72 than they had been in 1746–47. Further, the number of appeals and reservations to make appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings were at a much higher level in the third sample compared to samples one and two (see ch. 6). These appeal supplications are here found to have stemmed from commoners of rank, noblemen, burghers and peasants. The resources they requested will be discussed in later chapters.

To draw a general conclusion regarding the acceptance rates, the Screening Deputation responded to the general trend of who wrote supplications in 1726–27, awarding the most prominent groups an average or better than average acceptance rate. At the 1746–47 Diet the committee responded more eclectically. The increased share of corporate bodies and supplicants, especially from the burgher Estate, did not generate more positive responses for these groups, whereas the committee was still obliging to the commoners of rank. At the 1771–72 Diet, the tables turned and burgher supplications stood a greater chance than average of getting their supplications accepted, while commoners of rank stood a lower chance.

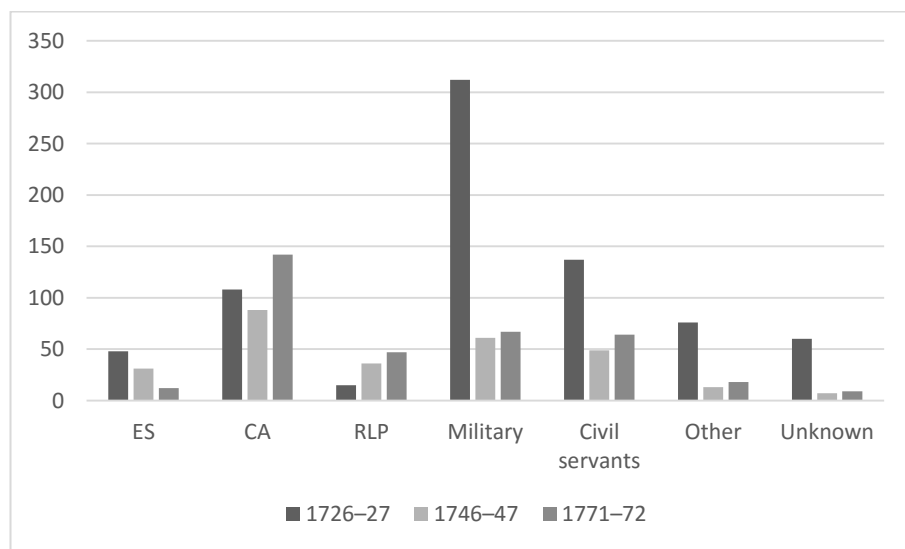
Why the commoners of rank faced a lower than average acceptance rate at the 1771–72 is beyond the scope of this study; however, why so many of the women supplicants were commoners or rank or mobles, and what the connection between the nobles, commoners of rank, and unrepresented lower groups were, will be revealed in the next chapter.

## 11 Secondary status

The focus of this chapter is on the noblemen, commoners of rank, and unrepresented lower group supplicants. It first accounts for the general results when categorizing supplicants according to their secondary status, followed by sections on state affiliation, including the employment status of state-affiliated supplicants, and rank, including the most common titles of 1765–66 prejudice appellants. In the last section I again take a closer look at the relevant acceptance rates.

### General findings

In the 1726–27 sample, most of the noblemen and commoners of rank, together with the army command, belonged to the military (Fig. 11.1). Odds are that an even larger proportion of the supplicants could have been placed in this category, had the first sample not contained such a large number of unidentifiable noblemen. The second largest group was civil servants, followed by supplicants involved in commercial activities, with manufactory owners and ironmasters added to the burgher tally. In the second and third samples, the commercial agent group is more or less completely composed of burghers.<sup>430</sup> In the third sample, the share of this body of supplicants edged close to the share of supplicants from the military at the first Diet, meaning that the commerce category was as dominant in the third sample as the military category had been in the first.



**FIGURE 11.1** Supplicants by secondary status (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). ES=ecclesiastical servants, CA=commercial agents, RLP=rural land-proprietors. For the categories, see p. 34. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>430</sup> Compare with attachment 10.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Commercial agents</b>	16	6.4%	3	3.5%	5	6.2%
<b>Rural land-proprietors</b>	2	0.8%	14	16.5%	0	0.0%
<b>Military</b>	123	49.4%	36	42.4%	23	28.4%
<b>Civil servants</b>	73	29.3%	21	24.7%	44	54.3%
<b>Other</b>	35	14.1%	11	12.9%	9	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	249	100.0%	85	100.0%	81	100.0%

**TABLE 11.1** Commoners of rank supplicants by secondary status (by supplications). Other includes unknown. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

The number of commoners of rank and noblemen was much lower in the second sample than in the first (see ch. 10), but this decrease was not spread evenly between military and civil servant supplicants, for while the number of military supplicants decreased to a fifth of its previous size, the number of civil servants shrunk to a third. The almost complete disappearance of army command supplications is a partial explanation, but the lower number of commoners of rank and noblemen in the second sample was to a higher degree caused by there being fewer officers rather than fewer civil servants.

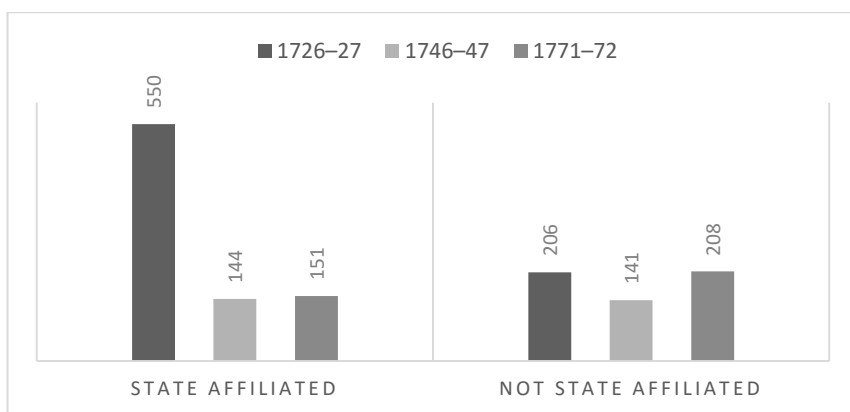
The number of supplicants from the military and the civil administration shot up again during the peak of appeals on grounds of prejudice in the 1760s. At this point, the proportion of supplicants from the military and the civil service who appealed against prejudice in 1765–66 resembled the proportion in the first sample, with a distinctly higher number of officers than civil servants.<sup>431</sup> After prejudice appeals were forbidden, the number of supplicants from the military and civil service again decreased, in the third sample the ratio between officers and civil servants was more or less 1 : 1.

The commoner of rank supplicants serve as a good illustration of the changing ratios of supplicants from the military and the civil service. Some attained their position from commerce or estate management, but most of them earned their daily bread in the military or the civil administration (Table 11.1). In the first two samples, the number of officers outweighed the number of civil servants. In the third sample, the opposite was true.

## State affiliation

Not only was the number of supplicants from the military and civil service high in the first sample, the number of state-affiliated supplicants was even higher (Fig. 11.2). About three-quarters of all supplicants who approached the Screening Deputation in 1726–27 had some sort of affiliation with the state. In 1746–47, state-affiliated people still wrote about half of the supplications, but their numbers had plunged. They grew in the 1760s and then decreased again to 1746–47 levels in the third sample. Two out of five supplicants in the third sample were state affiliated, and even at the lowest point, state-affiliated supplicants stood for a great many supplications.

<sup>431</sup> Attachment 49c.



**FIGURE 11.2** Supplicants by state affiliation (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see p. 34. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

Proportionally speaking, the number of non-employed state-affiliated supplicants decreased more than the number of employed state-affiliated supplicants when comparing samples one and two (Table 11.2). In sample three, their numbers fell even further, while the number of employed supplicants increased. It is unlikely that the surge in state-affiliated supplicants in the 1760s contained many non-employed state-affiliated supplicants—the prejudice appeals behind the surge seem mostly to have concerned promotions. Thus, the state-affiliated group changed its composition in terms of current employment. Whereas at least two-fifths were not in employ at the 1726–27 Diet, five-sixths were in employ come the 1771–72 Diet.

State affiliation also explains most of the supplications written completely or partially by women (Table 11.3). A majority in all three samples can be labelled as state affiliated. Lastly, most unrepresented lower-class supplicants were state affiliated, 23 of 25, of which the majority can be put in the military category. Among them were two maids who had returned from captivity, a bosun, a bosun’s widow, and a group of discharged lower artillery staff.<sup>432</sup>

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Employed</b>	333	60.5%	104	72.2%	131	86.8%
<b>Unemployed/expectant</b>	139	25.3%	29	20.1%	11	7.3%
<b>Retired</b>	14	2.5%	0	0.0%	2	1.3%
<b>Deceased father or brother</b>	11	2.0%	3	2.1%	0	0.0%
<b>Widowed</b>	53	9.6%	8	5.6%	7	4.6%
<b>Total amount of non-employed</b>	217	39.5%	40	27.8%	20	13.2%

**TABLE 11.2** State-affiliated supplicants by employment (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=550$ , 1746–47  $n=144$ , 1771–72  $n=151$ ). For the categories, see p. 35. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>432</sup> Attachments 21 and 22c; Årende 1436, 1467, 1647 & 1654 R2522, UdH, FU, RA. There was a degree of overlap as seven women supplicants belonged to the unrepresented groups, see attachment 13.



	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>State affiliated female supplicants</b>	60	73.2%	12	92.3%	11	55.0%
<b>All female supplicants</b>	82	100.0 %	13	100.0 %	20	100.0 %

TABLE 11.3 Female supplicants by state affiliation (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

## Rank

The majority of supplicants in all three samples came from groups 2, 3 and 4, and their share increased in the second and third samples (Table 11.4). The majority of supplicants came from both sides of the important divide in the ranking scale—from either group 2 or 3, which equated to the step from company to regimental officer in the military (see ch. 2)—and most of them from the company level. The third group was also the most represented among the officer prejudice appellants at the 1765–66 Diet: captains and lieutenants submitted a third of the prejudice appeals.<sup>433</sup>

These findings are hardly surprising. Firstly, the number of company officers was far greater than the number of regimental officers, who in turn constituted a bigger group than the number of high commanders. Secondly, the pyramid structure of the military created bottlenecks where men had to compete with one another to get through. The key promotion, the one that signalled social advancement into the upper echelons of society, was advancement to major. Accordingly, the two ranks beneath the rank of major also show up the most in the prejudice peak.

Nonetheless, a distinction between supplicants from the civil administration and the military did exist. Most civil servant supplicants came from group 3 or 4. Group 2 contains mostly regimental officers; group 3 company officers and civil servant equivalents and generally more officers and civil servants; and group 4 mostly lower echelon civil servants (Table 11.4). The larger number of group 1 supplicants in the first sample seems to have consisted of similar shares of officers and civil servants.<sup>434</sup>

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Group 1</b>	62	13.8%	4	3.6%	9	6.9%
<b>Group 2</b>	71	15.8%	18	16.4%	31	23.7%
<b>Group 3</b>	120	26.7%	52	47.3%	53	40.5%
<b>Group 4</b>	80	17.8%	26	23.6%	33	25.2%
<b>Private soldiers</b>	18	4.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Other</b>	98	21.8%	10	9.1%	5	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	449	100.0%	110	100.0%	131	100.0%

TABLE 11.4 Supplicants with civil service or military titles, by rank (by supplications). For the categories, see p. 36. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>433</sup> Attachment 49b.

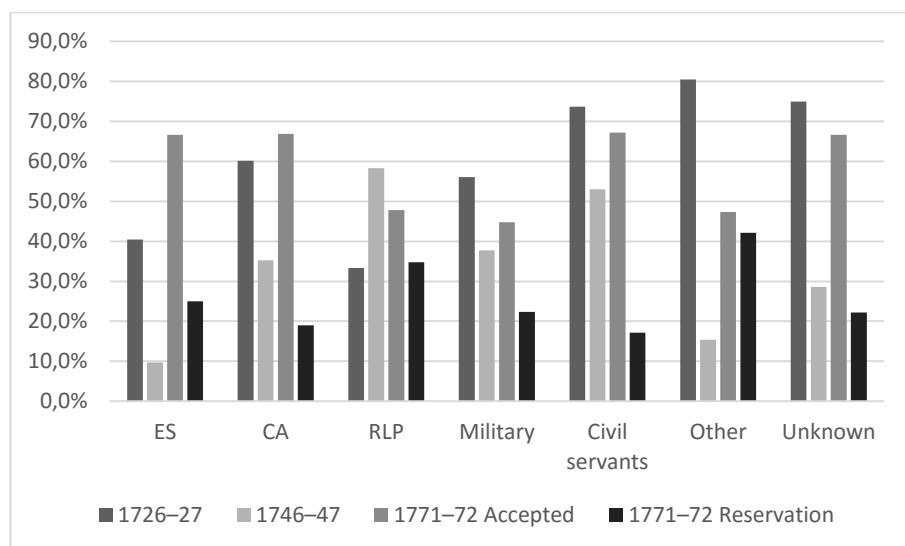
<sup>434</sup> At 1746–47 however, the number of officers and civil servants were evenly matched in group three. Compare attachments 24a–b.

Furthermore, in 1726 many of the supplicants came from the elite of the military and government (Table 11.4). Among them we find high commanders, county governors, and members of the Council of the Realm; in fact, even the Chancery President Arvid Horn petitioned to exchange one piece of land for another.<sup>435</sup> In the second and third samples, this group of supplicants was much smaller both in numbers and share. Additionally, a large part of supplicants categorized as other belonged to the army command. Thus, a large portion of the supplications in the first sample either stemmed from the military or the civil administration's elite or from established corporate interests within the military. In the second and third samples their numbers were significantly lower.

### Acceptance rates

The acceptance rates by affiliation and rank (Fig. 11.3) in several respects mirror the acceptance rates by Estate (see ch. 10). The destiny of the commerce group echos that of the burgher group in all three samples, and one of the most successful groups in the first sample was the unknown group. Supplicants in the other category, however, enjoyed the highest acceptance rates in the first sample, when four out five gained an approval from the Screening Deputation. It is also evident that the acceptance rates for the rural land-proprietor supplications were different from those of the peasant group.

Table 11.5 confirms something evident in Figure 11.3, namely that state affiliation did not prove advantageous to supplicants. To be sure, the acceptance rate for civil servant and military supplicants was very high at the 1765–66 Diet, but outside those special circumstances the state-affiliated group did not seem to receive favourable treatment; however, plainly civil servants



**FIGURE 11.3** Supplicants' acceptance rates by secondary status (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). ES=ecclesiastical servants, CA=commercial agents, RLP=rural land-proprietors. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>435</sup> Årende 666, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	337	61.3%	53	36.6%	84	55.6%
<b>Reservation</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	32	21.2%

TABLE 11.5 Acceptance rates for state affiliated supplicants (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=550$ , 1746–47  $n=144$ , 1771–72  $n=151$ ).  
Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

always enjoyed a higher acceptance rates, while supplicants associated with the military or the church had to count on average or worse than average treatment.

The differences between civil servants and military supplicants can be explained by factors that differed between the three samples. The army command's acceptance rate of one in five (see ch. 10) dragged the military acceptance rate down below average in the first sample. Otherwise, the military supplicants would have had a much higher acceptance rate. Thus, most military supplicants enjoyed a higher than average rate in the 1726–27 sample, just like their civil servant equivalents. In the third sample, however, they were definitely less fortunate—especially the company officers, who only had two out of five supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation.<sup>436</sup>

## Conclusions

This chapter has shown that most noblemen and commoners of rank had some sort of state affiliation, mostly through the military. Thus, instead of talking about supplicants from the five Estates versus those not belonging to the five Estates, we can best gauge the findings in this and the previous chapter by categorizing the supplicants as either state affiliated or as members of the commoner Estates. Certainly, there existed a degree of overlap for mayors in the Estate of the Burghers and for the clergy, but on a general level we can still speak of state-affiliated supplicants on the one hand and supplicants from the commoner Estates on the other. As the former group mostly consisted of commoners of rank and noblemen, and Sten Carlsson has shown how commoners of rank and the lower nobility intermarried in the eighteenth century, the connection is not only based on their public service, but also to some extent on social patterns.<sup>437</sup> While the commoner Estates were mostly the focus of the previous chapter, commoners of rank, noblemen, and the other state-affiliated supplicants have been main focus of investigation in this chapter.

State-affiliated supplicants, primarily commoners of rank and nobles, dominated the supplication channel at the beginning of the period, wrote about half of the supplications at the 1746–47 Diet, increased between 1756 and 1766 because they made all the prejudice appeals, and again decreased to 1746–47 levels in the third sample. It is within this category that we find most of the female supplicants as well as most of the supplicants from the lower unrepresented groups. The fluctuations of these groups followed changes in state-affiliated supplicants' employment status. The supplication channel evolved and catered more and more to the employed state-affiliated supplicants as time went by and thus, when the second surge of state-

<sup>436</sup> For the numbers in this paragraph see attachment 46a.

<sup>437</sup> According to Carlsson, *Ståndssambälle och ståndspersoner*, 183–186, at least a third of the women from the lower nobility who married between 1700 and 1779 married commoners of rank; see also Wirilander, *Herrskapsfolk*, 218–220.

affiliated supplicants hit the supplication channel in the early 1760s, it did tellingly not include a second increase in the number of women supplicants. Only men could appeal appointments.

Comparing military and civil servants, the former group of supplicants was larger at the start of the Age of Liberty and during the prejudice peak. In samples two and three, their numbers were more or less the same. From the perspective of rank, the findings suggest that although differences between officers and civil servants existed, most of these supplicants fell into group 2, 3 or 4; in the first sample, however, about a sixth of the supplicants belonged to society's elite. Even Arvid Horn took the opportunity to submit a supplication. In the second and third samples as well as during the prejudice peak, far fewer supplicants came from this strata.

After 1727, civil servants and military supplicants who approached the Screening Deputation were less elite in background. Yet on the other hand, people who had no political representation at the central level and arguably little on the local level either, namely women and underrepresented groups, decreased or disappeared as well. To sum up, one could say that the group of supplicants among military personnel and civil servants developed in the opposite direction to the burghers. The most powerful interests in the group—the army command and incumbents with top-ranking offices and commands—gave way for the large group of regiment and company officers and NCO's and their civil equivalents. Among the burghers, established interests in the form of town corporations took over in the second and third samples.<sup>438</sup>

Finally, the results concerning acceptance rates are mixed. On balance, state affiliation did not provide a supplicant much in the way of advantage in any of the samples, although the results from the first sample are heavily affected by the low acceptance rate for army command supplications. If we therefore bracket these supplications, it is apparent that both military and civil servant supplicants met with a higher than average acceptance rate, something they most likely did at the 1765–66 Diet as well; however, civil servant supplicants consequently encountered a greater degree of benevolence than average from the Screening Deputation. For supplicants from the military this was not to be: they encountered average and then lower than average acceptance rates in the second and third samples respectively. Thus, the higher than average acceptance rate for commoners of rank in the first sample can be understood in the light of the higher acceptance rate for both officers and civil servants. The higher acceptance rate in the 1746–47 sample, however, mostly stemmed from the success of the civil servants.

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<sup>438</sup> One possible explanation for the demise of group 1 supplicants in the second sample might be the changing attitude towards the elite within the Diet. Arvid Horn had been left to combine his different roles as Chancery President, member of the Council of the Realm, and Marshal of the Diet virtually unquestioned until the 1731 Diet, after all. At that point, his opponents saw to it to undermine his position by attacking the potential bias that might arise from holding these positions in parallel. As a result, Council members were no longer allowed to be elected as Marshal of the Diet, a decision Malmström believes severed relations between Council and Diet. Perhaps, then, the decrease of group 1 at least partially stemmed from the exclusion of certain elite members from the Diet in general. Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, ii. 128–131.

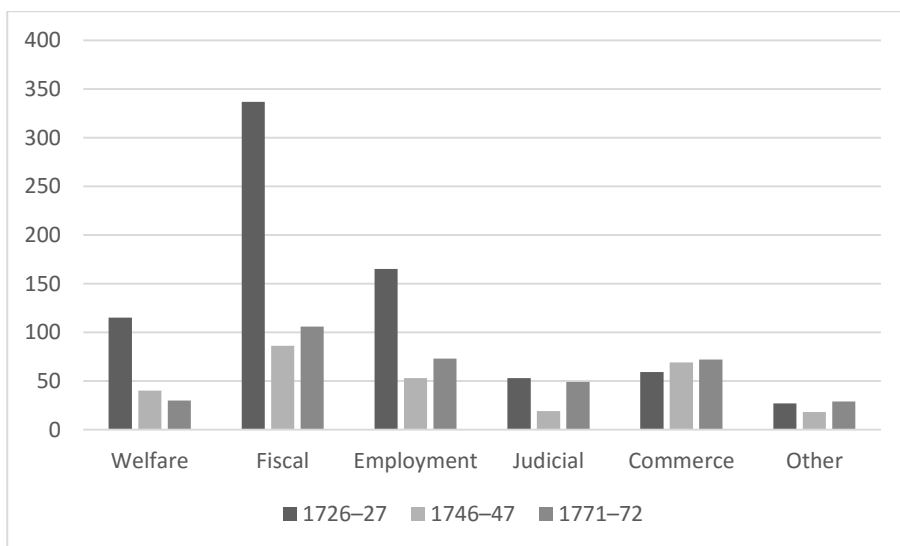
## 12 The resources requested

The topic of this chapter is the resources the supplicants asked for, both in general terms and according to the type of supplication. I also look closer at the resources that were involved in appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's decisions, while the last section presents the findings about the acceptance rates for supplications by the resources requested. The analysis of the requests is then continued in the following chapter, where I examine their direct impact, and Chapter 14, where the general resource categories are further scrutinized according to their subcategories.

### General findings

Most supplications in the all samples concerned fiscal resources but it was the dominant category in the first sample—two out of five (Fig. 12.1). Employment and welfare supplications came at second and third place. These resource categories were struck the hardest by the decrease after 1727. All categories were smaller in the second sample compared to the first, except commercial supplications which grew, and most supplications seem to have disappeared from the fiscal, welfare, and employment categories. As they shrunk, the commerce category became the second largest behind the fiscal category.

In the third sample, the judicial category had recovered to its 1726–27 size while fiscal and welfare had not, the latter even decreasing further compared to the second sample. Although the employment category was bigger in 1771–72 than in 1746–47 and thus shared second place with commerce, it had de facto shrunk since the prejudice peak of the early 1760s. Lastly, the number of commercial supplications in the 1771–72 sample was similar to that of the 1746–47 sample. Thus, the increase in the number of burgher supplicants using the supplication channel at the 1771–72 Diet did not result in an increase in commercial supplications.



**FIGURE 12.1** Supplications by resources requested (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see pp. 37–39. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

Even though the categories to some extent switched places and proportions over time, the supplication channel mainly catered for supplications belonging to two or three large categories at each Diet. On the other hand, the supplications grew more diversified over time: at the first Diet, the three top categories comprised four-fifths of all supplications, but 20 years later, with welfare replaced by commerce in an otherwise unchanged top three, they composed three-quarters, and 25 years later again in the 1771–72 sample, seven-tenths.

### Who requested what

There are connections between who people were and what resources they requested. In the fiscal and welfare categories, supplicants from all or most groups can be found, but with clear developments over time. Regarding the three other main categories—commercial, employment and judicial—one or two groups of supplicants were responsible for the majority of supplications in all three samples.

Beginning with the more diverse categories, all major groups can be found among the fiscal supplications. At the beginning of the period we mostly encounter commoners of rank and civil servants. In the second and third samples, as those two groups decreased, we first find a larger share and then a larger number of burghers and peasants who submitted fiscal supplications.<sup>439</sup> A similar development can be seen in the welfare category, where commoners of rank and noblemen submitted most supplications in the first sample. Then they were overtaken by the burghers, not so much because the latter group increased, but because the former decreased.<sup>440</sup>

Burghers seemingly dominated the commercial category throughout the Age of Liberty, although others of course also asked for commercial resources, such as commoners of rank who wrote between five and ten supplications per Diet.<sup>441</sup> The burgher dominance of this category is perhaps not that odd, commerce was what burghers did, and the non-noble ironmasters, for example, had other means to influence policy at the Diet (see p. 70).

Commoners of rank and noblemen made most of the employment and judicial requests: the former accounting for most employment requests in all three samples, while noblemen submitted the second largest number of employment supplications in the second and third samples. Army command supplicants joined them in the first sample, while contingents of clergy and burghers are present in all samples.<sup>442</sup> In the judicial category, noblemen, commoners of rank, and burghers submitted most requests at the 1726–27 and 1771–72 Diets.<sup>443</sup> That noblemen and commoners of rank submitted so many of the employment supplications is reasonable considering their state affiliation, but why they and the burghers submitted most of the judicial supplications is difficult to ascertain with the methods utilized in this study.

### Broken down by Estate

The majority of noblemen asked for fiscal resources at the 1726–27 Diet, with employment and welfare in second and third place. In the second and third samples, similar numbers of noblemen

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<sup>439</sup> Attachment 27b.

<sup>440</sup> Attachment 27a.

<sup>441</sup> Attachment 27e.

<sup>442</sup> Attachment 27c.

<sup>443</sup> Attachment 27d.

sought employment and fiscal supplications. At the 1771–72, a third of all noblemen sought employment resources, a certain decrease from the heights of the prejudice peak. Moreover, the number of judicial supplications from noblemen had increased to about the same size in 1771–72 as it had been in 1726–27, overtaking the welfare category.<sup>444</sup>

A majority of the clergymen requested employment and fiscal resources in all three samples.<sup>445</sup> Between two-fifths and half of the burgher supplicants requested commercial resources, with fiscal resources in a steady second place, varying between a fifth in the 1746–47 sample, a third in the 1726–27 sample, and a quarter in the 1771–72 sample. In a reverse development to that of the nobility, judicial resources were the third most requested resources at the 1726–27 Diet, but then were overtaken by welfare resources in the second and third samples.<sup>446</sup>

Three-fifths to three-quarters of the peasants in all three samples requested fiscal resources, as did most supplicants from lower unrepresented groups in the first sample.<sup>447</sup> Of the army command supplicants in the first sample, two-thirds concerned employment resources and a quarter fiscal resources.<sup>448</sup>

Lastly, the popularity of fiscal resources among the commoner of rank supplicants decreased over time. Beginning at more than two-fifths, it dropped to three-tenths and then to a fifth in the 1746–47 and 1771–72 samples respectively. At the end of the Age of Liberty, fiscal resources were the joint second most popular together with judicial resources. The most requested resources in the third sample were the employment category, which had risen from third place in 1726–27 to joint first with the fiscal category in 1746–47, again presumably peaking in the 1760s. Although the number of employment supplications had decreased by the time of the 1771–72 Diet, they still remained in first place. Welfare supplications constituted the second most sought-after resource in the first sample and then decreased in popularity.<sup>449</sup>

### **Broken down by occupation or affiliation**

At the 1726–27 Diet, military supplicants outnumbered the civil servants in every resource category. In the second and third samples, the portion of military and civil servant supplications evened out in the welfare and employment categories, but not in the fiscal and judicial categories. Military supplicants continued to submit a higher number of requests for fiscal resources than their civil servant brethren in the second and third samples. On the other hand, civil servants submitted more judicial requests at the 1771–72 Diet.<sup>450</sup>

There was a clear connection between the large share of state-affiliated supplicants in the first sample and the high number of fiscal, employment, and welfare requests (Fig. 12.2). State-affiliated supplicants submitted about nine-tenths of the welfare and employment requests and about three-quarters of the fiscal requests. When the number of supplications and the number

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<sup>444</sup> Attachment 29a.

<sup>445</sup> Attachment 29b.

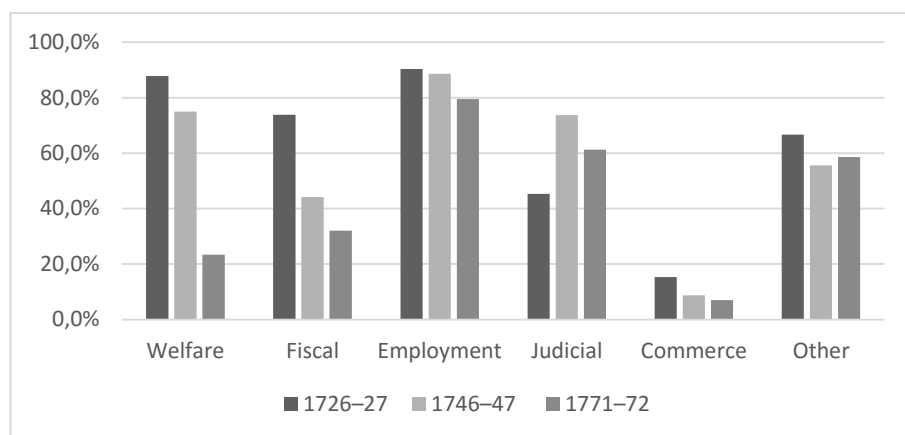
<sup>446</sup> Attachment 29c.

<sup>447</sup> Attachments 29d and 29g.

<sup>448</sup> Attachment 29e.

<sup>449</sup> Attachment 29f.

<sup>450</sup> Attachments 30a–b.



**FIGURE 12.2** The proportion of supplications from state-affiliated supplicants by resources requested (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

of state-affiliated supplicants decreased after the 1726–27 Diet their shares of course decreased as well, but not evenly. Thus, the lower share of noblemen and commoners of rank in the fiscal and welfare categories over time—mentioned in the previous section—can also be described as a decrease in the share and number of state-affiliated supplicants. The decrease in the employment category was, however, not as dramatic, and in the judicial category the state-affiliated supplicants’ share at the 1746–47 Diet was higher than in 1726–27.

In the first sample both employed and non-employed state-affiliated supplicants mostly sought fiscal resources. The second most popular resource category for non-employed state-affiliated supplicants in 1726–27 was welfare, where they were responsible for four-fifths of all state-affiliated requests—82 out of 101. Conversely, more than four-fifths of those who asked for employment resources were employed, the second most popular category. In the second and third samples, the spread of non-employed supplicants was more even among the welfare, fiscal, and employment categories, while most employed state-affiliated supplicants sought employment and fiscal resources at the 1746–47 and 1771–72 Diets.<sup>451</sup> The prejudice peak likely conformed to these results, albeit with an even starker connection between employed state-affiliated supplicants and the employment category.

These results, lastly, also give further insights into the disappearance of women and lower unrepresented groups. The majority of these supplicants belonged to the group of non-employed state-affiliated (see ch. 11) and accordingly most of their supplications fall into the fiscal and welfare categories.<sup>452</sup> Their decrease was thus part of a wider development when the overall number of non-employed state-affiliated supplicants decreased, and consequently so did their share in the fiscal and welfare categories.

<sup>451</sup> Attachment 32b.

<sup>452</sup> Attachments 28 and 29g.

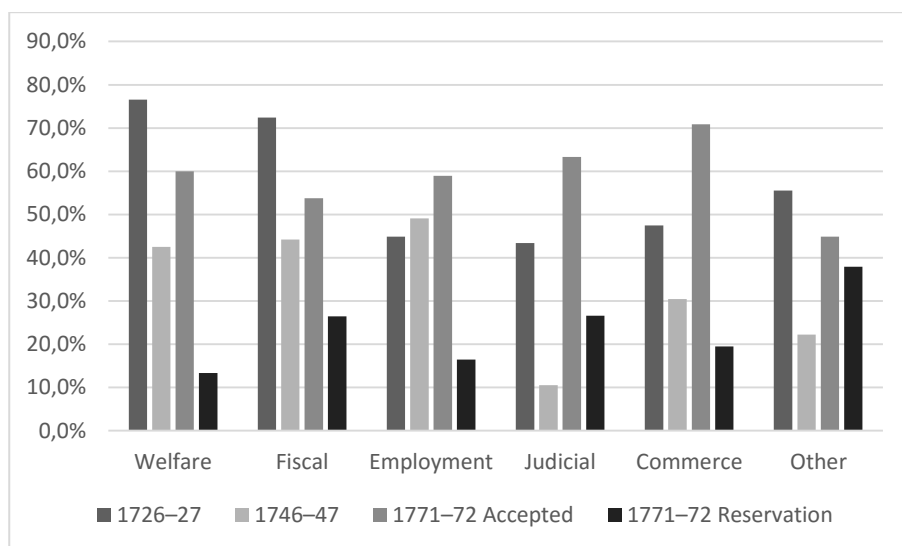


## Appeals

Returning to the issue of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts, there were also some general trends concerning the resources involved in these appeals. At the first Diet, half the supplicants who appealed had sought the Estates' judicial resources to resolve disputes not involving the state. In the second sample, however, three-quarters of the appeals concerned fiscal and employment resources, with few appeals concerning judicial resources, and during the prejudice peak of the 1760s most of the appeals most likely concerned employment as well. At the last Diet of the period, fiscal resources were clearly the most likely to be appealed, with employment and judicial resources in second and third places respectively, the latter being on the rise. Proportionately speaking, these three resources also comprised most appeals against Kungl. Maj:t, with commerce and welfare supplications the least likely to have been appealed.<sup>453</sup> Thus, appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings mostly concerned either judicial, fiscal, or employment resources in this period.

## Acceptance rates

The generally high acceptance rates at the 1726–27 Diet were unevenly distributed between the resources (Fig. 12.3). About 45 per cent of all employment, judicial, and commercial requests were accepted and forwarded to the Diet for further examination, whereas fiscal and welfare supplications enjoyed a much higher acceptance rate. Thus, the Screening Deputation clearly approved of supplications concerning two out of the three most requested resources more than supplications related to the other resource categories, including employment. No doubt the acceptance rate for employment requests stemmed from the fact that army command



**FIGURE 12.3** Supplicants' acceptance rates by resources requested (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). Sources: R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>453</sup> Attachment 53c.

supplications in general had poor acceptance rates, and they authored many of the employment supplications.

At the following Diet, the employment requests' acceptance rate moved to the other side of the average acceptance rate. At this point, employment supplications were the most likely to gain acceptance into the Diet, with fiscal and welfare supplications also receiving an above average acceptance rate. The largely relative upswing in commercial supplications seemingly left the Screening Deputation unmoved, however, as they met with less than average acceptance rate.

At the 1771–72 Diet the average acceptance rate returned to 1726–27 levels. A difference when comparing the first and third samples, however, is that the spread in acceptance rates was much lower at the 1771–72 Diet. While fiscal supplications faced a lower than average chance of acceptance and commercial supplications faced a better chance than average, the welfare, employment, and judicial supplications' acceptance rates lay close to average. Moreover, the gap between the lowest and highest acceptance rates as not as wide as it had been in 1726–27.

## Conclusions

Fiscal resources were the most commonly requested resource in all the three samples. Even after 1727 they kept their place as most requested resources; however, together with the other most requested resources at the 1726–27 Diet, employment and welfare resources, numbers dropped markedly in connection with the decrease in supplications from 1727. Commercial requests increased when comparing samples one and two, and became the second most asked-for resource together with employment in the third sample; however, the increase of burgher supplicants, when comparing the second and third samples, did not result in a further increase in commercial supplications. Lastly, employment supplications were likely the most requested resource in the prejudice peak, as about half the supplicants sought this resource.

Looking at who requested what, the findings reveal different connections between the various groups and resources. In the fiscal and welfare categories, the state-affiliated groups who were prevalent in the early Age of Liberty were supplanted by a majority of commoner Estate supplicants in the late Age of Liberty, with the peasantry group putting all their eggs in the proverbial fiscal basket throughout all three samples. The other resources mainly constituted reserves for one or two groups in all three samples: burghers wrote most of the commercial supplications; commoners of rank and noblemen most of the judicial and employment supplications. Thus, the groups seemingly monopolized some resources while meeting in others.

The decrease in the number of state-affiliated supplications when comparing sample one with the second and third— as mentioned in chapter 11—was unevenly spread across the categories. While the decrease of the welfare and fiscal categories coincides with the decrease of state-affiliated supplications, the share of state-affiliated supplicants even increased in the judicial category. Comparing the employed with the non-employed state-affiliated supplicants show some similarities and differences. In the first sample both groups mostly requested fiscal resources, while those employed also sought employment resources and the non-employed also requested welfare resources. The lower number of women and the disappearance of unrepresented lower groups—mostly non-employed state-affiliated people—was thus part of the decrease in the number of state-affiliated supplicants who sought fiscal and welfare resources.

Returning to appeals against Kungl. Maj:t, they mostly concerned fiscal, employment, and judicial resources. As such, it is most likely that the lion's share of the appeals were lodged against other offices of Kungl. Maj:t than the Justice audit, seemingly stemming from the more administrative ones which handled the Crown's property and its employees. This was certainly also the case in the early 1760s, when the number of appeals most likely reached even further heights because the surge in prejudice appeals.

Moreover, we know that about two-fifths of the appeals came from the burghers and peasantry groups predominantly represented in the supplication channel by their corporate bodies by the time of the third sample (see ch. 10). Thus, a large share of these appeals fell into the category of standard appeals and complaints against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts associated with the submission of gravamina from the commoner Estates. We knew that the commoner Estates tried to change Kungl. Maj:t's decisions in fiscal matters, for example, yet we did not know that this channel was used to this end too, and not to this extent. At the same time, about half of the appeals came from noblemen and commoners of rank, appealing by themselves or in groups. That people from these two groups used this particular channel to appeal adds another facet to the Estates' role as the highest judicial and administrative instance in the Age of Liberty.

Turning to the acceptance rates, the Screening Deputation mostly awarded the most requested resources with a higher than average acceptance rate. Fiscal and welfare resources received this treatment in the first sample and second samples, joined by employment requests in the second sample. The increase in size and share of commercial supplications in the second sample, however, did not meet with the same indulgence until towards the end of the Age of Liberty.

The destinies of the different supplications in the Screening Deputation to some extent mirrors the acceptance rates for different social groups (see ch.s 10 and 11). For example, at the first Diet of the period the Screening Deputation acted more benevolently towards those with welfare or fiscal supplications—requests often submitted by noblemen and commoners of rank. At the 1746–47 Diet, the committee still responded more kindly to these resource requests, but also towards employment requests. In the third sample, the committee's more charitable stance towards burghers was reflected in the higher acceptance rate for commercial supplications.

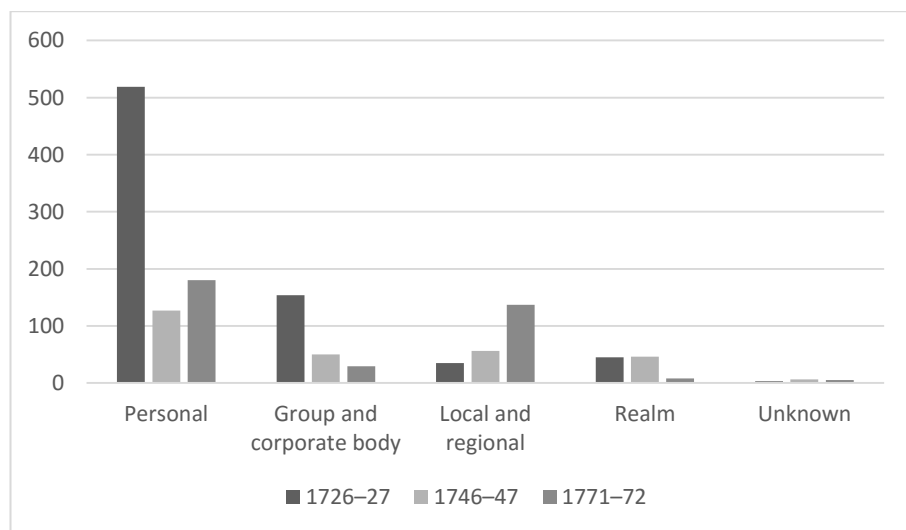
## 13 The scope of the supplications

In this chapter I take a closer look at the samples from the perspective of the supplications' scope. The chapter begins with the general findings and continues to the connections between the Estates and the supplications' scope, and then the same for resources. Finally, I consider the different scopes of impact before the chapter ends with an account of the acceptance rates.

### General findings

Most supplications in all three samples had a personal scope (Fig. 13.1). Although the number was lower in the second and third samples, we must also take into the 1760s boom in appeals on grounds of prejudice into consideration. Prejudice appeals generally had a personal scope and seen previously, about 40 per cent of the supplications submitted at the 1765–66 Diet concerned prejudice (see ch. 6). The personal scope was surely as dominant during the early 1760s as in the first sample; however, there was definitely a shift from the individual, group, and corporate scopes towards the local, regional, and realm scopes in the second sample. In the third sample, the group, corporate, and realm scopes only composed a tenth when weighed together, compared to a quarter in the first and second samples. The local and regional scope, on the other hand, more than doubled when comparing the second and third samples. While nine out of ten supplications in the first sample had a personal, group, or corporate scope, nine out of ten supplications in the third sample had a personal and local scope.

In the group or corporate category, all subcategories were smaller in the second sample compared with the first, but especially corporate scope supplications. The even lower number of group or corporate supplications in the third sample was mainly the result of a further



**FIGURE 13.1** The scope of the supplications, simplified (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). For the categories, see pp. 39–40. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

decrease in unknown group supplications.<sup>454</sup> Looking closer at the local and regional scope of the supplications, the increase here was mostly caused by an increase in supplications with local scope supplications—only 19 of 137 supplications in the third sample were categorized as regional. Conversely, supplications with a local scope by themselves constituted a third of the 1771–72 sample.<sup>455</sup>

### **Broken down by Estates and resources**

Just as with resources, different social groups had different ambitions. All but some noblemen and commoners of rank were pursuing things that were of limited, individual interest. At the same time, both groups also submitted a proportion of the supplications that impacted on the group or corporate levels in the first sample, whereas noblemen also submitted a quarter of the supplications intended to have realm scope. Commoners of rank also wrote similar numbers of group or corporate scope supplications in the second sample as they had in the first. Most army command supplications unsurprisingly had a group or corporate aim, and the decline in the second sample can be partially explained by the army command's near disappearance from the supplication channel (see ch. 10). Lastly, supplications that would have local, regional, or even realm impact, mostly came from the clergy, burghers and peasants, with burghers responsible for half of the realm in the first sample and the burghers and clergy for almost all of them in the second sample.<sup>456</sup>

Accordingly, there were differences in scope when viewed from a resource category perspective. Resource categories where we find mostly commoners of rank and noblemen, such as the employment and judicial categories, are mostly limited to the personal scope. Commercial supplications, on the other hand, mostly contain requests with a wider scope as they were typically submitted by burghers. The mixed fiscal and welfare supplications also would have had a mixed scope of impact, although it widened in the second and third samples when a larger share of commoner Estate supplicants sought these resources. The welfare resource category provides the most telling example for this development: in 1726–27, 100 welfare supplications had a personal scope and in 1771–72, only 6 supplications. Lastly, supplications with a group or corporate scope seem spread out between requests for fiscal, employment, and commercial resources.<sup>457</sup>

### **Broken down group and corporate body scope**

The cessation of supplications from the army command group had a notable effect on corporate supplications (Table 13.1). Moreover, the decrease in supplications with a group scope took place in two steps, as mentioned above in the general findings section.

As examples of supplications with a narrower group scope, one can take J Möller, Gustav Helsing, and Rutger Kock, who wanted the Estates to help them with a court case where they stood accused of violent conduct, or the notaries Brehlwitz, Hoffman, and Hagelberg, who

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<sup>454</sup> Compare attachments 34a–b

<sup>455</sup> Compare attachments 34a–b.

<sup>456</sup> Attachments 35a–c.

<sup>457</sup> Attachments 36a–c.

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Group, 3–10</b>	24	15.6%	5	10.0%	4	13.8%
<b>Group, 10+</b>	20	13.0%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Group, unknown size</b>	50	32.5%	33	66.0%	12	41.4%
<b>Clergy corporate</b>	8	5.2%	3	6.0%	5	17.2%
<b>Burgher corporate</b>	11	7.1%	6	12.0%	8	27.6%
<b>Army command corporate</b>	41	26.6%	2	4.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	154	100.0%	50	100.0%	29	100.0%

**TABLE 13.1** The scope of group and corporate supplications, with corporate bodies by Estate (by supplications). For the categories, see p. 39. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

applied to settle their claims on the Estates for serving in a 1723 commission.<sup>458</sup> Another type of reimbursement was sought by five merchant seamen—bosuns who had been captured by the Russians in 1717, taken to Siberia and the Volga Delta, and eventually returned to Sweden in 1723. According to their insurance, the Crown owed them money for each month they had spent in captivity.<sup>459</sup>

Of the supplications with a larger group scope, most were from the army command. On behalf of his regiment, the Royal Dragoons, P Örnstedt among other things proposed new allotments for the NCOs, the lower staff, drummers, and the fifer. He also wanted the regiment to receive help rebuilding farms destroyed by Russian troops and that officers who had already ploughed their own money into rebuilding projects be reimbursed; and that the regiment's allotted farmers supply their dragoons with uniforms, an obligation they had been relieved of for the last five years.<sup>460</sup> The general M J Gerta, on the other hand, lamented that 51 members of *lindrabantkåren* (the Gardes du Corps) did not have the rank of regimental officers. He thought it would be a good idea to remedy it in order to bestow more splendour on both Kungl. Maj:t and the realm.<sup>461</sup>

Supplications with a group scope of unknown size offer several examples of heirs who for one reason or another sought the aid of the Estates. The heirs of the Monike the Rigan merchant's supplications both at the beginning and at the end of the Age of Liberty have already been noted (see p. 130). Similarly, the heirs of one Classon wanted the 1746–47 Estates' aid concerning an inheritance, should Kungl. Maj:t's decision not go their way.<sup>462</sup> Another type of unknown group supplication reached the Estates in 1726–27. In it, the Jewish merchant Jacob Abraham Jude wrote about the great benefits a realm would enjoy if it allowed Jews a place to

<sup>458</sup> Ärende 53 & 331, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>459</sup> Ärende 1467, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>460</sup> Ärende 462, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>461</sup> Ärende 332, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>462</sup> Supplik 473, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

live. They would go about their business, pay normal customs duties and taxes, and, on top of that, a protection tax so that they could enjoy a normal level of safety.<sup>463</sup>

Besides the many supplications with a corporate scope that came from the army command, this category also contained burghers. At the 1771–72 Diet, Svärdfejareämbetet (the Guild of Armourers) in Stockholm complained that they had lost the privilege of supplying the regiments with sidearms to Wira factory mill, north of Stockholm. Now they appealed against it.<sup>464</sup> At the same Diet, Stockholm's retailers asked for permission to import assorted items such as spectacles, wallets, and so on, as nobody manufactured them in Stockholm. Again from Stockholm, *skepparsocieteten* (the Shipmasters' Association) wanted the law upheld so that everyone who engaged in foreign trade from Stockholm also had to hold their franchise from the city.<sup>465</sup> The 1771–72 sample also contains supplications from Åbo University, submitted to the Diet by its chancellor Claes Ekeblad. In one of them the university asked that the state continue to allot it the money decided in 1762, especially as a recently constructed plantation had taken a large chunk out of the university budget.<sup>466</sup>

### Broken down by local, regional and realm scope

Burghers, mostly in the shape of towns in the second and third samples, tended to approach the Screening Deputation with supplications of local, regional, or realm scope (Table 13.2). In the first sample, more than two-fifths; in the second sample half; and in the third sample three-fifths of the supplications with this sort of scope stemmed from burghers.

As the lion's share of burgher supplications in the second and third samples came from towns, it is not perhaps not surprising that they often utilized the supplication channel to deal with factors pertaining to their inner doings or their relationship with the surrounding countryside. The city of Åbo wrote several supplications in 1746–47 that serve to highlight these

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	14	17.5%	2	2.0%	3	2.1%
<b>Clergy</b>	9	11.3%	23	22.5%	1	0.7%
<b>Towns</b>	10	12.5%	46	45.1%	89	61.4%
<b>Other burghers</b>	26	32.5%	9	8.8%	8	5.5%
<b>Peasants</b>	3	3.8%	19	18.6%	36	24.8%
<b>Army command</b>	5	6.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.7%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	8	10.0%	1	1.0%	3	2.1%
<b>Other</b>	5	6.3%	2	2.0%	4	2.8%
<b>Total</b>	80	100.0%	102	100.0%	145	100.0%

TABLE 13.2 Supplicants who made requests with a local, regional, or realm cope, by Estate (by supplications). Modified to highlight the proportion of towns. Other includes unknown. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

<sup>463</sup> Årende 1721, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>464</sup> Årende 137, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>465</sup> Årende 24 & 25, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>466</sup> Årende 86, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

different variants. In one the town's burghers wanted to hold a yearly market on Shrove Tuesday in order to cut the popular demand for illegal markets held by peasants; in another they needed help catching poaching fishermen who emptied the city's fishing grounds; and they wanted their burghers to be able to appoint vicars in the city's Swedish and Finnish parishes by popular vote.<sup>467</sup>

Peasants too wrote supplications with a wider scope (Table 13.2). In the second sample a sixth and in the third sample a quarter of these supplications stemmed from various peasant corporate bodies. Mats Mattson Ollika, delegate at the 1746–47 Diet from Åbo and Björneborg County, asked the Estates for a variety of things. At the lower end of the scale, he requested that the peasants in the parish of Krijro be rewarded with a six-year tax exemption because of war damages. At the other extreme, he asked that the peasantry of the entire county pay less taxes for their mills and that the Diet should scrutinize the use of the extraordinary taxes paid during the war. If the money had not been put to good use, the peasants demanded remuneration.<sup>468</sup>

Supplications with a realm scope generally sought commercial, fiscal, or welfare resources.<sup>469</sup> Most of the commercial supplications pertained to imports or exports, often in combination with the calibration of tolls. For example, *Tobaksspinnarensocieteten* (the Tobacco Producers' Association) of Stockholm asked the 1746–47 Diet to not increase the import tolls on tobacco plants until the domestic plantations had come up to speed. In a synchronized move, the city of Stockholm asked the Estates to forbid the import of processed tobacco, and to stimulate the growth of tobacco plantations in the south of Sweden in order to protect Swedish producers of processed tobacco. This measure would guarantee that Swedish tobacco growers had a guaranteed market for their produce.<sup>470</sup> The clergy of Linköping, meanwhile, in 1726–27 submitted a list of grievances in which among other things they asked for a national standard measure for grain for use in *kyrkohärbärgen* (tithe barns). They also requested a reduction in the large number of church collections, as they feared that the frequent calls for donations emptied the parishioners' pockets to the extent that they could not donate to their own churches when the need arose.<sup>471</sup>

The supplication channel could also be used for proposals of realm scope that sought to reform society or cure its ills. The Diet delegate for the towns of Karlshamn and Varberg at the 1746–47 Diet, Mayor Franz Cervin, wanted to do something about the widespread begging. Foreigners were swarming the country and Cervin thought the money they received should go to Swedish paupers instead. He suggested a series of changes in both law and administration to crack down on foreign beggars who either abused the system or had been stranded in Sweden after the war. One solution he proposed was to transport soldiers and their families to country of origin on their discharge from the armed forces, another was to put paupers to work at manors, farms, factory mills, and the like. Likewise, he thought paupers who roamed the realm

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<sup>467</sup> Årende 490, 492 & 493, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>468</sup> Årende 422, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>469</sup> Attachments 36a–c.

<sup>470</sup> Årende 399 & 499, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>471</sup> Årende 290, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

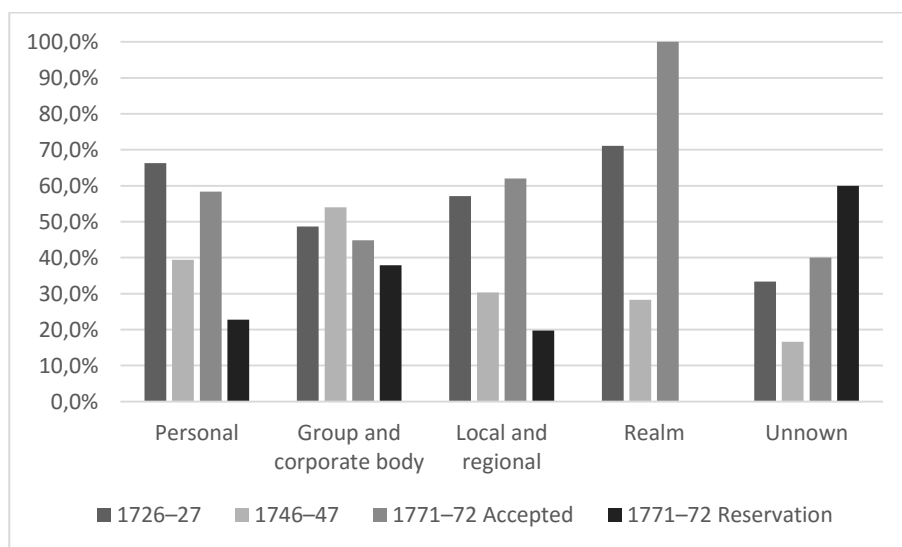


without proper permits from the authorities should have to do forced labour, and Swedish subjects who had housed them should receive due punishment.<sup>472</sup>

The concern of Sten Bielke, *hovrättsråd* (appeal judge) at Åbo Court of Appeal, was with young paupers. In his supplication submitted in 1746–47, he claimed that many of them perished from famine or unhealthy living. Countless others took the beggar's staff and acclimatized to that sort of life. Because the future of the Swedish kingdom's wealth rested on its young, Bielke argued that it had to make sure young people were brought up and educated to a satisfactory level. One such measure that already existed was the possibility for people to take custody of a poor child or teenager and teach them their trade in exchange for their service until he or she had repaid the favour. But because the law as it stood was very loosely formulated, the judge had seen countless disputes where the parties disagreed on the proper length of time someone had to remain with their custodian. Thus, Bielke simply proposed an alteration in the existing legislation that would prescribe a fixed scale, depending on how long ago the person had entered their service.<sup>473</sup>

## Acceptance rates

Supplications with a personal scope always had an average or better than average acceptance rate (Fig. 13.2). Thus, not only did the Screening Deputation consistently favour individual supplicants they also favoured supplications of a personal scope (see ch. 9). The committee's action did not correspond to the development of the supplication channel, though. Despite an increase in the proportion of supplications with a local, regional, or realm scope, the Screening



**FIGURE 13.2** Supplications' acceptance rates by scope (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=756$ , 1746–47  $n=285$ , 1771–72  $n=359$ ). Sources: R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>472</sup> Ärende 14, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>473</sup> Supplik 612, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

Deputation rewarded those with a local or regional scope with a less than average acceptance rate at the 1746–47 Diet, just as they had done at the 1726–27 Diet. The committee also changed their stance on supplications of realm scope. While the first sample had had a better than average acceptance rate, they faced a worse than average one 20 years later. At the end of the Age of Liberty, however, things had changed, while the acceptance rates for supplications with a local or regional scope now hovered around the average. Lastly, the acceptance rates for those with a group or corporate scope were much better in 1746–47 than they had been in 1726–27. This change is attributable to the absence of the army command supplicants, who stood a small chance of having their supplications accepted (see ch. 10).

## Conclusions

Most supplications throughout the period were personal in scope, although the proportion decreased from about two-thirds in 1726–27 to half or slightly below in the other two samples. On the other hand, the number of personal scope supplications surged during the prejudice peak. Against this, around half of the 1746–47 and 1771–72 supplications had a wider scope. When comparing these two samples, further differences appear. In 1746–47, those of group, corporate, regional, or realm scope together with local scope comprised half of all supplications. In the third sample, however, only the last category remained significant alongside the supplications of a personal scope.

It is possible that the decreased number of supplications with a realm scope in sample three reveals another facet of the increased congruence between regulations and supplications. The Estates, after all, had voted to prohibit lofty proposals and ideas from the Screening Deputation (see ch. 5): rather, supplicants should submit them to the administrative boards. This regulation apparently had no effect at the 1746–47 Diet, but might have at the 1771–72 Diet. If the lower number supplications of realm scope was indeed an effect of this regulations, the result matches the others in Chapter 6 that showed how regulations increasingly affected the workings of the supplication channel.

Differences in ambition tended to echo supplicants' background. Commoners of rank and noblemen mostly restricted their efforts to the personal level, aiming to solve something for themselves or someone else. Thus, the resource categories where they dominated also comprised many of the supplications that had a personal scope. The clergy, burghers, and peasants, on the other hand, often submitted locally, regionally, or even realm oriented requests. The resource categories most often requested in commoner Estate supplications thus went with a higher proportion of requests of a wider scope.

Privilege or status was the most likely reason behind the differences in scope when comparing noblemen and commoners of rank with supplicants from the commoner Estates. Noblemen and commoners of rank mostly held their positions on the basis of their merits as individuals. Although a nobleman was born into his or her status as part of a noble family, his position in the Crown's organization, for example, depended on his individual skills at navigating the bureaucratic terrain. Had the supplication channel seen a large number of ironmasters, for example, who often operated foundries as joint ventures, the results might have been rather different, but that was not the case, and thus these supplicants mostly asked for things that pertained to an individual level. Burghers and peasants, on the other hand, went about their

business under a corporate aegis. They operated within the village, parish, district, guild, or town corporation. Thus, supplications stemming from these groups and the clergy more often aimed wider—locally, regionally, even the entire realm when the defence or strengthening of their privileges called for it.

The Screening Deputation's acceptance rates in the second sample have been found to have remained less favourable to certain groups or requests whose relative numbers increased when comparing the first and second sample. Then in the third sample this treatment ceased. Judging by the findings in Chapters 10 and 11, this is what befell corporate bodies from the burghers and the other commoner Estates. In Chapter 12 we saw the same with requests for commercial resources. The results covered in this chapter enable us to spell out the same development again, using the scope of the supplication as the variable: The Screening Deputation maintained unconvinced by supplications with a local or regional scope in both the first and second sample, as well as supplications with a nationwide ambition in the second sample. At the last Diet, however, the members of the committee had come to terms with supplication of local scope, which now enjoyed an average acceptance rate. On the other hand, the committee always rewarded personal requests with an average or better than average acceptance rate. It seems submitting a supplication of only personal scope was always the supplicant's safest bet.

## 14 Resource subcategories

In this chapter, I examine the composition of each category of resources requested in the supplications, and any changes evident in the period. The chapter provides an insight into the variety of issues and disputes which the supplications contained, and offers a more detailed understanding of the long- and short-term trends in what people requested.

### Fiscal resources



**FIGURE 14.1** Fiscal resources by subcategory (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=337$ , 1746–47  $n=86$ , 1771–72  $n=106$ ). For the subcategories, see pp 37–38. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

More than two-thirds of the fiscal requests submitted to the 1726–27 Screening Deputation concerned claims on the state (Fig. 14.1). In fact, claims on the state not only constituted the majority of the fiscal supplications, but when measuring the number of claim supplications against all supplications in the first sample, they constituted a third. Claim supplications alone were the reason why fiscal supplications composed about 40 per cent of the first sample (see ch. 12). Claims remained a large share of the fiscal supplications, but the drop in supplications after 1726–27 took a heavy toll on this subcategory especially. Instead the number of tax-related supplications increased. Lastly, the number of property requests recovered to its 1726–27 size in the third sample. Thus, fiscal supplications went from being dominated by claims to a more differentiated set of requests.

This diversification was coupled with the broadening of the types of supplicants who submitted fiscal supplications (see ch. 12). At first, the category was dominated by noblemen and commoners of rank, with state-affiliated supplicants submitting three-quarters of the supplications to do with claims.<sup>474</sup> In time, commoner Estates' supplicants came to submit most of the fiscal supplications, although noblemen and commoners of rank were still a presence.

#### *Claims on the state*

The Great Northern War had left the Swedish state heavily indebted, and the Estates assumed responsibility for the debt in 1719. Moreover, the Estates' Office created a prioritization list which classed the debt in order of urgency, with class 1 the most urgent to class 11 being the

<sup>474</sup> Attachment 33a

least important. Claims for withheld salaries were put into class 8, while outstanding pensions and forms of relief ended up in class 10.<sup>475</sup> Because the Estates assumed responsibility for claims on the state, and because people clamouring for their unpaid salaries or pensions received a low prioritization, it is not surprising that the Screening Deputation of 1726–27 received many supplications related to claims on the state.

Some supplicants claimed that reimbursement for services rendered would mean the difference between penury and survival. The Stockholm's tailor guild, for example, had provided the guard's regiment with uniforms and equipment between 1718 and 1720 to a value of 13 000 dkm without receiving a single penny back, and now they claimed to be overrun by poor widows and fatherless children who were demanding satisfaction with tears in their eyes.<sup>476</sup> Others still performed their duties in the state's employ while waiting for their unpaid salaries and reimbursements to arrive. Besides his regular duties, Gabriel Östman spent several months a year travelling around the country auditing on behalf of the Estates' Office. Not only had he not received reimbursement for his travelling expenses and salaries for servants he hired during his travels, he had not received his own salary since he started the job in 1719. The Crown thus owed him 150 dsmt a year for the last seven years, a salary he also wanted to receive on time in future.<sup>477</sup>

For some, the Estates were perhaps the only available option in order to receive overdue reimbursement. For the farrier Johan Oström this was seemingly the case: he had served with a dragoon regiment for 17 years and, like many others, had endured severe hardship, imprisonment, ill health, and, to top it off, no wages. Oström claimed that unless the Estates helped him to examine and specify the sums of money the state owed him, the Board for Public Lands and Funds would refuse to pay out.<sup>478</sup>

Claims persisted after 1727, albeit not to the same extent. Although the Swedish state engaged in costly warfare again in 1741–43 and 1757–62, there was no repeat of the extreme situation of the Great Northern War during the Age of Liberty. Nonetheless, the Swedish state still managed to fail to meet its financial obligations and continued to struggle with its management of its salaries, expenses, and taxation. Additionally, the welcoming of complaints against the new pension system is visible in the third sample. Six supplications contained complaints about withheld pensions, four written by women with deceased husbands or fathers.<sup>479</sup>

### ***Taxes***

Taxes in eighteenth-century Sweden comprised different types of duties, such as taxes paid in cash, in kind, or paid through the performance of some type of corvée for the Crown. This variation is reflected in the tax supplications. In 1746–47, Gothenburg's burghers pointed to the high taxes they had agreed to pay for the war effort, and said that now perhaps the Estates could

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<sup>475</sup> Åmark, *Sveriges statsfinanser*, 678–680.

<sup>476</sup> Ärende 580, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>477</sup> Supplik 1191, R2523, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>478</sup> Supplik 411, R2523, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>479</sup> Ärende 175, 244, 458, 480, 567 & 673, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

grant them a lower tax rate as recompense.<sup>480</sup> In 1771–72 the town of Askersund wanted to increase the amount of untaxed alcohol they could bring into the city and sell. The increased revenue would go directly to the mayor's salary.<sup>481</sup>

A supplication about corvée was submitted by the peasantry of the *frisocknarna*, the so-called free parishes, of Örebro—Axberg, Kil, and Hofsta—who wanted to renegotiate their statutory labour. These parishes had been freed from the military allotment system in exchange for administrative subordination to the Dylta sulphur mill, where the parishes' freeholders performed 32 days corvée a year and supplied the mill with firewood and coal.<sup>482</sup> However, in 1746 they wanted an investigation into how much sulphur the mill really needed to produce, and consequently how much firewood to deliver. They also wanted all peasants to share the burden of supplying coal and firewood equally, and that peasants whose lands lacked trees be exempted. Lastly, they asked to not have to perform corvée during '*brådaste andetider*', the busiest harvest periods.<sup>483</sup>

Billeting could also present a problem. At the 1771–72 the town of Varberg wanted other towns in the county to help pay for the troops in Varberg Fortress, while in a similar errand, Kristianstad's burghers wanted the nobility and clergy in their area to contribute. At the same Diet, the Malmö merchant H Bager complained about increased demands from the state: as it was, the town's burghers already supplied the garrison with firewood, but Kungl. Maj:t had not only ordered them to supply more firewood, but also to complement their fuel deliveries with candles.<sup>484</sup> With the costs of perquisites and fuel hard hit by the inflation of the day, it is perhaps not strange that these towns sought to press down costs as best they could.

The scope of these supplications varied. In 1746–47 the clergy of Östergötland asked for tax relief for an *adjunct* (a curate) in the area.<sup>485</sup> On the other hand, at the same Diet the clergy of Lund wanted a clarification of *Helgonskulden*, a tax that only applied in Sweden's southern, formerly Danish provinces: originally meant to pay for parish clerks, education, and so forth, a decision by Kungl. Maj:t in 1742 meant the tax no longer went to these purposes or was abolished completely.<sup>486</sup> This left some of the rank-and-file parochial employees and attendants unemployed. The clergy of Lund thus thought that to iron out any discrepancies in the system an investigation of the special tax was in order.<sup>487</sup> Taxes could thus be negotiated on a personal or a wider level.

### **Property**

In the property subcategory, different groups submitted supplications relating to various forms of public property. When the requests came from noblemen or commoners of rank they often concerned the royal demesne. In 1726–27, Colonel Jacob Meijer requested a lease of the royal demesne at Laholm, in the county of Halland, for his old age, and in 1746–47 the nobleman

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<sup>480</sup> Ärende 554, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>481</sup> Ärende 223, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>482</sup> *Historiskt-Geografiskt Och Statistiskt Lexikon öfver Sverige. Bd 2, C-F*, 147.

<sup>483</sup> Ärende 345, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>484</sup> Supplik 226, R3638, UdH, FU, RA; Ärende 44 & 132, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>485</sup> Ärende 309, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>486</sup> The screening list is unclear on this point.

<sup>487</sup> Ärende 526, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

Johan Gabriel Falk complained about a decision that denied him his rights to a farm as a benefit for the leaseholder of Gripsholm royal demesne. Now he wanted it back.<sup>488</sup> However, 25 years after Meijer's supplication, however, these types of requests had all but disappeared. The Estates were particularly generous in handing out leases of royal demesne at the beginning of the Age of Liberty. In the 1740s and then in the 1760s, these grants came under scrutiny; the Estates cancelled leases and tightened terms.<sup>489</sup> Perhaps these errands disappeared as a result. Another issue was the appeals and complaints stemming back to the 1680s resumption of Crown land granted or enfeeoffed to subjects: nine supplications in the first sample and three in the second concerned land caught up in the Great Reduction.<sup>490</sup> In 1723, the Estates had even authorized a commission to which everyone who thought themselves unjustly treated could submit their complaints, a commission that remained active until 1748. Maria Aurora Brenner had submitted her complaints, but was not satisfied with decision the commission had made in 1740; therefore she appealed to the Estates at the 1746–47 Diet.<sup>491</sup>

Despite the decrease frequency of such requests, public land nonetheless continued to be a bone of contention. Unsurprisingly, for many leaseholders the disposal and purchase of leasehold property was a subject close to their hearts during the Age of Liberty. For example, Gustaf Larson from Rimstad in Östergötland elected to contest Kungl. Maj:t's decision to deny him the right to purchase a farm on behalf of a nobleman.<sup>492</sup> Another type of public property dispute is illustrated by the town of Nyköping, which had leased the enclosed pastureland known as Tyska ladugården (the German Byre) since the 1769–70 Diet. In 1771 the town's burghers upped their bid and asked for a more or less permanent lease, or at least a lower rent. Moreover, they argued that they should be given the right to use another pasture the Crown had given to a nearby ironworks, describing a clear connection between the economic straits of the town, the onerous task of maintaining transport in the area, and what a boon the pasture would be.<sup>493</sup>

## Commercial resources

As seen in Chapter 12, the burghers dominated when it came to commerce, with commoners of rank answering for some of the supplications. Supplications concerning privileges and terms constituted the largest subcategory throughout the period, with protection in second place at the first two Diets (see Fig. 14.2). At the 1771–72 Diet, the support subcategory increased. Thus, the type of commercial resources people sought changed to a certain degree.

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<sup>488</sup> Ärende 697, R2522, UdH, FU, RA; ärende 204, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

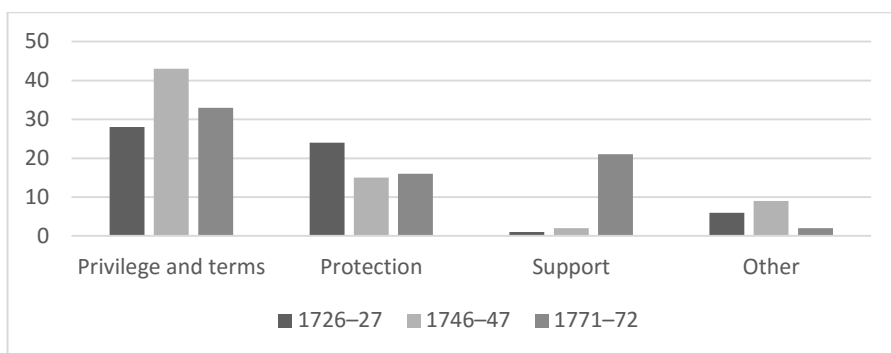
<sup>489</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 383; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 394–395.

<sup>490</sup> Ärende 821, 878, 931, 1241, 1245, 1540, 1891 & 1948, R2522, UdH, FU, RA; Ärende 29, 207 & 286, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>491</sup> Ärende 207, R2944, UdH, FU, RA; Prytz, *Familjen i kronans tjänst*, 28–29.

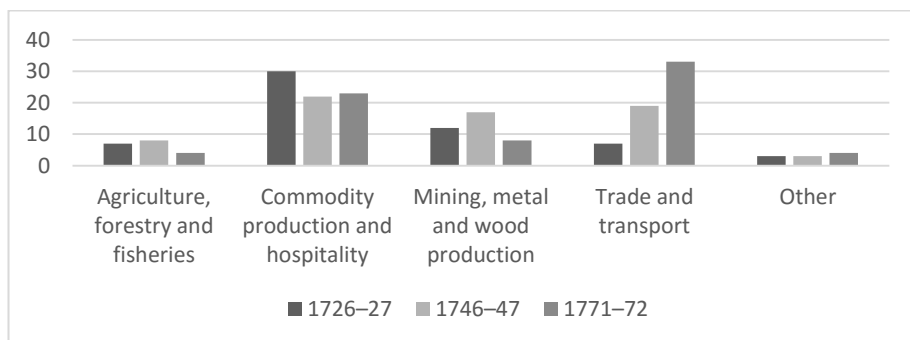
<sup>492</sup> Ärende 155, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>493</sup> Supplik 185, R3640, UdH, FU, RA.



**FIGURE 14.2** Commerce resources by subcategory (by supplications) (1726-27  $n=59$ , 1746-47  $n=69$ , 1771-72  $n=72$ ). For the subcategories, see p. 37. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

The nature of the commercial supplications also underwent some changes (see Fig. 14.3). In the first two samples, a third of the commercial supplications concerned mining, large-scale metal production, agriculture, forestry, or fisheries. In the third sample, these categories had halved in size. Commodities and hospitality also decreased from being the largest to the second largest subcategory, overtaken by trade and transport.



**FIGURE 14.3** Commerce resources by concerned economic sector (by supplications) (1726-27  $n=59$ , 1746-47  $n=69$ , 1771-72  $n=72$ ). For the categories, see p. 37. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637-R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

### ***Terms and privileges***

Most supplicants who requested commercial resources asked for some sort of new privilege or to modify an existing one. Claes Hinrich Mett, Diet delegate from Kalmar at the 1746-47 Diet, requested a new privilege on behalf of a consortium of merchants. They lamented the shortage of sugar in the county, which forced them to bring it in at high prices, which in turn made the sugar on sale expensive. With the Estates' support, the merchants would set up and run a new sugar mill if they could have the local monopoly.<sup>494</sup> At the same Diet, Hierpe copperworks' partners wanted both new privileges and improvements to their existing ones: they wanted to have the privilege to increase their coinage venture; they asked to increase their staked claim; and they wanted to export their products to Norway without paying customs.<sup>495</sup>

<sup>494</sup> Årende 300, R2944, UdH, FU, RA; Supplik 300, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>495</sup> Årende 250, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.



Towns also asked for new or better terms and privileges too. At the 1771–72 Diet, the town of Åbo requested that its merchants and artisans be granted access to Sastmola market, a privilege already granted to the town of Björneborg.<sup>496</sup> At the same Diet, the town of Varberg complained about the lack of freedom for its merchants since a royal decree issued on 20 November 1766 which forbade them from buying fish from fishermen in the Gothenburg and Bohuslän archipelagos and then selling it outside the region. Varberg now asked if it was possible to change the interpretation of the decree, so that Varberg's merchants could buy fish there and then sell said fish to the peasantry along the coast between Gothenburg and Varberg.<sup>497</sup>

### ***Protectionism***

A characteristic of this type of supplication from 1726–27 was the prevalence of craftsmen demanding protection from domestic or foreign competition. A partial explanation for this change could perhaps be the short-lived experiment where *frimästare* (lit. free masters) were allowed to set up shop in certain places without the blessing of the guilds. This was certainly the case for the button-makers and book printers from Stockholm, who petitioned the Estates in 1726–27, the former stating that they were being driven into unemployment because of non-guild craftsmen.<sup>498</sup> Other types of conflicts abounded as well. Illegal interlopers sold knives to the dismay of the cutlers; wigs to the dismay of the wigmakers; dyers produced dyed cloth which intruded on the cloth cutters', privileges; and the flaxmongers and pedlars on the one hand and the tanners on the other made life difficult for cobblers by buying up all the available leather or undercutting their prices.<sup>499</sup>

These types of conflicts, originating in the cracks in the guild system, did not disappear from Swedish society after 1727; however, in the Screening Deputation's work they were largely replaced at the 1746–47 and 1771–72 Diets by issues such as trading and production rights between towns, not between guilds. One example of this is when Uppsala and Gävle in 1746–47 complained that hatters from Falun sold their merchandise at Älvkarleby's two annual markets, to the detriment to Uppsala's and Gävle's hatters.<sup>500</sup>

### ***Support***

The state's active support of industry began to decrease at the 1765–66 Diet, but despite (or because of) this the number of supplicants asking for support increased (Fig. 14.2). The 1760 instructions had recognized people's right to petition the Diet on matters pertaining to manufactories and the like. This meant tentative or already active entrepreneurs could turn to the Diet. One example of this type of request came from the Geneva-born watchmaker Augustin Bourdillon. He had come to Sweden in 1755 and three years later decided set up his business in Stockholm, specializing in enamelled watches. Thirteen years down the road he had spent all of his capital and found his apprentices' upkeep something of a problem. His suggestion was therefore that the Estates remunerate him for the capital he had spent and help him obtain the 'quickest' women from Stockholm's orphanage so that he could train them in his techniques. As

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<sup>496</sup> Ärende 130, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>497</sup> Ärende 43, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>498</sup> Ärende 840 & 1028, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>499</sup> Ärende 102, 1022, 1027 & 1904, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>500</sup> Ärende 299, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.



**Figure 14.4** In the first sample, but not in the second and third sample, many of the burgher supplications came from guildmasters seeking the Estates' aid in protecting their market shares. This excerpt from an early nineteenth century illustration depicts a tinker, a cutler, a cooper, a smith, a potter and a rope-maker.

a result he would not only contribute to the good of society through his business, but also by educating people from the fringes of society.<sup>501</sup>

Towns asked for help with their waterways. Rivers needed to be dredged in order to allow commercial traffic, and towns wanted either a sum of money or the privilege to acquire the funds or material. In Halmstad, for example, the ocean winds relentlessly blew sand inland which clogged the main waterway. For long periods of time, ships had to lie at anchor in the roadstead instead of unloading directly in the harbour.<sup>502</sup> Thus, we find a supplication from Halmstad in the third sample, asking for a lump sum of 10–12,000 riksdaler along with privileges to procure

<sup>501</sup> Supplik 312, R3638, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>502</sup> Halland läns landsting (ed.), *Hallands historia*, 332–333.

wood from nearby forests for the presumably work-intensive effort. Facing similar problems, the town of Trosa asked for an interest-free loan in order to start up cod and herring fisheries as well as the possibility to write off against the loan the sum required to clear the town's river. Nykarleby, meanwhile, asked for permission to start a lottery to generate funds.<sup>503</sup>

## Employment resources

As shown in Chapter 12, attempts to tap the Diet's employment resources were largely the preserve of commoners of rank and noblemen. The other groups active in this category were the army command—the second largest group in the first sample—and clergy and burghers, who submitted about a tenth of the supplications submitted to the 1746–47 and 1771–72 Diet respectively.

At the first Diet, supplications for benefits dominated this category. Almost three-quarters of the employment requests belonged to this subcategory (see Fig. 14.5). At the 1746–47 Diet, when the total number of employment requests was running at a third of the 1726–27 level, the benefits subcategory was at about a tenth of what it had been 20 years earlier, now at the same level as appointments and prejudice. Despite decreasing a great deal since the prejudice peak, the number of prejudice appeals was still larger than the number of benefit and appointment supplications in the third sample. Thus, the employment category evolved from mostly concerning the conditions of employment to mostly concerning the attainment of employment, a development caused by the large drop in benefit supplications and the increase in prejudice supplications.

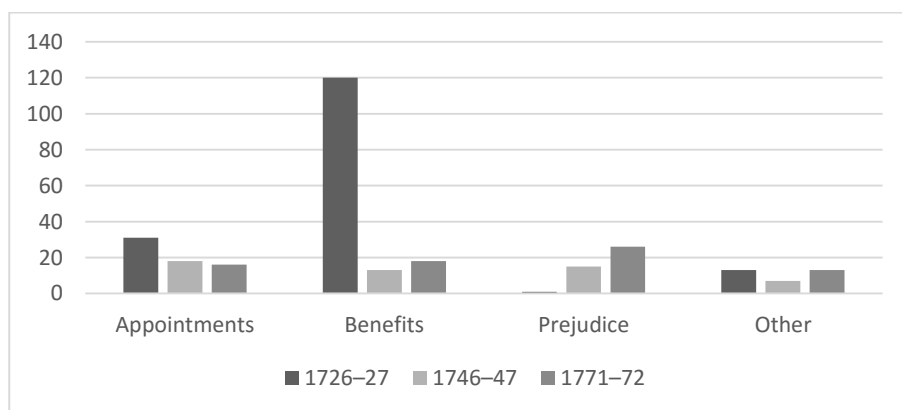


FIGURE 14.5 Employment resources by subcategory (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=165$ , 1746–47  $n=53$ , 1771–72  $n=73$ ). For the subcategories, see p. 37. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Benefits

Not only had the Great Northern War left the state unable to pay its debts and many state-affiliated households in dire straits, it also eroded public servant's employment conditions. In a frantic effort to reduce expenditure, Kungl. Maj:t cut public salaries and other benefits across

<sup>503</sup> Årende 65, 222 and 317, R3641, UdH, FU, RA.

the board in the early years of the Age of Liberty.<sup>504</sup> Perhaps as a result, the Estates received many benefit supplications, with most requests for new or better benefits in the first sample coming from the military, and more specifically from the army command (Table 14.1). The Österbotten County infantry regiment wanted better regulation of the payment of salaries in grain; more generous expenses when they travelled; an increased salary for one particular second lieutenant; and better living conditions for the garrisons in Fredrikshamn and in Nyslott in southeastern Finland.<sup>505</sup> The Björneborg County infantry regiment requested higher salaries; reimbursements for officers forced to live in dilapidated billets; funds to rebuild billets destroyed by Russian troops; a higher ceiling for expenses when officers travelled on government service; and so on.<sup>506</sup>

Public employees from outside the military also took the opportunity to seek better conditions. Gustav Gyllenborg, a secretary in the royal chancery, petitioned the Estates for a larger annual salary, because his current salary of 500 riksdaler was not enough for the duties he performed.<sup>507</sup> It was also within this specific group of requests that we find many of the clergy's supplications. The clergy of Österbotten County asked for higher salaries for the headmasters and teachers at the schools in Vasa and Uleåborg, as well as better living quarters for the assistant vicars in the parish of Paldamo. As the parish was large and the assistant vicars travelled on foot, the clergy thought it proper to afford them one farm each instead of a shared one.<sup>508</sup> The welfare of an assistant vicar—this time in Helsingborg—was also important for professor Jacob Benzelius of Lund, who thought the vicar required a higher salary.<sup>509</sup>

Although the number of benefit supplications decreased after 1726–27, there was still a steady trickle. In 1746–47, the district judge Gillis Åkerhielm pointed out to the Estates that he had no residence included in his terms of employment, and therefore he asked to be given 50 dsmt extra for living expenses. To help, he attached a list of unallotted farms in the east of Stockholm County

	1726-27		1746-47		1771-72	
<b>Military</b>	14	11,7%	1	7,7%	2	11,1%
<b>The army command</b>	45	37,5%	0	0,0%	1	5,6%
<b>Clergy</b>	24	20,0%	7	53,8%	5	27,8%
<b>Civil servants</b>	28	23,3%	3	23,1%	6	33,3%
<b>Other</b>	9	7,5%	2	15,4%	4	22,2%
<b>Total</b>	120	100,0%	13	100,0%	18	100,0%

**TABLE 14.1** Supplicants who submitted supplications about benefits by a mix of Estate and secondary status (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>504</sup> Karonen, 'Coping with peace after a debacle', 206.

<sup>505</sup> Årende 1737, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>506</sup> Årende 1739, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>507</sup> Årende 869, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>508</sup> Årende 983, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>509</sup> Årende 895, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

where the money could be found.<sup>510</sup> In 1771–72 Strängnäs's Diet delegate Jonas Söderberg asked that the curate hired for the position of *bögmässopredikant* (ordained preacher) be able to count his years of service as double. As the curate not only held the Sunday and weekly services, but also managed other responsibilities, Söderberg thought it only fair to boost his credentials in this way.<sup>511</sup>

### *Appointments*

Although never reaching the height of the prejudice appeals, appointment supplications were present in all three samples. Simon Hörling was working in Skåne as a substitute *auditör* (judge advocate) without pay, although he received financial support from the state and was in line for an appointment. At the 1726–27 Diet he made sure to thank the Estates for this, and he acknowledged that he knew the Estates faced more errands than they could handle, but still he thought his case worthy of consideration. Hörling had been close to being appointed a district judge, and he had been temporarily deputized in several vacant districts until the arrival of a permanent replacement. He wanted a recommendation to Kungl. Maj:t so that he could finally enjoy a permanent position and perhaps more importantly, a permanent salary.<sup>512</sup> In 1746–47, Torsten Tavast, a captain and representative of the Savolax infantry regiment, brought it to the Estates's attention that several officers had been promoted by field marshal Lewenhaupt in the recent war; however, they had not received the necessary royal assent, which made their promotions void.<sup>513</sup>

There were few instances when people submitted an employment supplication that incurred the draconian 1,000 dsmt fine (see p. 82. Perhaps sampling another Diet would have yielded a greater number, as Edler argues that 'most of' the supplications submitted to the 1734 Screening Deputation came from officers who wanted to hand over or sell their commands.<sup>514</sup> There are a few examples in the current samples, however, and one of them concerns Christian König, *lagman* (chief district judge) for the county of Västmanland. He wanted to retire with his salary intact for the remainder of his life. König furthermore had identified a candidate who would be willing to replace him without complaining about the lack of income, namely baron, district judge, and *kammarherren* (royal chamberlain) Funck, who submitted his own supplication agreeing with König. Now, both König and Funck realized that there would be a hole left by Funck if he moved up from district judge to chief district judge; therefore, they both wanted judge advocate Waldius to take Funck's place. Waldius concurred in his own supplication. Together, these three supplications all proposed that the Estates recommend their proposal to Kungl. Maj:t.<sup>515</sup> Whether or not they were punished with the draconian fines remains an issue for further examination.

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<sup>510</sup> Ärende 113, R2944, UdH, FU, RA; Supplik 113, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>511</sup> Supplik 269, R3640, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>512</sup> Supplik 1560, R2523, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>513</sup> Ärende 410, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>514</sup> Edler, *Om börd och befordran under frihetstiden*, 43.

<sup>515</sup> Ärende 159–161, R2944, UdH, FU, RA; compare with resolutionslista, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

## Prejudice

Although prejudice appeals have already been mentioned several times, we have so far not looked closer at what one could look like. One such supplicant was E. A. Krabbe, a former major of the Kymmenegård infantry battalion. In his 1746–47 supplication, he complained about having lost all of his worldly possessions when the Russians invaded Finland, driving his wife and his many minor children into poverty. Not only that, but with the land losses to Russia after the peace settlement his commission with the battalion ceased to exist, as his allotted farm lay in what was now Russian territory. Kungl. Maj:t had promised Krabbe and other officers in the same predicament new appointments, but they had never transpired. On the contrary, as things stood a certain Major Fock was favourite for the vacant lieutenant-colonelcy in the Åbo County regiment. Fock, according to Krabbe, was far less qualified than him. To strengthen his claim, Krabbe did what most people claiming prejudice had to do—he attached a description of his career in the Crown's service to strengthen his claim. Year by year, the document recounted how he had entered the king's army as a volunteer 40 years ago, and then continued with Krabbe's experiences in the Great Northern War and the Hat's Russian War. It is a document that recounts wounds to his limbs and head, and his participation in countless small battles and skirmishes, most of them now long forgotten.<sup>516</sup>

After the removal of the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice in 1766, the number of prejudice supplications decreased from the 700 submitted at the 1765–66 Diet; however, both the number and proportion of prejudice appeals was larger in 1771–72 than in 1746–47 (Fig. 14.5). Both Malmström and Lagerroth have noted that the frequency of prejudice appeals increased again at the Age of Liberty's last Diet, but do not specify by what amount.<sup>517</sup> The present study shows that the number submitted to the Screening Deputation was in fact higher than those submitted to the 1746–47 Diet, and to that we should probably add the number of prejudice appeals submitted directly to the Estate chambers.

Not all prejudice appeals at the 1771–72 Diet were impermissible, however; some were submitted under the 1760 instructions that permitted unfinished business to be carried forward from Diet to Diet. This was certainly the case with the royal courtier Carl Estenberg (see ch. 6). Other supplicants, however, had clearly decided to work around the ban. Chief district judge Göran Adolf Rutensköld had come to the Estates in 1765 to successfully plead prejudice in the appointment of a county governorship; however, despite the recommendation given to him by the Estates, several younger people had been appointed who Rutensköld thought less qualified than he was. Being old and tired—he was about to turn 60 in early 1772—and, as he wrote, well aware of the ban on prejudice appeals, Rutensköld asked to retire. However, this was obviously a way for the chief district judge to highlight what he felt was clear prejudice and to get the Estates to do something. The Screening Deputation seems to have taken the bait.<sup>518</sup>

The ratio of officers to civil servants was more equal in the second and third samples than during the prejudice peak (Table 14.2). In 1765–66, more officers than civil servants appealed prejudice, but this was not the case in 1746–47 or 1771–72.

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<sup>516</sup> Supplik 333, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>517</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 299–305; Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 369.

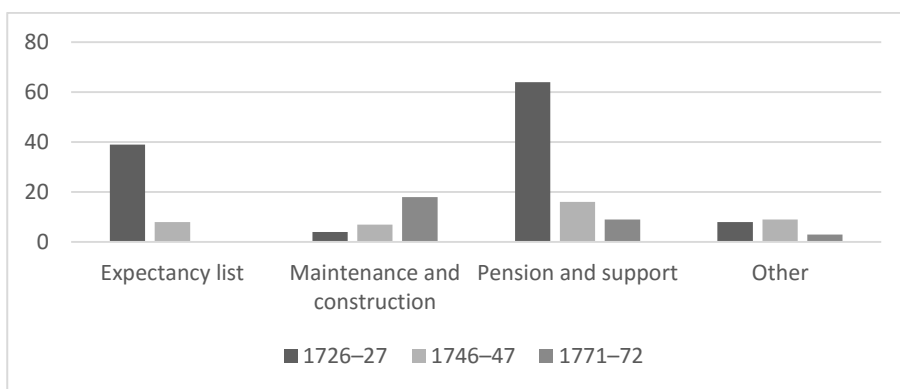
<sup>518</sup> Supplik 530, R3639, UdH 1771–72, FU, RA.

	1726–27		1746–47		1765–66		1771–72	
<b>Military</b>	1	100%	6	40,0%	463	66,8%	10	38,5%
<b>Civil servants</b>	0	0,0%	9	60,0%	228	32,9%	16	61,5%
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	2	0,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	1	100%	15	100%	693	100%	26	100%

**TABLE 14.2** Supplicants who appealed against prejudice by secondary status. Civil servants include ecclesiastical servants (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Welfare resources

Of the supplications submitted at the 1726–27 Diet, more than half of those looking to tap welfare resources were concerned with some type of pension or personal support, and another third, expectancy lists (Fig. 14.6). As the number of welfare supplications dropped from 115 to 40, the share of these two subcategories decreased, and in the third sample, requests asking for help with the maintenance or construction of public buildings and amenities constituted the majority of welfare supplications. This development was coupled with a change in which supplicants asked for this resource (see ch. 12). While commoners of rank and noblemen submitted the majority of welfare requests at the 1726–27 Diet, they mostly came from burghers at the 1771–72 Diet.



**FIGURE 14.6** Welfare resources by subcategory (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=115$ , 1746–47  $n=40$ , 1771–72  $n=30$ ). For the subcategories, see p. 38. *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

## Pension and support

To understand this development, it is useful to begin with the requests for pensions or support at the 1726–27 Diet. In the aftermath of the Great Northern War, the Crown struggled to cope with its servants, many of them trickling home after a long imprisonment as prisoners of war in Russia. A large proportion of them were unable to work because of disability or old age. Many households faced a future without a male breadwinner, and the lack of an institutionalized welfare system exacerbated the problem. Legislation obliged parishes and local communities to finance poorhouses and even asylums, but as a countrywide survey from 1737 showed, the

quality and even existence of such institutions varied from parish to parish, from county to county. Considering the huge strain the Great Northern War had placed on Swedish society, it goes without saying that the situation had been a great deal worse in the 1720s.<sup>519</sup>

Not only was the rudimentary and arbitrarily functioning social security system on its knees, the state had few structures in place to specifically cater for the needs of its old or sick servants. Yes, both the army and navy boasted pension funds for the old or disabled— with the army fund supporting over 5000 people in the early 1720s—and the army ran a small hospital, Vadstena krigsmanshus, with places for 62 decrepit officers and men. However, 62 beds was a drop in the ocean, the pensions were meagre, and the pension reserves were under heavy strain. In 1732 for example, the pension reserve cancelled all payments for lack of funds.<sup>520</sup> The situation for civil servants was even worse: they had no pension fund whatsoever, a situation that remained unrectified throughout the Age of Liberty.<sup>521</sup> Both military and civil incumbents could sell their offices (see ch. 6), but those without a permanent post lacked that option as well.

Widows had a few alternatives. She had a year's grace when she could continue to draw her late husband's salary and use army-tied accommodation. There was *änkekonservering*, where a widow or her daughter would marry the next incumbent. Such solutions seem to have been common among the clergy, for example; however, the drastic situation of the time meant such measures were insufficient. There were far more widows than new incumbents to marry them given the shrinking public servant corps, and the state had enough problems paying the salaries of those who were still in active service. There was no institutionalized care for widows and children of deceased clergymen and civil servants until the 1740s.<sup>522</sup>

Thus, petitioning the Estates remained a sensible option, especially as it was the Diet that controlled the national finances. Old or former public employees directed their pleas at the Estates to make ends meet, even those already supplied with a state pension. General Mikael Planting could already count himself relatively lucky after he had retired from his colonelcy of a dragoon regiment with a promotion that entailed a higher pension; even so, he found the pension insufficient and asked the Estates for more.<sup>523</sup> The types of requested pensions also varied. Lieutenant colonel Christopher Budda wanted a farm where he could spend the rest of his life, while the former bailiff Anders Carsbom thought an annual pension of ten barrels of grain a fitting reward for 26 years in the Crown's service.<sup>524</sup> Others did not seek permanent support, only temporary relief: on behalf of Maria Stare, Tavastehus regiment wanted the state to award her a year's grace. As the daughter of a second lieutenant in the regiment she would receive a part or all of her late husband's annual salary if the Estates approved the request.<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Johanson, Malmberg and Andersson, 'Fattigvård i Sverige under 1700-talet', 222–244; Pulma, 'Fattigvården i Borgå stift under frihetstiden', 370.

<sup>520</sup> Åmark, *Sveriges statsfinanser*, 814–821; Wirilander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 243; Åberg, *Fångars elände*, 209–210; Two people in the sample - former lieutenant Hans Tilberg and cornet Alexander Wetterman - asked to be placed in the hospital. Ärende 271 & ärende 453, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>521</sup> Åmark, *Sveriges statsfinanser*, 381–387.

<sup>522</sup> Widén, *Änkeomsorg i ståndssamhället*, 7–8; Arvidsson, *Makten och döden*, 209.

<sup>523</sup> Ärende 174, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>524</sup> Ärende 149 & 774, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>525</sup> Ärende 1047, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.



With the decrease of welfare supplications after 1727 these types of support requests decreased. There were a few, of course, including one from the widow of second lieutenant Anders Herlin, Margareta Herlin, who had been deprived of her livelihood by her husband's death. She asked the 1746–47 Diet for a yearly quantity of grain from the two farms that she and her husband had rented before his death. With that sum, she would be able to support herself and her small children.<sup>526</sup>

### ***Expectancy list***

The expectancy list category is also best explained by returning to the Great Northern War and the 1726–27 Diet. These requests were also prompted by poverty, but in the context of the large number of redundant officers in the wake of the war. The very large number of officers dead or captured in infamous military disasters such as the Battle of Poltava in 1709 and Magnus Stenbock's capitulation at the Siege of Tönning in 1713 meant that new regiments had to be created from scratch. Similarly, but less spectacularly, injury and sickness resulted in a constant stream of promotions where the former incumbent was still alive and later returned to active service. Officers rewarded with a promotion pension—for example, captains who retired as majors—were no strangers to returning to active service in their new rank, further disturbing the system, and people who had been in Crown service in the Baltic provinces lost their positions when those territories were lost. Besides the regular regiments, the Crown created extraordinary regiments during the war that were then demobilized, leaving even more officers unemployed. The Swedish army, which had swelled to 100 regiments by the end of the war, shrunk by as much as 60 per cent when it reverted to its peacetime incarnation. At the same time, capable officers were returning home from captivity, further exacerbating the situation.<sup>527</sup>

To come to terms with this problematic situation, the Estates appointed *Placeringsdeputationen* (the Placement Deputation), and charged it with siphoning off the most able officers and returning them to active duty. The committee offered the rest a discharge with a year's salary or put them on so-called expectancy lists on half pay.<sup>528</sup> Expectants were assigned to a regiment, but were not on active service, and were left to linger until a position became available. In 1729, 453 officers were on expectancy salaries; six years later that figure had dropped to 286. This method for dealing with redundant officers was employed again in 1743 and 1762, and was not unique to Sweden. The Placement Deputation also handled civil servants and clergymen who had lost their positions owing to captivity, cession of territory, or the abolition of their posts, if they had no other means of employment. In the end, the Placement Deputation had 115 civil servants or state attendants and 28 clergymen on its books.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> Ärende 472, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>527</sup> Nilsson, 'Rank or command?', 125–126; Karonen, 'Coping with peace after a debacle', 208–211; Carpels, 'Royal power and bureaucracy', 37.

<sup>528</sup> As an example, the placement list for the Uppland county regiment included 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 5 captains, 1 regimental quartermaster, 8 lieutenants, 8 second lieutenants, 1 master sergeant and 8 sergeants. Additionally, almost all of these had been given placements below their ranks. For example, all expectancy captains had the rank of either lieutenant colonel or major. Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 405, n. 1.

<sup>529</sup> The placement deputation's decision was in turn largely based on the recommendations of the so called war commission who made the initial examination. Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 405, n. 2; Åmark, *Sveriges statsfinanser*, 694–695; Wirlander, *Officerskåren i Finland under 1700-talet*, 23–24; Nilsson, 'Rank or command?', 126–127; the Habsburg monarchy, for example, employed a similar system. Hochedlinger, *Austria's wars of emergence*, 116.



**Figure 14.7** When the fighting of the Great Northern War was over, the Estates were left to pick up the pieces. As seen especially in the fiscal and welfare categories, the first sample was filled with supplications asking to settle claims or seeking some sort of support. People who had lost a limb, like the man in the picture who lost it in the Napoleonic Wars, would find their ability to support themselves, at least through physical labour, reduced.

With the employment situation being what it was, and because the Estates had taken on responsibility for finding a solution, the first sample contains several supplications on these matters. Some, like lieutenant Petter Ekebon, asked for a raise in their expectancy salary. Ekebon, placed with the Nyland County infantry regiment, made sure to thank the Estates, but insisted the sum he was receiving did not suffice. Given his service and hardships as a prisoner of war, he wanted a full lieutenant's salary.<sup>530</sup> Most asked for a placement, however. Second lieutenant Hård expected his wish for an expectancy placement to be fulfilled as he was a poor nobleman.<sup>531</sup>

At the 1746–47 Diet there were some supplicants who asked for an expectancy salary. *Fältproviantmästaren* (master purveyor) Hindrich Brandt had held a position at the Board for Public Lands and Funds, but had it taken from him and now wanted the Estates to give him a recommendation and an expectancy salary.<sup>532</sup> At the 1771–72 Diet, however, despite the Pomeranian War having ended only nine years before, no supplications pertaining to the expectancy lists could be found in the sample.

<sup>530</sup> Ärende 415, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>531</sup> Ärende 1238, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

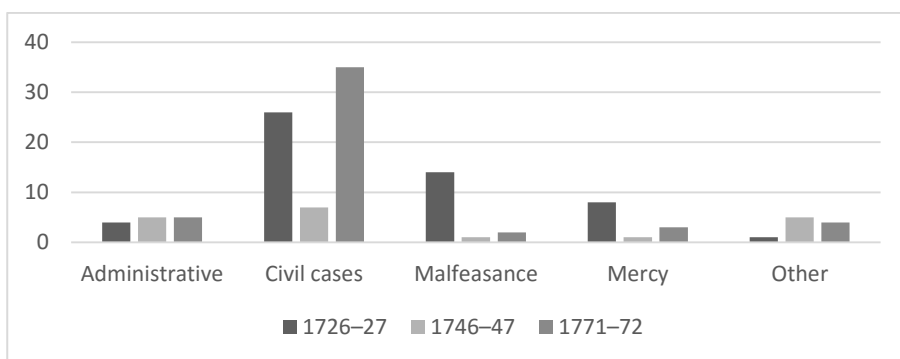
<sup>532</sup> Ärende 432, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

### *Maintenance and construction*

As the number of supplications concerning expectancy placements or pensions dropped, another type of errand came to dominate the shrinking welfare category, namely towns asking for support for public buildings, amenities, or general construction projects. A most desperate plea came from Norrköping, which had billeted Russian soldiers in 1743. According to the supplication, supporting the troops had cost the town dearly, and the troops had furthermore disrupted trade and seldom purchased anything from the town's burghers, while they had consumed firewood at such an alarming rate that fuel had to be brought in from outlying areas. In 1744 the town asked for a relief from taxes and got a reprieve for the payment of its 1745 taxes; however, in 1746 the county governor proclaimed the reprieve over and demanded the town pay not only 1746 year's taxes, but also the previous year's. The town could not bear this burden, a double burden no less, in its poverty-stricken state, and requested a permanent reprieve from that year's taxes, a so-called *friår*, free year.<sup>533</sup> At the 1771–72 Diet, Sundsvall sought any public funds available to rebuild its public buildings after the 1764 conflagration, and the town of Nyköping needed financial support to repair the town church's west tower. To fund the repairs, both sought the establishment of a government-authorized *stambok*, or collection book.<sup>534</sup>

### Judicial resources

Most judicial supplications concerned civil cases (see Fig. 14.8). The second largest subcategory contained supplications proposing some sort of administrative measure. Despite the increase in peasant supplications in the second and third samples in general, their absence from the judicial category is perhaps most plainly visible in the lack of an increase in supplications about



**FIGURE 14.8** Judicial resources by subcategory (by supplications) (1726–27  $n=53$ , 1746–47  $n=19$ , 1771–72  $n=49$ ). For the subcategories, see p. 38. Sources: R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>533</sup> Supplik 57, R2945, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>534</sup> Supplik 152 & 186, R3640, UdH, FU, RA; collection books circulated around the realm's churches where people donated and signed the ledgers, rendering money for different causes. Judging by a folder in the peasantry's archive from this Diet, applying for collection books seem to have been a common way for parishes, towns and other collectives to muster much needed money. See Collect & Stamboks ansökningar, R2014, BdA, RA. A *stambok* of this kind is not to be confused with *stambok* as in animal pedigree (for horses or dogs, for example).

wrongdoing in the samples. Only two 1771–72 supplications concerned wrongdoing, one of which we have already encountered (the butcher Lars Hultin in Chapter 3). While the peasantry repeatedly made their displeasure about Crown servants known in the latter half of the Age of Liberty, the findings here show that they did not submit complaints to the Screening Deputation.<sup>535</sup> As noted in Chapter 12, judicial supplications were mostly submitted by noblemen, commoners of rank, and burghers.

### *Civil disputes*

The largest subcategory had the largest variety of errands. The conflict between Holméen and Siegroth was one of them, albeit accompanied by violence (see ch. 5). A less violent theme in the subcategory was the problems that death brought to the survivors' relationships. Sometimes younger and older generations did not see eye to eye, as when the military allotment farmer Sigfrid Sigfridsson's late father had sold a farm to the local bailiff. The transaction took place without Sigfridsson's knowledge and against his will, and now he wanted it back; so much so that he was even willing to reimburse the bailiff.<sup>536</sup> In another errand, one Carl Johansson had been locked in a dispute with his uncles since at least 1765 over the right of inheritance to a *skattehemman* (freehold farm).<sup>537</sup> Likewise, the inheritance rights to Äppelnäs manor in the southwest of Sweden had caused disputes among the presumptive heirs prior to the 1771–72 Diet. This dispute, however, not only involved two or three people, but two groups, the Billberg heirs and the Browall heirs, with a representative of the later unsuccessfully attempting to make the Estates examine their case.<sup>538</sup>

Other types of property disputes also engaged entire groups. The Pedersöre parishioners appealed against the Judicial Audit at the 1771–72 Diet: they were locked in a *råttmist* (a boundary dispute) with the parishioners from the neighbouring parish of Kauhawa, and as Kungl. Maj:t had not issued a verdict in the Pedersöre parishioners' favour, they asked the Screening Deputation to permit them access to the Estates' examination and verdict.<sup>539</sup> Perhaps the most startling errand in this subcategory concerned theft, and not just any theft. If we are to believe the merchants Toutin, Pinquardt, Lijon, Ziegler, Grubb, Campbell, and Appelroth, they had been the victims of the privateer captain Lillia. Although the errand had been forwarded to the Judicial Audit by Amiralitetsrätten (the Admiralty Court), the merchants wanted their case examined by the Estates.<sup>540</sup>

### *Administrative*

At the 1746–46 Diet, the Stockholm magistracy highlighted what they perceived as infringements of their jurisdiction by *överståthållaren*, the governor of Stockholm. The governor appointed people in their administration; he wanted to completely control the daily business of the town's administration; he had moved town councillors back and forth between positions; and last but not least, he had allowed people dissatisfied with the magistracy's ruling to appeal

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<sup>535</sup> Cavallin, *I kungens och folkets tjänst*, 109–118.

<sup>536</sup> Ärende 313, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>537</sup> Ärende 489, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>538</sup> Ärende 518, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>539</sup> Ärende 151, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>540</sup> Ärende 754, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

against them to him.<sup>541</sup> At the same Diet, all district judges working in the Svea Court of Appeal's jurisdiction proposed that they be relieved of the duty to be present at the inspections of officer's residences. Judge advocates were perfectly capable of doing that job.<sup>542</sup>

In 1771–72, another district judge, Jacob Johan Sackleen, who presided over the districts of Pikis and Halliko in Åbo and Björneborg County, asked that his jurisdiction be split in two. He argued that the Estates had granted this wish to other district judges at previous Diets because of their extensive jurisdictions, and that his was even bigger. Constant litigation and other duties left him with no spare time and failing health, and with a wife and several small children he had no option but to seek relief. He also seems to have had the support of the peasantry in his district, who wrote in support through Matts Mattson, their Diet delegate.<sup>543</sup>

### **Wrongdoing**

The butcher Lars Hultin provides one glimpse of what the subcategory wrongdoing contains; however, his was perhaps a bit more dramatic than the average case. A more representative instance is provided by Karin Pärsson from the southern part of Öland, who in 1726–27 complained about a group of people who had taken all her property from her and driven her from her home. Not only that, but Pärsson also thought the district judge was not especially well-inclined towards her, and thus she requested that another judge preside over an extraordinary district court session where her complains could be heard.<sup>544</sup>

Not all supplicants were ordinary people who had suffered at the hands of a Crown servant. One P. Tillroth who worked as a bailiff in the county of Bohuslän had been accused of wrongdoing by a *landsfiskal* (district police superintendent). According to the superintendent, Tillroth owed the peasantry money in his districts for haulage, billeting, and other types of corvée. Tillroth, however, claimed that he had not received the funds to pay what the Crown owed them, and, moreover, the Crown owed the peasants less than the alleged sum. This, Tillroth continued, was obviously the superintendent's doing—he was always scheming against him—and now Tillroth needed the Estates help to extract himself from the suit, as he could ill afford it, and to reimburse him for the inconvenience and costs so far incurred.<sup>545</sup>

### **Conclusions**

This chapter has provided the reader with a glimpse into the variety of the supplications as well as the issues and situations that spurred supplicants into action. More importantly, it has shown that beneath the seeming stability of the general resource categories, their respective compositions underwent change. These changes help to further explain the decrease in supplications after 1727. In the fiscal category, this development was caused by the lower number of claim supplications; in the welfare category, the fall in pension and expectancy supplications; and in the employment category, the fall in benefit supplications. The reduction of claim supplications is the most conspicuous of the three: the 1727 decree took an explicit

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<sup>541</sup> Årende 529, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>542</sup> Årende 511, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>543</sup> Årende 461, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; Supplik 461, R3639, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>544</sup> Årende 59, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>545</sup> Årende 1892, R2522, UdH, FU, RA.

stance on supplications about claims on the Crown, and it seems to have paid off for the Estates to shun this type of errand. Likewise, we already know that the large increase in supplications in the 1760s was partially due to the surge in prejudice appeals. Thus, particular types of errands left their mark on the ebb and flow of the supplication channel. The ebb after 1727 was largely caused by the disappearance of a select group of specific requests, the flow of the early 1760s was largely caused by one type of specific request.

Moreover, the shifts in who requested what led to changes in the types of resources requested. When burghers submitted most of the welfare supplications, they asked for support for buildings and the like, not pensions or a place on the expectancy lists. Even when there were no changes in who mostly requested a resource—as, for example, in the commerce category—the sectors or specific requests concerned could still change. Most stable, perhaps, was the number of requests that sought to tap judicial resources. The same type of people sought judicial assistance, and they mostly sought help with civil cases.

## 15 Who, what, and the logic of appropriateness

The results from the last six chapters showed that the supplicants who utilized the Swedish Diet's supplication channel fell into two groups: state-affiliated supplicants and commoner Estate supplicants. Some overlaps exist, particularly with the clergy, a commoner Estate composed of public servants, and also among the burghers with those serving in town administrations.

The results showed that these two groups followed their own trajectories, and especially the state-affiliated supplicants experienced alternating ebbs and flows. They wrote most of the supplications in the early Age of Liberty and then seem to have faded until the 1760s, when a second wave of state-affiliated supplicants hit the supplication channel and pushed the number of supplications above 1,000, even 1,500, again. By the end of the Age of Liberty this second wave ebbed out again. Beneath the ups and downs of the state-affiliated supplicants we have the more tranquil flow of commoner Estate supplicants. Their numbers did not decrease after 1727 and they seem to have maintained a steady presence in the supplication channel until the 1750s or 1760s, when their numbers increased. Their numbers did not hit the same high-water mark as the state-affiliated supplicants, but unlike them, the number of commoner Estate supplicants did not ebb away. In the third sample, they peaked in both relative and absolute numbers.

These two groups broadly speaking petitioned about different matters, and their supplications had very different scope. Thus, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first concerns the state-affiliated supplicants, and the second the commoner Estates, and in these sections I discuss the findings presented in Chapters 5–14 in order to chart the various chronologies and circumstances. The chapter then ends with a section where the arguments presented in this chapter are analysed from the perspective of a logic of appropriateness.

### **The first wave of state-affiliated supplicants**

The Great Northern War explains much of the early interaction in the Diet's supplication channel. It had left the Swedish state heavily indebted and had taken a heavy toll on society and the economy. As Sweden embarked on a lengthy period of austerity, many subjects were left with large claims on the state for services rendered. The Diet assumed part of the responsibility for the management of this debt through the Estates' Office, which in turn made prioritizations about which debts to honour. Pensions, salaries, and the like ended up far down the pecking order, which seems to have vexed people to the extent that around 40 per cent of all supplications in the first sample concerned claims, mostly submitted by commoners of rank and civil servants. As a result, the Diet's supplication channel largely became a channel for debt management in the beginning of the period.

Such social safety nets as existed, arbitrarily established around the country, were reliant on an economy that had broken down in the wake of the prolonged war. This lack explains why people from state-affiliated households also petitioned the Estates for welfare resources. They had given their service to the Crown and were in many cases left without means to support themselves when their services were no longer required for whatever reason. As the Estates controlled the nation's coffers, they might possibly see fit to help these people. A second explanation for welfare supplications from state-affiliated supplicants is also found in the fact that the Estates had taken responsibility for managing the large number of unemployed officers

and civil servants in the wake of land losses, budget cuts, and the dramatic downsizing of the armed forces. They offered redundant public servants so-called expectancy salaries, which some supplicants petitioned for.

The desperate state of the state's budget also goes some way in explaining the third major resource category in the first sample—employment resources. Here, individuals, groups, and army command supplicants alike all tried to negotiate their terms and conditions of service after the state had slashed salaries and expenses in the wake of the deficit. The occurrence of this specific subcategory can in some measure also be explained by the mere presence of army command and clergy supplicants in the supplication channel—improving employment conditions was in their own interest.

Nonetheless, according to the Screening Deputation's regulations many of these supplications were impermissible. The results from Chapters 5 and 6 showed little tally between the regulations and the actual workings of the supplication channel. Despite this, the Screening Deputation accepted three out of five supplications at this Diet. The reason for this was presumably connected to the patriarchal aspect. To exemplify this, we will take a closer look at women supplicants.

### **Women petitioners as an illustration of the first wave**

No fewer than 80 or so of the first sample's supplications were submitted by women, and most of them can be categorized as state affiliated. They, like the male state-affiliated supplicants, came to the 1726–27 Diet to vying for social support or some sort of fiscal resource. Although the female supplicants constituted a minority of all potential female supplicants—many women faced a life without a male breadwinner in the aftermath of the Great Northern War—it was certainly not self-evident that they should have had access to this channel to begin with, especially considering the basis of political participation at the time: maleness and property or a franchise.

First of all, the legislation's gender-neutral language should not be taken as a guarantee that women could access the supplication channel. In his study of clerical appointments in the province of Hälsingland—where legislation was just as gender-neutral—Peter Lindström finds that widows who owned land participated in elections held between 1730 and 1800. Similarly, Åsa Karlsson-Sjögren's study of women's participation in mayorial elections in the Age of Liberty shows that women participated; however, both studies show most women participated via proxies. Although they could vote, they were not welcome to participate actively in these political fora, despite being enfranchised and despite the gender-neutral legislation. These women represented a piece of land or a business, a taxed entity, and not themselves.<sup>546</sup> Women could hold political rights attached to things, but were not considered political subjects per se.

Although physical participation in a local arena was not the same thing as submitting a supplication to a committee, they were both actions of political participation. A comparison is thus in order and my findings both follow and contradict the results for Lindström and Karlsson-Sjögren. Yes, most women who wrote to the Diet were widows; however, it does seem most women in my samples did not act through a proxy, but submitted in their own right or, in seven

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<sup>546</sup> Lindström, *Prästval och politisk kultur*, 186–188; Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten*, 39–46.



instances, together with men. In two cases women submitted requests for other women's behalf.<sup>547</sup> There are also few instances, four from all three samples, where married women submitted a supplication.<sup>548</sup> Although a small number, they are perhaps proof that the supplication channel allowed women marginally more scope for action than the town and parish halls across eighteenth-century Sweden; however, we should probably be careful when interpreting the presence of women acting alone at the 1726–27 Diet. Considering that regulations were not applied with rigour at that point, it might be that some women sent supplications through middlemen who did not hold formal proxies. In that case, the women did not come to the Diet themselves, but the unofficial proxies were not recorded in the screening lists because they lacked official status, giving the impression that women could submit supplications in the flesh when they really could not.<sup>549</sup>

Moreover, the women in my sample interacted with the Estates through the supplication channel primarily as members of state-affiliated households, not as representatives for a piece of taxable property. As a result, in some cases the supplicants were noblewomen of much higher social standing than the peasant and burgher widows studied by Lindström and Karlsson-Sjögren. Regardless, the political subjects in the Diet were unquestionably men; only men could be elected Diet delegates.<sup>550</sup> The Estates, however, granted access to these women when they acted as supplicants, proxies or no proxies.

One explanation could be that the connection between gender and political agency was growing clearer, even if it remained a bit of a grey area. One example is the regulation of town and Diet elections. A 1758 decree forbade women from participating in mayoral elections, but in many towns the interpretation of its stipulations led to women not being allowed to vote in Diet elections either, while in other places things continued as before. Thus, a regulative uncertainty existed where regulations for one type of election could influence praxis in other kinds of elections, or have little to no effect at all. Local praxis and custom could overrule national legislation. Lagerroth also observes that women's participation in Diet elections was noticed in the Diet, but went uncorrected.<sup>551</sup> Perhaps this incoherence or uncertainty worked in the women supplicants' favour at the Diet too, where some female supplicants submitted supplications, and often successfully at that. If so, the uncertainty was greater before 1727 than afterwards, as the number of women shrank.

Another explanation would be that supplications were not a political, but a legal right. Chapter 3 accounted for the judicial aspect of the supplication institution, where the chance to submit supplications offered subjects a way to protect their rights and privileges. The Diet had not assumed the king's responsibilities for the legal system *de jure*, but in practice. Although this goes some way in helping us understand women's continued presence in the supplication channel after 1727, it is, however, insufficient to explain the significant presence of women in the first sample.

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<sup>547</sup> Attachments 9 and 57b.

<sup>548</sup> Årende 1587 & 1792, R2522, UdH, FU, RA; Årende 313 & 465, R2944, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>549</sup> I do not think this is likely, but there is certainly a need for further investigation.

<sup>550</sup> See, for example, Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten*, 69.

<sup>551</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 248–249; Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten*, 68–74.

The most probable explanation is not the judicial aspect, but rather the patriarchal aspect. The social and economic turmoil of the Great Northern War created a tremendously difficult situation for many Swedish subjects. It left many Crown servants dead or incapacitated by injury, sickness, starvation, or poverty. The members of the Estates were well aware of this. These circumstances prompted the patriarchal aspect of the supplication institution. This line of reasoning explains why military officers were more in evidence in the supplication channel, as they had suffered more and many of them had been unable to receive their salaries while they were prisoners of war. Many of these state-affiliated supplicants had difficulty supporting themselves, those who died often left their households with no means for support. Their outstanding salaries or pensions were to be the last to be paid of the state's debts. Therefore a proportion of them wrote the Estates, and because of the stressful and unique situation, the Screening Deputation more often than not accepted their requests for further examination.

With the patriarchal aspect in play, women from state-affiliated households had the opportunity to act. According to Svante Norrhem and Anu Lahtinen, women were given a wide scope for action as long as it pertained to the interests of their family or their household in a wide sense, as opposed to actions prompted by greed, vanity, and their own benefit. In her study of men and women who fought the government's revocation of land grants in the Great Reduction, Prytz similarly argues that women were allowed to act because the state granted land to households, not individual males. Thus, women could act in matters concerning that household.<sup>552</sup> As most of the female supplicants in the first sample belonged to households that had been or still were connected to the state by employment, it is reasonable to assume that these female supplicants thought they could submit supplications—and were allowed to—as the state had trouble meeting its financial obligations to them.

In Chapter 6 I remarked that the patriarchal aspect to some extent explained the dislocation between regulation and interaction. At the beginning of the Age of Liberty, the gap was even wider. The patriarchal aspect explains the actions of the supplicants as many of them turned to the Estates in search of redress, and that included women. It was not legal or formal rights that prompted them, rather the hope of beneficence. It also explains the actions of the Diet delegates who let beneficence and not the regulations guide their actions. This situation enabled such otherwise politically marginalized groups—unrepresented lower groups, women—and not only noblemen and commoners of rank to act. Circumstances worked in favour not only of people with higher social status represented by the Estates, but also those unrepresented by the Estates and of lower social status.

### **Ebb, flow, then ebb again**

After 1727, the window for impermissible supplications stood less open. The number of supplications fell, a drop mainly caused by the disappearance of state-affiliated supplicants. While the number of state-affiliated supplicants decreased from 550 in 1726–27 to 144 in 1746–47, the corresponding decrease for non-state-affiliated supplicants was 206 to 141.<sup>553</sup> We also see the effect of the demise of this group in what supplicants requested after 1727. The number of

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<sup>552</sup> Norrhem, *Kvinnor vid makens sida*, 174–178; Lahtinen, *Anpassning, förhandling, motstånd*, 208; Prytz, *Familjen i kronans tjänst*, ch. 5 especially.

<sup>553</sup> Attachment 22a.

claims supplications in the second and third samples, for example, fell to a tenth of their 1726–27 number. The demise is also apparent in the employment category, where the number of benefit supplications decreased, and in the welfare category, where the number of pension and expectancy applications sank.

There was also a change in the type of state-affiliated supplicant who used the supplication channel. Gone were the army command supplications and most of the high-ranking officers and civil servants. The small portion of unrepresented lower-class groups also disappeared. All in all, the civil servant and military portions in the supplication channel remained at similar levels in the 1746–47 sample, the ratio having been 1 : 2 in the 1726–27 sample. Lastly, the number of non-employed state-affiliated supplicants fell far more than the employed ones, leaving the state-affiliated group in the 1746–47 sample not only smaller, but also composed differently. These supplicants also petitioned about other things. That is why civil servants and officers lingered after 1727, but not their widows or family members—they had other matters to bring before the Estates. From now on, state-affiliated supplicants to a higher degree consisted of employed men. And they sought less welfare resources and other fiscal and employment resources than before.

To some extent, the finding that there were fewer women involved echoes the research about the male gender of the political subject during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In her study of the political culture of the Age of Liberty Diets, Sennefelt has shown how notions of political community and participation were negotiated and constructed by men, and how traits intimately tied to masculinity were affixed to central political notions.<sup>554</sup> In the present study, I have shown that the net result of the attempts to lessen the onslaught of supplicants did lead to a smaller degree of female participation. The interaction grew more masculinized after 1727. Although most of the supplicants were men in the first sample as well, the number and proportion of women were higher than in the other samples; however, this change does not seem to have come on the back of explicit bans on women. The regulations did not emphasize certain male-coded traits. Although fewer women took part of the supplication channel's operations, the cause was not gendered and had more to do with administrative measures directed at all impermissible supplications, not only women's. In other words, more women used the supplication channel before 1727 than after it, but neither before nor after was their participation, or lack thereof, primarily predicated by their gender.

After the lull of the 1730s and 1740s, a second wave of state-affiliated supplicants hit in the late 1750s. Changes in the system for judging credentials and the war in Swedish Pomerania drove the number of prejudice of appeals up. At the 1765–66 Diet about 700 supplicants appealed on grounds of prejudice. The Estates had indeed meddled with all kinds of appointments throughout the period. The reasons varied, and included their intent to pursue influence for people's personal networks; to audit Kungl. Maj:t's appointment procedures; to reward those who had served the Estates; and to hinder the King from gaining influence while strengthening the Diet's position. This time around, however, the number of prejudice appeals overwhelmed the Diet.

There were similarities between the first and second wave. Firstly, both were primarily the result of state-affiliated supplicants. Secondly, there were double as many military supplicants as

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<sup>554</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 277–280.



**Figure 15.1** After 1727, many of the non-employed state-affiliated supplicants disappeared from the Diet's supplication channel, as seen, for example, in the lower amount of women. However, female supplicants can still be found in sample two and three, like the famous painter Ulrica Pasch (picture) who sought a pension. For Pasch's supplication, see ärende 296, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

civil servant supplicants judging by prejudice supplications; however, unlike in 1726–27, people brought prejudice appeals within the confines of regulations, and supplicants did not need to rely on some implicit or explicit benevolence on the part of the Estates in order to have their grievance heard. Thus, the prejudice peak confirms the trend of an increased congruence between regulation and interaction during the later Age of Liberty. Moreover, the prejudice appellants held positions in the military and in the civil administration—they were not unemployed. They appealed promotions where they had been passed over, and in order to get a promotion one had to be employed. Lastly, the Pomeranian War was only a partial factor in the increased number of prejudice errands. In comparison, the Great Northern War was the determining factor behind the first wave. The Pomeranian War was not as costly and did not run for two decades, and therefore did not take the same toll on society, a society that moreover had just come out of the prosperous 1750s and where social institutions existed to degree they had not in the 1720s, like the pension funds discussed in Chapter 14. Although the turmoil of the 1760s could have contributed to the increase of supplications requesting some sort of aid, this contribution seems to have been minor and mostly within the commerce resource category.

Then, with the 1765–66 Diet, the wave subsided. The abrogation of the right to appeal on grounds of prejudice meant that the number of state-affiliated supplicants sank back to 1746–47 levels, and as the total number of supplications was higher in 1771–72 than 25 years before, the share of state-affiliated supplicants reached its nadir. However, even at their lowest, state-affiliated supplicants comprised four-tenths of the requests.

### Commoner estate supplications and gravamina

Before we discuss the burgher and peasant supplicants further, there is the issue that many of the commoner Estate supplications were in fact particular gravamina submitted to the Screening Deputation. This finding raises the prospect of referring to requests submitted to the Screening Deputation as supplications *and* gravamina, not only supplications. It also seems a disagreement exists in previous research. Fredrik Lagerroth refers to all these errands as *besvär*, a term which can be used to refer to grievances in general, the particular gravamina submitted by Diet delegates, or judicial appeals. Nils-Erik Villstrand, on the other hand, refers to all errands submitted to the Screening Deputation as supplications.<sup>555</sup> This issue needs some further attention.

The first task is to determine how many of the grievances in the samples could be viewed as particular gravamina. It would be convenient to focus on the sender and just categorize all requests submitted by Diet corporate bodies as such; however, these corporate bodies submitted grievances on behalf of collectives and individuals as well, not only on behalf of a populace or town as was decided in 1755 (see p. 84. Requests submitted on behalf of individuals or groups were supplications. It does not suffice to define grievances submitted before the first submissions deadline for the 1771–72 Diet as supplications, and those submitted by the second deadline as gravamina: the Diet corporate bodies submitted grievances during the first period as well.

Better then to define what constituted a gravamen by both author and scope. Thus, a particular gravamen was either (a) submitted by a Diet corporate body or a Diet delegate with a direct impact on a corporate, local, regional, or realm level; or (b) submitted during the second term at the 1771–72 Diet, the term reserved for Diet delegates. This definition is generous in order to capture the maximum number and will thus answer the question of how many supplications at most could be defined as particular gravamina. As table 15.1 shows, the majority of the requests submitted by commoner Estates supplicants could be defined as particular gravamina.

However, this result does not mean that it is correct to refer to the requests submitted to the Screening Deputation as ‘supplications and gravamina’. Rather, the findings emphasize the intersection between supplications and gravamina: they were different but connected channels of interaction. It is worth considering why in greater detail.

Using the peasantry as an example, the intersections between gravamina and supplications start on the local level. The peasantry met at the parish level to choose electors and formulate *sockenbesvär* (parish gravamina), which were also referred to as *primärbesvär* (primary or original gravamina). These electors then usually congregated at the district level under the supervision of

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<sup>555</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 109; Villstrand, ‘Memorialets makt’, 203–204.

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	All	Gravamina		All	Gravamina		All	Gravamina	
<b>Noblemen</b>	177	17	9,6%	38	1	2,6%	67	4	6,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	48	14	29,2%	31	25	80,6%	12	7	58,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	92	34	37,0%	86	58	67,4%	136	105	77,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	12	3	25,0%	22	19	86,4%	46	37	80,4%
<b>The army command</b>	62	28	45,2%	3	2	66,7%	2	2	100,0%
<b>Total</b>	391	96	24,6%	180	105	58,3%	263	155	58,9%

**Table 15.1** Supplications submitted by people from the five Estates definable as particular gravamina (by supplications). *Sources:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

the district judge to elect their Diet delegates and to decide what errands their representatives should champion at the Diet. According to his instructions, the district judge was to help the peasantry to weed out gravamina not suited for the Diet. The errands that had the support of the electors and the district judge became *bäradsbesvär* (district or hundredal gravamina), also referred to as *riksdagsbesvär* (Diet gravamina), and were drawn up with the help of the district judge. Most of the time, the weeded-out gravamina—unless they concerned court cases that had already been heard, for example—were submitted as supplications to the county governors, the administrative boards, or to the district court.<sup>556</sup>

At the Diet, the Estate of the Peasants, just like all the other Estates, sorted its district gravamina into two piles. The pile which received the backing of the entire Estate of the Peasants became part of the so-called *allmänna besvär* (general gravamina). These errands were supposed to deal with matters of concern to the realm, or at least an entire county or similar, and which required a new law or a change or elucidation of an existing law. At the 1719 and 1720 Diets the general gravamina were handed over to Kungl. Maj:t as per tradition. In 1723, as mentioned in Chapter 4, the Estates took over the handling and examination of the general gravamina themselves, with the argument that they were the lawmaking body of the realm and that this new procedure would free up time for Kungl. Maj:t to help supplicants and others.<sup>557</sup> As we also saw, all gravamina continued to be addressed to the king and all decisions required Kungl. Maj:t's ratification. Thus, these gravamina were still formally submitted to the king, although their destiny was decided in the Diet.

The other pile of grievances rejected from each Estates' general gravamina became *enskilda besvär* (particular gravamina). Bäck, Fällström, and Mäntylä argue that there existed little difference between gravamina and supplications, and at this point of the process the similarity grows even clearer when looking at what treatment particular gravamina received. Not having gained the backing of the entire Estate, it was then up to the individual delegate to further his constituents' interests. Delegates with particular gravamina could go to Kungl. Maj:t, who in turn drew up special registers of these errands and distributed them among the administrative boards and other public organs for further investigation. As Anders Claréus points out, they thus

<sup>556</sup> Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', ch. 3 at 3, 13–14; Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeinflytande under frihetstiden*, 29–30.

<sup>557</sup> Lagerroth, Nilsson and Olsson, *Sveriges riksdag*, 95–98.

became part of the 'administrative process', for as Bäck says, they were 'in practice transformed into supplications'.<sup>558</sup>

Thus, the interaction process connected gravamina and supplications at three places. Initially at the local level, when some were hived off and submitted as supplications to the county governor. Then at the central level, where particular gravamina submitted to Kungl. Maj:t received the same examination as supplications. Then again at the central level, when delegates submitted gravamina to the Screening Deputation. Although it was not an obligatory step for Diet delegates, as suggested by Lindblad, Frohnert, Fällström, and Mäntylä, many of them did indeed use the Screening Deputation.<sup>559</sup>

The fact that the difference between particular gravamina and supplications was more administrative than practical is also apparent from the timings. If in 1725 the peasantry in a parish or district were at loggerheads with, say, an ironworks, and wrote to Kungl. Maj:t, their grievance would have been categorized as a supplication; in 1726, they would have addressed the same grievance to the king as a gravamen. Furthermore, no absolute distinctions between general and particular gravamina existed. Burgher delegates successfully got grievances that only applied to their town into the general gravamina. By getting these gravamina included, they received the backing of the entire Estate and were thus more certain of reaching a satisfactory conclusion.<sup>560</sup> Thus, the context decided what each errand would become. A request submitted in the gravamina was a gravamen, a request submitted in the supplication channel was a supplication.

Consequently, it was the administrative setting that made particular gravamina into supplications as soon as they were submitted to the Screening Deputation. The Screening Deputation's job was to receive supplications, and its regulations referred to the Petitioners' Edict, not the procedures for submitting gravamina. Neither did the Screening Deputation's regulations prescribe any differences for how to examine gravamina, it did not even mention of the second deadline, even though it was publicly known through *Riksdagstidningen*. The most probable explanation here is that a shift in praxis took place in all but name, just like the delegation of power from Kungl. Maj:t to the Diet. Thus, it did not matter that everyone knew that the Screening Deputation received both supplications proper and particular gravamina. The supplication channel was still meant for supplications.<sup>561</sup>

Secondly, these supplications, unlike gravamina, were not submitted to Kungl. Maj:t, but to the Diet. The particular gravamina were submitted directly to Kungl. Maj:t and the general gravamina were processed in Kungl. Maj:t's place. The reception of supplications by the Screening Deputation was not part of either process. One could say that the examination of general gravamina by the Estates involved constitutional outsourcing, while the examination of supplications by the Estates amounted to constitutional innovation through imitation.

However, that all requests examined in the samples can be considered supplications does not take away from the fact that many had come to the capital as gravamina. This fact is also visible

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<sup>558</sup> Lagerroth, *Sveriges riksdag*, 254–255, 262; Fällström and Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', 267; Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeinflytande under frihetstiden*, 29–30, quote at 30; Claréus, 'Primitiva Bönder?', 40–41, quote at 41.

<sup>559</sup> Lindblad, 'Riksdagsbesvär och suppliker', Kap 3, iv; Fällström and Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', 264; Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 194.

<sup>560</sup> Herlitz, 'De svenska städernas privilegier', 255–256.

<sup>561</sup> Besides the Diet Gazettes, see von Oelreich ed., *En ärlig Swänsk*, 617–623.





in some of the supplications (Fig. 15.2). When delegates came to the Diet, they came with several gravamina in enumerated order. Then, the delegates simply took the gravamina as it stood and went to House of the Nobility chancery and submitted it, number intact.<sup>562</sup> That many a gravamen came under the Screening Deputation's scrutiny as a supplication confirms the results in previous chapters. Over time, established interests within the Estates came to use this channel for their errands. Especially burghers.

## The burghers

Much like the state-affiliated supplicants, the burgher supplicants underwent a shift in composition between the 1720s and the 1740s. The increase of burgher supplications towards the end of the Age of Liberty merely compounded the change. This shift meant that many of the supplications in samples two and three came from towns, whereas at the 1726–27 Diet they had stemmed from guilds, merchants, and others. To be sure, guilds and merchants remained strong interest groups in the Estate of the Burghers, but in this channel the umbrella that were the town corporations increasingly pleaded their cases for them. The shift also saw the proportion of corporate supplications increase from half to two-thirds and then to four-fifths.

Thus, in contrast to the state-affiliated supplications, the proportion of supplications submitted by strong interest groups was higher in the second and third samples than in the first. The influx of towns to some extent altered what the burgher supplications concerned. Trade and transport became areas of greater concern in the commercial supplications, there were fewer conflicts between rival guilds and more between rival towns, and the supplication's scope was generally local.

However, there was no event like the Great Northern War behind this change to the burgher group. Rather, it came about because Diet delegates adapted to the fact there was another channel into the Diet, and thus the town corporations started using the Screening Deputation. According to Nils Herlitz, the burghers preferred the Diet to Kungl. Maj:t, because the latter had to acquiesce to decisions made by the Estates, and if they went directly to Kungl. Maj:t there was less chance that they would get what they or their constituents wanted. As the Age of Liberty progressed, the particular gravamina channel to the King saw fewer and fewer important errands, as burgher delegates pushed to have their gravamina entered into the Diet one way or the other.<sup>563</sup> The Screening Deputation presented one such opportunity.

For burghers, the corporate supplications often concerned a piece of land, a market, a particular trade, a locality, or a region where they either wanted either new or better privileges or greater protection. It could be a town's hatters going for its wigmakers; or the one town complaining at being denied access the other's market, despite being open to the other's artisans and merchants; or a request to rent or purchase a piece of public land or an attempt to negotiate this or that tax: all these attempts followed a pattern where the towns' relationship with the Crown was to a large extent individual.

As Herlitz points out, the towns' privileges were regulated town by town, and rarely in a single charter, but in a succession of decisions, privileges, rights, decrees, and so on. Thus, a

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<sup>562</sup> The 1771–72 sample contains seven such cases. See; supplik 148, 149, 180, 208, 232, 289, 339, R3640, UdH, FU, RA.

<sup>563</sup> Herlitz, 'De svenska städernas privilegier', 296; compare with Gustafsson who on a general level argues that issues reached the Diet when there were no other solutions and the opportunity arose. Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 131.



**Figure 15.3** Eighteenth century commerce was heavily regulated and competitive. Access to or the protection of markets was the topic of several supplications in the second and third samples. The market trade in the picture took place on Stora Torget, Gothenburg, in the 1830s.

town corporation was regulated by the sum of all the decisions concerning it. The 1720 Instrument of Government promised that towns would continue to be granted the ‘privileges and rights’ afforded to them by the kings of old.<sup>564</sup> These supplications were thus very much symptomatic of early modern Sweden’s heavily regulated trade system, built on an accumulation of rights. The web of regulations and privileges, with commerce regulated by way of individual decrees rendered a zero sum game, can also be found *within* towns. If traders in a town were granted the right to import and sell a certain product, the craftsmen there already manufacturing that product were riled, and vice versa. Thus, as Martin Wottle remarks, the various guilds’ and associations’ privileges most often concerned a trade-off, the betterment of one’s privileges to the detriment of another, or the fencing off of one’s area of enterprise from another.<sup>565</sup>

As a consequence, each individual decision or decree often concerned something that either regulated trade within a town or with other towns. As a result, each new privilege and immunity renegotiated the relationship between corporations. The right to hold a market for one town meant competition for another; the right to establish a manufactory within one town meant one less economic opportunity for another. This constant renegotiation made its way into the Diet by a variety of means, supplications among them, and heightened the tensions within the Estate of the Burghers.

<sup>564</sup> ‘förbliva vid deras välfångna privilegier och rättigheter som dem av forna konungar givne och förlänte äro’; Herlitz, ‘De svenska städernas privilegier’, 287–294, quote at 290.

<sup>565</sup> Wottle, *Det lilla ägandet*, 85, 87.

Joachim Neresius' account of his stint as a Diet delegate at the 1726–27 Diet, addressed to his constituents in Gothenburg, serves as a good example. Neresius did not dwell on key foreign policy shifts or the like, he concentrated on explaining how he had served Gothenburg, or at least tried to, by protecting the town's interests in disputes over foreign trade. Special attention was also given to Uddevalla, and Neresius' actions to thwart the town's wicked attempts to shift tax burdens to Gothenburg or to gain iron-trading privileges at Gothenburg's expense, while at the same time trying to avoid the ire of *bergslagen* (the mining towns of central Sweden). Tellingly, Neresius writes little or nothing about conflicts of interest with people or corporate bodies from the other Estates.<sup>566</sup>

The inherent competitiveness of their enterprises might also explain why the burghers' delegates submitted many more supplications than clergy and peasant delegates. In the belief that one town's gain was another's loss, it must have been harder for the burgher delegates to usher their towns' demands into the general gravamina, let alone for the Estate to unite behind a set of gravamina. It was almost always the burghers who proposed extending the deadline for submitting supplications, because they were still not done with their own negotiations. It was indicative of the tensions that the trade privilege structure created within the Estate.<sup>567</sup>

The same corporate-based explanation goes along way to explain the fiscal supplications submitted by burgher supplicants. In the first sample, most burghers wanted the same things as most state-affiliated supplicants, namely to settle their claims. In the last sample however, the towns were individually negotiating their fiscal relations with the state. Be it attempts to lessen taxes on alcohol, negotiate ownership of a piece of land or complaining about the burden of billeting, it does not seem that towns joined together for these similar requests where there are clear shared interests. Nonetheless, they did not join forces in this channel.

The requests for financial support to dredge rivers, renovate buildings, and other public works tell a similar but still different story. On an administrative level, towns had to secure the same type of specific privileges as those needed for commerce, but instead for the right to exploit a forest or to arrange a lottery; however, these requests also tell us something about the scarcity of local financial resources. True, it was in the towns' interest to exaggerate their poverty when pleading for contributions from the state treasury, but most Swedish towns really were small, and probably found it difficult to generate the necessary capital even during more positive economic periods. The national coffers were necessary for these types of projects when other sources of funding such as church collections did not suffice.

But, and this is important to remember, buildings did not burn down more frequently and neither did rivers have a greater propensity to silt up at the end of the Age of Liberty. It is unlikely that more towns were in real need of financial support at the end of the period than at the beginning—if anything, quite the contrary, considering the disaster that was the Great Northern War. Just as with the towns' commercial and fiscal supplications, it was the Diet delegates' changed behaviour that lay behind the increase of requests for infrastructural aid.

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<sup>566</sup> Neresius, 'Berättelse om riksdagen 1726–27'.

<sup>567</sup> RaP 9, 26 July 1738, p. 237; BrP 9:1, 8 Oct. 1746, pp. 98–99; PrP 15 Oct. 1746, pp. 68; RaP 15, 15 Oct. 1746, p. 106–107; PrP 14:1, 26 Nov. 1755, p. 136, 27 Mar. 1756, p. 285; BdP 8, 12 Jan. 1761, p. 101; BdP 10, 9 Mar. 1765, p. 53, 10 June 1765, p. 103, 9 July 1765, p. 113; RaP 24, 11 Feb. 1765, p. 45, 10 June 1765, p. 176; BdP 11, 29 May 1769, p. 97; BdP 12, 11 July 1771, p. 53, 15 July 1771, p. 56.



**Figure 15.4 and 15.5** Towns used the supplication channel in order to seek resources and privileges they needed in order to clear their rivers or repair buildings and other public amenities. Above we see Västerås, ca 90 km West of Stockholm around 1800, below Karlskrona, the Swedish Naval center to the very south. The prevailing rural elements of Swedish town life at the time can be seen in both paintings.

There are few, if any, traces here of the political dramas that played out on the national stage or in the Diet's assembly halls. For the burghers, the late Age of Liberty was a time marked by the struggle between *stapelstäderna*, the staple ports or towns that had a licence to conduct foreign trade, and *uppstäderna*, all the rest, limited to domestic trade or export via the staple ports. For example, it was a heavy blow to Stockholm—a staple port with a dominant position in Swedish trade at the time—that at the 1765–66 Diet the towns around the Gulf of Bothnia successfully cooperated to abrogate the *bottniska handelstrånget* (lit. Gulf of Bothnia trade restraint) which for centuries had forbidden all towns north of Gävle and Åbo to engage in foreign trade or in trade with southern Sweden, with some exceptions.<sup>568</sup> Yet none of these struggles, or between central and peripheral towns, have left a trace in the supplications record. Nor are there any supplications that could be said to stem from a unified Estate of the Burghers. Perhaps, as Herlitz has suggested, they were there, but in the burgher's general gravamina.<sup>569</sup> Such faint traces of national burgher interests as there are can be located in the first sample, in the massed cobbler guilds' supplication, for example (see p. 37). The supplications found in the second and third samples mostly concerned the local and regional minutiae of burgher privileges, and their national ramifications were limited to a concern to protect local interests.

These findings also confirm those of Sven Lindblad—who has studied peasant and burgher gravamina presented at the last four Diets of the Age of Liberty—and show that burgher gravamina related to the economy were locally fixed.<sup>570</sup> Of course, a study of the rhetoric of this sort of petition, with its local scope, could probably reveal a more nationally oriented rhetoric. This is certainly the case in Jouko Nurmiainen's study of tobacco privileges in the town of Degerby-Lovisa or the establishment of a nearby sawmill, where local disputes were formulated in a rhetoric that centred on the wealth of the realm.<sup>571</sup> Nonetheless, the scope of these matters, as with most of the burgher supplications found here, remained firmly local.

Turning to the acceptance rates for the burghers' supplications, the delegates in the Screening Deputation did not respond well to the increased number of supplications from towns at first—in fact, their tendency mid century was to resist. Unlike in 1726–27, burgher supplications now met with a lower than average acceptance rate and the situation was even worse for corporate bodies. Thus, the Screening Deputation opposed the use of the supplication channel by established burgher corporations as an alternative route for their gravamina to reach the Diet.

Then the situation in the Screening Deputation changed. First, the commoner Estates managed to outmanoeuvre the nobility and abrogate the decision that the Screening Deputation examine the general gravamina. Then the commoner Estates agreed that Diet delegates be allowed a fortnight more than other supplicants to submit supplications. Judging by the results from the third sample, it seems that burgher and peasant delegates benefitted the most from this, as even the total number of supplicants from the clergy was lower in 1771–72 than it had been in 1746–47. Regardless, the commoner Estates managed to change the formal configuration of the supplication channel to fit their needs. The impact of these changes could

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<sup>568</sup> Sundberg, *Partipolitik och regionala intressen*.

<sup>569</sup> Herlitz, 'De svenska städernas privilegier', 295–296.

<sup>570</sup> Lindblad, *Bonde Och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 45–46.

<sup>571</sup> Nurmiainen, 'Particular interests and the common good', 390–393.

be seen in the Screening Deputation's actions at the 1771–72 Diet. Not only did burgher supplicants now face an average acceptance rate, the supplications submitted in that extra fortnight that went on to be accepted were conspicuously less congruent with the regulations than those submitted before the one-month deadline. Laxer standards were applied by the Screening Deputation when examining Diet delegate supplications. Thus, not only had the supplication channel's structures changed to accommodate commoner Estate delegates, the supplication channel's gatekeepers favoured them.

## The peasantry

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the commoner Estates' influence in the Diet grew in the last decade of the Age of Liberty', and of the three it was the peasantry who gained most ground. Pinpointing the time of their political awakening, when they transitioned from being a 'reactive' Estate to a 'proactive' Estate—in the words of Anders Claréus—has been a favoured pastime among historians for quite some time. Malmström and Roberts describe the last few years of the Age of Liberty as the crucial point in time, while Claréus argues that the development was an effect of the regular Diets and started in the 1750s at the latest. I would argue for the 1730s and the struggles between Arvid Horn and his opponents in the Hats as the catalyst.<sup>572</sup>

Like the Estate of the Burghers, the peasantry also experienced inner friction, in this case between peasants from the central counties and those in the periphery, where the former seem to have drawn the shortest straw. For example, the Age of Liberty's most notable speakers of the Estate—Olof Håkansson and Josef Hansson—came from the counties of Blekinge and Bohuslän respectively, not from Stockholm, Södermanland, or Uppland, and the seating arrangements which had favoured peasants from the latter counties were dispensed with. Olof Håkansson's long dominance of the Estate was finally broken by his death in 1769, leaving space for a more dynamic process in the Estate's political procedures.<sup>573</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 3, the peasantry drafted Estate privileges for themselves, and at one point were on the verge of gaining permanent access to the Secret Committee; however, neither their bolder stance nor a influx of peasant business (see ch. 4) showed in the supplication channel.

There are several possible explanations for why the number of peasant supplications did not reach the same numbers as the burgher supplications. Firstly, the peasantry—like the clergy—might have been better than the burghers at coordinating their general gravamina to satisfy a majority of their delegates. Certainly, the inherent tensions that persisted between towns did not exist within the peasant Estate. Secondly, the peasantry seems to have trusted the Screening Deputation less than they trusted the General Gravamina Deputation. As we saw in Chapter 5, they thought that they were more in control in the General Gravamina Deputation—there they were aided by their chancery staff, and had better control of where their errands were investigated in the Diet.

Nonetheless, the peasant requests that reached the Screening Deputation concerned some of the peasantry's favourite subjects during the Age of Liberty: taxes, different types of *corvée*

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<sup>572</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, vi. 319–320; Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 157; Claréus, 'På offensiven'; Almbjör, 'Stolthet och enfald'.

<sup>573</sup> Alexandersson, *Bondeståndet i riksdagen*, 78–82 Almbjör, 'Stolthet och enfald', 47–48.





**Figure 15.6** The peasantry used the Diet's supplication channel to, among other things, negotiate taxes and one way to pay taxes was to freight goods and people. This picture shows the peasant Sven Jonsson from Hult on haulage duty in 1827.

for the state and ironworks, and the right to buy leaseholds.<sup>574</sup> These issues—haulage, *corvée*, taxes—had troubled the peasantry since the sixteenth century, as shown by Johan Holm and Jan Samuelson in their respective examinations of *gravamina*.<sup>575</sup> The peasantry's wish to keep taxes to a minimum and to simplify them seems to have been constant during the Age of Liberty. At certain times they achieved some progress, such as a shortlived partial reform of the tax system in 1742–43. When the next Diet brought a reverse, it can be considered a loss.<sup>576</sup> Taxes were also one of the reasons for the peasantry's frustration at being excluded from the Secret Committee, as the committee set the budget without divulging its composition. As the peasantry argued in their constant attempts to gain access to the Secret Committee's proceedings, they carried the realm's prosperity on their backs by paying most of the taxes. Therefore they should have the right to sit on the committee in control of the budget.<sup>577</sup>

To purchase leaseholds from the Crown was another favoured subject. *Skatteköp*, the purchase of leaseholds owned by the Crown, had been granted to them at the beginning of the

<sup>574</sup> Lindblad, *Bonde och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 26–27, 34–39; Claréus, 'Primitiva bönder?', 36, 43.

<sup>575</sup> Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt*, 102–111, 124; Samuelson, "Efter vårt enfaldiga förstånd", 56–58.

<sup>576</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, iii. 235–236, 399–401.

<sup>577</sup> Claréus, 'På offensiven', 100.

Age of Liberty. At the 1723 Diet, a proposed ban on the sale of farms to leaseholders had to be scrapped as they generated much-needed income for the state. Although leaseholders who wanted to buy their farms found these purchases more regulated after 1723 than before, the possibility still existed. In 1763 Kungl. Maj:t enacted a ban, but at the 1765–66 Diet the peasantry managed to get the other commoner Estates' support to revert the decision. Seeing as the state could decide that leaseholders in a certain location pay their taxes as *corvée* to a local factory mill, or even sell their lands, the purchase of a leasehold not only represented social advancement, but also put the peasant in a more secure legal position.<sup>578</sup> With such stakes, it is no surprise that these types of supplications can be found in the supplication channel.

Perhaps more conspicuous than the types of errands found in the supplications, are the ones that are not there. According to Lindblad, judging by the *gravamina* it was *indelningsverket* (the military allotment system) that plagued the late Age of Liberty peasantry the most, and it seems peasants found the entire system overwhelming in its demands for manpower and taxes.<sup>579</sup> However, no peasant supplications about the allotment system could be found in the samples. Neither did the samples contain supplications that concerned home distilling of aquavit, ownership of *allmänningar* (the commons) or *storskiftet*, the first rural land reform, identified and examined as central issues to the peasantry in the Age of Liberty by Kalle Bäck.<sup>580</sup>

There were, moreover, no complaints about Crown servants from the peasantry. Although the findings in Chapter 5 showed that the peasantry thought the right to bring particular errands to the Diet would protect them from Crown servants' arbitrariness, no such case could be located in the three samples. According to Lindblad, peasant delegates did bring such complaints to the Diet, mostly concerning lower civil servants who dealt with forestry, customs, and land surveying; however, the clergy seemed to bring the peasantry even more trouble. Several of the *gravamina* brought to the late Age of Liberty Diets concern their fees and conduct, something which they also did also in the late seventeenth century.<sup>581</sup> Even so, complaints against the clergy are also missing in the samples.

Lastly, the supplication channel contains few commercial supplications despite the fact that Lindblad's findings show that, quantitatively speaking, the most common conflict in the peasantry's and burgher's *gravamina* concerned members of the other Estate. The peasantry wanted a loosening of the burgher's grip on the countryside which they believed hindered them from acquiring the items they wanted and impeded their trade opportunities. The burghers, for their part, targeted peasants and rural artisans who produced goods that impinged on the towns' monopoly. As with the dispute between Åbo and peasant fishermen (see p. 162), these conflicts did reach the supplication channel, but seemingly not many of them.

In all of these cases of what we might call missing issues, it is their very importance that may well explain their absence. Because the peasantry thought the issues significant and because their Estate was not divided in the same way as the burghers, errands of greater importance were agreed upon and sent to the General *Gravamina* Deputation. Perhaps they were even sent to

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<sup>578</sup> Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, i. 409–410; Malmström, *Sveriges politiska historia*, v. 283–285.

<sup>579</sup> Lindblad, *Bonde och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 33–34.

<sup>580</sup> Bäck, *Bondeopposition Och Bondeinflytande under Frihetstiden*; see also Lindblad, *Bonde och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 34.

<sup>581</sup> Lindblad, *Bonde och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 38–39; Sven Lindblad, 'Allmogens besvär', 10; Samuelson, 'Efter vårt enfaldiga förstånd', 59–60.



Kungl. Maj:t. Either way, they did not end up with the Screening Deputation, which the peasant Estate did not trust as much as they trusted the General Gravamina Deputation.

Comparing the scope of burgher and peasant gravamina, Lindblad remarks that the peasant gravamina about trade often had a more general or national scope than the burghers'. They sought to liberalize trade across the realm, whereas burghers mostly aimed the local level where their specific commercial rights applied. If more of these peasant supplications had been funnelled into the supplication channel, it certainly would have impacted the findings about the scope of the supplications. But, even then it would be unlikely that we would discover many grievances of a realm scope. According to Lindblad, very few of the burgher and peasant gravamina submitted during the late Age of Liberty were of general nature, concerning policy rather than specific errands. As Anders Claréus has remarked, the peasantry's complaints remained rooted in their daily lives rather than radical, comprehensive thought.<sup>582</sup> Thus, the increase of peasant and burgher supplications and the resulting shift in the Diet's supplication channel to mostly business of a local scope reflects the nature of burgher and peasant concerns.

### **Towards a regulation-based logic of appropriateness**

In Chapters 5 and 6, the theory of the logic of appropriateness was applied to the regulations and structures within and around the Diet. With the present findings and those from Chapters 7–14, it is now possible to paint a more complete picture of developments with the aid of this theory. The following account weighs these findings and arguments together.

At the 1726–27 Diet, the workings of the Diet's supplication channel were not in line with the regulations issued in 1723. The regulations emphasized what has been referred to as the judicial and administrative aspects of the supplications, establishing the Diet as an appellate institution against Kungl. Maj:t and errands without clear jurisdiction; however, most supplicants were state affiliated and tried to settle their claims on the state, to secure some sort of support, or to improve their salaries and employment conditions. As we saw in Chapter 7, writing manuals for supplications encouraged people to allude to their poverty and destitution, and it is not likely that all of the supplicants who claimed to be poor were. Nonetheless, it cannot be disputed that for many the times were difficult, even desperate. They turned to the Estates for aid and the Screening Deputation complied, on average accepting three out of five supplications, and an even greater proportion of those from civil servants and the military. There existed a tacit understanding between the Estates and the supplicants—tacit as far as the sources go, anyway—which created a gap between the formal rules and the reproduced practice.

The rules that guided practice can instead be ascribed to what has been referred to as the patriarchal aspect, part of the ideological foundations of the supplication institution being the idea that the sovereign would behave graciously and mercifully towards his subjects and take responsibility for their basic sustenance. This stance in turn legitimized the recipient's—often a sovereign, but in this case the Diet's—political position. As the excerpt from Axel Reuterholm's diary shows (see p. 109) notions of benevolence and righteousness certainly guided the decision not only to spare a supplicant from fines, but also to support his appeal. Exceptions could be made for subjects who had fallen on hard times. In the early Age of Liberty, however, there were

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<sup>582</sup> Lindblad, *Bonde och borgarståndens riksdagsbesvär*, 25–33; Claréus, 'På offensiven', 99, 103.

a very great many people who had fallen on hard times and the reproductive rules that guided the Screening Deputation's behaviour allowed too many pleas into the Diet.

The legislation enacted between 1727 and 1738 disturbed this mutual understanding between the Estates and supplicants. Diets were dragging on for far too long. Many identified supplications as a major culprit and felt something had to be done. At the 1726–27 Diet the timing was right. As mentioned in Chapter 6, Kungl. Maj:t did not have to put out one fire after the other anymore, and dealt with more routine matters from 1726 and onwards. Moreover, Arvid Horn quelled all resistance to his political dominance at the 1726–27 Diet. The need for the Estates to take care of as many supplicants as possible in order to legitimize their political position had decreased. Thus, regulations ensued which strived to increase efficiency and reduce the number of supplications.

The new regulations led to a decrease of the number of people who used the supplication channel, as well as changes for those who still used it and for what. More town corporate bodies started using the supplication channel for their requests, which judging by the acceptance rate was not appreciated by the committee's delegates. Whereas the burgher supplications at the first Diet mostly stemmed from individual burghers or guilds, towns had supplanted them by the time of the second sample. The established town corporations started using this channel for their errands as a complement to the existing gravamina channels. At the same time, the total number of submitted supplications fell by four-fifths when comparing 1726–27 and 1746–47. Claims, support requests, and requests for improved employment terms ceased to constitute the majority of the errands in the supplication channel. The number of state-affiliated supplicants shrank most of all in groups in the supplication channel, and their decrease lay behind most of the drop in supplications, when comparing the first and second samples. Those state-affiliated supplicants that remained were in employ to a higher degree. Yes, the number of people in need of help would have fallen anyway as the turmoil of the Great Northern War finally faded, but the decrease of supplications after 1727 took care of what time would have dealt with otherwise. The patriarchal aspect did not influence the interaction as much after 1727.

But even with these changes, few seem to have followed the new regulations. Only a fifth of the supplications submitted at the 1746–47 Diet met regulations, the same as in 1726–27. Supplicants continued to go straight to the Estate and bypass lower instances. Diet delegates also undermined the supplication channel by indulging these supplicants, both in the Estate chambers and in the Screening Deputation, and also submitted their own impermissible supplications. Thus, the Screening Deputation did not follow the legislation to the letter, although their behaviour in 1746–47 was more in accordance with legislation than it had been in 1726–27.

Consequently, there seems to have been some confusion as to how the regulations should be interpreted and what importance it actually sustained during the 1730s and 1740s. The number of supplications dropped, but those who understood that regulations were applied arbitrarily still ventured to the Diet with impermissible supplications. Whereas supplicants and Estates seem to have shared a common view of what composed proper errands, in spite of regulations during the 1720s, there now existed a clearer dissonance between Estates, supplicants, and regulations. Rather than following the legislation or adapting to the general composition of the supplicants and their supplications, the Screening Deputation trod a third

path: it adopted a mode of examination that neither resembled that of 1726–27, where the acceptance rate was beneficial to those who most used the supplication channel, nor the practices prescribed in the regulations.

As mentioned in Chapter 6, the trial and error character of the early Age of Liberty probably contributed. What the Diet's role was, and what the roles of the Diet's different organs and committees were, was a matter of negotiation from Diet to Diet. The patriarchal aspect continued to play its part along with blatant self-interest, the latter potentially facilitated by the social whirl that surrounded the Diet in the streets, taverns, or people's homes. Moreover, self-interest could vary from commoner Diet delegates who had to do everything in their power to further their constituents' interest, to simply attaining a promotion for one's friend, relative, or ally. Such factors possibly undermined the establishment of a logic of appropriateness that harmonized with the regulations. As things stood, proper conduct included a wide array of actions and sentiments. The Diet was still not established enough to serve as a hotbed for a regulation-based logic of appropriateness, and the regulations issued since 1727 had mostly established what could *not* constitute a logic of appropriateness, not what could.

Things soon changed. The 1748 instructions gave the supplication channel compiled regulations including almost all relevant regulations, and it became easier to grasp the rules. It and its 1760 successor also forced the Screening Deputation to keep minutes and communicate with other committees and the Estate assemblies, thus creating a form of oversight. The regulations also confirmed the Screening Deputation as part of the political landscape, as supplicants had to pay a stamp duty to be able to submit their supplications to the Diet. Whatever was taxed was definitely legitimate.

In the 1750s, further steps were taken that increased the regulations' legitimacy among the Diet delegates. At the 1751–52 Diet, the commoner Estates reversed the 1748 decision to have the Screening Deputation examine the general gravamina as well. Despite the nobility's protests, the commoner Estates voted to revert to the old order. The following Diet, the commoner Estates went even further and gave Diet delegates the extra fortnight that would have applied for general gravamina—six weeks—so that they would be able to submit particular gravamina as supplications to the Screening Deputation. If we conceptualize the trial and error period of the 1730s and 1740s as a fitful renegotiation of regulations and norms, the commoner Estates at least reached one conclusion: to have the Screening Deputation accommodate their particular gravamina. One also has to consider that Diet delegates possibly gained the most from the right to make a reservation for submitting a supplication after the Screening Deputation's deadline expired. They remained in the capital anyway and could readily make use of such reservations. As the three examples in Chapter 7 further show, supplicants could wait a long time for a verdict, and could be called upon to testify or submit further documents. It is possible Diet delegates were at a greater advantage here as well.

As a consequence of these regulation changes, the number of commoner Estate supplications increased. Their share at the 1746–47 Diet had been bigger than at the 1726–27, but that was mainly caused an increase in the number of peasant supplicants and by the fact that the number of burghers did not decrease between the two Diets, while the other groups did. In the third sample, the number of burgher supplications, mostly towns, increased further along with a portion of peasant supplications. The clergy, on the other hand, seem to have made little

use of the new opportunity, as they submitted even fewer supplications in 1771–72 than they had in 1746–47.

The congruence between interaction and regulation moreover increased during the last couple of decades of the Age of Liberty. This increased congruence first became plainly visible in the large second wave of state-affiliated supplicants during the 1760s. When the conditions for measuring merit changed, comparisons were simpler to make for the many aggrieved Crown servants. They collected their merits and submitted prejudice appeals. Half of the supplications submitted at the 1765–66 Diet concerned prejudice in some way or other. Most importantly, though, from the perspective of the logic of appropriateness, the wave took place within the confines of the regulations. These people had the permission to appeal prejudice as long as they could prove their case, and considering how many other factors than skills and merits influenced appointments, most of them probably did have a case.

In 1771–72, the interaction in the Diet's supplication channel was far more consistent with the regulations than in the previous samples. Both supplicants and the Screening Deputation did their part. The third sample thus displays the same type of harmonization between supplicants and Screening Deputation as the first sample, with the difference that now, fifty years on, the interaction accorded with regulations. Reproductive rules and formal rules had iterated together, with the formal rules now guiding the supplication channel's interaction more than other rules did at this point. As a result, the number of submitted supplications did not go down as in the 1720s. In fact, the amount of supplications was higher in 1771–72 than it had been during the 1750s, in part because about a fifth of all supplications in the sample were legitimately resubmitted. These supplicants had had their supplications accepted by the Screening Deputation at a previous Diet, but as the Diet had ended before they had received a verdict, regulations gave them the right to return at the next Diet. As also shown by the prejudice peak of the 1760s, an increased congruence between regulations and interaction did not necessarily mean less interaction.

Lastly, there were the judicial supplications and appeals against Kungl. Maj:t. They namely show the extent to which the Diet grew into a *de facto* supreme court over the period. On the one hand it was considered important not to impinge on the king's political and judicial sovereignty (see ch. 5). The monarchy's symbolic position had to be maintained. On the other hand, the number of appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings increased in the latter half of the Age of Liberty as regulation and interaction began to converge. Whereas Lagerroth speaks of ten or twenty appeals against the Judicial Audit and mentions the right to appeal against decisions made by Kungl. Maj:t's other offices, the findings in the third sample revealed that about half of the supplicants appealed or reserved the right to appeal decisions issued by Kungl. Maj:t. It cost a lot of money and time to appeal against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts, but people did it. The legitimacy of the Diet's position as a *de facto* supreme court whenever it was convened continued to grow towards the end of the Age of Liberty, at least in certain sections of society.

In some senses this is not particularly controversial: the fact that corporate bodies from the commoner Estates tried to appeal and change Kungl. Maj:t's laws and rulings by using *gravamina* is well known. That they, especially burghers, also used the supplication channel for their complaints and requests to the degree shown in this study was not known, but nonetheless changes little of our perception of the Diet's powers during this time. On the other hand, that it

was more common that individual supplicants and groups used the supplication channel for these purposes than corporate bodies, and that supplicants cynically hedged their bets by reserving the right to appeal against Kungl. Maj:t's ruling if they displeased them, deepens our understanding of the Diet's role for Swedish subjects at the time. Whether a non-noble civil servant or part of a peasant corporation, supplicants could and did appeal against Kungl. Maj:t's verdicts in administrative and civil matters, matters through which political influence could be exercised. It was an accepted move, and action frequently was taken, and not only when appealing prejudice. It was a development very much part of the increased convergence of regulation and interaction.

This convergence was further facilitated by the increasing institutionalization of the Diet, a process of which it was very much part. The novel practices of the early Age of Liberty had become accepted and institutionalized. The Diet as an organization and as a political entity among central organs like the King and the Council of the Realm had gained some sort of stability and legitimacy through recurring meetings. The Screening Deputation and its regulations was part of that development.

Returning to the specifics of the Screening Deputation, it should be noted that although regulation and interaction were increasingly in accord, this was far from complete. The main cause for this gap seems to be supplications submitted by Diet delegates by the later deadline, which clearly got a laxer examination. A far greater proportion of accepted supplications submitted during that later period were impermissible, perhaps not so surprising considering the commoner Estates controlled three-quarters of the votes in the committee. On the one hand this exception can be seen as undermining the logic of appropriateness based on the formal rules. On the other hand, one could also view it as a solution that strengthened a regulation-based logic of appropriateness: had the commoner Estate supplications submitted later not received more lenient treatment, the regulations would perhaps not have been legitimate in the Diet delegates' eyes. Had they not thought the regulations appropriate, they could have undermined them even more.

The point of the regulations had been to create another administrative and judicial level of the supplication channel. Although the regulation in the Diet seems to have been a reaction towards the large amount of supplicants swarming the Diet in 1720, there seems to have been no talk about abolishing the supplications from the Diet before 1769. A likely sign of the supplication institution's appropriateness. Moreover, the ambition to create that other administrative and judicial level of the supplication channel was met with at least partial success in the later decades of the Age of Liberty. The judicial and administrative aspect guided the logic of appropriateness. Employed state-affiliated supplicants and commoner Estates' corporate bodies benefitted from this development. The former gained massively in the short run with the influx of prejudice appeals, but also in the long run, as they continued to have another way settling claims, promotions, appointments, legal disputes, and so on. The difference from the early period was that now people had to follow the prescribed routes. No more, or at least less, cheating. The commoner Estates' corporate bodies had an extra outlet for their *gravamina*. The burghers wanted their errands to enter the Diet. Here, they could affect the outcome.

Can we speak of institutional change? Measured by Andreas Duit's analytical concepts—reproductive rules and reproductive practices—yes. The reproductive rules of the supplication

channel changed over time. They went from mostly being influenced by the patriarchal aspect to a state of confusion. Then, lastly, the formal rules based on the judicial and administrative aspects became the foundation for the reproductive rules, with the exception of the examination of Diet delegates' supplications. Thus, the formal rules made their mark on the supplication channel over the course of time.

From a socio-economic perspective, yes and no. The clientele of the supplication channel changed over the period. State-affiliated supplications were more often employed in the second and third samples, when the army command and most of the top-ranking public servants were far less in evidence. Moreover, towns submitted more and more of the burgher supplications and peasants started making use of the supplication channel to a larger extent. On the other hand, the supplication channel consistently catered to a mostly male middle- and upper-class body of potential supplicants. This statement is even true of the first sample, despite the presence then of a large proportion of widows, unemployed, poor or even destitute state-affiliated supplicants. Many people in Sweden were in dire straits in the 1720s, and only the elite and those with a secure income from the land—which defied inflation—can be said to have enjoyed any sort of security. Most people, though, did not have access to the—albeit meagre—safety net that existed for the privileged poor, meaning military personnel and to a lesser degree for civil servants. The Diet's supplication channel existed for people with a modicum of social or political capital, even if the specific nature of that capital changed, and even if the reproductive rules changed. The Diet's supplication channel never existed for the poor and politically underprivileged, and was probably never meant to. It remained a concern of established interests, both inside and outside the Diet.

Lastly, one finding outside this narrative deserves a mention. While I have concentrated in this section on two groups who often acted from different motives and with different sets of goals—commoner estate supplicants and state-affiliated supplicants—there remains the Estate of the Clergy, which must be considered part of both. They too were a commoner Estate in the Diet, and, just like the burghers and peasantry, their inner dynamic changed as the lower clerical delegates successfully challenged the old leadership of the Estate, the bishops. According to Patrik Winton, this shift meant that political networks centred on shared political sentiments supplanted the old political networks based on patronage.<sup>583</sup> However, unlike the burghers and peasantry, there was a *decrease* in the clergy's supplications between sample two and sample three, rather than an increase. Moreover, the clergy was populated by public servants. Their requests thus straddled the distinction between the other two Estates, as they revolved around negotiations of terms of service and promotions, while their scope was broad when it came to social and fiscal resources. It lay in the clergy's interests to secure their employment conditions, much as it did for the army command, but the clergy was also part of the commoner Estates' calibration of the Screening Deputation to commoner delegates' needs. Although the same overlap certainly existed in the Estate of the Burghers, it does not seem to have been so much in evidence in the supplication channel, while for the clergy it is there to see in the samples.

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<sup>583</sup> Winton, *Frihetstidens politiska praktik*.

## 16 Concluding discussion

The aim of this dissertation has been to examine the social breadth of the political conversation in early modern Sweden, as seen through the supplications submitted to the Diet during the Age of Liberty. More specifically, I have examined supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation, the committee tasked with receiving and examining the supplications, then deciding which to reject and which should be forwarded to the Diet. The disparate results from Sweden's regional supplication channels reveal that groups excluded from representation in the Diet—women, the lowest strata of society, commoners of rank—chose to use this channel. The supplication channel thus had the potential to be more inclusive, allowing a broader cross-section of society access to the central organs of state. Yet, there has been a lack of systematic studies of the supplication channel on the central level. Consequently, the present study's findings have added to our understanding of both supplications and the relationship between Diet and society during the Age of Liberty.

I have analysed the supplication channel as an institution, defined as a set of ideas, ideal types, templates, norms, and values embodied in the form of an organization. According to March and Olsen's theory of the logic of appropriateness, people interact with one another through institutions, which leads to the establishment of codes of conduct and streamlines the way they think about meanings, problems, and solutions in the widest sense. Thus, the decisive factor in who has access to a channel and makes use of it is not only dependent on cynical opportunities, but also on which actions are compatible with underlying norms and meanings, with the institution's logic of appropriateness. Thus, I have not only examined how many supplications people submitted to the Diet, who the supplicants were, and what they wanted, but I have been equally concerned to trace the institutional concepts connected to supplications, and what, if any, influence they had on the Diet's supplication channel. Andreas Duit's concept of reproductive rules and reproductive practices has been applied in order to test the theory.

### Three key aspects in action

Given that institutions build on ideas, ideal types, or norms, I have examined the historical precedents for the Diet's supplication in the Age of Liberty. A survey of the literature showed that the supplication institution was based on three distinct aspects: judicial, administrative, and patriarchal.

All supplication channels built on the idea that the king was the final arbiter of his subjects' legal rights, and himself had the right to audit his servants. When the Swedish judiciary was formalized and centralized in the seventeenth century, so was the right to petition the sovereign for legal redress. This is the judicial aspect. Likewise, the seventeenth-century architects of the early modern state built supplications into the fabric of Swedish government at all levels, including the administrative boards and county governors who served as Kungl. Maj:t's representatives. Thus, the formation of the Swedish state saw supplications become a permanent feature of its bureaucratic procedures, and likely increased the number of supplications the state received. And with the formalization of the various supplications channels came administrative measures to fend off petitioners: their number could be overwhelming, and they did not always follow the formal hierarchies as they were supposed to. This is the administrative aspect.

Partially these tendencies are explained by sheer opportunism. People took their chances. Yet these tendencies can also be explained by the patriarchal aspect. The king was expected to be benevolent and merciful to his subjects if injustice and harm had befallen them, even if they failed to follow the right path or use the right measures when making their grievances known. These actions validated the stark hierarchical differences between rulers and ruled. Included in this aspect was the face-to-face meeting between subject and king, a meeting that carried great legitimacy. This is the patriarchal aspect.

Thus, supplications as an institution comprised ideas that both complemented and contradicted one another. On the one hand, the patriarchal aspect was to some extent necessary to legitimize the king's political power and control of the judicial system and the royal administration. On the other hand, the patriarchal aspect demanded that these formal hierarchies be circumvented. The judicial and administrative systems needed these hierarchies to function as smoothly as possible, but they could and did stand in the way of the dispensing of royal justice and grace, especially as it was in the king's interest to let people complain outside the formal structures in order to win their favour or to audit the royal servants without hindrance.

The connection between these aspects and the specific development the Diet's supplication channel are very clear. The Screening Deputation was considered yet another level in the existing supplication channel, and the regulations borrowed several features from existing regulations of the royal supplication channel and other administrative practices. Additionally, the different aspects can be used to understand the supplication channel's development as well.

At the beginning of the Age of Liberty, supplicants beleaguered the Diet and the Screening Deputation was created to channel this flow of supplications. The regulation that guide its work from the start was based on the judicial and administrative aspects of the supplication institution. However, the independent institutional strength of the Screening Deputation was weak and the patriarchal aspect guided its workings. At this time, Sweden was in a desperate condition. A long war had drained the country of most of its resources and left large tracts ravaged by enemy forces. Many public servants were left destitute or incapable of fending for themselves. Unemployment or worse terms of employment loomed as the Crown downsized its organization as best it could, and to top it all off, the Crown owed money to a great many people for services rendered. It was at this point that the Estates had entered the frame, assuming responsibility for the handling of the national debt and managing the large surplus of unemployed public servants, most of them military officers. To be sure, supplicants would probably have come to the Estates anyway but it is also likely that state-affiliated supplicants came to the Diet to submit supplications on these matters as a consequence of the Estates' assumed administrative position. Regardless, despite the fact that most of these supplications were not permissible, they were accepted anyway. Three out of five submitted supplications were forwarded to the Diet. The patriarchal aspect was in the ascendant.

This situation was not tenable. The Screening Deputation received more than 5,000 supplications at the 1723 and 1726–27 Diets. Then there was the unknown quantity of people who went straight to the Estate assemblies and committees. According to a majority of the delegates, the Estates needed to wake up to the administrative realities and time constraints, and at the same time, the political situation in Sweden had seemingly calmed down to a degree where



the need to receive supplications in order to temper social unrest had diminished somewhat. The need to leave the supplication channel open in order to bolster the regime's legitimacy receded.

A new decree followed in 1727 that reiterated the need for supplicants to follow the prescribed route by only submitting their supplications to the Screening Deputation, and that then took an explicit stance against claims. Subsequent regulations continued to formalize the supplication channel, both by making the its users adhere to certain rules and conditions, but also by stipulating rights such as the right to appeal against the Screening Deputation's decisions or to return the same supplication to a subsequent Diet if it had been accepted but not voted on by the Estates. Thus, the regulations formalized both the rights and the responsibilities of supplicants, something which served to strengthen the supplicants' legal position, but, on the other hand, made redundant the tacit use of ideas about benevolence to protect supplicants' rights. Regulations emphasized the judicial and administrative aspects.

At this stage, the breeding ground for a logic of appropriateness based on regulation was still weak. Initially, a tacit agreement between supplicants and the Screening Deputation about what errands belonged in the supplication channel had guided their interaction. After the 1727 decree, this agreement ended, but there was nothing to replace it. Supplicants continued to submit impermissible supplications; the Screening Deputation continued to accept impermissible supplications to a high degree, even though the acceptance rate sank from 60 per cent in 1726–27 to about 40 per cent in 1746–47; supplicants still successfully went straight to the Estate assemblies. Confusion, in other words. The reproductive rules had not been replaced. There were several likely factors that prevented the formal rules being established as the reproductive rules, such as the trial and error character of the early Age of Liberty Diet, which caused uncertainty, and the complexity of applying the regulations to complicated supplications. Moreover, there was the spatial distribution of the Diet, which made supervision well-nigh impossible; the continued, if less distinct prevalence of the patriarchal aspect; and personal gain, pursuing favours for oneself, people in one's network, or for one's electorate in the case of Diet delegates (this last being reinforced by the social culture that surrounded the Diets, through which people could enlist the help of delegates to further their supplication's chances).

After the 1746–47 Diet, however, a new logic of appropriateness for the supplication channel came into being—one based on the judicial and administrative aspects to a far greater extent. This development also coincided with a general institutionalization of the entire Diet, and indeed all political praxis. The congruence between the regulations and supplications increased, as between the regulations and the Screening Deputation's actions. The exceptions made for the commoner Diet delegates were part of the new reproductive rules, however. In the 1750s, the Estates voted to recalibrate the purpose of the Screening Deputation to accommodate their *gravamina* as well, and the committee—where three-quarters of the votes were controlled by commoner delegates—became less avid in its scrutinization of Diet delegates' supplication. Now, an impermissible supplication stood a greater chance of acceptance when submitted by a Diet delegate. Similarly, although a majority towards the end of the Age of Liberty chose to followed regulations, many did not. To take the perhaps most conspicuous example, more supplicants lodged prejudice appeals in 1771–72 than in 1746–47, despite them now being impermissible.

There were several reasons why a new logic of appropriateness came into play, for in addition to the general institutionalization of the Diet, there were other factors that brought the supplication channel more into line with the regulations. The comprehensive instructions of 1748 and 1760 helped, as did the Screening Deputation's new obligations to record and communicate their proceedings with the Estate assemblies. Moreover, the commoner Estates' cooperation was necessary to enforce the regulations, and the de facto price seems to have been the exceptions made for Diet delegates. The increased impact of regulations as the guiding rule for interaction was achieved on the basis of particular gains for Diet delegates, as they could submit their supplications to the Screening Deputation late, and could count on a more lenient examination than other supplicants. Burghers especially seem to have used this opportunity.

Nonetheless, the Estates took the regulation of their supplication channel seriously, and met with increased compliance from supplicants and Diet delegates alike during the latter part of the Age of Liberty. Many historians, however, have taken the handling of lesser errands to be a sign of the Age of Liberty Diet's corruption. Michael Roberts, for example, scathingly describes the Diet's involvement in such microgovernance as 'cracking nuts with a sledgehammer', leaving the Estates 'overworked as a result their own jealousy of power, so eager in the pursuit of trivialities.'<sup>584</sup> Although this is an issue deserving a lengthier account than Roberts's—something I hope to rectify in the future—suffice to say that the Estates' micromanagement was not only a cynical strategy in their rivalry with the king. Perhaps more importantly, each supplication was part of a long tradition of mixing the executive, legislative, and judicial arms of government in order to protect subjects' rights and to audit the state's servants to whom power had been delegated. Certainly, it was innovative of the Estates' to involve themselves in the handling of supplications, but it was not innovative for the most powerful central authority to receive supplications. There was nothing new or strange about it. Moreover, the many regulations seeking to lessen the number of supplications do not conform to the image of a Diet up to its neck in errands because its delegates could not help but get involved in everything.

### Using the Diet's supplication channel

The present study of the development of the supplication channel and its effect on the supplicants' use of it has focused on two groups: state-affiliated supplicants; and commoner Estate supplicants, primarily burghers. Most of the large number of supplications submitted at the beginning of the Age of Liberty came from state-affiliated supplicants. Lacking an institutionalized logic of appropriateness based on formal rules, they submitted and had most of their supplications accepted under the aegis of the patriarchal aspect. At that point, economic turmoil coupled with the Estates' position and control of the national finances and debt led to a flood of supplications from this group, which also explains the relatively large number of female supplicants. As the Screening Deputation acquiesced by accepting most state-affiliated subjects' supplications, the patriarchal aspect benefitted this group of people.

When the patriarchal aspect guided the reproductive rules less in the second and third samples, these state-affiliated supplicants' use of the supplication channel waned, and to an extent the group changed composition: the proportion of public servants in employ increased,

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<sup>584</sup> Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, 78–80, 91–98, 106–110, quote at p 94.

their ranks did not include as many of the top officers and public officials, and army command supplications almost ceased. The proportion of women and other non-employed state-affiliated supplicants fell. These changes were in turn most likely connected to the errands people could write about. When the Estates took a stand against the individual settling of claims, this most likely deprived most potential female or unemployed supplicants of the possibility to turn to the Estates, at least those who did not understand that the regulations were not applied strictly. For a legitimate appeal to the Estates, one had to have deep pockets. To appeal prejudice over a promotion, one had to have a position. Symptomatically, the second wave of state-affiliated supplicants in the prejudice peak of the 1760s consisted of employed supplicants. Furthermore, Norrhem has suggested that the Council of the Realm's dwindling importance during the Age of Liberty might have led to women of all classes seeking access to the Diet instead. As far as this study can show, this shift did not transpire.<sup>585</sup>

Thus, I would argue that the reasons that made noblemen and commoners of rank continue to write supplications changed. It started out with the Estates' involvement in taking care of the conditions of states servants and their management of the state budget, but grew into the Estates' involvement in appointments. This development peaked in the early 1760s, but the second wave took place within the confines of the regulations, not outside it unlike the first wave.

Regulations were not the main factor behind the rise of commoner Estate supplications, though. When this first wave of state-affiliated supplicants had receded, the commoner contingent—mostly burghers—became more conspicuous. The use of the supplication channel by towns and to a lesser extent peasant districts and clergy corporations can be explained by the fact that they, like the supplication channel, were part of the Diet. Or at least their Diet delegates were. To submit gravamina in the form of supplications to the Screening Deputation was a tempting prospect for the burghers, as it presented delegates with yet another path into the Diet, a path which moreover was advertised to their constituents in the royal and public proclamations and then *Riksdagstidningen*. The peasantry, on the other hand, seem to have been suspicious of the supplication channel, and relatively few requests from the large number of gravamina they brought with them to the 1771–72 Diet ever reached the Screening Deputation. The clergy were not much given to using the supplication channel either. It has also been said that the burgher delegates needed the supplication channel more than the clergy or peasant delegates, because many of their Diet gravamina concerned explicit or implicit conflicts with other towns. Stemming from the zero-sum character of eighteenth-century commerce, which made one person's gain into another's loss, many requests could not be included in the burgher's general gravamina. The burgher delegates had to get their errands into the Diet by another route.

From the 1750s, the Screening Deputation was more accommodating of the Diet delegates' use of the supplication channel. There were no changes to the supplication channel's regulations. It was still a supplication channel. But its praxis changed. Firstly, a later submissions deadline open only to supplications submitted by Diet delegates offered them the chance to enter particular gravamina into the Diet instead of going to Kungl. Maj:t. Secondly, the formal rules seem to have been less rigorously applied to Diet delegates. More of the supplications submitted for the later deadline were at odds with regulations when compared with those submitted for

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<sup>585</sup> Norrhem, *Kvinnor vid maktens sida*, 167–168.

the first deadline. Thus, the new logic of appropriateness meant that the Screening Deputation could be used for commoner corporate supplications.

Different circumstances therefore benefitted state-affiliated and commoner Estate supplicants. The two waves of state-affiliated supplicants came to the Screening Deputation with issues that had no clear jurisdiction, such as prejudice appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's decisions, the settlement of claims, or requests to receive expectancy salary. People from the commoner Estates submitted supplications that they most often already had a channel for, the *gravamina* channels. Instead, they submitted their errands to the Screening Deputation, simply because they could as members of the Diet. Thus, the organizational factor mainly explains the occurrence of supplicants from the commoner Estates, but as far as my investigation goes, it does not explain much of the occurrence of state-affiliated supplicants—the exception being the army command supplications in the first sample.<sup>586</sup> As another difference, it can be said that the group of state-affiliated supplicants adapted to the regulations while commoner Estates' corporate bodies adapted the supplication channel to their needs. When looking at what resources these two groups sought, the difference in privilege and relationship to the state is obvious. The burghers' and peasantry's relationship to the state was mostly that of a taxpayer or a businessman, while the commoners of rank and noblemen came into contact with the state primarily as employees.

As neat as this description of the supplicants and their requests may be, it comes with one caveat: the clergy can be said to have belonged to both groups, as did a portion of the burgher supplicants. Clergymen and mayors sat on two chairs, as was especially evident in terms of what they wrote about and the scope of their requests, which varied from fiscal issues to concerns about social welfare to negotiations of employment terms. And although they were part of the commoner Estate coalition that calibrated the Screening Deputation to the benefit of Diet delegates, they made little use of it.

In addition to the the narrative of the commoner estate and state-affiliated supplicants, there are the judicial supplications and appeals against verdicts from Kungl. Maj:t. The Estates' involvement in judicial errands seems to have been neglected or underestimated by Lagerroth. He speaks of five to twenty appeals per Diet. The samples show that 170 appeals or reservations to appeal against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings were made, albeit not to a great extent against the Judicial Audit. The findings also show that not only commoner Estates' corporate bodies appealed Kungl. Maj:t's rulings, but just as many appeals came from noblemen and commoners of rank, thus making the Diet a supreme court in administrative and civil matters for both individuals and corporate bodies, both Diet delegates and non-Diet delegates. Lastly, many supplicants clearly appealed against the rulings *per se* and not the judicial proceedings. Although the limits of the supplication institution's logic of appropriateness seem to have been the undermining of the king's symbolic sovereignty, supplications *de facto* chipped away at it too.

Finally, it is worth reflecting upon the stated aim of this dissertation to 'examine the social breadth of the political conversation in early modern Sweden'. With the exception of unrepresented lower-strata supplicants, peasants, craftsmen and most of the retail traders, the nobility, and (I assume) the bishops, the remaining supplicants in both groups fall into what

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<sup>586</sup> Of course noblemen at the Diet had an advantage because of their presence at the Diet. However, there was not a clear concerted effort from noble quarters to adapt the channel for their purposes, nor did their grievances have to travel through the Screening Deputation like the Army Command's grievances.

Tom Söderberg defines as the awakening middle classes of the Age of Liberty. The nobility, according to Söderberg, formed their own group almost regardless of wealth and position, but as the majority of the nobility were not land magnates and did not hold the highest offices and ranks, a large share of the nobility in my opinion should be added to Söderberg's middle classes. While only speaking about Finland, Wirilander makes a similar case, but, crucially, without an upper limit. Therefore, he includes the nobility, the retail traders, some of the wealthier craftsmen, and some of the wealthier peasants as parts of what he dubs *herrskepsståndet*, the Estate of the Gentry. This Estate stretched from the absolute elite of society down to the peasantry in the rural areas and the craftsmen in the towns. Despite the large variances within the group in status and wealth, they were united by certain social and cultural characteristics that set them apart from the rest of the population.<sup>587</sup>

Regardless of whether we are looking to distinguish the supplicants from the people below them, or both below and above them, it seems fairly certain that the Diet's supplication channel was not used by Swedes as a whole, but by a minority elevated above the anonymous mass of people populating the lower strata of society. The Diet, with its Estates, its supplication channel, its permission for ironmasters and the army command to convene at Diets: all these different arenas and channels guaranteed the middle and upper strata of society access to and influence over the use and distribution of resources deemed important by the supplicants. Whether or not we consider the supplication a supplementary or a principal channel of influence depends on which group of supplicants we consider. For towns it was supplementary; for non-noble officers and civil servants it was the main channel. Of course, as noted in the previous chapter, the supplicants' relatively high status did not mean that they were wealthy, especially the first wave of state-affiliated supplicants; however, their status gave them access to this channel, unlike others without the means of subsistence.

Then, in 1727, a choice was made. As shown in this study, this meant a further elaboration of the supplication channel's administrative and judicial aspects, to the detriment of the patriarchal aspect. The result was a supplication channel that was fully in line with the rest of the Diet's character as a political assembly primarily catering to the established social groups of higher standing, a characteristic succinctly captured by the peasantry's exclusion from the Secret Committee.

### **The usefulness of the concept of logic of appropriateness**

Marsh and Olsen's theory has been helpful in understanding some of the present findings about the development of the Diet's supplication channel. At the start of the Age of Liberty, supplicants and Diet delegates alike were governed by a logic of appropriateness based on benevolence and morals. This allowed the massive influx of certain errands, and a larger proportion of non-employed state-affiliated supplicants, including women, were able access the supplication channel. When the validity of benevolence and morals as guides for conduct decreased, these groups' access to the supplication channel diminished; however, the Diet as an organization was still not coherent and institutionally strong enough to generate a new logic of appropriateness for the supplication channel based on its formal rules. As time passed and the

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<sup>587</sup> Söderberg, *Den namnlösa medelklassen*, 170–175; Wirilander, *Herrskepsfolk*, 81–94.

Diet became more stable, a logic of appropriateness at least partially based on the formal rules came into existence. The concept most certainly puts a finger on the weaknesses in the Diet's organization, such the problems caused by the fact that its assemblies were spread out across Stockholm city centre. In such conditions, it was no simple feat to create a sense of unity or a Diet identity that bridged social and spatial distances.

Most of all, the theory highlights the mere existence of the supplication channel and the institution's normative strength. The Diet had never before had the political position that it attained during the Age of Liberty, nor had it had a formal supplication committee. Nothing necessitated its existence, in the sense that we can imagine alternative solutions, such as an ombudsman appointed by the Estates—which is exactly what the Chancellor of Justice became towards the end of the Age of Liberty. Likewise, an extra channel into the Diet for Diet delegates' particular *gravamina* could have been opened without necessitating a general supplication channel. Yet, the authors of the 1723 constitution chose to respond to the all too many supplications by creating a committee for their examination, not to ban them. Yet, it could be argued that an organ that assumed the political stature like the Age of Liberty Diet did, needed to be directly accessible to the people. Especially when it assumed the oversight of the Crown's organization and many of the king's political powers. The supplication template served both of these functions, but certainly not in the most time-effective way, encumbering an already beset Diet with yet more work.

That said, some of the findings are not encompassed by March and Olsen's theories. The commoner Estates' use of the supplication channel for their own purposes did not follow a proper code of conduct, yet it does seem that this exception had to exist to facilitate a formally based logic of appropriateness. How are we to understand this existence of seemingly contradictory norms at the fore of the supplication channels interaction? Furthermore, as mentioned in the introduction, March and Olsen seem to mean that all actions are appropriate as long as they are considered such, but it is hard to evaluate appropriateness in this particular instance. It is likely that a majority of the nobility did not find this development appropriate, for example, although they did not protest because the other Estates would have voted them down. If that is the case, it was power relations and not a logic of appropriateness that shaped the institution.

This brings us to the 1769–70 Diet and Security Bill. This proposed that the Estates stop meddling in minor business. If approved, the Screening Deputation would have ceased to exist, but the proposal failed. Certainly, it could be argued that the supplication institution commanded too much appropriateness to be shut down—even as the ideological circumstances were changing with the spread of ideas about the separation of the state's legislative, executive, and judicial powers, the institutional strength of the Diet's supplication channel was strong enough to endure—yet it could just as well be argued that the Security Bill failed because of the self-interest of the Diet delegates, who used the supplication channel and did not want to lose this opportunity. Granted, self-interest could also be termed a logic of appropriateness, but the question is if a theory is needed to explain that phenomenon?

Secondly, it seems that the increased congruence between interaction and regulations at least partially rested on oversight, not on voluntary subscription to proper conduct. The Screening Deputation had to record their proceedings and communicate their actions regularly to the

Estate assemblies. It is also possible that the involvement of Riddarhuset's fiscal might have deterred some delegates and supplicants from impermissible actions. Had someone taken away these supervisory elements, it is not sure that the Screening Deputation and the Estate assemblies would have started acting more in accordance with the regulations in the second half of the Age of Liberty. If that is the case, it weakens the argument for a strong institutionalized culture which guided behaviour. In his study of the Swedish Diet between 1660 and 1682, Joakim Scherp has also utilized institutional theory in the form of the concept of transaction costs, which puts the emphasis on the burden of overseeing agreements and reaching viable, enforceable solutions.<sup>588</sup> A complete switch to this theory would have left new gaps in the explanation, gaps handled well by March and Olsen's concept, but a combination of the two would perhaps offer a more coherent frame. On the other hand, the gaps in the explanation could just as well be pinned on the study's methods and choice of samples, and not on the institutional theories themselves. A more exhaustive examination of the Diet minutes and other sources pertaining to the Diets, such as the Diet delegates' diaries and the like, could have yielded a wider spectrum of findings to fit into March and Olsen's theory.

### Supplications in a wider context

Part of my aim has been to compare my findings to the other levels of the Swedish supplication channel and to the other formal political channels in eighteenth-century Sweden. It is to this and the broad political developments in the Age of Liberty that I will now turn.

It is not easy to compare supplications submitted to the Diet with supplications submitted to the central administrative boards, largely because of the lack of systematic studies. For supplications to Kungl. Maj:t, there are two systematic studies—Hillborn's and Hinnemo's—that examines supplications by women in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. For different reasons pertaining to Hillborn's and Hinnemo's respective methods, it is difficult to compare how many women turned to the Diet with how many turned to Kungl. Maj:t (see pp. 11–12). Nonetheless, it does seem that in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Kungl. Maj:t received far more supplications from women than the Diet in the Age of Liberty Diet would do. Despite the differences in the numbers, there are similarities in the types of errands. What enabled or at least drove many women to submit supplications was that they belonged to military or civil servant households and acted under the guise of the patriarchal aspect. Likewise for women seeking some sort of trade privilege or form of support in order to afford a living. Women went to Kungl. Maj:t to ask help with financial relief or to be granted continued possession of land when their husbands—often officers—died or proved unable to support them. In 1726–27, most women approached the Estates to settle claims they had on the state as widowers, or they were looking for some type of support. Similar ideas of responsibility for state-affiliated households' welfare facilitated both interactions. When the Estates dispensed with most of these errands in 1727, this gender-based similarity between Kungl. Maj:t's and the Diet's supplication channels ceased. There are also other, wide, differences between the findings of this study and those of Hinnemo's survey, but we will get to that in the last international context section of this chapter.

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<sup>588</sup> Scherp, *De ofrälse och makten*, 34–41.

Comparing the Diet's supplication channel to its regional equivalents, there are both similarities and differences in submitted supplications and what they requested. Starting with the similarities, burghers and public servants seemingly wrote supplications to everyone—the county governors, the magistrates, the Diet, the lot—although it seems that when burghers wrote supplications to regional instances they did so as individuals and not as part of their town (town corporations' privileges were decided by central government, not locally). Furthermore, public servants seem to have used both levels for employment requests concerning their salaries, tied accommodation, and so on. Peasants wrote supplications requesting tax breaks or temporary exemptions to the county governors as well, and people also sought financial relief or other forms of welfare assistance.

The findings also showed that just like supplications submitted on the regional level, the central levels of the supplication channel could also be used for political errands. Not only is this conclusion based on the Diet's corporate bodies' use of the supplication channel, but also on the supplications written by groups of varying sizes and on proposals that might have stemmed from one person, but concerned a locality, a region, or even the entire realm. Even though a majority of the supplications had a personal scope, supplications have to be considered as yet another channel for political action that led from the localities straight to the central organs of state and government.

That is where the similarities end, however. The differences are so wide that I would argue there were different functions or for the different levels of the Swedish supplication channel. To a large degree the differences can be explained by subsidiarity and jurisdiction. The proportion of peasants among those who petitioned the county governors is much larger than among those who turned to the Diet's supplication channel. Although the peasants' supplications at the regional level seemingly fell in number during the first half of the eighteenth century, they were still somewhere around 40 to 50 per cent of the total. In the Diet's supplication channel, their proportion increased—no doubt aided by the regulations of the 1750s—but the number of supplications submitted there never reached the same heights as at the regional level. Had the peasantry been more active in the Diet's supplication channel, the results might have been rather different, but at the same time, the *gravamina* were the peasantry's preferred channel whenever the Diet had convened. Their lack of activity in the Diet's supplication channel did not stem from a lack of access. Unrepresented lower groups seem to have submitted supplications to their county governors throughout the eighteenth century, but seemingly never made any real inroads into the Diet's supplication channel.

Meanwhile, the issues written about varied, often for apparent reasons. Although a large number of supplications to the county governors were to settle claims and other financial disputes, these were interpersonal conflicts and related to the county governors legal obligations and responsibilities within his county. Legal prerequisites also explain the large number of supplications about forestry, as people had to get permission from the county governor to fell oak trees, for example.

Thus, the difference between the errands people took to the county governor and the Estates respectively often stemmed from the regulations that assigned different roles to different levels. As the Diet was not an administrative organ, it received none of the standard applications that, for example, county governors did. It is also not surprising that few, if any, supplications to the



county governors or the magistracy concerned claims on the state's coffers: to settle these claims, people turned to the state's central organs. On the other hand, the local and regional conflicts between different towns and guilds often concerned legislation issued centrally and therefore needed settlement there.

Moreover, the differences can be explained by organizational structures, as the social safety nets for public servants or the funds necessary for building bridges or dredging rivers existed on a central level. Because of regulations and state structures, both the regional supplication channels and the Diet's supplication channel were mainly used for different things, albeit by the same middle- or upper-middle strata of society.

Regarding success rates, the possibilities for comparison are slim as few studies consider this, or are limited to the destiny of a certain group of supplications. This is also the reason why success rates were not covered in the introduction to the present volume. Neither is the sort of success or acceptance rates applied in this study the same as the type of success rates applied in other studies. Even though Hillborn's findings show that people could use supplications to their own advantage even with Kungl. Maj:t, her findings say nothing of the ratio of submitted to successful supplications. On the regional level, supplicants seem to have received positive responses more often than not. According to Ekman, most of the supplications submitted to the Östergötland county governor in mid eighteenth century were either referred on for further examination or resulted in immediate action from the local administration; Jonsson shows that the Västernorrland county governor accepted between three-fifths and five-sixths of the peasant supplications submitted from 1685 to 1735; and Westerberg, that about half of the women's supplications submitted to Södermanland's county governor in the 1770s were accepted. Thus, the generally high acceptance rate in the Diet's supplication channel does not seem to have been at odds with the success rates in the regional administration; however, such a comparison certainly necessitates further research that examines the final success rate of Diet supplications.<sup>589</sup>

Thus, the comparison between the central and regional levels of the supplication channel gives an impression of a system that was largely used by the same groups, but for different things. This was a system that seems to have been fairly generous to the supplicants in terms of giving them what they requested or referring their request on for further investigation. The social background of the people who used it seems to have been more diverse than the Diet's constituency, although the social depth seems to have narrowed the further up the supplication channel we look.

Furthermore, even though we can speak of a wider accessibility of the supplication channel in comparison to the Estates' general gravamina channel, a large proportion of the supplicants were drawn from a very small social minority. These people—the non-peasant landowners, noble and non-noble public servants, self-employed people involved in trade or production, self-employed town dwellers involved in the free trades—together with the propertied peasants, who would also grow into a distinct, propertied minority, were to form the political backbone of the

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<sup>589</sup> Westerberg, 'Suppliken som källa till kvinnohistorien', 8; Hillborn, 'Och fogar iagh på dhet ödmiukeligaste'; Ekman, *Suppliker till landsbövdingen*, 19–20; Jonsson, *De norrländska landsbövdingarna*, 230–233.

nineteenth-century Diet, both before and after the parliamentary reforms of 1865–66.<sup>590</sup> Although separated by their access or lack of access to the central political assembly of the realm, they were united in the fact that they could and did use the supplication channel to wield influence in many different areas—asking for support or privileges, negotiating terms, appealing against verdicts—albeit under a different set of circumstances. When tracing the lineage of the movement that would advocate reform of the political franchise in the nineteenth century, it would be as well to consider the supplication system as a conduit for the agency of the privileged parts of society.

### Political developments in the Age of Liberty

When it comes to the political importance of the Diet's supplication channel during the Age of Liberty, the most pertinent factor to consider, in my opinion, is whether the supplication channel secured or threatened established hierarchies.

For the commoner Estates' corporate bodies, the obvious answer is that the supplication channel functioned as a supplementary channel for the established hierarchies. One could rightly argue that, for example, town corporations contained inner divides, where some groups had more influence than others. Especially from mid century onwards, when the amount of taxes decided each burgher's voting power in mayoral elections. This decision greatly benefitted merchants; few craftsmen had a comparable turnover.<sup>591</sup> Thus, it is possible that the occurrence of small corporate bodies such as guilds at the beginning of the period implied that they were trying to circumvent the corporate grip on the towns. On the other hand, the concerned area of enterprise in the commerce resource supplications did not change significantly just because towns wrote most burgher supplications in the second and third samples. The friction between craftsmen and merchants should not be exaggerated, at least not for this channel.

Thus, the Diet's supplication channel did not challenge existing hierarchies in the commoner Estates. There was not a massive influx of supplications from journeymen or rural craftsmen, nor from cotters or farmhands. If anything, the supplication channel strengthened the established corporations by allowing them an additional opportunity to complain about or deal with problems that in one way or another threatened their stability. Thus, my findings confirm Fällström, Mäntylä, Bäck, and others, who argue that supplications were used for the same errands as *gravamina*; however, in this case one must consider the special circumstances which meant commoner delegates actually controlled the supplication channel, unlike the other levels of the supplication channel that lay under the Crown's control.

Nonetheless, the Screening Deputation likely facilitated the new dominance of the commoner Estates in the Diet (see ch. 4). As mentioned in Chapter 15, the rise of the peasantry has been a much discussed by historians, and the Age of Liberty Diet is often described as a catalyst. There is no need to rehearse all the arguments here, but to take one clear example, Gustafsson speaks of 'the formative influence of the political system on societal tensions' and argues that differing political options affected the composition of the Danish and the Swedish

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<sup>590</sup> When the four chamber Estate system was replaced by a two chamber system primarily based on wealth, not corporate belonging, was inaugurated.

<sup>591</sup> Fällström and Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', 198–199, 203–207; Martin Wottle, *Det lilla ägandet*, 25.

peasantry. While the Danish peasantry remained locally divided, the Swedish peasantry developed into a national interest group thanks to their participation in the Swedish Diet.<sup>592</sup> If we apply a similar perspective to the Screening Deputation and the commoner Estates, the committee can certainly be construed as a similarly formative influence. The commoner Estates facilitated a legislative turnaround that embraced the Diet delegates' use of its supplication channel, and this turn in turn encouraged the commoner Estates to see the possibilities of using the Diet for their own gain. With the spread of the printed screening lists, their constituencies could see in black and white that the Diet was a place where their delegates could further their interests.

Although it was mostly burgher delegates who used the supplication channel, the mere fact of the calibration of the Screening Deputation to the commoner Estates' advantage meant a partial conquering of the Diet. When the committee started to accommodate Diet delegates, they had territorialized a part of the Diet to fit their needs. Although other events and processes also facilitated the rise of the commoner Estates, the Screening Deputation played a role as well.

State-affiliated supplicants used the Diet's supplication channel for administrative and judicial errands. When looking at the two waves, it seems they used the supplication channel for matters where the Estates remained the only option or where clear jurisdiction did not exist. At the beginning of the period, the economic situation and the Diet's new political position led people to turn to the Estates to resolve their claims and improve their employment conditions, or to procure some sort of financial relief. No regulations existed that formally encouraged these supplicants, but submit supplications they did.

Indeed, it seems likely that the large influx of supplications about claims, welfare, and benefits helped to calm a potentially volatile situation, especially as so many of them were subsequently accepted and forwarded to the Estates. As mentioned several times already, the economic and social chaos in aftermath of the Great Northern War presented a huge problem. Petri Karonen even refers to this period as the 'crisis of the transition to peace'. Karonen identifies several areas of concern to Kungl. Maj:t already mentioned in this study: demobilizing the armed forces, managing the countless unemployed public servants, kick-starting the economy. Karonen also speaks of the legitimizing and pacifying actions taken by the government to appease the populace, such as sending out extraordinary commissions to audit crown servants, making civil servants swear oaths of allegiance, and rebuilding churches all over the country.<sup>593</sup>

To this list we can also add the handling of state-affiliated supplicants through the Diet's supplication channel. To not help them would have left many bereft of what the state owed them, as well as the care that the state would be wise to offer, if only to keep hold of whatever legitimacy was left after two decades of continuous war. At the very least, the acceptance of so many supplications for claims or support can be seen as an attempt to remedy the social ills brought on by war. As part of the bigger package of measures examined by Karonen, the supplications facilitated a relatively calm transition to peace. Just as the supplication submitted by Finnish refugees to the Finnish Deputation did two decades later (see p. 77). That first wave

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<sup>592</sup> Gustafsson uses inspiration from Theda Skocpol. Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 18–21, 149–151, 157–161, quote at 161; see also Skocpol, 'Bringing the state back in'.

<sup>593</sup> Karonen, 'Coping with peace after a debacle', 208–214.

of state-affiliated supplicants were thus part of a general process that sought to stabilize the political situation and strengthen the existing political and social structures.

After the 1727 decree, the composition of this group of supplicants changed, and with it, their tune. In the 1760s they asked for help with appointments or promotions. As state employment remained a fairly certain source of income and a certain source of status, Crown employ retained a certain allure. Attaining a position was an arduous task, with a vague system for evaluating merits; rampant nepotism; and the *ackordsummor* that people paid to incumbents. When Kungl. Maj:t would not or could not help unfairly snubbed public servants, the Estates remained the only option. One could very well say that the Estates were undermining the sanctity of state service, but on the other hand, the sanctity of state service and rule of law was already well and truly undermined by networks, nepotism, and purchases, often controlled by high-ranking officers and civil servants. For anyone keen to challenge hierarchies, the Estates provided a route. Thus, unlike most supplications from commoner Estate supplicants and the first wave of state-affiliated supplicants, prejudice appeals and basically all requests about appointments or promotions threatened to undermine established hierarchies.

Appointments were an important and politically contentious issue. It should not be forgotten that the right to posts and promotions was such a contentious issue that it finally helped spark the coup of 1772 that ended the Estates fifty-year reign. With the commoner Estates on the verge of gaining access to posts previously monopolized by the nobility, many a nobleman supported Gustaf III's coup that would guarantee their privileges. Furthermore, Gunnar Artéus has speculated that the decision to abrogate the formal table of ranks in 1765–66 turned the non-noble elements in the officers' corps against the Age of Liberty constitution.<sup>594</sup> Similarly, it cannot be discounted that the decision to abrogate prejudice appeals also decreased the Estates' support within the armed forces and administration. The decision left public servants trapped or held back by the informal networks, as well as possibly disappointed that they would no longer receive any help to circumvent these informal networks. If correct, the decision did not increase animosity, but it definitely decreased support. Thus, even though prejudice appeals can be considered supplications that concerned administrative or judicial matters, they were most certainly politically explosive.

Consequently, the Estates' interaction with state-affiliated supplicants were either directly or indirectly tied to political concerns and confrontations. It thus forms part of the political narrative of the Age of Liberty, much more than the reception of supplications from commoner Estates' corporate bodies. The interaction both secured and destabilized established hierarchies and social relations in society. This destabilizing potential is emphasized by the many appeals against Kungl. Maj:t's rulings by noblemen and commoners of rank—they may not have undermined the Judicial Audit's authority, but they did undermine Kungl. Maj:t's supreme authority.

From this I will turn to a discussion of the results of my study in an international context. More specifically, I compare four different facets: the printing of supplications and petitions; supplications as sources of information and their consequent role in the legislative process; the allegory of the safety valve; and women's access to petition channels.

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<sup>594</sup> Artéus, *Krigsmakt och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, 150.

## The international context—supplications in print

As we saw in Chapter 5, the Swedish Diet's supplication channel became part of the publically spread printed texts in the Age of Liberty. In seventeenth-century England, it was also standard to print petitions, and this has been considered by historians to be a formative factor in politics. As early as the fourteenth century, a distinction between private and common petitions was already being made, with the latter presenting grievances regarded to be of a more general interest.<sup>595</sup> During the seventeenth century, petitions were increasingly used to rebuke the king's negligence of Parliament, and finally, according to David Zaret, they became part of and facilitated the growth of the new public sphere and its political debates during and after the English Civil War. The petitions were printed verbatim and distributed around the country for people to sign and discuss.<sup>596</sup>

Circulated and signed, these petitions enabled once excluded parts of society to partake in political discussion and debate, but how far this new inclusion stretched remains unsure. Beat Kümin and Andreas Würgler argue that a petition with 'Almost 30,000 signatures ... must have involved a campaign reaching very far down the social scale.'<sup>597</sup> In a very impressive study, not least methodologically, Mark Knights set out to analyse the political, religious, and social background of a sample of the 16,000 signatures to London's 'Monster' petition, submitted to the king in 1680. According to Knights, many of those who signed were artisans, especially in the cloth trade, but there was also a fair share of radical intellectuals and affluent merchants. Thus a certain social range can be established, albeit for only a portion of the signatures on one petition.<sup>598</sup> As Patricia Higgins has shown, the petitions of the English Civil War also involved many women, who even came to Parliament to submit their petitions.<sup>599</sup>

There are similarities and differences in the early modern English and Swedish experiences. Whereas petitions in England were privately printed and signed by individuals, voicing their approval or disapproval of government policy, the Swedish screening lists were primarily printed and distributed by the de facto government, namely the Diet. Printed petitions in England could both approve or criticize the government, while the probable purpose of the printed screening lists was to strengthen the Estates' legitimacy. It would seem highly unlikely, contradictory even, that they would have distributed these lists if they ran the risk of undermining the Diet.

Rather, Sweden's screening lists have a different English counterpart. From the end of the seventeenth century, the English Parliament regularly issued a publication called *Votes and Proceedings* that recounted important decisions, presented petitions, and so on. Although the publication of the Swedish *Riksdagstidningen* was part of the political struggles between the king and his opponents in the Diet, it does seem that there are similarities between the two publications contents-wise. Much like *Votes and Proceedings*, *Riksdagstidningen* came to account not only for the principal discussions in the Diet, but also for the mundane proceedings, such as the screening lists. According to John Brewer, the English Parliament's policy of public

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<sup>595</sup> Rayner, 'The forms and machinery of the 'commune petition'', especially 570; Zaret, 'Petitions and the "invention" of public opinion, 1510.

<sup>596</sup> See, for example, Reeve, 'The legal status of the petition of right'; Zaret, 'Petitions and the 'invention' of public opinion'.

<sup>597</sup> Kümin and Würgler, 'Petitions, gravamina and the early modern state', 50.

<sup>598</sup> Knights, 'London's 'monster' petition', 60-63 especially.

<sup>599</sup> Higgins, 'The reactions of women'.

communication arose in a context where the public craved information, and knowledge of public affairs was deemed as something positive in itself.<sup>600</sup> Perhaps Brewer's interpretation is applicable in the Age of Liberty context as well. In that case, the printed screening lists and *Riksdagstidningen* not only stemmed from political disputes, but also represented attempts by the Diet to satisfy an at least perceived public demand for knowledge. The printed screening lists and those supplications that ended up in print verbatim thus formed part of the public sphere, although not in the same manner as seventeenth-century English petitions.

Ågren, much like Brewer, has argued that there was a Swedish reading public yearning for information of all kinds about public affairs. Comparing the situation in eighteenth-century Sweden with eighteenth-century pre-revolutionary France—drawing on Arlette Farge, among others—Ågren suggests that this interest in information about more trivial matters developed before the type of public sphere highlighted by Zaret, oriented towards national events and politics. In other words, people met, read, and discussed bankruptcies, court cases, slanders, and character assassinations *before* they started discussing national policies. Printers and litigants alike were aware of this public curiosity and tried to capitalize on it. The latter often used an appeal to an unnamed public in front of which they defended their case and actions. Discussions about national politics and world affairs then followed, facilitated by the practices of meeting and discussing more mundane information.<sup>601</sup> Thus where Zaret argues that certain events and publications at least facilitated the growth of the public sphere, Ågren and Farge argue that the same events were discussed by an existing public, originally drawn together for other purposes. If the latter perspective is applied to Swedish screening lists, while they might not have contained politically explosive material, they were still part of the general exchange of information that took part in facilitating the emergence of the public sphere—the same public sphere that became part of Swedish political life in the eighteenth century.

Sennefelt on the other hand, inspired by Hannah Arendt, proposes that we view early modern society as one where several spheres or public spheres coexisted.<sup>602</sup> Political debates belonged to one sphere, gossip about published court records to another. Apply this to the screening lists, and they can indeed be said to have formed part of a public sphere: the one which revolved around the spread of information in general. They did not form part of the sphere where the heated political debates took place—except perhaps once, in the debates about the 1769 Security Bill—although their communication to the public in print was at least in part a result of these debates.

### **The international context—legislation, information, participation**

In terms of legislation, this study has primarily focused on the regulation of the Diet's supplication channel itself, and there are several interesting similarities in other representative assemblies' handling and treatment of supplications. As an example, both the English medieval Parliament and the Imperial Diet of the Holy Roman Empire had formal petition and supplication channels. Both assemblies assigned to special committees the responsibility of examining incoming requests and deciding what to do with them. Similarly, the Estates in

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<sup>600</sup> Brewer, *The sinews of power*, 227–228.

<sup>601</sup> Ågren, 'Hemligt eller offentligt?'

<sup>602</sup> Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta*, 20–31.

seventeenth-century Languedoc, albeit a province in the French kingdom, but with a population the size of Sweden's at the time, seemingly spent a lot of time handling lesser errands.<sup>603</sup> However, this concrete role that different assemblies played in people's lives, different from the role of modern parliaments, is something that I hope to return to on another occasion. Rather, the focus of this section is the connection between supplications, as sources of information, and legislation concerning other areas of society.

Beginning with the Holy Roman Empire, supplications definitely had an impact on policies and legislation. Kümin and Würzler argue that supplications influenced legislation in the principality of Hesse-Kassel. Supplications lay behind the abolition of an unpopular inheritance law, changes to the cloth trade, regulations for servants, and the revoking of an agriculture tax, among other things.<sup>604</sup> Achim Landwehr similarly proposes that supplications filled a role in the legislative process in the town of Leonberg in Württemberg, although he argues that it is hard to determine whether supplications influenced legislation or merely contributed to its initiation.<sup>605</sup>

Supphellen, Claus Bjørn, and Bregnsbo argue that the Danish supplication channel impacted on legislation. Through it the Crown gained insight into the needs—and distress—of the people and could keep an eye on the Crown's servants. For example, the impact on legislation was evident in supplications that concerned newly enacted reforms, and thus errors could be corrected. Another situation is described by Bjørn in his study of peasant supplications complaining about *boveri*, the corvée performed by Danish peasants for their landlords, and tithes in 1768–1769. When the Danish authorities in 1768 issued a decree that encouraged proposals and complaints about the Danish agriculture, the peasantry took the authorities aback with the sheer number of supplications. Consequently, the authorities issued a new decree in 1769 that further regulated corvée. As Bjørn argues, the peasantry did perhaps not determine the regulations' exact content, but they certainly made it an issue in the first place and ensured the speed with which the Danish authorities moved to issue the new decree. Lastly, as Bregnsbo notes, the startling number of supplications eventually forced the king to transfer many decisions closer to the local and regional civil servants in the latter half of the eighteenth century.<sup>606</sup> Supplications thus became part of Denmark's state formation as a key factor in political decentralization.

In contrast to these examples, it seems the Swedish Estates seldom used supplications to gain an insight into the faults of specific legislation, a fascinating find in light of the fact that in the Age of Liberty the Diet was a legislative assembly first and foremost. Feedback on legislation submitted by way of supplications would have dovetailed with their formal constitutional role. Yet if anything, the Estates actively avoided these types of supplications for most of the period, as exemplified by the 1734 decree which forbade people from submitting errands with a certain scope. Towards the end of the Age of Liberty things changed somewhat, when regulations

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<sup>603</sup> Myers, 'Parliamentary petitions in the fifteenth century', 393–397; Beik, *Absolutism and society in seventeenth-century France*, 127–128; Neuhaus, 'Supplikationen auf Reichstagen des 16. Jahrhunderts', 151–152, 154, 157.

<sup>604</sup> Kümin and Würzler, 'Petitions, gravamina and the early modern state', 55–56.

<sup>605</sup> Landwehr, *Policy im Alltag*, 283–312.

<sup>606</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 184–185; Bjørn, 'De danske cahiers', 167–168; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 223–224; see also Sogner, *Krig og fred*, 235.

encouraged mill owners and people with qualms about the pension system to submit supplications. Moreover, people with proposals concerning legislation and the administration of public land were enticed with a monetary award. Thus, the supplication channel opened up for feedback and proposals in the last decade of the Age of Liberty, but only in certain areas.

The most likely explanation lies with political systems and state apparatuses. Age of Liberty Sweden was not ruled by decree by a monarch and his council. Neither did the Diet only represent the nobility, clergy, and powerful cities; it included smaller towns and peasants too. Thus, the Diet was connected to Swedish society, and supplied delegates with the general gravamina channel through which the Estates presumably received plenty of suggestions for new laws and feedback on the existing ones. In Denmark–Norway, the king made himself absolute ruler and abolished the Estates in 1660. Thus, supplications became the major form of communication and only formal means by which the Crown and its subjects communicated.<sup>607</sup> Similarly, when comparing Sweden and Denmark–Norway, Gustafsson states both states boasted bureaucracies of considerable refinement; however, the Swedish state reached further down into the localities, especially when compared with Denmark proper before the land reforms of the late eighteenth century. As things stood before then, the great landowners in Denmark did not let the Danish state intrude to any great extent.<sup>608</sup> Thus, the Danish administration was less conducive to the relaying of information from the bottom to the top than the Swedish administration. Supplications, as a source of information, most likely played a more important role in such a context.

Early modern Hesse-Kassel had a Diet, but it had a less powerful position than the Swedish one. As the prince furthermore owned a lot of land he was economically independent to a degree that the Swedish kings were not. Even though the Hessian Diet affected legislation and policies with their gravamina, the Hessian Estates were much more exclusive than the Swedish. The Diet consisted of two chambers, the clergy and nobility in the first and the towns in the second. The Diet did not include the peasantry. There are cases where complaints from the peasantry did reach the Hessian Diet, for example, when their interests coincided with their noble landlords; however, such access was seemingly dependent on the Diet's goodwill, and the peasantry was not an Estate, let alone one on a par with the others.<sup>609</sup> Even though Hesse-Kassel boasted a representative assembly, its narrower social width meant the prince had to use other channels if he wanted feedback on policies from the lower classes. Supplications represented one such channel. Plainly, another was to ask the principalities' localities and civil servants to submit their thoughts on how to improve the governance of the realm, as Fredrik I of Sweden did when he became Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel in 1730.<sup>610</sup>

It would certainly be incorrect to say that supplications were irrelevant as sources of information for states with Diets or other forms of more or less popular political participation, but supplications definitely had another type of importance in these states. For absolute rulers with few or no channels unfiltered by civil servants, supplications provided a window on the

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<sup>607</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 160; Jespersen, Netterstrom and Nygaard, 'Teorier om statsdannelse', 22.

<sup>608</sup> Gustafsson, *Political interaction in the old regime*, 128–129.

<sup>609</sup> Neuhaus, 'Supplikationen als landesgeschichtliche Quellen', ii, 73–79; Ingrao, *The Hessian mercenary state*, 37–53; Würgler, 'Desideria und Landesordnungen, 189–190; Romein, 'Fatherland rhetoric', 277–283.

<sup>610</sup> Würgler, 'Desideria und Landesordnungen', 192–195.



country's grass roots, which the Swedish kings and Diet did not need to the same extent. Through supplications, absolute rulers gained access to their subjects' thinking on legislation and what its weaknesses were, and could amend the law accordingly. In a country such as Sweden, this role fell to the people's representatives in the Estates. If the rulers wanted to listen, the information was there to be heard.

This last point, however, is key to any understanding of supplication channel's role in absolute states as well. Taking the Danish state as an example, it is not as if the Danish supplication channel was more inclusive in order to compensate for the lack of a central, representative assembly. Examining the supplications submitted to the Danish royal chancery over the course of the eighteenth century, Bregnsbo's results show a similar bias towards the middling sort as the findings of the present study. True, the number of peasant supplications increased as the century progressed, and there was a steady flow of supplicants drawn from what here has been referred to as unrepresented lower groups. But on the other hand, civil servant supplicants accounted for somewhere between a third and four-fifths of all supplications, and burghers an additional tenth at least.<sup>611</sup> Thus, a minority of Denmark–Norway's population wrote at least half of the supplications that came to the Danish Royal Chancery's attention. As a source of information, the supplication channel in many cases never ran especially deep in a society.

Additionally, the Danish authorities discouraged the lower strata from using the supplication channel, at least for certain purposes. Immediately after 1660, the peasantry in Denmark inundated the king with supplications but it also seems the attempts to regulate the supplication channel and strangle access to it succeeded. Regulations forced Danish peasants to first present any grievances they might have with their landlord to the landlord in question before they could turn to the king. If they did not obey, they could be punished, despite the legitimacy of their complaints. Looking at the eighteenth century, Bjørn describes a situation where authorities and the upper echelons of society viewed the peasantry with disdain and suspicion; even though the peasants were of course formally allowed to submit supplications, any complaints were considered open challenges to the ruling order, not seldom prompted by outside agitators giving the peasantry ideas. For example, a complaint from peasants in 1696 led to an investigation not of the complaint, but of the origin of the grievances. Who among the peasants had goaded the others was more relevant than the peasants' circumstances. Not until the latter half of the eighteenth century would this situation change and peasants become a more respectable part of society.<sup>612</sup>

Suffice it to say, the information the authorities wanted to see relayed in through supplications was supposed to come from certain parts of society. Thus, as a source for information, the Danish supplication came with certain biases and restrictions that meant that information could only flow freely from a limited set of groups. Insight into how things worked at the grass-roots level was limited, and perhaps not much wanted.

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<sup>611</sup> Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 65, 95–109, 240, 249.

<sup>612</sup> Munck, *The peasantry and the early absolute monarchy in Denmark*, 59–63; Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 21–35, 139–157, the example from 29–30.

## The international context—the flawed safety valve analogy

Depending on the constitution and the availability of a petition channel, each polity has a different slant on the importance of supplications for wielding influence. The meaning of a supplication from a minor burgher or peasant corporate body, for example, would not be the same in societies where such corporate bodies had alternative channels or where there none. That is not to say that the approval of a grievance was more satisfactory for peasants in Brandenburg than in southern Finland. One can assume that people everywhere only wrote supplications about issues of some importance or relevance to them, as it cost time and money to do so; however, the general importance of the Swedish Diet's supplication channel for peasant corporate bodies and collectives, or towns for that matter, was probably less than in, say, Denmark or Hesse-Kassel.

This brings us to the sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit concept of the safety valve. Frohnert argues that the petition 'or its equivalents existed in most societies as built-in safety valves.'<sup>613</sup> While a speculative remark, it leads to two probable interpretations. Firstly, safety valves were consciously created or utilized by the powers-that-be. People could use them to 'vent' their displeasure with the political system or society that otherwise would have resulted in uprisings or unrest. Secondly, on a more general level, one could simply imagine the safety valve as a channel where people tried to remedy wrongs or misfortunes. In this sense, supplications not only defused dissatisfaction, but also facilitated a positive view on the state's role in people's lives. Safety valves generated legitimacy in situations where it might have been at risk.

The results from the present study certainly show that supplications could very well be viewed as safety valves when times were hard. The extraordinary situation of the late 1710s and 1720s left many desperate, and, as described in Chapter 15, it is possible that the submitting and acceptance of many supplications about welfare, claims, and the like contributed to a calmer society when taken together with other measures. At least, it is likely the powers-that-be viewed supplications in this light. Whether they were correct or not is another issue.

When looking around early modern Europe, it certainly seems as if supplications and petitions smoothed over social tension and troublesome episodes. Concerning the Norwegian kingdom, Supphellen attributes to supplications a mediating role in the relationship between Crown and peasantry. From these grievances the authorities could discover dissatisfaction and prevent unrest and uprisings, thus 'reducing the feelings of powerlessness'.<sup>614</sup> James Shaw, who has studied trade supplications sent to Cosimo de' Medici in mid sixteenth-century Florence, describes how people petitioned the Florentine prince in order to solve problems that the regular judiciary could not.<sup>615</sup> Similarly, Andreas Würgler has argued that supplications submitted to the rulers of Hesse-Kassel possibly contributed to the landgraviate's relative calm after 1525. As people could vent their grievances to the authorities about matters that often sparked revolts in other states, the need to resist or use violence against the authorities decreased.<sup>616</sup> Thomas Robisheaux has shown how the ruler in the small principality of Hohenlohe in the southwest of

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<sup>613</sup> Frohnert, 'Administration i Sverige under frihetstiden', 251; see also van Voss, 'Introduction', 4.

<sup>614</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 185.

<sup>615</sup> Shaw, 'Writing to the Prince', 56–60.

<sup>616</sup> Würgler, 'Desideria und Landesordnungen', 203; see also Neuhaus, 'Supplikationen als landesgeschichtliche Quellen', ii, 66.

the Empire could interact with his subjects through supplications to ensure calm and cooperation at times when taxation increased. The peasants sought and were to some degree granted personal exemptions that strengthened the bonds between them and their prince.<sup>617</sup>

Examining a perhaps more unusual situation, David Martin Luebke shows how peasants in East Frisia submitted supplications to their prince as a manipulative strategy in unstable times. During a rebellion, the peasantry petitioned their ruler with a list of grievances and to excuse themselves from taxation, while still professing, even emphasizing, their allegiance in the conventionally obsequious idiom of all supplications. Their tactical supplications helped normalize relations in what were irregular circumstances. Later, they used their rhetorical professions of loyalty in the petitions to clear themselves from charges of dissent. Had they not clearly stated their loyalty to the prince? The prince of East Frisia also gathered information about the uprising through these letters, information which he later based his strategies on.<sup>618</sup> Luebke's reveals a very active political use of supplications, from both the peasants' and the ruler's perspective, which ultimately normalized relations in the active phase of a rebellion and in the aftermath.

However, even with these examples in mind, there are four caveats to consider. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, supplications were no carnivals, spaces where every act of mockery and defiance was allowed. It was strictly forbidden to falsely accuse Crown servants or otherwise abuse the system. Procedures had to be followed. The supplication channel, in Sweden as elsewhere, was not an unrestricted conduit where people could express their displeasure freely. The fines and the formal requirements that hedged about supplication channels should remind us of that.

Even though there were plenty of examples of people breaking the rules, the rules existed for a reason. Admittedly, the patriarchal aspect of the supplication channel undermined such regulations to some extent, but it only periodically and never completely. And even if people did break the rules, even successfully, it did not mean they went unpunished. There are instances in eighteenth-century Denmark where peasants tried to submit their supplications collectively and were punished severely as a result, even being met by the military. Similarly, Renate Blickle has found about twenty occasions between 1525 and the late 1700s where Bavarian peasants collectively travelled to the Bavarian prince in order to submit their complaints in person. The prince always took the supplication, as was his duty, but the people most often never got what they wanted, and those who took part in the journey were arrested.<sup>619</sup> Much like in Denmark–Norway, the Bavarian authorities did not view these actions kindly.

Thus, much as with sources of information, the supplications were of intentionally limited use as safety valves. The people in the lower strata of society—those who most likely had need of a safety valve—faced restrictions and suspicion whenever they sought to use the supplication channel for certain reasons or in certain ways. When viewed collectively, supplicants could certainly undermine the formal rules of the institution, as shown in the present study for

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<sup>617</sup> Robisheaux, 'Peasant unrest and the moral economy'; also see Cohn, *Creating the Florentine state*, chaps. 7–8.

<sup>618</sup> Luebke, 'How to become a loyalist', 361–367.

<sup>619</sup> Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 27; Blickle, 'Supplikationen und Demonstrationen', 297–315.

example, but the individual cost for each and every supplicant who did so could be very high indeed.

Secondly, even if for example the Danish peasantry had successfully used the supplication channel, for example, how can we know that the granting of their requests would in any way contribute to a more positive view of society and the political system in which they lived? This question is too big to answer here, so I will leave the reader with two examples. Claus Bjørn argues that although the eighteenth-century Danish peasantry used the Danish court system with resolve, they did not trust it. According to Bjørn, the Danish peasantry were convinced that the middle and upper strata of society were conspiring against them, and that the formal institutions primarily catered to these people. A strong sense of righteousness encouraged the peasantry to use all means necessary, including the formal channels, but their use of these channels did not affect their outlook on society.<sup>620</sup> A similar argument is made by Douglas Madsen in his study of data collected in 1967 from Indian citizens who petitioned the Indian authorities: both those who succeeded and those who failed maintained an unchanged view of the system.<sup>621</sup>

Although studying different periods and continents, Bjørn and Madsen say the same thing, and their statements lead us back to the safety valve. The theory presupposes a simplified casual relationship between the successful use of society's legitimate channels and satisfaction about the state of society, without considering the deeper impact of mentalities, bias, and ideology. It does not follow that an eighteenth-century peasant or a twentieth-century Indian citizen with biases against the system are likely to change their view of the system just because they successfully used one particular channel on one occasion. And if they did not change their biased views, why would they be less likely to be unruly or revolt if presented with the opportunity? Furthermore, in issues such as prejudice or a town's access to a market to the detriment of another, one also has to consider the cost to others of a successful supplication. Early modern Europe was a system of privileges where supplicants often found themselves caught up in a zero-sum game. To satisfy one party, another party often had to pay. Thus, even if someone's satisfaction about the current system and political structures was increased by a decision by the king in their favour, there was an apparent risk that someone else's faith in the same system and structures would take a knock.

Thirdly, to use a lack of unrest to support the safety valve idea is also flawed. According to David Beetham, a necessary condition for classifying something as legitimate is that there 'is evidence derived from actions expressive of it.'<sup>622</sup> In other words, an absence of unrest is not a conclusive proof of a political system's legitimacy, and thus the lack of serious revolts in early modern Sweden, Denmark-Norway, or Hesse-Kassel is not a sign that supplications, among other safety valves, eased tensions in society. It might as well be caused by resignation or fear of retaliation for criticism vocal enough to attract the authorities' attention<sup>623</sup>. The work by, for example, Bjørn, Madsen and Beetham points to this aspect of the safety valve idea being in need of further elaboration. I would argue that in Sweden the many accepted supplications from state-

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<sup>620</sup> Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 36–45, 50–59, 113–114.

<sup>621</sup> Madsen, 'Political self-efficacy tested'.

<sup>622</sup> Beetham, *The legitimization of power*, 12–13.

<sup>623</sup> See for example James C. Scott's concept of 'public' and 'hidden' transcripts. Scott, *Domination and the arts of resistance*.

affiliated supplicants increased the new constitution's legitimacy among these layers in society, but one could similarly argue that they were already favourably inclined to this or almost any regime that followed on Karl XII. And again, the Diet's supplication channel did not cater to the masses, those whose latent rebelliousness kept sovereigns awake at night throughout the early modern era.

Lastly, the safety valve allegory is also flawed in terms of the connection between the availability of petition channels and the sum of all political agency. The allegory seems to revolve around the idea that the volume of political agency will decrease if some complaints are heard or even resolved. That may very well be the case on some occasions, but not on others. Jonsson's study of Swedish supplications show that the number of submitted peasant supplications was twice as high in 1735 compared to 1716.<sup>624</sup> So, despite regular Diets and years of peace, peasants still found more things to petition about than during Karl XII's despotic reign, which consisted of two decades of non-stop warfare. The sum of interaction increased despite better times and more channels, not worse times and a lack of channels.

This same problem is highlighted in Marie Lennersand's study of the extraordinary commissions dispatched across Sweden in the early stages of the Age of Liberty. While supplications and commissions are not the same thing, the basic premise is the same from a safety valve perspective: a large part of a commission's task was to appease the populace by bringing Crown servants to book. And yet Kungl. Maj:t had to recall the commissions dispatched in Sweden proper as they agitated the peasantry. The commissions did everything but appease—they stirred up the already restless peasantry, and local and regional Crown servants found themselves undermined, with the populace acting disobediently, even mockingly, towards them.<sup>625</sup> Access to this new channel, the commissioners, had encouraged further dissent instead of quelling it.

Similar connections between opportunities to complain and an increase in the number of complaints, the very opposite of a safety valve's intended effect, can be found throughout early modern Europe. The influx of peasant supplications in 1768 took the Danish authorities aback—they had sought proposals and ideas from society, but not from the peasantry and not about the heavy burden of *corvée*. According to Bjørn, the state's subsequent interest in agricultural reform in the second half of the eighteenth century led many Danish peasants—feeling the proverbial wind in their sails—to act more determinedly for their rights and against the manor owners' wrongdoings.<sup>626</sup> The impetus for their increased activity did not only stem from themselves or from tougher conditions, but from a perceived benevolence on the part of the state and a perceived weakening of rural political structures as a result.

That the authorities were aware of this problem is shown by the conundrum scribes that presented in some states. Just as in Sweden, the style of supplications and petitions across early modern Europe was a rhetoric of obsequiousness.<sup>627</sup> To a certain extent, the rhetoric did not

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<sup>624</sup> Jonsson, *De norrländska landsbördingarna*, 226.

<sup>625</sup> Lennersand, *Rättvisans och allmogens beskyddare*, 240–268.

<sup>626</sup> Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 146–157, 164–169.

<sup>627</sup> See, for example, Myers, 'Parliamentary petitions in the fifteenth century', 386–388; Rigaudière, 'Issues at stake in the development of the state', 78; Dodd, 'Writing wrongs'; Shaw, 'Writing to the Prince', 63–64; Corteguera, 'Encuentros imaginados entre súbdito y monarca', 34–35.

hinder people from challenging authority of course, but at the same time, failure to follow the correct submissive style could result in an unsuccessful supplication. Irene Kubiska-Scharl and Michael Pözl's study of supplicants at the Viennese court shows that those who wanted to submit a supplication to the Emperor often had to consult a scribe, because of the complexity of the style and the legal niceties. Supplications that did not follow the necessary style and pattern ran a much higher risk of rejection.<sup>628</sup> Thus it is not surprising to find such scribes, in every corner of early modern Europe. As we saw in Chapter 7, the Swedish authorities had seemingly learned to accept the existence of scribes under certain conditions. Likewise, professional scribes seem to have become part of the petition compilation process in other parts of Europe as well, as in England and Florence.<sup>629</sup>

Other early modern European rulers were considerably less comfortable about scribes. They thought that they caused rumblings in society and incited people to make claims on the powers-that-be that they would never have thought to do otherwise. In Prussia, legislation issued in 1787 prescribed prison sentences for scribes and others found to be inciting unruliness and unrest.<sup>630</sup> The political concern was perhaps even clearer in the conglomerate kingdom of Denmark–Norway. In both Norway and Denmark, regulations stipulated that anyone who helped people write a supplication were forbidden to enter anything into the supplications they had not been asked to write. In Norway, where peasants were known to be occasionally rebellious, the authorities feared that peasants would use supplications to political ends, and thus feared freelancing scribes and others who they thought roamed the countryside, inciting the peasantry. At the same time, the authorities wanted people to be able to write legitimate supplications. The solution to this quandry was to supply the populace with authorized scribes. Thus, seventeenth-century legislation stipulated that all supplications had to be written by certain civil servants, *sorenskrivaren*, in rural areas and by appointed scribes in towns. In Denmark proper, on the other hand, where the peasantry lived in serfdom under the watchful eye of the magnates, anyone could write a supplication as long as they signed it. That is not to say that the Danish magnates were less suspicious of scribes and other supposed agitators, but it seems that access to the supplication channel needed less restriction when the possibilities for surveillance were better than in Norway.<sup>631</sup>

Thus, not only does the safety valve allegory seem flawed, but it transpires that access to petition channels and supplications could just as well increase unrest and dissatisfaction. For proof that interaction channels like this were potential powder kegs one need only turn to Britain. There, the English Parliament had employed petitions to force Charles I (1625–1649) to redress grievances and amend legislation against his will in 1628.<sup>632</sup> During the Civil War in the 1640s, still humble and praising unity, petitions of political character were printed, circulated, and signed—tools for propaganda and political mobilization. In the end, Charles I was dethroned

<sup>628</sup> Kubiska-Scharl and Pözl, *Die Karrieren des wiener Hofpersonals*, 68; for other examples, see Knights, 'London's monster' petition', 44–45; David Nicholls, 'Addressing God as Ruler', 130–131; Zaret, 'Petitions and the 'invention' of public opinion', 1513–1515; van Nierop, 'Popular participation in politics in the Dutch Republic', 288–289; Blicke, 'Peasant protest', 188–192.

<sup>629</sup> Myers, 'Parliamentary petitions in the fifteenth century', 387–388; Shaw, 'Writing to the Prince', 65.

<sup>630</sup> Luebke, 'Frederick the Great and the celebrated case of the millers Arnold', 406.

<sup>631</sup> Supphellen, 'Supplikken som institusjon', 152–156, 158–160, 169; Bjørn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 27–35; Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 38–39.

<sup>632</sup> Foster, 'Petitions and the petitions of right'; Reeve, 'The legal status of the petition of right'.

and executed. Before the French Revolution and the execution of Louis XVI (1774–1791), the shadow of Charles I's destiny loomed over monarchs as a terrifying example.<sup>633</sup> The role of petitions in these political developments can hardly have gone unnoticed. The lesson was not lost on the British, and sure enough, the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was followed by regulations for petitions: they could not concern the Church or legislation, unless certain judges or civil servants approved them beforehand, and there was a cap on the number of signatures and the number of people who could submit the petition in person.<sup>634</sup>

Thus, so-called safety valves could just as well create more dissent than they assuaged. Rulers knew this, and administrative measures around Europe were not only aimed at curbing the number of supplications, but also to keep society in check. The subversive potential of supplications had to be suppressed. These fears were also present in the regulations for the Swedish Diet's supplication channel; as mentioned in Chapter 5, collectively signed supplications were forbidden from anyone but corporate bodies, and groundless accusations of Crown servants brought harsh punishments. Rulers and representative assemblies seem to have enjoyed basking in the glow of their performance as benevolent auditor, listening attentively to people's troubles. At the same time, they seem to have been acutely aware of the dangerous potential of supplications. As safety valves go, they were certainly risky, and might as well generate more steam, so to speak, rather than release pent-up pressure. Whenever early modern subjects thought they had an opportunity to complain about political structures and inherent economic inequalities, they seem to have taken it and then some. For this and the other reasons mentioned in this section, it is necessary and important not to perpetuate the concept of the safety valve without these (and probably other) caveats in mind.

### **The international context—women, jurisdiction and equality**

Kari Helgesen's study of about 500 supplications, sent in the mid eighteenth century by people in Trondheim county, Norway, to the royal chancery, shows that a fifth of them were from women.<sup>635</sup> Bregnsbo, who has studied the same channel without the geographic limitations, comes to a similar conclusion: the share of women ran at above a tenth, but rose to a fifth or so from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards. Towards the end of the century 500 plus women used the supplication channel on a yearly basis.<sup>636</sup>

Thus it seems Danish and Norwegian women submitted their grievances to the Danish royal chancery more often than Swedish and Finnish women did to the Swedish Diet. In fact, the number of women who submitted supplications to the Danish King increased throughout the eighteenth century, while in Sweden the Estates' decree of 1727 brought a marked cut in the kind of errands that most of the women had approached them with thus far. The supplication channels thus not only differed in particular instances, but also in trends. Somewhat paradoxically, it seems that the freer constitution of Age of Liberty Sweden excluded women from access to their de facto rulers to a far greater degree than the absolute constitution of Denmark–Norway, at least when comparing these two supplication channels. The Swedish

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<sup>633</sup> Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, 45.

<sup>634</sup> Taswell-Langmead, *English constitutional history*, 745.

<sup>635</sup> Kari Helgesen, 'Supplikken som kvinnehistorisk kilde', 259.

<sup>636</sup> Bregnsbo, *Folk Skriver til kongen*, 104–105.

example adds to the thesis of the masculinization of eighteenth-century politics (see p. 190); Denmark–Norway does not.

The difference stems in part from the formal, constitutional positions of the Swedish Diet and the Danish king. A high proportion of people petitioned the Danish kings for aid in many different types of judicial errands. Their supplications concerned legal processes (requests for legal aid or a reduction in legal penalties) or family law (divorces or marriage between relatives), wills or declarations of majority—responsibilities that lay within the Danish king’s jurisdiction. Together, these judicial supplications composed around half of all submitted supplications both at the beginning and at the end of the eighteenth century. Their number goes some way in explaining the much higher proportion of female supplicants in the Danish royal supplication channel, as around half the women supplicants’ requests concerned either wills or legal majority for most of the eighteenth century. These were women exercising their legal rights and possibilities. Many of these errands were standard in format, and if they fulfilled the administrative requirements, they were generally approved.<sup>637</sup> Thus, many of women’s supplications to the Danish king can be seen as part of the judicial and administrative aspect of the supplication channel. They were part of standard administrative procedure, and thus the king as the ultimate administrative and judicial authority became involved.<sup>638</sup>

In comparison, the Swedish Estates were never the recipients of these types of standard format supplications. Prejudice appeals perhaps came the closest, but even they still needed some examination. The reason for this difference is simply that the Diet never grew into an administrative office. As the present study and previous research has shown, the Estates involved themselves in administrative errands, but their involvement was always based on their auditing function: it never stemmed from legal changes that made the Estates themselves part of a standard, administrative procedure, unlike their administrative organs. Thus, Karl Hildebrand’s remark that ‘if the Estates convened year on year, the administrative boards might as well have ceased their activity’ is succinct, but only half correct.<sup>639</sup> The larger number of women supplicants in the Danish royal supplication channel shows why. A comparison between the Danish king’s and the Swedish Kungl. Maj:t’s respective supplication channels would definitely yield more similar results and numbers of women as the kings had similar administrative roles.<sup>640</sup> But the Danish king and the Swedish Estates did not. Differences in the number and proportion of women in the Swedish Diet’s and the Danish king’s supplication channels, which can thus be ascribed to their respective formal positions, are probably not of much importance in terms of accessibility. If anything, Swedish women had access to one supplication channel more than their sisters in Denmark–Norway did.

Besides the formal differences, however, women’s access to the Danish king’s supplication channel stemmed from the patriarchal aspect. Although many of the women’s social background eluded Bregnsbo and Helgesen, they identified many wives or widows of peasants or civil

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<sup>637</sup> Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 91–94, 108–109; see also Gustafsson, ‘Islands administration på 1700-Talet’, 168–170.

<sup>638</sup> At the same time, Hilde Sandvik has found several Norwegian women who petitioned the Danish Commerce board on matters of trade and commercial law, Sandvik, ‘Politiske kvinner på 1700-tallet i Norge’, 78–83.

<sup>639</sup> Hildebrand quoted in Lagerroth, *Frihetstidens författning*, 201.

<sup>640</sup> See Hinnemo, *Inför högsta instans*, ch. 2, as well as the research cited therein.



servants who requested financial aid or relief.<sup>641</sup> In the end, The Swedish Estates' regulations successfully did away with such pleas unless the supplicant had followed the specified path, and thus.

An interesting parallel comes from England and the Civil War. At a time when many of the social and political structures were undermined, women in small and large groups started approaching Parliament with petitions on matters such as religion and peace. Although Members of Parliament sometimes welcomed their petitions and sometimes shunned them, they consistently displayed their displeasure at the presence of the women. Violent altercations would take place, and at one point Parliament told a group of female petitioners that 'the matter you petition about, is of an higher concernment than you understand, that the House gave an answer to your Husbands; and therefore that you are desired to goe home, and looke after your owne business, an meddle with your huswifery.'<sup>642</sup>

According to Amanda Whiting, Parliament wanted to deny women access on the basis of common law, by which women were subsumed into their households and represented by their husbands, a legal status also known as coverture; however, Whiting also shows that the people at the time, as well as researchers focused on petitions to Parliament, have neglected the fact that women had petitioned Parliament and the king as judicial and administrative instances long before. Moreover, there were no strict rules, and 'answers to the question about women's "right" to petition cannot be given simply by looking to the prescriptions of the law.' Looking at petitions to the king and his various councils and courts, it is plain that the legislation aimed at hindering women was circumvented time and again. Women submitted a tenth of the petitions addressed to the Court of Star Chamber during the reigns of Elizabeth I (1558–1603) and James VI & I (1567/1603–1625). And although women did not usually exist as independent subjects outside their household in a judicial sense, the king had a duty to protect their life and property as if they did exist as independent judicial subjects. By custom and equity, women could and did use the possibility to petition the king and his servants to a much greater degree than they petitioned Parliament, thanks to the king's judicial role.<sup>643</sup> Much like the women's judicial position in relation to Sweden's Diet in the Age of Liberty, relations between women and the English Parliament in the mid seventeenth century seems to have been open to interpretation and gradual position shifts. Women seem to have gradually lost out and could only stage their return with the voting reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Furthermore, the comparison of eighteenth-century Denmark–Norway and Sweden with seventeenth-century England shows that kings seem to have been more accessible to women supplicants than representative assemblies were. There were no women-friendly regulations for royal supplication channels that could account for this. Neither, as I have argued, was women's access to the various levels of the Swedish supplication channel primarily predicated on their gender. Rather, kings occupied a judicial, administrative, and patriarchal position that put them in a customary relationship with each and every one of their subjects, including women. Although the English Parliament and the Swedish Diet had come to act as representatives for

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<sup>641</sup> Bregnsbo, *Folk skriver til kongen*, 107–109; Helgesen, 'Supplikken som kvinnehistorisk kilde', 260–264.

<sup>642</sup> Quoted in Higgins, 'The Reactions of women', 203.

<sup>643</sup> Whiting, 'Some women can shift it well enough', quote at 91.

the entire realm, they were still rooted in the limited constituency on which they as political bodies were founded. The imperative mandate discussed in Chapter 4 perfectly illustrates this tension. Thus, it does not necessarily follow that an absolute monarch of Denmark-Norway was more gender neutral than the ‘free’ Swedish Diet of the Age of Liberty, but it is at the same time a possibility that cannot be disregarded. Regardless of whether or not regulations took an explicit stance on the supplicant’s gender.

### **Some concluding remarks**

So, the analysis and international comparisons done, what are the main findings of this study? Well, first of all, the Swedish supplication system, on at least one of its levels, has been given a thorough investigation. The wanted signs referred to in the introduction can be taken down. I would argue that we now have a clearer view of the Diet’s involvement in lesser errands and the structures surrounding them. The findings offer a new understanding of the specific political interaction on the central level during the Age of Liberty, but they also have bearing on the supplication institution in the late Middle Ages and the entire early modern period. Supplications were not only feasible means to individual ends, they were also part of the medieval and early modern centralization of judicial and political power, the formation of the early modern *and* modern state, the protection of the privileges and immunities of Swedish subjects, and, during the Age of Liberty, the constant power struggle between the Diet and the kings. Each supplication viewed by itself might seem trivial, but nonetheless played a part in each and every one of these major processes. As it turns out, the individual outside the elite could have quite an impact on the early modern state and politics when acting in concert with other supplicants, like rain eating away at a rock.

Secondly, the supplication institution’s theoretical openness to every subject who desired to use it, clashed with the desired use of the supplication channel from the recipient’s point of view. The institution was built on the idea of the powerful monarch and his magnanimity towards his subjects. The sovereign upheld the laws and guaranteed their swift and judicious execution, but he could also alter them when equity or benevolence necessitated. This is at least the image sovereigns like to project. At the same time, as is shown in the case of the Swedish Diet in Age of Liberty, even though the Estates wanted to receive supplications, they again and again voted to cut down the sheer number of supplications and temper the incessant disrespect for rules and proper procedure. It is hard to say what people made of these apparent tensions in the system. One could argue that they found it offered a sense of predictability—if you tried and tried again, you might have some sort of success in the end—but equally well the opposite might have been true. That there was no certainty other than the capriciousness of the powers-that-be.

Nonetheless, paradoxically, intimate access to the highest authorities that supplications allowed subjects was predicated on the subordination of subjects in a hierarchical system; a system where power flowed downwards and where subordination to the supreme power facilitated closeness. Today, Swedish and Finnish citizens are the equals of their representatives and rulers, and we have checks between the now separated judicial, executive, and legislative branches to prevent corruption by power. At the same time, the regulations put in place to make our political bodies more predictable and limit their powers have made it harder to reach in to them and exert influence through them.

Which brings me to the light bulb joke, as in ‘How many postmodernists (or new age gurus, or lawyers, or whoever) does it take to change a light bulb?’ A similar question, ‘How many people did it take to make Sweden’s central political system work?’, has been given one answer in this study. The Diet’s supplication channel in the Age of Liberty was more inclusive than the Estates in terms of social groups and gender, but still most of the people who used the supplication channel came from the middle and upper strata of society. In other words, people from a minority in Swedish society stood for the majority of interaction, and my findings do little to alter the picture of eighteenth-century Sweden as a society dominated by people of wealth and rank. The supplication channel stood open to anyone, and the lower strata of society did not have to pay the stamp duty, yet it does not seem that they used it to the extent that we can say that it compensated for their inferior socioeconomic and political positions. The egalitarian potential of the supplication channel was seemingly never realized.



**Figure 16.1** An elderly female pastry pedlar, Södermalm, Stockholm 1795. Not many supplicants from the lower strata of society can be found in the samples.

## 17 Epilogue

### The nineteenth century onwards

By the nineteenth century, the view on the state's proper role had started to change. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was believed that the state could involve itself in anything that was of common or universal interest. Everything else was of particular interest. These terms, 'common' and 'particular', had no absolute boundaries, although they were incompatible: an issue could not be both of common and particular interest at the same time. It could, however, certainly concern private interests and be of common interest.<sup>644</sup> This was exemplified by the supplications in this study: each individual instance of prejudice, each infringement of legal rights, was a correction of the entire system. By extension, the idea that anything could be of common interest invariably led to the conclusion that everything was. In 1726, David Silvius—mentioned on p. 113—said that 'The supreme power must out of necessity embrace and understand everything, which exists within a realm or state; property, persons and their actions'.<sup>645</sup> In the nineteenth century, however, more and more people felt that the state should no longer concern itself with everything and everyone, but rather provide society with legal frameworks and policies.<sup>646</sup> In such a context, it might seem that the idea of the active involvement of your ruler in your problems would go out of fashion.

But it did not. Although we can assume that supplications as an instrument for political purposes decreased, this does not imply that the idea of turning to one's king lost its power. This very idea is expressed in Lars Johan Govenius' short story *Carl XV och supplikanten* ('Carl XV and the supplicant'), published in 1877. Govenius treats the reader to a fictional tale about the civil servant Göran von Grip who, gripped by his gambling addiction, steals money from his job at the railway. His pious mother then seeks a pardon from Karl XV (1859–1872), kneeling and pleading at his side when she encounters him after a royal audience. The King is hesitant at first. He claims punishments are necessary to instill respect for the law in his subjects. Then, with a faint but magnanimous smile on his lips, he at last says, 'if I today do wrong according to worldly justice, I do right according to divine justice instead. Your son is pardoned.'<sup>647</sup> Indeed, to meet the king in person remained part of popular folklore well into the twentieth century, as a survey conducted by Stockholm's Nordiska museet showed in 1939–40.<sup>648</sup>

Neither was this folklore without a kernel of truth. The Bernadotte kings continued to receive supplications from Swedish citizens throughout the nineteenth century. Some of these followed administrative and judicial procedures, such as applications for marriages and divorces or pardons from death sentences. Others came from people in some sort of need, a need that they thought the king could solve. According to Grönhammar, supplications were a way for the Bernadotte monarchs—like for most if not all monarchs before—to show their royal

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<sup>644</sup> Melkersson, *Staten, ordningen och friheten*, 92–95.

<sup>645</sup> 'Öfverväldet måste nödvändigt med sin makt omfatta och begripa allt, hvad inom ett lands eller stats gränser sig befinner, både egendom, personer samt deras actioner görande och lätande'. Quoted in Ekegård, *Studier i svensk handelspolitik*, 130.

<sup>646</sup> See, for example, Melkersson, *Staten, ordningen och friheten*.

<sup>647</sup> 'om jag idag felar mot den *verldsliga*, så uppfyller jag i dess ställe den *gudomliga*. Er son är benådad', Govenius, *Carl XV och supplikanten*, 37.

<sup>648</sup> Grönhammar, 'Folkets böner till kungen', 121–122.

benevolence to the people of Sweden. Sometimes, they even displayed great interest in the supplicants who they came into contact with. It was also possible to have audiences with the king and queen at the Royal Palace as late as the 1930s.<sup>649</sup>

The supplication channel that the Chancellor of Justice had taken responsibility for in Gustaf III's early reign continued on during the nineteenth century. Under the office's aegis, the supplication channel even entered the twentieth century and survived two world wars. On 24 March 1961, the Chancellor of Justice Olof Alsén received the penultimate supplication from one Algot Berlin, who complained about the treatment of patients in St Jörgen's mental hospital in Gothenburg. Eighteen months later, 27 November 1962, a chancery clerk Ella Nilsson from Malmö wrote about an appointment.<sup>650</sup> Hers was the last ever supplication, and a very appropriate one considering the results of this study. The supplication channel closed. Some remains of what the supplication channel stood for can be found in the office of Justitieombudsmannen, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, whose job it is to make sure that the Swedish authorities follow 'the laws and rules that govern their work—especially such laws that pertain to individuals' rights and duties in relationship to the common.'<sup>651</sup> Though detached from the practical political role that supplications played and strictly legal in remit, the Parliamentary Ombudsman's job description could be used, word for word, to describe the role of the supplications in early modern society.

## Modern vestiges

There are some living constitutional traces of the right and practice to petition one's ruler in Western society. In Great Britain, the right to petition parliament is still found in common law as an inalienable right of every UK citizen, and nowadays it is possible to petition the government over the Internet. Each petition that receives over 10,000 signatures will be considered by the government, and any with over 100,000 signatures is considered for debate in Parliament. Across the Atlantic, the first amendment to the American Constitution safeguards the right of every American citizen to petition their president. The German Parliament also stands open to requests and complaints and as it says on the website through which you can submit e-petitions, the scope can vary from the very personal sphere to public concerns. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights also enables citizens of the EU to petition the European Parliament.<sup>652</sup> Of course, informal avenues still exist. The Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro was hit on the head with a mango during a public event in April 2015. The woman who had thrown it was searching for an apartment and had written her grievance and her telephone number on the fruit. The president later granted her an apartment in a TV broadcast.<sup>653</sup>

But the truth is that many governments could not intervene in individual affairs even if they wanted to, for fear of causing a political outcry or even breaking the law: the Swedish

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<sup>649</sup> Grönhammar, 'Folkets böner till kungen', 117–119, 121–123; see also Björn, *Bonde, herremand, konge*, 63–64.

<sup>650</sup> Vol. 21, Justitiekanslersämbetets supplikdiarium, RA.

<sup>651</sup> Riksdagens ombudsmän, 'Startsida'.

<sup>652</sup> UK Government and Parliament, 'Petitions'; Cornell University Law School, 'First amendment'; Deutscher Bundestag, 'Petitionen'; EUR-Lex, 'Charter of fundamental rights of the EU', article 44.

<sup>653</sup> Rafael Romo, 'Venezuelan President: new apartment for woman who plunked me with mango'.

government, for example, is forbidden to intervene in individual errands.<sup>654</sup> Nor do Swedish citizens have a legal right to submit proposals or requests to the Swedish Parliament, although there is nothing stopping me from ‘inspiring our delegates’, as the Parliament’s information centre informed me.<sup>655</sup> Demokratitredningen, an official commission of inquiry tasked with exploring ways to increase Swedish citizens’ participation in the democratic process, proposed that citizens be able to submit proposals directly to their local, regional, and national representative assemblies, and was duly rebuked from different quarters.<sup>656</sup> The inescapable fact is that Swedish citizens today face a bigger gap between them and their rulers and delegates than their early modern ancestors did.

On the other hand, people still seek the help of the current king, Karl XIV Gustav (1973–). On the Royal Court’s website, anyone who wants to get in touch with the royal family is met with both contact forms and a physical address for those who prefer letters.<sup>657</sup> I filled out the form, informing the king who I was, and that I wondered if the king still received requests from his subjects. Although only those who send physical letters were guaranteed an answer at the time, the email got a brief reply from one of the secretaries at the Royal Court, Helen Garofalo.<sup>658</sup> She not only confirmed that people still did this, but also added that all royal family members received letters from people wanting to meet them, asking for help with money or with righting injustices in society, or for something as small as a photo. Most requests and wishes cannot be satisfied, but according to Garofalo it sometimes happens.<sup>659</sup> A further inquiry in search of more specific information on how many people get in touch with the king about favours, and their success rate, was met with a polite reply that no further information would be provided.<sup>660</sup> A further attempt to write the King a supplication—both a re-enactment of the dissertation’s topic and a serious request for information—also failed. Perhaps the staff in the royal household felt I had already received sufficient answer. More likely, I simply forgot to include an address where His Royal Majesty could send his reply.

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<sup>654</sup> Regeringen.se, ‘Myndigheter’.

<sup>655</sup> Email from Dan Stenborg, 23 Apr. 2015.

<sup>656</sup> Lindvall and Wästberg, ‘Låt folket lägga förslag till riksdag och kommun’; Lindvall and Tedros, ‘Folkmotioner stimulerar till engagemang och debatt’.

<sup>657</sup> Kungahuset, ‘kontakt’.

<sup>658</sup> Kungahuset, ‘Hälsningar och frågor’.

<sup>659</sup> E-mail from Helen Garofalo, 27 Mar. 2012.

<sup>660</sup> E-mail from Helen Garofalo, 2 Apr. 2012.

## Svensk sammanfattning

Vilket politiskt inflytande hade folk utanför samhällseliten i Europa under den tidigmoderna epoken (ca 1500–1800)? Det är ett ständigt diskuterat ämne inom historieforskningen. Redan under medeltiden började de stater, som vi idag känner som nationalstater, ta form. Därmed centraliserades makten, inte obönhörligt men likväl sakta och säkert. Parlament och ständerförsamlingar, rättsarenor och andra typer av medel för interaktion mellan stat och samhälle – i avhandlingen kallade interaktionskanaler eller bara kanaler – fick då en allt viktigare roll. Den som ville utöva inflytande behövde allt oftare använda dessa kanaler. Därför är de viktiga att studera för den som vill titta närmre på politiskt inflytande och politiskt deltagande i det tidigmoderna Europa.

I Sverige har historiker framför allt forskat på riksdagen och häradstingen som viktiga kanaler mellan stat och samhälle. Suppliker eller böneskrifter, förfrågningar från svenska undersåtar riktade till kungen eller riksdagen, är däremot ett mycket mindre utforskat ämne. Ett frapperande konstaterande, med tanke på att suppliker troligtvis var den *vanligaste* kommunikationsformen mellan undersåtar och överhet under hela den tidigmoderna epoken. Supplikkanalen var dessutom tillgänglig för alla undersåtar – till skillnad från riksdagen som bara rymde representanter från adeln, prästerna, borgarna och bönderna – och tillät, potentiellt, supplikanterna direkt tillgång till den svenska statens centrala organ. I ett så hierarkiskt och auktoritärt samhälle som det tidigmoderna svenska fanns alltså ett kommunikationsmedel som överbryggade alla barriärer.

I den här studien behandlas suppliker riktade mot statens centrum, närmare sagt de som lämnades in till frihetstidens riksdag. Under frihetstiden (1719–1772) intog riksdagen en dominant politiskt ställning och kom i praktiken att mer eller mindre bli en del av den svenska staten på kuppen. Varje gång riksdagen möttes föll det på en speciell kommitté, Urskillningsdeputationen, att ta emot suppliker under riksdagens första månad och sedan avgöra vilka ärenden som kunde accepteras för vidare undersökning och vilka som skulle avvisas. Deras så kallade urskillningslistor, sammanfattningar av alla suppliker och vilket beslut kommittén fattade för varje supplik, och supplikerna själva utgör det huvudsakliga källmaterialet. Med hjälp av en databas kan jag visa vilka de flesta supplikanterna var (kön, social bakgrund, bostadsort), vad de ville och om de fick sina ärenden antagna för vidare undersökning.

Samtidigt är den organisatoriska kontexten för ständernas supplikkanal viktig att ta hänsyn till; de ideologiska och administrativa idéer och hänsynstaganden som formade kanalen och i sin tur påverkade vem som hade tillgång till den, både i teorin och i praktiken. Institutionell teori används för att matcha fynden från databasen med fynd från närläsning av lagtexter, riksdagsprotokoll och andra dokument från frihetstidens riksdagsarkiv. Genom matchningen framkommer vilka normer och regler som haft inflytande över lagstiftning, över tillgången till kanalen, och framför allt, över hur interaktionen i kanalen utvecklades.

Studien visar att precis som många svenska och europeiska medeltida och tidigmoderna furstar brottades ständerna från dag ett med en avvägning mellan administrativ realitet och effektivitet å ena sidan och patriarkalt ansvar och maktanspråk å andra sidan. Lagstiftningen var tydlig, bara de som hade ett ärende utan tydlig jurisdiktion eller hade behandlats fel under rättsprocessen hos Kungl. Maj:t kunde vända sig till riksdagen. Ändå strömmade supplikanter

till riksdagen med andra typer av frågor. Så kallade statsförknippade supplikanter, människor från hushåll där någon antingen arbetat eller arbetade åt staten vid suppliktillfället, dominerade i början. Framför allt från officers- och ämbetsmannahushåll. I det Stora nordiska krigets svallvågor behövde många någon form av offentlig omsorg för att försörja sig eller understöd i väntan på en ny tjänst. Ännu fler ville kräva pengar som staten var skyldig, andra förhandlade löner och förmåner som skurits ned för att få bukt med statens finanser. Trots att de flesta supplikerna inte följde reglerna godtog Urskillningsdeputationen mer än hälften av förfrågningarna för vidare undersökning i riksdagen. Här är det rimligt att anta att den patriarkala och maktlegitimerande aspekten av institutionen hade ett större genomslag än de formella reglerna, speciellt som riksdagens position var ny och i behov av legitimering och samhället var oroligt. Både supplikanter och riksdagsfullmäktige var till stor del överens om att avsteg från reglerna var befogat och supplikerna bidrog till att stabilisera samhället på 1720-talet.

När situationen lugnat ner sig kom motreaktionen 1727. Antalet ärenden tyngde ner riksdagens arbete och fördröjde viktigare ärenden ansågs det. Därför röstade ständerna fram ytterligare regler för kanalen, inklusive böter för vissa förseelser. Nya regler och böter följde under 1730- och 1740-talen och det är tydligt hur Urskillningsdeputationens regleringar harmoniserades med de som redan tillämpades i den kungliga hanteringen av suppliker och i de kungliga domstolarna. Samtidigt skänkte lagstiftningen supplikanterna legitimitet. Rätten att överklaga Urskillningsdeputationens beslut blev till exempel satt på pränt. Överklaganden mot Kungl. Maj:t i själva sakfrågan blev dessutom i praktiken tillåtet förutom för Justitierevisionens domar. Detta ansågs urholka kungens symboliska suveränitet och expandera riksdagens makt alltför långt. Det utökade och hårdare regelverket fick hur som helst en tydlig effekt, antalet suppliker sjönk drastiskt.

Men, minskningen innebar inte att supplikanter och riksdagsfullmäktige följde reglerna. Illegitima ärenden fortsatte att lämnas in till och accepteras av Urskillningsdeputationen i hög grad. Supplikanter envisades med att gå direkt till ständens möteskammare och lämna in sina förfrågningar där, och få dem antagna, trots att det var förbjudet. Övervakning och synkronisering var svårt att åstadkomma i en riksdag utspridd över hela Stockholms stadskärna och riksdagsfullmäktiges olika egenintressen gick gång på gång stick i stäv med lagstiftningens innebörd. Även om interaktionen inte längre styrdes av de normer som dominerat i frihetstidens början, var det inte de formella reglerna som guidade interaktionen heller.

Däremot försvann många av de ärenden som dominerat kanalen i början. Supplikantgruppen förändrades. Antalet statsförknippade supplikanter sjönk och de som blev kvar var sådana som tjänade staten när de supplicerade. Borta var många av de som inte aktivt tjänade staten vid suppliktillfället, inklusive kvinnliga supplikanter som utgjort runt en tiondel av supplikanterna i början av frihetstiden. När kanalens interaktion styrdes av andra normer än de formella reglerna fanns troligen ett utrymme för agerande som kvinnor från statsförknippade hushåll använde sig av i just hushållsfrågor. Efter 1727 var deras numerär avsevärt mindre.

När den stora vågen av statsförknippade supplikanter lagt sig efter 1727, växte gruppen ofrälse supplikanters andel, närmare bestämt supplikanter som var borgare, präster eller bönder. Till skillnad från den tidiga frihetstiden så började dessa grupper alltmer utgöras av korporationer som använde sig av kanalen för att få in ärenden i riksdagen. Speciellt städer verkar ha haft ett behov av att använda kanalen i närings- och skattefrågor. Bönderna och prästerna använde



kanalen i mindre utsträckning, de förra för i stort sett bara skatte- och markfrågor, de senare för en blandning av tjänste-, skatte- och omsorgsfrågor.

Under den senare halvan av frihetstiden verkar supplikkanalens interaktion alltmer ha överensstämmt med de formella reglerna. Supplikinstitutionens administrativa och juridiska normer och idéer hade större inflytande över interaktionen. Fler legitima suppliker lämnades in och majoriteten av antagna suppliker var legitima. Supplikanterna anpassade också sitt beteende på andra sätt. Framför allt var nästan hälften av supplikerna överklaganden av Kungl. Maj:t. Detta fynd är både förväntat och iögonfallande. Att de ofrälse stånden använde riksdagarna till att överklaga Kungl. Maj:ts beslut är inte någon överraskning men att adelsmän och ofrälse ståndspersoner gjorde det, så regelbundet och ofta, verkar ha missats av tidigare forskning.

Det finns tre troliga anledningar bakom utvecklingen under den senare frihetstiden. Sannolikt var Urskillningsdeputationens utveckling en del av en större institutionaliseringsprocess för hela riksdagen. Efter ett par årtionden var riksdagens organisation och arbetssätt inarbetade och accepterade. Å andra sidan började kommitténs arbete granskas av resten av riksdagen. Därmed kunde de få stå till svars för sina handlingar på ett sätt de kunnat undgå tidigare. En tredje faktor är de ändringar i praxis till förmån för de ofrälse ståndens riksdagsfullmäktige. Urskillningsdeputationen höll öppet längre för riksdagsledamöter med riksdagsbesvär och dessutom stred fler av de accepterade supplikerna från andra terminen mot reglerna. Kort sagt, de ofrälse riksdagsledamöternas motivation att upprätthålla supplikkanalens regelverk ökade troligen när de visste att de själva skulle få en generösare tillgång och granskning. Hur som helst innebar den ökade överensstämmelsen mellan regelverk och interaktion att de möjligheter som existerat under den tidiga frihetstiden inte längre fanns.

1760-talets ständer fick emellertid uppleva att regelöverensstämmelse lika gärna kunde innebära fler suppliker. Antalet suppliker sköt i höjden under det tidiga 1760-talet då ändrade befordransregler gjorde det enklare att avgöra och mäta kompetens. De som gått miste om en befordran till förmån för någon mindre kompetent kunde överklaga till riksdagen, vilket var precis det som hände. De statsförknippade supplikanterna återkom alltså för en andra våg men den här var uteslutande manlig; män som hade tjänst vid suppliktillfället. Likaså ökade mängden suppliker för att supplikanterna från 1760 hade rätt att återkomma med ett ärende om det antagits vid en riksdag som avslutats innan ständerna fattat ett beslut gällande suppliken.

Undersökningen visar att det inte var lätt att sköta en supplikkanal. En rimlig fråga att ställa sig då är varför ständerna ens brydde sig? Om nu supplikerna drog ner arbetstakten, varför inte bara avskaffa dem? En del av förklaringarna har redan nämnts, som behovet av att legitimera sig, det patriarkala ansvaret för statstjänare som sökte kompensation eller understöd, och egenintresse. Samtidigt ska supplikernas juridiska funktion framhåvas. En metod att se till att det förhatliga kungliga enväldet inte återkom var att granska statens verksamhet, utöva revision, varje gång ständerna träffades. Revisionen garanterade också undersåtarnas rättigheter, då alla förtjänade ett lagenligt fungerande och rättvist bemötande från kronans tjänare. Supplikerna var ett medel för att utföra revision; genom prövandet av enskilda ärenden granskades den rättsliga och administrativa apparaten, en nytta som tillkom hela samhället.

Med tanke på att revisionen var en riksdagens nagel i kungens öga är det inte så konstigt att det var just i motsättningen mellan kung och riksdag som supplikinstitutionen blev ifrågasatt. Kungafamiljen och deras anhängare lanserade vid riksdagen 1769–70 ett förslag till maktindelning

mellan kung och riksdag som skulle ha gjort riksdagen till enbart lagstiftande församling. Inblandningen i enskilda ärenden skulle helt ha avskaffats. Säkerhetsakten blev inte godkänd av riksdagen men debatten kring förslaget alstrade talande argument. För att parafrasera adelsmannen Pechlin fanns det ingen som var så kompetent att överse lagarnas tillämpning som den som stiftat den. I vår tid värdesätts maktindelningen mellan de lagstiftande, dömande och verkställande organen som en grundpelare för rättssäkerhet. För Pechlin låg rättssäkerheten i förenandet av dessa roller. Att vi idag inte har samma tillgång till våra makthavare och representanter som 1700-talets svenskar hade genom suppliker beror på att vi fjättrat dem med diverse lagar och regler. Ministerstyre är som bekant olagligt i Sverige. Den oerhörda makt och prestige som det finns i att visa nåd och skipa rättvisa är oåtkomlig för dagens riksdagsledamöter och regeringsmedlemmar, på bekostnad av ett avstånd till medborgarna. Ett avstånd som idag används mot etablissemangen och deras påstådda verklighetsflykt.

Med det sagt ska inte supplikkanalens förmåga till att överbrygga avstånd och hierarkier överdrivas. På den här nivån, riksdagens supplikkanal, var det knappt några människor som tillhörde de lägre samhällsskikten. Visserligen, de så kallade ofrälse ståndspersonerna som stod utanför riksdagen fick genom kanalen tillgång till denna och kunde utöva inflytande över sin karriär och sin försörjning. Detta behöver beaktas när vi pratar om den gruppens politiska möjligheter i 1700-talets Sverige. Men bara för att supplikkanalen var mer inkluderande än ständerna betyder det alltså inte att den nådde lägre ner i samhället. Inte heller underminerar fynden vår bild av riksdagen som en manlig arena. Visserligen var det många kvinnor som använde kanalen i början av frihetstiden men deras närvaro minskade tydligt efter 1727. Att de fortfarande fanns kvar i kanalen får anses vara iögonfallande i sig men ruckar inte på vår syn på 1700-talspolitik som ett huvudsakligen manligt företag. Kanalens utjämnande potential uppfylldes aldrig.

# Attachments

## Important note on the sources for the attachments

Seeing as the sources for most of the tables and figures are the same, they will be specified here and not repeated in connection to every single table and figure. When other sources than those specified here have been used, I have made sure to specify this.

### Most often used sources for statistical data in tables and figures

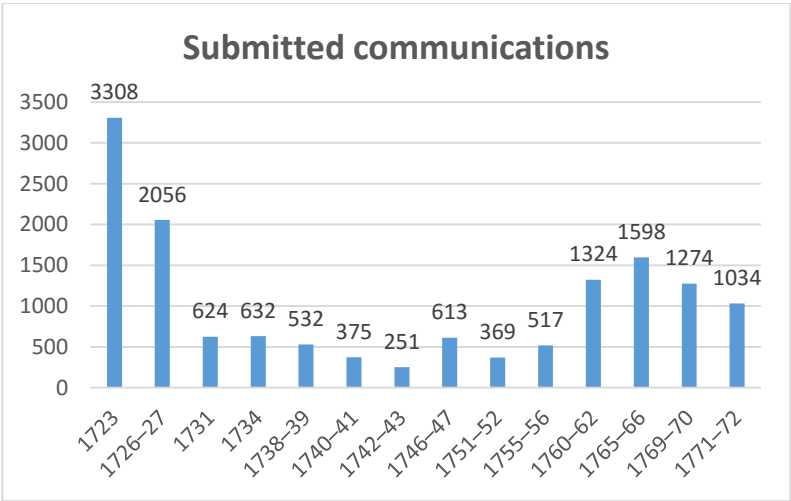
*Social background:* R2522, R2944, R3637–3640, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; RaS 1727, in RaP 5, p. 733-736; RaS 1747, in RaP 17, p. 418-420; RaS 1772, in RaP 31, p. 79-87.

*Place of residence:* R2522, R2944, R3637–3640, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS; Google maps.

*Requests:* R2522, R2944, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

*Acceptance rates:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

### Attachment 1



The number of listings in the Screening Deputation's screening lists (by listings). *Sources:* R2458, R2522, R2576, R2643, R2727, R2804, R2856, R2944, R3033, R3126, R3258, R3420, R3538, R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA.

### *Attachment 2*

	1726–27	1746–47	1771–72	Total
<b>Listings in the screening lists</b>	2056	613	1034	3703
<b>Sampled listings</b>	684	204	344	1232
<b>Administrative referrals/missing</b>	83	1	0	84
<b>Remaining listings</b>	601	203	344	1148
<b>Supplications in remaining listings</b>	756	285	359	1400

The three sampled supplication listings, broken down by type (by listings and supplications).

### *Attachment 3*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Sweden</b>	325	43,0%	166	58,2%	285	79,4%
<b>Finland</b>	83	11,0%	51	17,9%	38	10,6%
<b>German provinces</b>	10	1,3%	3	1,1%	4	1,1%
<b>Abroad</b>	17	2,2%	2	0,7%	7	1,9%
<b>Unknown</b>	321	42,5%	63	22,1%	25	7,0%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

All supplicants' origin, large scale (by supplications).

### *Attachment 4*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Göteborg</b>	143	35,0%	77	38,1%	125	38,9%
<b>Svealand</b>	155	38,0%	82	40,6%	144	44,9%
<b>Norrland</b>	27	6,6%	7	3,5%	15	4,7%
<b>Western Finland</b>	58	14,2%	18	8,9%	26	8,1%
<b>Southeastern Finland</b>	12	2,9%	18	8,9%	11	3,4%
<b>Unknown</b>	13	3,2%	15	7,4%	2	0,6%
<b>Total</b>	408	100,0%	202	100,0%	321	100,0%

All Swedish supplicants' origin, medium scale (by supplications).

*Attachment 5*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Malmöhus</b>	14	3,4%	5	2,3%	16	5,0%
<b>Kristianstad</b>	1	0,2%	3	1,4%	6	1,9%
<b>Blekinge</b>	15	3,7%	10	4,6%	9	2,8%
<b>Halland</b>	10	2,5%	0	0,0%	16	5,0%
<b>Kronoberg<sup>661</sup></b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	2	0,6%
<b>Jönköping</b>	15	3,7%	3	1,4%	9	2,8%
<b>Kalmar</b>	11	2,7%	4	1,8%	7	2,2%
<b>Göteborg and Bohus</b>	30	7,4%	16	7,4%	23	7,1%
<b>Älvsborg</b>	3	0,7%	5	2,3%	7	2,2%
<b>Skaraborg</b>	8	2,0%	0	0,0%	8	2,5%
<b>Östergötland</b>	26	6,4%	30	13,8%	15	4,6%
<b>Gotland</b>	3	0,7%	0	0,0%	6	1,9%
<b>Närke-Värmland</b>	19	4,7%	13	6,0%	8	2,5%
<b>Västmanland</b>	9	2,2%	5	2,3%	10	3,1%
<b>Södermanland</b>	12	2,9%	9	4,1%	20	6,2%
<b>Stockholm</b>	91	22,3%	46	21,2%	89	27,6%
<b>Uppland</b>	12	2,9%	7	3,2%	8	2,5%
<b>Kopparberg</b>	12	2,9%	2	0,9%	9	2,8%
<b>Gävleborg<sup>662</sup></b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	4	1,2%
<b>Västernorrland</b>	23	5,6%	7	3,2%	6	1,9%
<b>Västerbotten</b>	4	1,0%	0	0,0%	5	1,5%
<b>Åbo and Björneborg</b>	38	9,3%	13	6,0%	16	5,0%
<b>Nyland and Tavastehus</b>	8	2,0%	11	5,1%	7	2,2%
<b>Kymmenegård and Savolax</b>	4	1,0%	7	3,2%	4	1,2%
<b>Österbotten</b>	20	4,9%	5	2,3%	10	3,1%
<b>Unknown</b>	20	4,9%	16	7,4%	3	0,9%
<b>Total</b>	408	100,0%	217	100,0%	323	100,0%

All Swedish supplicants' origin, county scale (by supplications).

<sup>661</sup> Did not exist in 1726 and 1746.

<sup>662</sup> Did not exist in 1726 and 1746.

**Attachment 6**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Individuals</b>	532	70,4%	140	49,1%	185	51,5%
<b>Groups</b>	66	8,7%	40	14,0%	20	5,6%
<b>Corporate bodies</b>	149	19,7%	105	36,8%	151	42,1%
<b>Other</b>	9	1,2%	0	0,0%	3	0,8%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

Supplicants by type (by supplications).

**Attachment 7**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Men</b>	499	66,0%	161	56,5%	180	50,1%
<b>Women</b>	81	10,7%	14	4,9%	16	4,5%
<b>Men and women</b>	2	0,3%	1	0,4%	4	1,1%
<b>Corporate bodies</b>	149	19,7%	105	36,8%	151	42,1%
<b>Other</b>	25	3,3%	4	1,4%	8	2,2%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

Supplicants by gender (by supplications).

**Attachment 8**

	1738–39		1740–41		1742–43	
<b>Women</b>	42	7,9%	19	5,1%	9	3,6%
<b>Men and women</b>	1	0,2%	1	0,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	489	91,9%	355	94,7%	242	96,4%
<b>Total</b>	532	100,0%	375	100,0%	251	100,0%

Number of female supplicants at diets between 1738 and 1743. Listings and supplications. *Sources:* Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1738 Inkomne Mähl och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade eller ey antagne blifwit, *ÅT* 1738; Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1741 Inkomne Mähl, och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade, eller ei antagne blifwit, *ÅT* 1741; Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1742 Inkomne Mål, och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade, eller ej antagne blifwit, *ÅT* 1743.

**Attachment 9**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Widow</b>	59	71,1%	9	60,0%	11	55,0%
<b>Not a widow</b>	5	6,0%	4	26,7%	3	15,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	19	22,9%	2	13,3%	6	30,0%
<b>Total</b>	83	100,0%	15	100,0%	20	100,0%

Marital status of female supplicants (by supplications).

**Attachment 10**

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Noblemen</b>	177	23,4%	38	13,3%	67	18,7%
<b>Clergy</b>	48	6,3%	31	10,9%	12	3,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	92	12,2%	86	30,2%	136	37,9%
<b>Peasants</b>	12	1,6%	22	7,7%	46	12,8%
<b>The army command</b>	62	8,2%	3	1,1%	2	0,6%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	249	32,9%	85	29,8%	81	22,6%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	26	3,4%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	29	3,8%	1	0,4%	9	2,5%
<b>Unknown</b>	61	8,1%	19	6,7%	6	1,7%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

Suplicants by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 11**

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Artisans</b>	41	44.6%	8	9.3%	13	9.6%
<b>Manufactory owners</b>	0	0.0%	12	14.0%	7	5.1%
<b>Mayors and magistrate judges</b>	2	2.2%	10	11.6%	2	1.5%
<b>Merchants and masters</b>	22	23.9%	3	3.5%	12	8.8%
<b>Mining districts</b>	7	7.6%	2	2.3%	2	1.5%
<b>Towns</b>	15	16.3%	50	58.1%	94	69.1%
<b>Others</b>	5	5.4%	1	1.2%	6	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	92	100.0%	86	100.0%	136	100.0%

Burgher supplicants by profession or type (by supplications).

**Attachment 12**

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Individuals</b>	6	50.0%	0	0.0%	10	21.7%
<b>Collectives</b>	3	25.0%	3	13.6%	2	4.3%
<b>Parishes and villages</b>	2	16.7%	6	27.3%	9	19.6%
<b>Districts</b>	0	0.0%	7	31.8%	21	45.7%
<b>Regions</b>	1	8.3	6	27.3%	4	8.7%
<b>Total</b>	12	100.0%	22	100.0%	46	100.0%

Peasant supplicants by type (by supplications).

*Attachment 13*

1726–27		
<b>Men</b>	17	65,4%
<b>Women</b>	6	23,1%
<b>Men and women</b>	1	3,8%
<b>Corporate bodies</b>	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	2	7,7%
<b>Total</b>	26	100,0%

Unrepresented lower group supplicants by sex (by supplications).

*Attachment 14*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	21	25,3%	5	33,3%	7	35,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	2	2,4%	1	6,7%	0	0,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	8	9,6%	1	6,7%	3	15,0%
<b>Peasants</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	5,0%
<b>The army command</b>	30	36,1%	7	46,7%	6	30,0%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	7	8,4%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	15	18,1%	1	6,7%	3	15,0%
<b>Total</b>	83	100,0%	15	100,0%	20	100,0%

Female supplicants by Estate (by supplications).

*Attachment 15a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Clergy</b>	19	12,8%	24	22,9%	2	1,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	48	32,2%	57	54,3%	108	71,5%
<b>Peasants</b>	3	2,0%	19	18,1%	34	22,5%
<b>The army command</b>	62	41,6%	3	2,9%	2	1,3%
<b>Other</b>	17	11,4%	2	1,9%	5	3,3%
<b>Total</b>	149	100,0%	105	100,0%	151	100,0%

Corporate supplicants by Estate (by supplications).



**Attachment 15b**

		<b>Clergy</b>		<b>Burghers</b>		<b>Peasants</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>1726–27</b>	<b>Suppl.</b>	48	-	92	-	12	-	152	-
	<b>FCB.</b>	19	39,6%	48	52,2%	3	25,0%	70	46,1%
<b>1746–47</b>	<b>Suppl.</b>	31	-	86	-	22	-	139	-
	<b>FCB.</b>	24	77,4%	57	66,3%	19	86,4%	100	71,9%
<b>1771–72</b>	<b>Suppl.</b>	12	-	136	-	46	-	194	-
	<b>FCB.</b>	2	16,7%	108	79,4%	34	73,9%	144	74,2%

The proportion of supplications submitted by clergy, burghers or peasants that were submitted by or on behalf of corporate bodies (by supplications). Suppl.=supplications, FCB=From corporate bodies.<sup>663</sup>

**Attachment 16a**

	<b>Diet corporate bodies</b>		<b>Diet delegate</b>		<b>None</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>1726–27</b>	132	17.5%	101	13.4%	523	69.2%	756	100.0%
<b>1746–47</b>	103	36.1%	29	10.2%	153	53.7%	285	100.0%
<b>1771–72</b>	146	40.7%	33	9.2%	180	50.1%	359	100.0%

Supplications submitted by diet corporate bodies and diet delegates (by supplications).

**Attachment 16b**

<b>1726-27</b>									
	<b>Diet corporate bodies</b>		<b>Diet delegate</b>		<b>None</b>		<b>Total</b>		
<b>Noblemen</b>	0	0,0%	92	52,0%	85	48,0%	177	100,0%	
<b>Clergy</b>	19	39,6%	6	12,5%	23	47,9%	48	100,0%	
<b>Burghers</b>	48	52,2%	3	3,3%	41	44,6%	92	100,0%	
<b>Peasants</b>	3	25,0%	0	0,0%	9	75,0%	12	100,0%	
<b>The Army command</b>	62	100,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	62	100,0%	
<b>Total</b>	132	33,8%	101	25,8%	158	40,4%	391	100,0%	

Supplications submitted by diet corporate bodies and diet delegates, by Estate, at the 1726–27 diet (by supplications).

<sup>663</sup> The percentages refer to the portions of all supplications submitted by corporate bodies from that group. At the 1726–27 diet for example, 48 supplications from clergymen were submitted and 19 of those, 39,6 %, stemmed from corporate bodies.

**Attachment 16c**

1746-47								
	Diet corporate bodies		Diet delegate		None		Total	
<b>Noblemen</b>	0	0,0%	18	47,4%	20	52,6%	38	100,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	24	77,4%	2	6,5%	5	16,1%	31	100,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	57	66,3%	9	10,5%	20	23,3%	86	100,0%
<b>Peasants</b>	19	86,4%	0	0,0%	3	13,6%	22	100,0%
<b>The army command</b>	3	100,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
<b>Total</b>	103	57,2%	29	16,1%	48	26,7%	180	100,0%

Supplications submitted by Diet corporate bodies and Diet delegates, by Estate, at the 1746–47 diet (by supplications).

**Attachment 16d**

1771-72								
	Diet corporate bodies		Diet delegate		None		Total	
<b>Noblemen</b>	0	0,0%	24	35,8%	43	64,2%	67	100,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	2	16,7%	4	33,3%	6	50,0%	12	100,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	108	79,4%	1	0,7%	27	19,9%	136	100,0%
<b>Peasants</b>	34	73,9%	4	8,7%	8	17,4%	46	100,0%
<b>The army command</b>	2	100,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	2	100,0%
<b>Total</b>	146	55,5%	33	12,5%	84	31,9%	263	100,0%

Supplications submitted by Diet corporate bodies and Diet delegates, by Estate, at the 1771–72 diet (by supplications).

**Attachment 17**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	All	Gravamina		All	Gravamina		All	Gravamina	
<b>Noblemen</b>	177	17	9,6%	38	1	2,6%	67	4	6,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	48	14	29,2%	31	25	80,6%	12	7	58,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	92	34	37,0%	86	58	67,4%	136	105	77,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	12	3	25,0%	22	19	86,4%	46	37	80,4%
<b>The army command</b>	62	28	45,2%	3	2	66,7%	2	2	100,0%
<b>Total</b>	391	96	24,6%	180	105	58,3%	263	155	58,9%

Supplications submitted by people from the five Estates definable as particular gravamina (by supplications).

*Attachment 18*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Ecclesiastical Servants</b>	48	6,3%	31	10,9%	12	3,3%
<b>Commercial agents</b>	108	14,3%	88	30,9%	142	39,6%
<b>Rural land-proprietors</b>	15	2,0%	36	12,6%	47	13,1%
<b>Military</b>	312	41,3%	61	21,4%	67	18,7%
<b>Civil servants</b>	137	18,1%	49	17,2%	64	17,8%
<b>Other</b>	76	10,1%	13	4,6%	18	5,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	60	7,9%	7	2,5%	9	2,5%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

Supplicants by secondary status (by supplications).

*Attachment 19*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Ecclesiastical servants</b>	2	2,4%	1	6,7%	0	0,0%
<b>Commercial agents</b>	7	8,4%	1	6,7%	3	15,0%
<b>Rural land-proprietors</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	5,0%
<b>Military</b>	28	33,7%	9	60,0%	7	35,0%
<b>Civil servants</b>	20	24,1%	2	13,3%	3	15,0%
<b>Other</b>	13	15,7%	0	0,0%	2	10,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	13	15,7%	2	13,3%	4	20,0%
<b>Total</b>	83	100,0%	15	100,0%	20	100,0%

Female supplicants by secondary status (by supplications).

*Attachment 20*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Commercial agents</b>	16	6.4%	3	3.5%	5	6.2%
<b>Rural land-proprietors</b>	2	0.8%	14	16.5%	0	0.0%
<b>Military</b>	123	49.4%	36	42.4%	23	28.4%
<b>Civil servants</b>	73	29.3%	21	24.7%	44	54.3%
<b>Other</b>	35	14.1%	11	12.9%	9	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	249	100.0%	85	100.0%	81	100.0%

Secondary status of commoner of rank supplicants (by supplications). Other includes unknown.

*Attachment 21*

<b>1726–27</b>		
<b>Commercial Agents</b>	1	3,8%
<b>Military</b>	19	73,1%
<b>Other</b>	6	23,1%
<b>Total</b>	26	100,0%

Unrepresented lower group supplicants by secondary status (by supplications).

*Attachment 22a*

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>State-affiliated</b>	550	72,8%	144	50,5%	151	42,3%
<b>Not state-affiliated</b>	206	27,2%	141	49,5%	208	57,9%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0 %	285	100,0 %	357	100,0 %

Supplicants by state affiliation (by supplications).

*Attachment 22b*

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>State-affiliated female supplicants</b>	60	73.2%	12	92.3%	11	55.0%
<b>All female supplicants</b>	82	100.0 %	13	100.0 %	20	100.0 %

Female supplicants by state affiliation (by supplications).

*Attachment 22c*

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Noblemen</b>	153	27,8%	37	25,7%	63	41,7%
<b>Clergy</b>	48	8,7%	31	21,5%	12	7,9%
<b>Burghers</b>	2	0,4%	10	6,9%	2	1,3%
<b>The army command</b>	62	11,3%	3	2,1%	2	1,3%
<b>Commoners or rank</b>	212	38,5%	58	40,3%	69	45,7%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	23	4,2%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	22	4,0%	1	0,7%	3	2,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	28	5,1%	4	2,8%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	550	100,0%	144	100,0%	151	100,0%

State-affiliated supplicants by Estate (by supplications).

*Attachment 22d*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Ecclesiastical servants</b>	2	3,3%	1	8,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Military</b>	28	46,7%	9	75,0%	8	72,7%
<b>Civil servants</b>	20	33,3%	2	16,7%	2	18,2%
<b>Other</b>	10	16,7%	0	0,0%	1	9,1%
<b>Total</b>	60	100,0 %	12	100,0 %	11	100,0 %

Female state-affiliated supplicants by secondary status (by supplications).

*Attachment 23*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Employed</b>	333	60.5%	104	72.2%	131	86.8%
<b>Unemployed/expectant</b>	139	25.3%	29	20.1%	11	7.3%
<b>Retired</b>	14	2.5%	0	0.0%	2	1.3%
<b>Deceased father or brother</b>	11	2.0%	3	2.1%	0	0.0%
<b>Widowed</b>	53	9.6%	8	5.6%	7	4.6%
<b>Total amount of non-employed</b>	217	39.5%	40	27.8%	20	13.2%

Employment status of state-affiliated supplicants (by supplications).

*Attachment 24a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Group 1</b>	35	11,2%	2	3,3%	4	6,0%
<b>Group 2</b>	59	18,9%	13	21,3%	22	32,8%
<b>Group 3</b>	89	28,5%	27	44,3%	36	53,7%
<b>Group 4</b>	25	8,0%	14	23,0%	1	1,5%
<b>Private soldiers</b>	18	5,8%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	86	27,6%	5	8,2%	4	6,0%
<b>Total</b>	312	100,0%	61	100,0%	67	100,0%

Supplicants with military titles by rank (by supplications).

*Attachment 24b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Group 1</b>	27	19,7%	2	4,1%	5	7,8%
<b>Group 2</b>	12	8,8%	5	10,2%	9	14,1%
<b>Group 3</b>	31	22,6%	25	51,0%	17	26,6%
<b>Group 4</b>	55	40,1%	12	24,5%	32	50,0%
<b>Other</b>	12	8,8%	5	10,2%	1	1,6%
<b>Total</b>	137	100,0%	49	100,0%	64	100,0%

Supplicants with civil service titles by rank (by supplications).

*Attachment 24c*

	1726-27		1746-47		1771-72	
<b>Group 1</b>	62	13,8%	4	3,6%	9	6,9%
<b>Group 2</b>	71	15,8%	18	16,4%	31	23,7%
<b>Group 3</b>	120	26,7%	52	47,3%	53	40,5%
<b>Group 4</b>	80	17,8%	26	23,6%	33	25,2%
<b>Private soldiers</b>	18	4,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	98	21,8%	10	9,1%	5	3,8%
<b>Total</b>	449	100,0%	110	100,0%	131	100,0%

Supplicants with military or civil service titles by rank (by supplications).

*Attachment 25*

	1726-27		1746-47		1771-72	
<b>Welfare</b>	115	15,2%	40	14,0%	30	8,4%
<b>Fiscal</b>	337	44,6%	86	30,2%	106	29,5%
<b>Employment</b>	165	21,8%	53	18,6%	73	20,3%
<b>Judicial</b>	53	7,0%	19	6,7%	49	13,6%
<b>Commerce</b>	59	7,8%	69	24,2%	72	20,1%
<b>Other</b>	27	3,6%	18	6,3%	29	8,1%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The supplications by resources requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 26a*

	1726-27		1746-47		1771-72	
<b>Expectancy list</b>	39	33,9%	8	20,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Maintenance and construction</b>	4	3,5%	7	17,5%	18	60,0%
<b>Pension and support</b>	64	55,7%	16	40,0%	9	30,0%
<b>Other</b>	8	7,0%	9	22,5%	3	10,0%
<b>Total</b>	115	100,0%	40	100,0%	30	100,0%

Welfare resources by subcategory (by supplications).

*Attachment 26b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Claims</b>	242	71,8%	25	29,1%	28	26,4%
<b>Property</b>	33	9,8%	11	12,8%	29	27,4%
<b>Taxes</b>	29	8,6%	38	44,2%	45	42,5%
<b>Other</b>	33	9,8%	12	14,0%	4	3,8%
<b>Total</b>	337	100,0%	86	100,0%	106	100,0%

Fiscal resources by subcategory (by supplications).

*Attachment 26c*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Appointments</b>	31	18,8%	18	34,0%	16	21,9%
<b>Benefits</b>	120	72,7%	13	24,5%	18	24,7%
<b>Prejudice</b>	1	0,6%	15	28,8%	26	35,6%
<b>Other</b>	13	7,9	7	13,2%	13	17,8%
<b>Total</b>	165	100,0%	53	100,0%	73	100,0%

Employment resources by subcategory (by supplications).

*Attachment 26d*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Administrative</b>	4	7,5%	5	26,3%	5	10,2%
<b>Civil cases</b>	26	49,1%	7	36,8%	35	71,4%
<b>Malfeasance</b>	14	26,4%	1	5,3%	2	4,1%
<b>Mercy</b>	8	15,1%	1	5,3%	3	6,1%
<b>Other</b>	1	1,9%	5	26,3%	4	8,2%
<b>Total</b>	53	100,0%	19	100,0%	49	100,0%

Judicial resources by subcategory (by supplications).

*Attachment 26e*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Privilege and terms</b>	28	47,5%	43	62,3%	33	45,8%
<b>Protection</b>	24	40,7%	15	21,7%	16	22,2%
<b>Support</b>	1	1,7%	2	2,9%	21	29,2%
<b>Other</b>	6	10,2%	9	13,0%	2	2,8%
<b>Total</b>	59	100,0%	69	100,0%	72	100,0%

Commerce resources by subcategory (by supplications).

*Attachment 26f*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Agriculture, forestry and fisheries</b>	7	11,9%	8	11,6%	4	5,6%
<b>Commodities and hospitality</b>	30	50,8%	22	31,9%	23	31,9%
<b>Mining, metal and wood production</b>	12	20,3%	17	24,6%	8	11,1%
<b>Trade and Transport</b>	7	11,9%	19	27,5%	33	45,8%
<b>Other</b>	3	5,1%	3	4,3%	4	5,6%
<b>Total</b>	59	100,0%	69	100,0%	72	100,0%

Commerce resources by concerned economic sector (by supplications).

*Attachment 27a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	20	17,4%	4	10,0%	5	16,7%
<b>Clergy</b>	9	7,8%	4	10,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	6	5,2%	15	37,5%	19	63,3%
<b>Peasants</b>	0	0,0%	1	2,5%	2	6,7%
<b>The army command</b>	1	0,9%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	65	56,5%	16	40,0%	2	6,7%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	5	4,3%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	2	1,7%	0	0,0%	2	6,7%
<b>Unknown</b>	7	6,1%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	115	100,0%	40	100,0%	30	100,0%

Supplicants who made welfare requests by Estate (by supplications).



*Attachment 27b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	91	27,0%	14	16,3%	18	17,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	11	3,3%	10	11,6%	2	1,9%
<b>Burghers</b>	32	9,5%	16	18,6%	35	33,0%
<b>Peasants</b>	9	2,7%	14	16,3%	34	32,1%
<b>The army command</b>	17	5,0%	1	1,2%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	108	32,0%	25	29,1%	16	15,1%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	19	5,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	10	3,0%	0	0,0%	1	0,9%
<b>Unknown</b>	40	11,9%	6	7,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	337	100,0%	86	100,0%	106	100,0%

Suplicants who made fiscal requests by Estate (by suplications).

*Attachment 27c*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	34	20,6%	14	26,4%	22	30,1%
<b>Clergy</b>	25	15,2%	7	13,2%	7	9,6%
<b>Burghers</b>	2	1,2%	4	7,5%	10	13,7%
<b>Peasants</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	1,4%
<b>The army command</b>	40	24,2%	1	1,9%	1	1,4%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	46	27,9%	24	45,3%	30	41,1%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	1	0,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	16	9,7%	1	1,9%	1	1,4%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	0,6%	2	3,8%	1	1,4%
<b>Total</b>	165	100,0%	53	100,0%	73	100,0%

Suplicants who made employment requests by Estate (by suplications).

*Attachment 27d*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	14	26,4%	2	10,5%	12	24,5%
<b>Clergy</b>	2	3,8%	6	31,6%	1	2,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	11	20,8%	2	10,5%	8	16,3%
<b>Peasants</b>	2	3,8%	0	0,0%	4	8,2%
<b>The army command</b>	1	1,9%	1	5,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	12	22,6%	6	31,6%	16	32,7%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	1	1,9%	0	0,0%	4	8,2%
<b>Other</b>	10	18,9%	2	10,5%	4	8,2%
<b>Unknown</b>	53	100,0%	19	100,0%	49	100,0%

Suplicants who made judicial requests by Estate (by supplications).

*Attachment 27e*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	6	10,2%	3	4,3%	3	4,2%
<b>Clergy</b>	1	1,7%	1	1,4%	0	0,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	37	62,7%	44	63,8%	57	79,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	1	1,7%	6	8,7%	4	5,6%
<b>The army command</b>	1	1,7%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	11	18,6%	6	8,7%	8	11,1%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	1	1,7%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	1,7%	9	13,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Noblemen</b>	59	100,0%	69	100,0%	72	100,0%

Suplicants who made commerce requests by Estate (by supplications).

***Attachment 27f***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Noblemen</b>	12	44,4%	1	5,6%	7	24,1%
<b>Clergy</b>	0	0,0%	3	16,7%	2	6,9%
<b>Burghers</b>	4	14,8%	5	27,8%	7	24,1%
<b>Peasants</b>	0	0,0%	1	5,6%	1	3,4%
<b>The army command</b>	7	25,9%	0	0,0%	1	3,4%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	0	0,0%	8	44,4%	9	31,0%)
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	2	7,4%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	3,4%
<b>Unknown</b>	2	7,4%	0	0,0%	1	3,4%
<b>Noblemen</b>	27	100,0%	18	100,0%	29	100,0%

Suplicants who made other requests by Estate (by supplications).

***Attachment 28***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Welfare</b>	21	25,3%	3	20,0%	3	15,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	52	62,7%	9	60,0%	9	45,0%
<b>Employment</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	5,0%
<b>Judicial</b>	5	6,0%	1	6,7%	3	15,0%
<b>Commerce</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	3	3,6%	2	13,3%	1	5,0%
<b>Total</b>	2	2,4%	0	0,0%	3	15,0%
<b>Welfare</b>	83	100,0%	15	100,0%	20	100,0%

Supplications submitted by women by resource requested (by supplications).

***Attachment 29a***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Welfare</b>	20	11,3%	4	10,5%	5	7,5%
<b>Fiscal</b>	91	51,4%	14	36,8%	18	26,9%
<b>Employment</b>	34	19,2%	14	36,8%	22	32,8%
<b>Judicial</b>	14	7,9%	2	5,3%	12	17,9%
<b>Commerce</b>	6	3,4%	3	7,9%	3	4,5%
<b>Other</b>	12	6,8%	1	2,6%	7	10,4%
<b>Total</b>	177	100,0%	38	100,0%	67	100,0%

Noblemen supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 29b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	9	18,8%	4	12,9%	0	0,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	11	22,9%	10	32,3%	2	16,7%
<b>Employment</b>	25	52,1%	7	22,6%	7	58,3%
<b>Judicial</b>	2	4,2%	6	19,4%	1	8,3%
<b>Commerce</b>	1	2,1%	1	3,2%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%	3	9,7%	2	16,7%
<b>Total</b>	48	100,0%	31	100,0%	12	100,0%

Clergy supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 29c*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	6	6,5%	15	17,4%	19	14,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	32	34,8%	16	18,6%	35	25,7%
<b>Employment</b>	2	2,2%	4	4,7%	10	7,4%
<b>Judicial</b>	11	12,0%	2	2,3%	8	5,9%
<b>Commerce</b>	37	40,2%	44	51,2%	57	41,9%
<b>Other</b>	4	4,3%	5	5,8%	7	5,1%
<b>Total</b>	92	100,0%	86	100,0%	136	100,0%

Burgher supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 29d*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	0	0,0%	1	4,5%	2	4,3%
<b>Fiscal</b>	9	75,0%	14	63,6%	34	73,9%
<b>Employment</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	2,2%
<b>Judicial</b>	2	16,7%	0	0,0%	4	8,7%
<b>Commerce</b>	1	8,3%	6	27,3%	4	8,7%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%	1	4,5%	1	2,2%
<b>Total</b>	12	100,0%	22	100,0%	46	100,0%

Peasant supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

***Attachment 29e***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	1	1,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	17	27,4%	1	33,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Employment</b>	40	64,5%	1	33,3%	1	50,0%
<b>Judicial</b>	1	1,6%	1	33,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Commerce</b>	1	1,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	2	3,2%	0	0,0%	1	50,0%
<b>Total</b>	62	100,0%	3	100,0%	2	100,0%

Army command supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

***Attachment 29f***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	65	26,1%	16	18,8%	2	2,5%
<b>Fiscal</b>	108	43,4%	25	29,4%	16	19,8%
<b>Employment</b>	46	18,5%	24	28,2%	30	37,0%
<b>Judicial</b>	12	4,8%	6	7,1%	16	19,8%
<b>Commerce</b>	11	4,4%	6	7,1%	8	9,9%
<b>Other</b>	7	2,8%	8	9,4%	9	11,1%
<b>Total</b>	249	100,0%	85	100,0%	81	100,0%

Commoners of rank supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

***Attachment 29g***

1726–27		
<b>Welfare</b>	5	19,2%
<b>Fiscal</b>	19	73,1%
<b>Employment</b>	1	3,8%
<b>Judicial</b>	0	0,0%
<b>Commerce</b>	1	3,8%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	26	100,0%

Lower unrepresented group supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 29h*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	2	6,9%	0	0,0%	2	22,2%
<b>Fiscal</b>	10	34,5%	0	0,0%	1	11,1%
<b>Employment</b>	16	55,2%	1	100,0%	1	11,1%
<b>Judicial</b>	1	3,4%	0	0,0%	4	44,4%
<b>Commerce</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	11,1%
<b>Total</b>	29	100,0%	1	100,0%	9	100,0%

Other supplications (by Estate) by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 29i*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	7	11,5%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	40	65,6%	6	31,6%	0	0,0%
<b>Employment</b>	1	1,6%	2	10,5%	1	16,7%
<b>Judicial</b>	10	16,4%	2	10,5%	4	66,7%
<b>Commerce</b>	1	1,6%	9	47,4%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	2	3,3%	0	0,0%	1	16,7%
<b>Total</b>	61	100,0%	19	100,0%	6	100,0%

Unknown supplications (by Estate) by resource requested (by supplications).

*Attachment 30a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	55	17,6%	13	21,3%	4	6,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	141	45,2%	20	32,8%	19	28,4%
<b>Employment</b>	83	26,6%	19	31,1%	25	37,3%
<b>Judicial</b>	15	4,8%	3	4,9%	9	13,4%
<b>Commerce</b>	6	1,9%	4	6,6%	2	3,0%
<b>Other</b>	12	3,8%	2	3,3%	8	11,9%
<b>Total</b>	312	100,0%	61	100,0%	67	100,0%

Supplications from people with military titles by resource requested (by supplications).

**Attachment 30b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	21	15,3%	12	24,5%	3	4,7%
<b>Fiscal</b>	65	47,4%	7	14,3%	12	18,8%
<b>Employment</b>	38	27,7%	20	40,8%	25	39,1%
<b>Judicial</b>	6	4,4%	5	10,2%	16	25,0%
<b>Commerce</b>	2	1,5%	0	0,0%	3	4,7%
<b>Other</b>	5	3,6%	5	10,2%	5	7,8%
<b>Total</b>	137	100,0%	49	100,0%	64	100,0%

Civil servant supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

**Attachment 31**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Welfare</b>	101	18,4%	30	20,7%	7	4,6%
<b>Fiscal</b>	249	45,3%	38	26,2%	34	22,5%
<b>Employment</b>	149	27,1%	47	32,4%	58	38,4%
<b>Judicial</b>	24	4,4%	14	9,7%	30	19,9%
<b>Commerce</b>	9	1,6%	6	4,1%	5	3,3%
<b>Other</b>	18	3,3%	10	6,9%	17	11,3%
<b>Total</b>	550	100,0%	145	100,0%	151	100,0%

Supplications from people affiliated with the state by resource requested (by supplications).

**Attachment 32a**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	<b>All</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>All</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>All</b>	<b>SA</b>	
<b>Welfare</b>	115	101	87,8%	40	30	75,0%	30	7	23,3%
<b>Fiscal</b>	337	249	73,9%	86	38	44,2%	106	34	32,1%
<b>Employment</b>	165	149	90,3%	53	47	88,7%	73	58	79,5%
<b>Judicial</b>	53	24	45,3%	19	14	73,7%	49	30	61,2%
<b>Commerce</b>	59	9	15,3%	69	6	8,7%	72	5	6,9%
<b>Other</b>	27	18	66,7%	18	10	55,6%	29	17	58,6%
<b>Total</b>	756	550	72,8%	285	145	50,9%	359	151	42,1%

The proportion of supplications from state-affiliated supplicants by resource requested (by supplications). SA=state-affiliated.

**Attachment 32b**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	E	NE		E	NE		E	NE	
Welfare	19	82	81,2%	17	13	43,3%	2	5	71,4%
Fiscal	158	91	36,5%	26	12	31,6%	25	9	26,5%
Employment	122	27	18,1%	34	13	27,7%	53	5	8,6%
Judicial	18	6	25,0%	13	1	7,1%	29	1	3,3%
Commerce	4	5	55,6%	5	1	16,7%	5	0	0,0%
Other	12	6	33,3%	10	0	0,0%	17	0	0,0%
Total	333	217	39,5%	105	40	27,6%	131	20	13,2%

Supplications submitted by employed and non-employed state-affiliated supplicants by resource requested (by supplications).  
E=employed, NE=non-employed.

**Attachment 33a**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>State-affiliated</b>	184	76,0%	17	68,0%	22	78,6%
<b>Not state-affiliated</b>	242	100,0%	25	100,0%	28	100,0%

Supplicants who submitted supplications on claims by state-affiliation (by supplications).

**Attachment 33b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Military</b>	14	11,7%	1	7,7%	2	11,1%
<b>The army command</b>	45	37,5%	0	0,0%	1	5,6%
<b>Clergy</b>	24	20,0%	7	53,8%	5	27,8%
<b>Civil servants</b>	28	23,3%	3	23,1%	6	33,3%
<b>Other</b>	9	7,5%	2	15,4%	4	22,2%
<b>Total</b>	120	100,0%	13	100,0%	18	100,0%

Supplicants who submitted supplications on employment benefits by a mix of Estate and secondary status (by supplications).



*Attachment 34a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Personal</b>	519	68,3%	127	44,6%	180	50,1%
<b>Group, 3–10</b>	24	3,2%	5	1,8%	4	1,1%
<b>Group, 10+</b>	20	2,6%	1	0,4%	0	0,0%
<b>Group, unknown size</b>	50	6,6%	33	11,6%	12	3,3%
<b>Corporate body</b>	60	7,9%	11	3,9%	13	3,6%
<b>Local</b>	26	3,4%	41	14,4%	118	32,9%
<b>Regional</b>	9	1,2%	15	5,3%	19	5,3%
<b>Realm</b>	45	6,0%	46	16,1%	8	2,2%
<b>Unknown</b>	3	0,4%	6	2,1%	5	1,4%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The scope of the supplications, detailed (by supplications).

*Attachment 34b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Personal</b>	519	68,7%	127	44,6%	180	50,1%
<b>Group and corporate body</b>	154	20,4%	50	17,5%	29	8,1%
<b>Local and regional</b>	35	4,6%	56	19,6%	137	38,2%
<b>Realm</b>	45	6,0%	46	16,1%	8	2,2%
<b>Unknown</b>	3	0,4%	6	2,1%	5	1,4%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The scope of the supplications, simplified (by supplications).

*Attachment 34c*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Group, 3–10</b>	24	15.6%	5	10.0%	4	13.8%
<b>Group, 10+</b>	20	13.0%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Group, unknown size</b>	50	32.5%	33	66.0%	12	41.4%
<b>Clergy corporate</b>	8	5.2%	3	6.0%	5	17.2%
<b>Burgher corporate</b>	11	7.1%	6	12.0%	8	27.6%
<b>Army command corporate</b>	41	26.6%	2	4.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	154	100,0%	50	100,0%	29	100,0%

The scope of group and corporate supplications, with corporate bodies by estate (by supplications).

### *Attachment 35a*

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Noblemen</b>	144	27,7%	19	12,3%	3	8,6%	11	24,4%	0	0,0%	177	23,4%
<b>Clergy</b>	24	4,6%	15	9,7%	5	14,3%	4	8,9%	0	0,0%	48	6,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	37	7,1%	19	12,3%	15	42,9%	21	46,7%	0	0,0%	92	12,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	6	1,2%	3	1,9%	3	8,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	12	1,6%
<b>AC</b>	4	0,8%	53	34,4%	5	14,3%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	62	8,2%
<b>CoR</b>	220	42,4%	20	13,0%	1	2,9%	7	15,6%	1	33,3%	249	32,9%
<b>ULP</b>	21	4,0%	5	3,2%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	26	3,4%
<b>Other</b>	63	12,1%	20	12,9%	3	8,6%	2	4,4%	2	66,7	90	11,9%
<b>Total</b>	519	100,0%	154	100,0%	35	100,0%	45	100,0%	3	100,0%	756	100,0%

The scope of supplications submitted at the 1726–27 diet, by supplicant's social background by Estate (by supplications). Other includes unknown. AC=the army command, CoR=commoners of rank, ULP=unrepresented lower groups, P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

### *Attachment 35b*

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Noblemen</b>	32	25,2%	3	6,0%	1	1,8%	1	2,2%	1	16,7%	38	13,3%
<b>Clergy</b>	5	3,9%	3	6,0%	4	7,1%	19	41,3%	0	0,0%	31	10,9%
<b>Burghers</b>	21	16,5%	7	14,0%	31	55,4%	24	52,2%	3	50,0%	86	30,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	0	0,0%	3	6,0%	19	33,9%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	22	7,7%
<b>AC</b>	0	0,0%	3	6,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	3	1,1%
<b>CoR</b>	66	52,0%	17	34,0%	0	0,0%	1	2,2%	1	16,7%	85	29,8%
<b>Other</b>	3	2,4%	14	28,0%	1	1,8%	1	2,2%	1	16,7%	20	7,1%
<b>Total</b>	127	100,0%	50	100,0%	56	100,0%	46	100,0%	6	100,0%	285	100,0%

The direct scope of supplications submitted at the 1746–47 diet, by supplicant's social background by Estate (by supplications). Other includes unknown. AC=the army command, CoR=commoners of rank, P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

### *Attachment 35c*

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Noblemen</b>	54	30,0%	9	31,0%	2	1,5%	1	12,5%	1	20,0%	67	18,7%
<b>Clergy</b>	8	4,4%	3	10,3%	1	0,7%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	12	3,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	26	14,4%	13	44,8%	92	67,2%	5	62,5%	0	0,0%	136	37,9%
<b>Peasants</b>	9	5,0%	2	6,9%	34	24,8%	1	12,5%	0	0,0%	46	12,8%
<b>AC</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	0,7%	0	0,0%	1	20,0%	2	0,6%
<b>CoR</b>	76	42,2%	2	6,9%	2	1,5%	1	12,5%	0	0,0%	81	22,6%
<b>Other</b>	7	3,9%	0	0,0%	5	3,6%	0	0,0%	3	60,0%	15	4,2%
<b>Total</b>	180	100,0%	29	100,0%	137	100,0%	8	100,0%	5	100,0%	359	100,0%

The direct scope of supplications submitted at the 1771–72 diet, by supplicant's social background by Estate (by supplications). Other includes unknown. AC=the army command, CoR=commoners of rank, P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

### Attachment 36a

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Welfare</b>	100	19,3%	4	2,6%	5	14,3%	6	13,3%	0	0,0%	115	15,2%
<b>Fiscal</b>	257	49,5%	53	34,4%	20	57,1%	7	15,6%	0	0,0%	337	44,6%
<b>Employment</b>	85	16,4%	72	46,8%	2	5,7%	4	8,9%	2	66,7%	165	21,8%
<b>Judicial</b>	44	8,5%	6	3,9%	0	0,0%	3	6,7%	0	0,0%	53	7,0%
<b>Commerce</b>	16	3,1%	14	9,1%	6	17,1%	23	51,1%	0	0,0%	59	7,8%
<b>Other</b>	17	3,3%	5	3,2%	2	5,7%	2	4,4%	1	33,3%	27	3,6%
<b>Total</b>	519	100,0%	154	100,0%	35	100,0%	45	100,0%	3	100,0%	756	100,0%

The scope of supplications submitted at the 1726–27 diet by resource requested (by supplications). P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

### Attachment 36b

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Welfare</b>	20	15,7%	2	4,0%	10	17,9%	8	17,4%	0	0,0%	40	14,0%
<b>Fiscal</b>	36	28,3%	27	54,0%	15	26,8%	8	17,4%	0	0,0%	86	30,2%
<b>Employment</b>	42	33,1%	4	8,0%	3	5,4%	3	6,5%	1	16,7%	53	18,6%
<b>Judicial</b>	9	7,1%	2	4,0%	2	3,6%	6	13,0%	0	0,0%	19	6,7%
<b>Commerce</b>	14	11,0%	13	26,0%	25	44,6%	17	37,0%	0	0,0%	69	24,2%
<b>Other</b>	6	4,7%	2	4,0%	1	1,8%	4	8,7%	5	83,3%	18	6,3%
<b>Total</b>	127	100,0%	50	100,0%	56	100,0%	46	100,0%	6	100,0%	285	100,0%

The scope of supplications submitted at the 1746–47 diet by resource requested (by supplications). P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

### Attachment 36c

	P		GCB		LR		R		U		T	
<b>Welfare</b>	6	3,3%	1	3,4%	23	16,8%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	30	8,4%
<b>Fiscal</b>	43	23,9%	9	31,0%	54	39,4%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	106	29,5%
<b>Employment</b>	59	32,8%	6	20,7%	7	5,1%	1	12,5%	0	0,0%	73	20,3%
<b>Judicial</b>	34	18,9%	2	6,9%	9	6,6%	0	0,0%	4	80,0%	49	13,6%
<b>Commerce</b>	17	9,4%	10	34,5%	38	27,7%	7	87,5%	0	0,0%	72	20,1%
<b>Other</b>	21	11,7%	1	3,4%	6	4,4%	0	0,0%	1	20,0%	29	8,1%
<b>Total</b>	180	100,0%	29	100,0%	137	100,0%	8	100,0%	5	100,0%	359	100,0%

The scope of supplications submitted at the 1771–72 diet by resource requested (by supplications). P=personal, GCB=group and corporate body, LR=local and regional, R=realm, U=unknown, T=total.

**Attachment 37a**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	19	12,3%	3	6,0%	9	31,0%
<b>Clergy</b>	13	8,4%	3	6,0%	3	10,3%
<b>Burghers</b>	19	12,3%	7	14,0%	13	44,8%
<b>Peasants</b>	3	1,9%	3	6,0%	2	6,9%
<b>The army command</b>	53	34,4%	3	6,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	20	13,9%	17	34,0%	2	6,9%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	5	3,2%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	19	12,3%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	3	1,9%	14	28,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	154	100,0%	50	100,0%	29	100,0%

Supplicants who made requests with a group or corporate body scope, by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 37b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	14	17,5%	2	2,0%	3	2,1%
<b>Clergy</b>	9	11,3%	23	22,5%	1	0,7%
<b>Towns</b>	10	12,5%	46	45,1%	89	61,4%
<b>Other burghers</b>	26	32,5%	9	8,8%	8	5,5%
<b>Peasants</b>	3	3,8%	19	18,6%	36	24,8%
<b>The army command</b>	5	6,3%	0	0,0%	1	0,7%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	8	10,0%	1	1,0%	3	2,1%
<b>Other</b>	5	6,3%	2	2,0%	4	2,8%
<b>Total</b>	80	100,0%	102	100,0%	145	100,0%

Supplicants who made requests with a local, regional, or realm scope, by Estate (by supplications). Modified to highlight the proportion of towns. Other includes unknown.

**Attachment 38a**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%
<b>Reservation</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	82	22,8%
<b>Rejected</b>	225	29,8%	174	61,1%	50	13,9%
<b>No response or retaken</b>	59	7,8%	3	1,1%	14	3,9%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	357	100,0%

The acceptance rates for supplications (by supplications).

**Attachment 38b**

	Total		Deadline 1		Deadline 2	
<b>Accepted</b>	213	59,3%	140	57,4%	73	63,5%
<b>Reservation</b>	82	22,8%	21	20,5%	21	18,3%
<b>Rejected</b>	50	13,9%	35	14,3%	15	13,0%
<b>No response or retaken</b>	14	3,9%	8	3,3%	6	5,2%
<b>Total</b>	359	100,0%	244	100,0%	115	100,0%

The acceptance rates for supplications submitted at the 1771–72 diet in total and during deadlines 1 and 2 respectively (by supplications).

**Attachment 39**

	Submitted	Accepted
<b>1738–39</b>	532	222 41,7%
<b>1740–41</b>	375	179 47,7%
<b>1742–43</b>	251	135 53,8%
<b>1746–47</b>	613	223 36,4%

The acceptance rates at diets held between 1738 and 1747 (by listings and supplications). *Sources:* Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1738 Inkomne Mähl och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade eller ey antagne blifwit, *AT* 1738; Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1741 Inkomne Mähl, och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade, eller ei antagne blifwit, *AT* 1741; Förteckning på de wid Riksdagen 1742 Inkomne Mål, och hwilka deraf för Riksdagsärender antagne och remitterade, eller ej antagne blifwit, *AT* 1743.

**Attachment 40**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Individuals</b>	359	67,5%	57	40,7%	115	62,2%	37	20,0%
<b>Groups</b>	56	84,8%	26	65,0%	8	40,0%	8	40,0%
<b>Corporate bodies</b>	52	34,9%	25	23,8%	89	58,9%	35	23,2%
<b>Other</b>	5	55,6%	0	0,0%	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Supplicants' acceptance rates by type (by supplications).

**Attachment 41**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Men</b>	337	67,5%	77	48,7%	109	60,6%	38	21,1%
<b>Women</b>	60	74,1%	5	35,7%	11	68,8%	2	12,5%
<b>Men and women</b>	2	100,0%	0	0,0%	3	75,0%	1	25,0%
<b>Corporate bodies</b>	52	34,9%	25	23,1%	89	58,9%	35	23,2%
<b>Other</b>	21	84,0%	1	25,0%	1	12,5%	6	75,0%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Supplicants' acceptance rates by gender (by supplications).

**Attachment 42**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Noblemen</b>	123	69,5%	14	36,8%	41	61,2%	11	16,4%
<b>Clergy</b>	20	41,7%	3	9,7%	8	66,7%	3	25,0%
<b>Burghers</b>	56	60,9%	31	36,0%	91	66,9%	25	18,4%
<b>Peasants</b>	4	33,3%	7	31,8%	22	47,8%	16	34,8%
<b>The army command</b>	11	17,7%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	20,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	170	68,3%	43	50,6%	43	55,1%	20	25,6%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	22	84,6%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	20	69,0%	1	100,0%	4	44,4%	4	44,4%
<b>Unknown</b>	46	75,4%	9	47,4%	4	66,7%	2	33,3%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Supplicants' acceptance rates by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 43a**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Accepted reservation	
<b>Diet delegates</b>	64	63.4%	16	55.2%	25	75.8%	5	15.2%
<b>Diet corporate bodies</b>	42	(31.8%)	25	24.3%	87	59.6%	33	22.6%

Diet corporate bodies' and diet delegates' acceptance rates (by supplications).

**Attachment 43b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
Clergy	4	21,1%	1	4,2%	1	50,0%	0	0,0%
Burghers	26	54,2%	17	29,8%	72	66,7%	19	17,6%
Peasantry	1	33,3%	7	36,8%	14	41,2%	13	38,2%
The army command	11	17,7%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	50,0%

Diet corporate bodies' acceptance rates by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 44**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
Ecclesiastical Servants	20	41,7%	3	9,7%	8	66,7%	3	25,0%
Commercial agents	65	60,2%	31	35,2%	95	66,9%	27	19,0%
Rural land-proprietors	5	33,3%	21	58,3%	22	47,8%	16	34,8%
Military	175	56,1%	23	37,7%	30	44,8%	15	22,4%
Civil servants	101	73,7%	26	53,1%	43	67,2%	11	17,2%
Other	61	80,3%	2	15,4%	9	47,4%	8	42,1%
Unknown	45	75,0%	2	28,6%	6	66,7%	2	22,2%
Total	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Suplicants' acceptance rates by secondary status (by supplications).

**Attachment 45**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	337	61,3%	53	36,6%	84	55,6%
<b>Reservation</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	32	21,2%
<b>Rejected</b>	159	28,9%	91	62,8%	28	18,5%
<b>No response or retaken</b>	54	9,8%	1	0,7%	7	4,6%
<b>Total</b>	550	100,0%	145	100,0%	151	100,0%

State-affiliated supplicants' acceptance rates (by supplications).

*Attachment 46a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72		
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation
<b>Group 1</b>	24	68,6%	1	50,0%	1	25,0%	1 25,0%
<b>Group 2</b>	38	64,4%	6	46,2%	14	63,6%	3 13,6%
<b>Group 3</b>	58	65,2%	5	18,5%	15	41,7%	8 22,2%
<b>Group 4</b>	18	72,0%	9	64,3%	1	100,0%	1 100,0%
<b>Private soldiers</b>	15	83,3%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0 0,0%
<b>Complex</b>	20	26,0%	0	0,0%	1	50,0%	1 50,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	2	22,2%	2	100,0%	1	50,0%	1 50,0%
<b>Total</b>	175	56,1%	23	37,7%	33	49,3%	15 22,4%

Acceptance rates for supplicants with military titles, by rank (by supplications).

*Attachment 46b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72		
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation
<b>Group 1</b>	21	77,8%	1	50,0%	5	100,0%	0 0,0%
<b>Group 2</b>	8	66,7%	4	80,0%	8	88,9%	0 0,0%
<b>Group 3</b>	22	71,0%	14	56,0%	11	64,7%	5 29,4%
<b>Group 4</b>	42	76,4%	6	50,0%	18	56,3%	6 18,8%
<b>Complex</b>	2	50,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0 0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	6	75,0%	1	20,0%	1	100,0%	0 0,0%
<b>Total</b>	101	73,7%	26	53,1%	43	67,2%	11 17,2%

Acceptance rates for supplicants with civil service titles, by rank (by supplications).

*Attachment 46c*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72		
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation
<b>Group 1</b>	45	72,6%	2	50,0%	6	66,7%	1 11,1%
<b>Group 2</b>	46	64,8%	10	55,6%	22	71,0%	3 9,7%
<b>Group 3</b>	80	66,7%	19	36,5%	26	49,1%	13 24,5%
<b>Group 4</b>	60	75,0%	15	57,7%	19	57,6%	7 21,2%
<b>Private soldiers</b>	15	83,3%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0 0,0%
<b>Complex</b>	22	27,2%	0	0,0%	1	50,0%	1 50,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	8	47,1%	3	42,9%	2	66,7%	1 33,3%
<b>Total</b>	276	61,5%	49	44,5%	76	58,0%	26 19,8%

Acceptance rates for supplicants with military and civil service titles by rank (by supplications).



**Attachment 47**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Welfare</b>	88	76,5%	17	42,5%	18	60,0%	4	13,3%
<b>Fiscal</b>	244	72,4%	38	44,2%	57	53,8%	28	26,4%
<b>Employment</b>	74	44,8%	26	49,1%	43	58,9%	12	16,4%
<b>Judicial</b>	23	43,4%	2	10,5%	31	63,3%	13	26,5%
<b>Commerce</b>	28	47,5%	21	30,4%	51	70,8%	14	19,4%
<b>Other</b>	15	55,6%	4	22,2%	13	44,8%	11	37,9%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Acceptance rates for supplications by resource requested (by supplications).

**Attachment 48a**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Personal</b>	344	66,3%	50	39,4%	105	58,3%	41	22,8%
<b>Group, 3-10</b>	17	70,8%	0	0,0%	2	50,0%	1	25,0%
<b>Group, 10+</b>	10	50,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Groups, unknown size</b>	29	58,0%	24	72,7%	4	33,3%	5	41,7%
<b>Corporations</b>	19	31,7%	3	27,3%	7	53,8%	5	38,5%
<b>Local</b>	17	65,4%	12	29,3%	74	62,7%	24	20,3%
<b>Regional</b>	3	33,3%	5	33,3%	11	57,9%	3	15,8%
<b>Realm</b>	32	71,1%	13	28,3%	8	100,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	33,3%	1	16,7%	2	40,0%	3	60,0%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Acceptance rates for supplications by scope, detailed (by supplications).

**Attachment 48b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72			
	Accepted		Accepted		Accepted		Reservation	
<b>Personal</b>	344	66,3%	50	39,4%	105	58,3%	41	22,8%
<b>Group and corporate body</b>	75	48,7%	27	54,0%	13	44,8%	11	37,9%
<b>Local and regional</b>	20	57,1%	17	30,4%	85	62,0%	27	19,7%
<b>Realm</b>	32	71,1%	13	28,3%	8	100,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	33,3%	1	16,7%	2	40,0%	3	60,0%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%	82	22,8%

Acceptance rates for supplications by direct scope, simplified (by supplications).

**Attachment 49a**

<b>Prejudice</b>	693	86,2%
<b>Other</b>	111	13,8%
<b>Total</b>	804	100,0%

Employment supplications submitted at the 1765–66 diet, categorized as prejudice or other (by supplications). *Sources:* R3420, UdH, FU, RA.

**Attachment 49b**

<b>Captain</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>18,2%</b>
<b>Lieutenant</b>	120	17,3%
<b>Major</b>	59	8,5%
<b>Second Lieutenant</b>	34	4,9%
<b>Assessor</b>	25	3,6%
<b>Colonel</b>	22	3,2%
<b>Lieutenant colonel</b>	21	3,0%
<b>District judge</b>	20	2,9%
<b>Vice district judge</b>	19	2,7%
<b>Captain lieutenant</b>	18	2,6%
<b>Notary</b>	16	2,3%
<b>Chief district court judge</b>	11	1,6%
<b>Other</b>	202	29,1%
<b>Total</b>	693	100,0%

The most common titles of the supplicants who appealed against prejudice at the 1765–66 diet (by supplications). *Sources:* R3420, UdH, FU, RA.

**Attachment 49c**

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1765–66</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Military</b>	1	100%	6	40,0%	463	66,8%	10	38,5%
<b>Civil servants</b>	0	0,0%	9	60,0%	228	32,9%	16	61,5%
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	2	0,3%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	1	100%	15	100%	693	100%	26	100%

Supplicants who appealed against prejudice by secondary status (by supplications). Civil servants includes ecclesiastical servants. *Sources:* R2522, R2944–R2945, R3420, R3637–R3641, R3643, UdH, FU, RA; RhS.

*Attachment 49d*

<b>Yes</b>	556	81,4%
<b>No</b>	62	9,1%
<b>Reservation</b>	65	9,5%
<b>Total</b>	683	100,0%

Acceptance rates for supplicants who appealed against prejudice at the 1765–66 diet (by supplications). *Sources:* R3420, UdH, FU, RA.

*Attachment 50a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Applied for a reservation</b>	3	0.4%	5	1.8%	123	34.3%
<b>Did not apply for a reservation</b>	753	99.6%	280	98.2%	236	65.7%
<b>Total</b>	756	100.0%	285	100.0%	359	100.0%

Supplicants who made use of their right to apply for a reservation (by supplications).

*Attachment 50b*

	1726-27	1746-47	1771-72
<b>Noblemen</b>	3 (100,0%)	1 (20,0%)	19 (15,4%)
<b>Clergy</b>	0 (0,0%)	0 (0,0%)	3 (2,4%)
<b>Burghers</b>	0 (0,0%)	0 (0,0%)	32 (26,0%)
<b>Peasants</b>	0 (0,0%)	0 (0,0%)	25 (20,3%)
<b>The army command</b>	0 (0,0%)	0 (0,0%)	2 (1,6%)
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	0 (0,0%)	2 (40,0%)	32 (26,0%)
<b>Other</b>	0 (0,0%)	2 (40,0%)	10 (8,1%)
<b>Total</b>	3 (100,0%)	5 (100,0%)	123 (100,0%)

Supplicants who applied for a reservation by Estate (by supplications). Other includes unknown.

*Attachment 51*

	Total		Deadline 1		Deadline 2	
Accepted reservation, then accepted into the Diet	31	25.2%	30	29,7%	1	4,5%
Accepted reservation, then nothing more	82	66.7%	61	60,4%	21	95,5%
Rejected	6	4.9%	6	5,9%	0	0,0%
No response	4	3.3%	4	4,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Outcome for supplicants who tried to make reservations at the 1771–72 diet (by supplications). Rejected includes supplications either rejected when applying for a reservation or rejected when the supplicant utilized his or her reservation. No response includes supplications that either did not receive a reply when applying for a reservation or did not receive a response when the supplicant utilized his or her reservation.

*Attachment 52a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
Unfinished and resubmitted	12	1.6%	15	5.3%	70	19.5%
Not unfinished and resubmitted	744	98.4%	270	94.7%	289	80.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Supplications that had been submitted to and accepted by previous Diets without a final verdict (by supplications).

*Attachment 52b*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
Noblemen	4	33,3%	3	20,0%	20	28,6%
Burghers	4	33,3%	4	26,7%	28	40,0%
Peasants	1	8,3%	1	6,7%	4	5,7%
Commoners of rank	2	16,7%	5	33,3%	15	21,4%
Other	1	8,3%	0	0,0%	1	1,4%
Unknown	0	0,0%	2	13,3%	2	2,9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Supplicants who returned with previously accepted but unresolved supplications, by Estate (by supplications).

*Attachment 53a*

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
Appeals against Kungl. Maj:t	30	4.0%	44	15.4%	171	47.6%
Appeals against other instances	72	9.5%	14	4.9%	22	6.1%
Not appeals	654	86.5%	227	79.6%	166	46.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Appeals against lower instances (by supplications).

**Attachment 53b**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Noblemen</b>	7	23,3%	15	34,1%	37	21,6%
<b>Clergy</b>	0	0,0%	1	2,3%	5	2,9%
<b>Burghers</b>	8	26,7%	10	22,7%	38	22,2%
<b>Peasants</b>	2	6,7%	0	0,0%	31	18,1%
<b>Commoners of Rank</b>	8	26,7%	14	31,8%	48	28,1%
<b>Other</b>	1	3,3%	0	0,0%	7	4,1%
<b>Unknown</b>	4	13,3%	4	9,1%	5	2,9%
<b>Total</b>	30	100,0%	44	100,0%	171	100,0%

Supplicants who appealed against Kungl. Maj:t by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 53c**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	Total		Appeals	Total		Appeals	Total		Appeals
<b>Welfare</b>	115	2	1,7%	40	0	0,0%	30	8	26,7%
<b>Fiscal</b>	337	6	1,8%	86	16	18,6%	106	62	58,5%
<b>Employment</b>	165	3	1,8%	53	17	32,1%	73	41	56,2%
<b>Judicial</b>	53	15	28,3%	19	5	26,3%	49	31	61,3%
<b>Commerce</b>	59	3	5,1%	69	6	8,7%	72	18	25,0%
<b>Other</b>	27	1	3,7%	18	0	0,0%	29	11	37,9%
<b>Total</b>	756	30	4,0%	285	44	15,4%	359	171	47,6%

Appeals against Kungl. Maj:t by resource requested (by supplications).

**Attachment 53d**

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Accepted</b>	18	60.0%	23	52.3%	78	45.6%
<b>Reservation</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	70	40.9%
<b>Rejected</b>	11	36.7%	21	47.7%	16	9.4%
<b>No response or retaken</b>	1	3.3%	0	0.0%	7	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	30	100.0%	44	100.0%	171	100.0%

Acceptance rates for appeals against Kungl. Maj:t (by supplications).

***Attachment 54***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>1</b>	545	90,7%	177	87,2%	331	96,2%
<b>2</b>	32	5,3%	12	5,9%	12	3,5%
<b>3–5</b>	16	2,7%	10	4,9%	1	0,3%
<b>6–9</b>	3	0,5%	2	1,0%	0	0,0%
<b>10+</b>	5	0,8%	2	1,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	601	100,0%	203	100,0%	344	100,0%

The number of supplications in each listing (by listings).

***Attachment 55a***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Permissible</b>	163	21,6%	66	23,2%	222	61,8%
<b>Impermissible</b>	593	78,4%	214	75,1%	134	37,3%
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0,0%	5	1,8%	3	0,8%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The legitimacy of the supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation (by supplications).

***Attachment 55b***

	<b>1726–27</b>		<b>1746–47</b>		<b>1771–72</b>	
<b>Noblemen</b>	139	23,4%	20	9,3%	26	19,4%
<b>Clergy</b>	37	6,2%	30	14,0%	7	5,2%
<b>Burghers</b>	45	7,6%	66	30,8%	46	34,3%
<b>Peasants</b>	9	1,5%	21	9,8%	14	10,4%
<b>The army command</b>	57	9,6%	3	1,4%	0	0,0%
<b>Commoners of rank</b>	215	36,3%	60	28,0%	38	28,4%
<b>Unrepresented lower groups</b>	24	4,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%
<b>Other</b>	22	3,7%	1	0,5%	2	1,5%
<b>Unknown</b>	45	7,6%	13	6,1%	1	0,7%
<b>Total</b>	593	100,0%	214	100,0%	134	100,0%

Supplicants who submitted impermissible supplications by Estate (by supplications).

**Attachment 55c**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	S	P		S	P		S	P	
Welfare	115	23	20,0%	40	2	5,0%	30	16	53,3%
Fiscal	337	53	15,7%	86	29	33,7%	106	74	69,8%
Employment	165	20	12,1%	53	17	32,1%	73	23	31,5%
Judicial	53	21	39,6%	19	5	26,3%	49	40	81,6%
Commerce	59	35	59,3%	69	10	14,5%	72	50	69,4%
Other	27	11	40,7%	18	3	16,7%	29	19	65,5%
Total	756	163	21,6%	285	66	23,2%	359	222	61,8%

Permissible supplications submitted to the Screening Deputation, categorized according to resource category (by supplications).<sup>664</sup>  
S=submitted, P=permissible.

**Attachment 55d**

	1726–27			1746–47			1771–72		
	A	P		A	P		A	P	
Welfare	88	19	21,6%	17	2	11,8%	22	15	68,2%
Fiscal	244	39	16,0%	38	20	52,6%	85	67	78,8%
Employment	74	14	18,9%	26	11	42,3%	55	23	41,8%
Judicial	23	17	73,9%	2	0	0,0%	44	36	81,8%
Commercial	28	23	82,1%	21	7	33,3%	65	48	73,8%
Other	15	8	53,3%	4	1	25,0%	24	17	70,8%
Total	472	120	25,4%	108	41	38,0%	295	206	69,8%

The legitimacy of accepted supplications by resource category (by supplications).<sup>665</sup> Accepted includes supplications categorized either as accepted or as accepted reservation. A=accepted, P=permissible.

**Attachment 55e**

	Total			Deadline 1			Deadline 2		
	A	P		A	P		A	P	
Welfare	22	15	68,2%	10	9	90,0%	12	6	50,0%
Fiscal	85	67	78,8%	58	53	91,4%	27	14	51,9%
Employment	54	23	41,8%	46	21	45,7%	9	3	33,3%
Judicial	44	36	81,8%	40	34	85,0%	4	2	50,0%
Commercial	65	48	73,8%	27	25	92,6%	38	23	60,5%
Other	24	17	70,8%	20	14	70,0%	4	3	75,0%
Total	295	206	69,8%	201	156	77,6%	94	51	54,3%

The legitimacy of accepted supplications at the 1771–72 diet in total and during deadlines 1 and 2 respectively (by supplications).  
Accepted includes supplications categorized either as accepted or as reservation. A=accepted, P=permissible.

<sup>664</sup> Percentages represent proportion of permissible requests of all accepted requests.

<sup>665</sup> Percentages represent the share of permissible requests among all accepted requests.

***Attachment 56a***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Attachment</b>	123	16,3%	63	22,1%	109	30,4%
<b>No attachment</b>	633	83,7%	222	77,9%	250	69,6%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The number of supplications submitted with attachments (by supplications).

***Attachment 56b***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
	<b>Accepted</b>		<b>Accepted</b>		<b>Accepted</b>	
<b>Attachment</b>	99	80,5%	27	42,9%	71	65,1%
<b>No attachment</b>	373	58,9%	81	36,5%	142	56,8%
<b>Total</b>	472	62,4%	108	37,9%	213	59,3%

The acceptance rates for supplications submitted with attachments (by supplications). Accepted includes reservations.

***Attachment 57a***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Male proxy</b>	171	22,6%	30	10,5%	14	3,9%
<b>Woman proxy</b>	2	0,3%	0	0,0%	1	0,3%
<b>No proxy</b>	583	77,1%	255	89,5%	344	95,8%
<b>Total</b>	756	100,0%	285	100,0%	359	100,0%

The use of proxies by supplicants (by supplications).

***Attachment 57b***

	1726–27		1746–47		1771–72	
<b>Male proxy</b>	6	7,2%	1	6,7%	4	20,0%
<b>Woman proxy</b>	1	1,2%	0	0,0%	1	5,0%
<b>No proxy</b>	76	91,6%	14	93,3%	15	75,0%
<b>Total</b>	83	100,0%	15	100,0%	20	100,0%

Use of proxies by female supplicants (by supplications).



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