

Measuring social structure in a rural context

Applying the SOCPO scheme to Scania, Sweden (17th-20th century)¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

The SOCPO (social power) scheme is a tool for the classification of occupations into a limited number of classes. SOCPO, which is fully integrated with the HISCO (Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations) occupational classification scheme, is characterised by a coherent theoretically-driven set of principles for social stratification; explicit coding rules derived from these principles; and a comprehensive list of occupations classified by class (Van de Putte & Miles, 2005). Consequently, we believe SOCPO opens up what has hitherto been the 'black box' of occupational classification.

Clearly, the SOCPO scheme does not solve all problems related to the classification of occupations. A major challenge is posed by the comparative analysis in class-related phenomena such as social and marital mobility. This type of analysis requires that in every research area, class is measured in a similar way. This inevitably raises the question whether one can simply use the same class scheme in every research area and period. To what extent does the historical context matter in the classification of occupations into different

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classes? And if this influence is strong, how can we deal with it? This paper addresses a specific aspect of the context problem: can the SOCPO scheme, previously applied on mainly urban and industrial contexts, be used for the analysis of rural areas as well? And how should we refine it in order to do so?

The main part of the solution of this problem is to incorporate information on landholding, which evidently is a crucial dimension in rural social inequality. As such, there is no principal argument against the use of SOCPO scheme for this purpose, as the scheme is based on an explicit discussion of the sources determining the distribution of social power, among which possession. Yet, integrating detailed information on the size and type of landholding, and the combination of it with occupational information requires a specification of some of the operational rules. Other points of discussion relate to the skill of agricultural workers and of rural craftsmen. Needless to say, as historical contexts varied widely, only general principles and rules can be offered that can guide the application of the scheme in different contexts. By doing this we hope to respond to the criticism that occupational classification schemes do not take contextual differences into account.

We start with a general discussion of the rural social structure. In Section 2 we discuss each of the context-related problems in detail and show how we want to adapt the SOCPO scheme to provide a solution. In Section 3 we illustrate the adapted SOCPO scheme by means of an analysis of the Scanian social structure and its evolution from the 17th to the 20th century.

1.1. The rural social structure

This section provides the background for the specific context problems associated with the application of the SOCPO scheme on a rural society. We provide a brief overview of the major characteristics of the rural society prior to turning, in the next section, to the theoretical and practical choices we made to deal with these problems.

Evidently, land was the prime asset in the rural society. All across pre-industrial Europe, until the agricultural transformation, it was most common that the majority of the rural population lived in families that held land (Blum, 1978). However, these farmers, peasants, or tenants, faced different conditions due to differences in property rights and due to the amount of land they had at their disposal.

Many of these cultivators did not own the land themselves. Over large areas of Europe, the manorial system dominated the rural society. This

system originated from the early Middle Ages or even earlier and consisted of a landlord owning land that was managed by peasants in return for rent paid by them. In some areas labour rent was over time transferred into money rent while in other regions old customs with serfdom and *corvée* labour prevailed well into the 19th century (e.g., Scott, 1998). In other parts of Europe peasants owned the land themselves – they were freeholders or self-owners. These peasants paid tax, indirect or direct, to the central power. Between these extremes, various forms of mixed types of property rights existed. In reality, therefore, they faced different opportunities and economic conditions and their social positions might differ in accordance with that.

In pre-industrial society, land was managed through the open-field system. This form of management implied a collective decision making process on village level even if land could be private property in terms of output taken from it and work put into it. The open-field system was not a system designed to create equality but rather to minimise risks and adjust production to labour supply for each farm (McCloskey, 1975; Fenoaltea, 1976). Within this system, land was unevenly distributed; peasants held plots of lands that differed in size (Blum, 1978). Either family size was adjusted to land size or, most common, wealth among families differed according to the size of the land implying differences in social positions.

Besides these landholding groups other social groups existed as well. With land reclamation or a growing need for rural labour tied to the farms, a "semi-landless" group had emerged. These people, although a very heterogeneous group, were characterised by the possession of a house, owned or rented, and a small plot of land, often too small to support a family on the land itself. Finally, there were landless people, lacking land altogether, most of them working as farm labourers.

Defining the boundary between landholders and non-landholders, or the upper and lower part of the peasantry, might seem obvious but in reality many factors must be included. The size of the land is one way; usually self-subsistence is used to separate the landholding peasants from semi-landless peasants and crofters (e.g., Sommarin, 1939; Béaur, 1998; Svensson, 2006). Self-subsistence production implies a larger independence than having to supplement own production with work for other people. Naturally, the amount of land necessary for self-subsistence differs both between regions and over time due to soil conditions, crop mixes and productivity among other things. Moreover, also other factors affect the social position for the rural population. In addition to property rights and the form of rent payment, political representation and capitalist employment of workers may differentiate an upper part of the peasantry from a lower part. In Sweden, for example,

peasants with taxable landholdings had the right to elect political representatives to the parliament even if their landholdings in some cases were non-subsistent and smaller than the ones held by semi-landless crofters. On the other hand, within this group of tax-paying peasants some employed workers while others relied on the family for labour.

Moving on, besides land, people held other assets in the rural society such as skill or status. Not all of the people worked directly in the agricultural production. For instance, the local economy required artisans such as smiths, tanners and shoemakers and the central power and the church had officials on the local level, such as priests and military and civil officers. The size of these groups varied, for the artisans in accordance with trade patterns and local demand, while for the number of persons of rank, this was in accordance with the structure of the bureaucracy in the different states and regions.

Although seemingly static, the rural pre-industrial society contained a not negligible degree of social mobility (e.g., Lundh, 1999; Marfany, 2006). The extent depended on inheritance customs, marriage patterns, the development of the land market and other factors influencing access to land for different social groups. In some cases social mobility together with differences in reproduction between social groups were consistent with a constant social structure, while in other cases changing institutional and economic conditions brought about social mobility, which resulted in a changed social structure.

Conclusively, a model type of a pre-industrial rural village contained persons of rank, farmers and peasants owning land or tenants under a manor, semi-landless people not having enough land to support themselves, and landless people working as farm labourers, artisans or perhaps soldiers. Nearby this village, or even inside it, there were a noble man, a priest and some military or civil officers. The share of peasants holding land was, as already noted, most often very high in this population. However, things changed in this respect as well as in other, governing the way people worked and made their living.

1.2. Changes in the rural social structure

The agricultural society was far from stable. The agricultural revolution, urbanisation and industrialisation had a strong impact on the rural social structure. These changes are briefly discussed.

The agricultural revolution spread slowly across Europe from the 16th century to the 19th and 20th centuries. Although it has been debated what the

real essence of, or the most important factor in, the agricultural revolution was (e.g., Allen, 1992; Overton, 1996), some of the changes often associated with it are important for our concern because it had effects on the social structure of the rural society.

In England the agricultural revolution is displayed by large changes in landowning structures and increased social differentiation. This process was gradual, from the 16th century and onwards, where population growth and institutional changes such as the enclosures led to farm engrossment and a growth in the number of agricultural labourers and small-scale commoners (Overton, 1996, 168-182). Population growth was strongest from 1540 to 1650 and in 1750 and onwards (Wrigley & Schofield, 1981), while as for agricultural production, opinions differ. Some findings suggest two periods of increase, 1520 to 1739 and from the 1820s and onwards (Allen, 1992; see also Turner, Beckett, & Afton, 2001 for the 19th-century increase), while others highlight the period from the 1750s as the core phase (e.g., Overton 1996).

In other European regions, e.g., Flanders and Holland, agricultural productivity started growing even earlier than in England, however this happened more gradually. Population growth and proto-industrialisation supplemented agricultural activities and, at least in some parts of the region, farmers with small- or medium-sized plots of land eventually specialised and participated in the emerging markets (van Zanden, 2001; de Vries, 2001).

For the Swedish agricultural revolution, both demographic and economic indices point to the same decisive period, the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. Population growth accelerated from late 18th century and the strongest growth phase was the first half of the 19th century (Palm Andersson, 2000). The population doubled from 1750 to 1860, for the greater part this was an increase of the landless groups; while the landholding group increased by 25 per cent, the landless population more than quadrupled (Winberg, 1975, 17). Estimations of agricultural production and productivity are sparse for Sweden. A recent contribution mapping agricultural production in Scania shows that during the 18th century the production and population increased at the same rate but from the 1780s onwards production grew significantly faster than population (Olsson & Svensson, forthcoming).

More specifically, the agricultural revolution, in Sweden and elsewhere, contained institutional, organisational and technological changes affecting the social structure. Enclosures changed property boundaries of land but sometimes it also included property transmissions between people. Where tenants were evicted and landlords or other owners of land increased their share of the land, new work relations emerged (Béaur, 1998; Olsson, 2002).

Landholding tenants were turned into agricultural labourers lacking land and being employed seasonally or yearly. In other regions, enclosures implied consolidation of land leading to a rising production (Blum, 1978; Olsson & Svensson, forthcoming).

The agricultural revolution also contained changes in the organisation of production, i.e., methods of cultivation, new tools and new crops. With new crop rotations, new methods in cultivation and the rising production, the seasonality of agriculture decreased, making it possible for married farm labourers to replace life-cycle servants. Together with a rising demand for labour and evictions of tenants this increased the share of landless people on the rural countryside.

Yet, enclosures also led to an emerging market in land. For some places, this meant that new groups of people were able to acquire land, but also that the average size of land decreased; a large group of semi-landless labourers, cottagers, appeared (Blum, 1978; for Scania: Svensson, 2006). In other places the semi-landless or landless commoners disappeared due to common fields being turned into private property (Neeson, 1993).

The enclosures and the land market affected the landholding group as well. Besides evictions, it brought along other forces creating a growing economic differentiation within this group. With the reallocation of land in Sweden, high costs of enclosure, e.g., new farmhouses and land clearance, forced smallholders to sell parts of their land, while this together with the emerged land market and rising production made others invest in land and increase their land possession (Fridlitzius, 1979).

With the urban growth and a growing social differentiation a general commercialisation took place and markets in goods, labour and capital emerged. This led to a specialisation within agriculture that created a demand from the farmers for products that previously had been produced within their own households. This demand would be met either by a growing number of artisans, and perhaps with an increase in their skill level, or by trade with urban artisans or industries.

Industrialisation implied further changes in the rural society. The increased demand for food and the increased supply of urban commodities made specialisation in agricultural production grow (de Vries, 1975). Moreover, industrialisation spread to the countryside as well, turning agricultural villages into small towns and thereby changing the social structure radically. Even though agriculture often constituted the main livelihood, in some places industry and services associated with larger settlements came to constitute an important part of the society. All in all this made the number of occupations

among the non-landholders increase, turning them from a group of predominantly agricultural workers to a very heterogenic group.

Conclusively, the rural countryside of Europe was not a static society during the pre-industrial era but even so, with the agricultural and industrial revolutions the social structure experienced more dramatic changes. Possession of land was important before and after these transformations but during both periods, and increasingly during the second one, other factors such as occupation and status were decisive for the social position. Following this, analysing the social structure within a rural society poses a number of context-related questions that will be discussed in the next section.

2. THE CONTEXT PROBLEM

2.1. General description of the context problem

We start with describing the impact of the societal context on the construction of a class scheme in general.

First, *different dimensions may underlie the distribution of social power* in different contexts. In an urban economy, skill differences are very important (Penn, 1990). In rural contexts, landholding is far more crucial (e.g., Wolf, 1966; Carlsson, 1969; Winberg, 1975; Vanhaute & Van Molle, 2004). The class scheme needs to reflect this, and this requires a more elaborated theoretical discussion of the property dimension and its relation to social power. Moreover, the choice to include information on landholding is not without consequences in terms of sources. While occupational titles recorded in, for example, marriage certificates offer an insight in skill levels, they are not particularly helpful to measure property. The (very) abundant presence of a vague category like 'farmer', '*cultivateur*', '*åbo*' (peasant), or an equivalent, is the proof of it.³ Although some societies may indeed have a very low level of social inequality, it is far more likely that some of the inequality in these areas remained unobserved. In the rural context, bits of information other than occupational titles are a welcome tool to measure the main cleavage in society. This problem is discussed in Section 2.2.

Secondly, to some extent *sources of social power are relative and not absolute*. Literacy is a good example. If literacy is a condition *sine qua non* to

³ See for example the case of Rendalen, Norway (Bull, 2005) where the category of farmers count for almost 70% and France (Pélissier, Rébaudo, van Leeuwen, & Maas, 2005), where the category of farmers is 'very large'.

perform the crucial tasks of an occupation, this occupation will typically be defined as non-manual skilled work (e.g., clerk). That is, in a society in which there was no universal literacy this will be the case. By the end of the 19th century, literacy had become almost universal in many Western European countries (e.g., Van de Putte, 2005). In this new context literacy did no longer guarantee a reasonable level of irreplaceability, while irreplaceability is a crucial reason why skill leads to social power. This relativity of power sources requires some additional rules that make the classification scheme flexible. It might be necessary to code the same occupational title recorded in different time stages and places into different classes (or SP (Social Power) levels in the SOCPO scheme). A similar problem, and more important for the rural context, concerns the low level of skill of rural craftsmen compared to urban craftsmen (Braudel, 1984). This will be examined in detail in Section 2.3.

Thirdly, a specific example of the relativity of power sources relates to *shifting boundaries* between categories. For example, due to the increasing land productivity, the boundaries between different categories of land size may have become obsolete. Another example is the increase of the work obligation for tenants, or a rise of tenure prices. The level of social power associated with being a tenant will, in that case, be overestimated. The consequence of this is that the class scheme should be made sensitive to these changes. In theory, this is not a problem, as it should be possible to translate these and similar changes in statements about the dimensions used to classify individuals (e.g., making the boundaries to categorise the land size time-dependent). In practice it will, of course, be extremely complex to specify all changes over time, and to include them in the coding process. Unfortunately, addressing this problem is due to space limitations impossible in this contribution.

Fourthly, dimensions underlying a class scheme can be present in a *more* (or less) *refined* way in different contexts. Particularly sources of additional power may differ. To some extent societies differ in the way its members thought it was important, useful and relevant to distinguish some individuals from more ordinary people by giving them other titles. A first issue that will be discussed is whether the peasant's social status is a source of additional social power. A second issue involves other forms of additional cultural power that have not yet been incorporated by the SOCPO scheme. Some occupational titles refer to prestige titles (e.g., 'Mr' or 'Esq') or honorary occupations and functions (e.g., 'rural judge'), although the cultural power associated with it was less strong than the power associated with nobility titles

(that are coded in the highest class in the SOCPO scheme). These problems are discussed in Section 2.4.

2.2. Landholding

Next, we discuss these problems in more specific terms and propose solutions. The adaptations to the SOCPO scheme that result from this exercise are presented in Table 1 (A & B).

SP level	Property	Hierarchical position	Skill and manual/non-manual	Pure status
SP level 5 Elite	Macro: supra local-oriented, large capital	High commanders	Non-manual super skilled	Nobility Important honorary functions and occupations
SP level 4 Middle class	Medium A: local-oriented, medium capital, permanent self-sustainable	Medium commanders	Non-manual skilled, manual super-skilled	Moderately important honorary functions and occupations Personal prestige titles
SP level 3 Skilled	Medium B: local-oriented, medium capital, not self-sustainable in hard times	Low commanders	Manual skilled Devaluated super-skilled rural craftsmen*	
SP level 2 Semi-skilled	Micro: local-oriented, minimal capital, never self-sustainable		Semi-skilled Devaluated skilled rural craftsmen*	
SP level 1 Unskilled	Macro: supra local-oriented, large capital		Unskilled Devaluated semi-skilled rural craftsmen*	Low status positions

TABLE 1A: THE ADAPTED SOCPO SCHEME. MAIN DIMENSIONS

SP level	Property	Hierarchical position	Skill and manual/non-manual	Pure status
SP level 5 Elite	Large landholder	Managers of big farms	Lawyers	Baron
SP level 4 Middle class	Self-employed farmer, above subsistence	Office chef	Teachers	Church board member, 'herr'
SP level 3 Skilled	Tenant farmer	Foremen	Carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths	
SP level 2 Semi-skilled	Crofter		Working foreman, Spinners, weavers, rural shoemaker*	
SP level 1 Unskilled			Agricultural workers Farm servants, Stable workers, field workers Factory workers, day labourers	Poor; beggar

Note: * = dependent upon context

TABLE 1B: THE ADAPTED SOCPO SCHEME. EXAMPLES

2.2.1. Principled decisions

We start by explaining two important principled decisions related to the use of landholding in the SOCPO scheme. The first issue is our strategy to use both information on landholding and occupations. The use of information on landholding in a rural context is, as argued supra, evident. Combining it with information drawn from occupational titles is helpful to get an insight in the diverse category of landless people. Artisans, civil servants, soldiers and all kinds of semi-skilled and unskilled workers belong to this category, and they have a different access to power sources. Also for those who possessed some land, information on their occupation offers additional information. Furthermore, combining the landholding and the occupational information is necessary for research inspired by a comparative framework, particularly

when periods are compared that differ in the extent to which their economy is rural, or during which regions developed into a modern economy. The modern landless people were not necessarily similar to the landless people found in a traditional rural economy. A wide variety of workers with different skill levels, employed in the industrial, trade and service sector, replaced the unskilled agricultural workers.

Of course, many local scheme builders did make use of occupational information alongside landholding information, yet it is our aim to fully incorporate both types of information systematically.

A second issue is whether, regardless of its effects on the property dimension, the presence of a large agricultural sector has more consequences. Does it matter, as was argued by Maas and van Leeuwen (2005), whether or not one works in the agricultural sector? As part of the justification for their approach Maas and van Leeuwen refer to the work of Bouchard (1996) and Schüren (1989) to argue that historians seem to agree about the main dimensions of a class scheme, and that the economic sector was one of them (Maas & van Leeuwen, 2005, 280). Yet, Bouchard nor Schüren provide a very promising defence of the use of the economic sector in building class schemes.⁴

More broadly, there is little sign of a consensus that would support the inclusion of the economic sector as a component of class. Indeed, the

⁴ In *Tous les métiers du monde* (Bouchard, 1996; see Maas & van Leeuwen, 2005: 280 footnote 11) Bouchard's interest is in constructing an occupational rather than a class scheme: the categories of his classification "are not classes, strata [...] they are groupings of occupations based on functional and technical criteria related to occupational tasks" (our translation, Bouchard, 1996, 31). Bouchard reviews them basically to show how incoherent these were, e.g., by including overlapping categories. His aim was just to give an overview of what has happened. So, whatever claims and choices Bouchard makes about how to combine occupational titles, these were, explicitly, *not* about identifying the dimensions of a class scheme. Moreover, in so far as he does deal with sector for the purposes of occupational classification – and he never really explains why it might be important – he uses it in a different way than Maas and van Leeuwen do, distinguishing between five categories in these terms (production and sales, professional services, production of raw materials – e.g., farmers, production of finished products, other/unclassifiable) rather than just primary *versus* the rest (*Ibid.*, 50-51). As far as Schüren's classification (Schüren, 1989; see Maas & van Leeuwen, 2005, 280 footnote 11) is concerned, in the version with fifteen 'occupational' groups there are indeed traces of the sector ('agricultural workers', 'peasants'), but when, for the sake of the analysis of social mobility, these groups are lumped together into six different 'strata', the sector is no longer a separate dimension. The scheme distinguishes between the lower working class, the middle working class (among which agricultural workers are included), the upper working class, the lower middle class (including peasants), the upper middle class and the upper class (Schüren, 1993). In this reduced version of the scheme, therefore, different sector groups no longer constitute different classes but are integrated with other classes.

opposite is more the case. The sector is largely absent from the sociological debate on class and power. The one notable example concerns its appearance in Erikson and Goldthorpe's (1992) comparative study of social mobility in industrial nations, where both farmers and agricultural labourers are given their own class. But as Savage (1994, 73) argues in his discussion of the EGP (Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero) scheme:

"The delineation of a distinct class of agricultural labourers and farmers from the manual working class and petty bourgeoisie respectively conflates a sector of production with class" (Savage, 1994, 73; see also Scott, 2002).⁵

There is no clear reason why life chances are inherently connected to one's economic sector. Although it might of course be that some people working in a given economic sector have better life chances than others, this is determined by their resources in terms of property, skill, position in an organisation and additional cultural power. In a rural context, it is the possession of land as such that is crucial rather than working in the agricultural sector. Farmers may have specific life chances, but this is typically because they own some means of production. The main cleavage in an agricultural context is, in fact, within the agricultural sector: between farmers with large, medium, small or no landholding, and between farmers who own land and those who rent it. Consequently, many studies on agricultural communities, if not most of them, use land size and possession type as a basis of classification (e.g., Winberg, 1975; Brumagne, 1999 and many more; and for Scania: Bengtsson, 2000; Dribe, 2000; Svensson, 2001). If food prices go up, it is not the agricultural sector as such that takes the profit. It is those who own the (most) land who gain the most. Others gain less or lose out altogether (Bengtsson, 2004, 49; see also Vanhaute & Van Molle, 2004; Brumagne, 1999).

⁵. Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992, 44) argue that class relations are different within primary production, and that the transformation of the sector with industrialisation also marks its workers out for separate attention. However, some of the 'differences' they identify – in payment systems, the use of family labour etc. – could be found in other sectors over the same period, and their allocation of farmers to different origin and destination classes on the basis of their assumed mobility profile suggests a confusion between the use of the class scheme as a tool of analysis and a description of social class itself. Perhaps the implicit reason why some researchers want to delineate farmers is that they see them as a 'social class', a collectivity with specific customs. We agree that group life can be sector-based. And evidently, sector-based group life might lead to social homogamy and social immobility (e.g., miners, weapon makers, farmers). However, in these examples, sector-based group life is a cause of homogamy or heterogamy, but it is not a 'cause' of a class position. If this is the reason for including sector as a class dimension, 'social class' is being confused with 'objective class', and thereby being built into the measurement instrument. In other words 'social class' is used to measure the emergence of 'social class'.

At the same time, we would argue that there is no real difference in terms of social power between, on the one hand, farmers with a reasonable amount of land and, on the other, non-manual skilled workers such as school teachers. The first is largely independent and quite well protected from sudden shifts in market or climate, while the second typically had a quite stable employment, reasonable wages, and a degree of independence. Similarly, how much difference is there between a cottager with only a very small plot of land, regularly obliged to work as a labourer for more wealthy farmers, and a semi-skilled manual worker?

The case of semi-skilled and unskilled workers is perhaps even more arresting. A scheme like HISCLASS (Historical International Social Class Scheme) (Maas & van Leeuwen, 2005) distinguishes between (a) lower-skilled and unskilled farm workers, (b) lower-skilled non-farm workers, and (c) unskilled non-farm workers, and each therefore should have demonstrably different life chances. First, it might in practice be very difficult to distinguish between these groups. Unskilled workers in rural areas are typically job hoppers that combine different occupations, both farm and non-farm work, for example, in different seasons. Secondly, it is unclear why unskilled farm and non-farm work *per se* should be associated with significant variations in skill levels, property, hierarchical position and additional cultural power. Does it consequently really matter whether such an unskilled non-farm worker married an unskilled farm worker rather than another unskilled non-farm worker? It is understood that they might have a different social background. But can such a marriage be seen as a genuine measurement of the way in which social power differences implied, or not, closed and difficult to pass boundaries within a society?

In short, in our view, the amount of social power is the issue, not the style by which one enhances one's social power.⁶

2.2.2. *Categorisation of property as a class dimension*

In this section we discuss landholding as a source of social power without taking the presence of other power sources into account. Thereafter we present a procedure to merge the landholding information with the occupational information.

⁶ Furthermore, if sector is deemed to be important, why precisely should only the difference between the agricultural and the non-agricultural sector be included in the class scheme, and why for example, not textile work, trade, or transport? As there is no inherent connection between social power and sector, it is impossible to formulate explicit arguments on this choice.

In the SOCPO scheme, the property dimension is one of the sources of social power, as it confers independency. Just like other proprietors such as masters, some farmers are fully independent, not only towards members of the same community or village, but even towards society as a whole. Others however, who only have limited access to property are only nominally independent, while those without property are completely dependent. In the debate on landholding, the extent to which one's property confers independency is typically discussed in terms of subsistence (e.g., Sommarin, 1939; Rosén, 1994; Béaur, 1998; Svensson, 2001, 2006; Thoen, 2001). This concept refers to the extent to which one's property enables people to survive.⁷

The extent to which landholding confers social power is in the first place related to the *size of the landholding*. There are three broad categories of landholders when it comes to the size of land: those with enough land to have a stable surplus production, those with enough land to be self-subsistent, and those who do not dispose of enough land to be (permanently) self-subsistent. Take for example the village of Leefdaal in Brabant around 1800. Brumagne (1999, 38-39) distinguishes between large, wealthy landowners who produce for the market and who employ many workers, ordinary farmers with too few landholdings to be able to produce much for the market, and semi-landless people who have to work for big landowners in order to survive. A similar distinction is made by Dhaene (1986, 139, 288) for the village of Zingem in 19th-century Flanders where he distinguishes three groups: farmers who have enough land to develop large-scaled commercial activities, farmers whose land size is higher than the critical surface (defined as the size of land necessary to ensure the survival of one's family), but does not allow large-scaled market activity, and finally those farmers whose land size is lower than the 'critical agricultural surface'.

The impact of land size is however also determined by the specific arrangement by which one has land at his or her disposal (*possession type*). An important difference can be made between the full possession and the lease of land (tenancy). Full possession means that the owner makes decisions by himself. If one is a tenant, the situation is more complicated. On the one

⁷. In this way, property differs from other power sources such as skill and hierarchical position. The impact of these sources on social power relates to the level of replaceability, the level of controllability (both are associated with one's skill level) and the level of formal, delegated independency (associated with hierarchical position). Even if property does not make oneself fully independent, it may lead to self-subsistence in some conditions (e.g., in good economic times), or, minimally, it may lead to some distinction with those who are completely without property.

extreme, some tenants are in practice near owners. This is for example the case when they have life-long contracts that even can be transmitted easily to children. On the other extreme there are tenants who are far more vulnerable in their relationship to the owner. They typically have insecure rights (e.g., short-term contracts), are dependent upon the fluctuations of the land market (e.g., rising rents) and even might have an arbitrary burden of taxes and work obligations. For the purpose of refining the scheme, we simply distinguish two categories: full access to land (based on possession or life-long contracts with inheritance rights) *versus* tenure of land.

It is of course impossible to discuss the regional variety in possession types in detail. We just give one example. In 18th- and 19th-century Scania three types of land were present: the freeholders owned their land and had the right to sell it, divide it or transfer it to their children. The crown tenants were in many respects equal to the freeholders, although they could not divide the land without consent from the crown and they could not mortgage their land (Gadd, 2000). Both groups have, in our definition, full access to land. Very different, and less favourable, was the situation of the ordinary tenants who rented noble land from the landlords. Tenants under the nobility had insecure property rights, and paid rent in kind, money or through labour (Olsson, 2002). They were significantly less independent in the control of their power sources.

It is impossible to provide a more detailed rule on this issue. It is up to the local historian to decide whether the tenure contracts found in their research area permit classification in one rather than another category, or even whether a more detailed categorisation is necessary.

If we combine the information on land size and possession type, we can distinguish between four categories of farmers, each with a different social power level (see Table 2). First, there are proprietors who have a substantial surplus production that can be used to develop a large-scaled commercial activity. Also landlords benefiting from the rents paid by other farmers belong to this category. These persons are not only independent, they even have enough resources to free themselves from work. This category of owners with large landholding is, in the SOCPO terminology, similar to owners with macro-scale property. We classify them in the highest category, SP level 5.

Farmers who have a stable surplus production but do not fully possess the land, are coded in SP level 4. Their possession type is insecure, and this restricts the development of a long-term commercial activity. Farmers who own their land and who possess enough land to be self-subsistent, even in hard times, are also coded in SP level 4. The latter category of farmers typically

had some servants and seasonal farm workers at their disposal. Their social power level resembles that of urban small employers or masters.

If however the same land size is combined with a less secure possession type, the possibility to protect one's self-subsistence against all kinds of pressures from the outside world will be limited. These farmers will be self-subsistent in normal times, yet their limited property rights will not enable them to cope with long periods of economic stress. These farmers are coded in SP level 3. Their situation resembles that of skilled workers, ensuring their survival is not a constant problem, but they cannot translate their skill or their access to land into full independency.

SP level	Property/scale	Landholding
Sp level 5 Elite	Macro: supra-local oriented, large capital	<i>Owners with large landholding</i> : stable surplus, big commercial property
SP level 4 Middle class	Medium A: local oriented, medium capital, permanent self-sustainable	<i>Independent farmers</i> : full access to land, stable surplus only in good times, but above subsistence <i>Tenants with large landholdings</i> : limited property rights but stable surplus even in hard times
SP level 3 Skilled	Medium B: local oriented, medium capital, not self-sustainable in hard times ⁸	<i>Tenants</i> : limited property rights, no stable surplus, only in good times, but above subsistence
SP level 2 Semi-skilled	Micro: local oriented, minimal capital, never self-sustainable	<i>Crofters, smallholders</i> : semi-landless people, some landholding but below subsistence level
SP level 1 Unskilled		<i>Landless</i> : no landholding at all

TABLE 2: PROPERTY AND HIERARCHICAL POSITION IN SCANIA

⁸. This signifies that we create a new category in the scale sub-dimension. This new category (medium B, SP level 3) is entered between medium A (SP level 4) and micro scale (SP level 2). We define owners with medium B scale property as those who exploit property for subsistence or commercial exploitation, have reasonable protection for survival in bad times, but have a limited access to the property. This new category was introduced in order to accommodate the wide variety of property situations in rural areas, what was not experienced using occupational titles drawn from marriage certificates in rural areas.

The next category of farmers consists of those whose land size is below the line of self-subsistence. Even in good times, these semi-landless people are vulnerable to short-term stress evoked by climate change and economic cycles. They have to rely on the labour market to increase their survival chances. Some power sources are available, what distinguishes them from the unskilled and the landless, yet the availability of power sources is that limited that they are clearly very dependent. Being owners with micro-scale property, these semi-landless are classified in SP level 2.

2.2.3. *In practice*

This categorisation, based on the combination of possession type and land size, is based on a long tradition of research on differences in standards-of-living using the Scanian database (see Bengtsson & Dribe, 2005). We did, however, formulate these categories in a general way. It also resembles, to a large extent, other classifications of farmers (see for example the Danish case) where a tax measure reflecting as well farm size as soil conditions is used by Johansen (2005, 308) or the logics behind the classification of Flemish farmers described by Vanhaute and Van Molle (2004, 27). Mind however that putting this classification into practice requires some work. The land size necessary to become self-subsistent, or to produce a stable surplus, is probably different for every soil type. In Flanders for example, farmers are seen as self-subsistent if they possess more than 2 hectares (Vanhaute & Van Molle, 2004). In Scania, 1/16 of a *mantal*, was seen as the subsistence level for a family in the early 19th century (Sommarin, 1939). This corresponds to about 4-5 hectares on average in Scania at this time. However, in some societies the possibilities of estimating self-subsistence are more limited due to differences in sources and measures (refer for example to the classification of Tsuya & Kurosu, 2004, 272) for Japan using a continuous variable (*Koku*). Also the classification of possession type is far from straightforward. Nevertheless, these subjects have been studied in most regions, and this provides enough scientific knowledge that can inform the decision on this issues. Mind however, that these boundaries are likely to be time-varying, as claimed by for example Dhaene (1986), who also takes the leasing prices and soil productivity into account, both are of course changing over time, in order to calculate the boundaries between the different categories of farmers (see also Svensson, 2001).

2.2.4. *Merging the class dimensions*

For the combination of occupational information and landholding information we use the following procedure. First we calculate an SP level based on the information in the occupational title following the procedure presented by Van de Putte and Miles (2005). Secondly, we calculate an SP level based on the landholding information.⁹ We compare both levels, and choose the highest one as the final SP level. For example, a landless carpenter is coded in SP level 3, as the carpenter is a skilled worker. A farmer whose possession type and size fits the criteria of level 4 will be coded in SP level 4, even if he at the same time would be a carpenter (level 3).

Mind that we do not apply this procedure on occupations that depend upon landholding.¹⁰ The rule to choose the maximum of the landholding and occupation score is based on the assumption that both are alternatives, that is, that both are independent sources of social power (e.g., the semi-landless carpenter). This does not count however for occupational titles that only refer to property such as 'owner', 'farmer', 'tenant' etc. The information of the title is redundant with the landholding information in case these owners work in the agricultural sector. Consequently, these persons should be assigned to a given SP level by only using the landholding information. In case landholding information is present, we simply assign them to the SP level that corresponds to their landholding type and size.

⁹. Mind that we do not insert the landholding information in the normal coding procedure for the occupations, as a way to measure property. In the normal procedure, we start by assigning SP levels for those for whom information that refers to the presence of property and the hierarchical position inherent to the occupation is recorded. For example, 'manager' refers to a hierarchical position that is inherently connected to being a manager. Yet, a 'carpenter' can have property but this is not inherently connected to being a carpenter. Thereafter, we code the other titles according to skill. See Van de Putte and Miles (2005) for the full procedure. This principle cannot be applied automatically to information on landholding that uses other sources than occupational titles, as in this case there is also information on the property of those with only a small property (such as the semi-landless), while this is not the case for occupational titles (which typically do not contain information on the property of very small proprietors). Consequently, only using the information on landholding and ignoring the information on occupation would lead to a devaluation of, for example, landless carpenters to the lowest social group.

¹⁰. This means: those who have an occupational title coded into hisco 61110 (farmers), and the owners for whom it is not stated what precisely they own (hisco = -1, status code 11). Hence occupations such as 'house owners' do not depend on landholding, as opposed to 'owners' who indeed are dependent on landholding.

2.2.5. *Absence of information on landholding*

A problem occurs when information on landholding is missing for persons entitled as 'farmer'. This may occur in case tax sources are used, and where tax on land is not registered for the individual while the individual's occupation nevertheless is "farmer". To code these occupations we have to know the reason behind the absence of information. A *first* possibility is that these farmers do not possess much land. These farmers might in reality be semi-landless people who only possessed or rented a house and a small plot of unregistered land. In that case, they should be coded in SP level 2. A *second* possibility is that these farmers possessed land *before* the registration was done. They may, for example, have sold their land, while still using the occupational title. It makes sense to code these according to their previous land size – although this is not without risks as it favours an immobility bias. Perhaps more likely is that they were retired farmers. In that case, the rules for retired people should be applied.¹¹ A *third* possibility is that these persons had *registered landholding outside the area studied*. These farmers might for example be 'immigrants' who possessed, or still possess, land elsewhere. If it is impossible to gain information on the landholding size, these persons should be coded as missing values. *Finally*, it might be that the sources used are *incorrect or incomplete*.

The answer on the question of what is the most likely reason, depends on the specific research area and the quality of the sources, and it is up to the researcher to evaluate this. We can however suggest some guidelines. First, the researcher has to assess the extent as to which the registration of land is reliable. As this registration was often used as a basis of tax assessment, developed by state officials, and as it typically was quite difficult to hide much land, there is a fair chance that most land registration documents are reliable. If so, we can safely consider the absence of landholding information as correct, and rule out the fourth reason.

Secondly, what do we know about the other reasons? Although we can attempt to find direct or indirect evidence, it will typically be difficult and time-consuming to find an answer. But often some rules can be applied. The age of the farmer makes it possible to assess the likelihood of retirement. For

¹¹. Depending on the context, the strength of the retirement arrangements may be very different. However, we can expect that these arrangements are dependent upon the former landholding situation; they are a product of one's social power, and therefore we typically code these retired people in the same level as the one reached by the previous position.

example, we can use as a rule that persons older than say 50 or 60, are retired, and follow the appropriate coding procedure.¹²

Thirdly, also the occupational title itself can reveal some extra information, although many of these titles are typically vague ('farmer'). We give an example from the Scanian database. Persons entitled as *rusthållare* are assumed to be wealthy farmers who own their land. Based on etymological information and on an examination of the average landholding of '*rusthållare*' without missing value on landholding (not shown) we conclude that those farmers should be coded in SP level 4. Such a procedure should be performed with some care however, as is demonstrated by the Flemish example of Vandenbroeke (1984, 145).¹³

Finally, if the second, third and fourth reasons appear to be impossible, improbable or difficult to assess, we use as the basic rule that missing information on landholding means that there was only small landholding. The presence of a farmer's title does suggest the presence of some (probably unregistered) land. We code these in SP level 2.¹⁴

2.3. Relative power sources: skill in a rural context

An important question is whether in a rural society skill has the same impact on one's life chances as in an urban society. In this section we discuss the skill of farm workers and rural craftsmen.

¹² By evaluating the landholding history of an individual, we can assess the likelihood that the farmer did possess land in earlier times.

¹³ Individuals who possessed 1.5 to 2 hectares in the south of the province of Eastern Flanders were entitled farmer (*landbouwer*), while in the north much more land was required (4 to 5 hectares).

¹⁴ If a lot of information on landholding is missing, the situation is much more problematic. A first possibility is to treat these simply as missing values. Secondly, a much more risky possibility is to code these in the most common category (e.g., 90% of farmers for whom information is present are assigned to SP level 3, one can code the missing values in this category as well). Perhaps this procedure makes more sense when the researcher does not dispose of landholding information at all. Missing values are in that case not selective. Using external information on land size and property types makes sense in this case. A third option is to code the missing values consecutively in all possible categories, in order to assess whether the main conclusions are affected by the presence of missing values. In each case a bias analysis procedure is recommended (Van de Putte, 2005).

2.3.1. *The coding of agricultural skill*

There are numerous unspecialised farm workers in a rural economy. All these are assigned to SP level 1, as the SOCPO scheme evaluates them as unskilled workers. It can be argued that some skill was required for some of the tasks performed by these agricultural workers. Tasks such as killing animals, mending tools and milking cows are in absolute measures quite semi-skilled, as some experience is needed to become fully proficient. Yet, Froomkin and Jaffe (1953) state that in a predominantly agricultural society more or less devoid of machinery almost everyone will know how to farm as a result of being raised in that society. In other words, the skills of farm workers did not at all influence their level of replaceability. And as it is precisely because of the link with replaceability that skill offers social power, semi-skilled farm work did not lead to more social power, and consequently these farm workers are coded in SP level 1.

There are however some positions in the agricultural sector that did offer some social power. On big farms (the manors) there were some working foremen (for Scania see, Granlund, 1944, for Belgium see Van Isacker, 1984).¹⁵ These persons were assigned to be the 'first man' probably because of their experience and skill. They are a type of semi-formal leaders. Due to their decreased replaceability they are coded in SP level 2, ranked below the real foremen and above the ordinary unskilled farm workers.

2.3.2. *Coding the skill of craftsmen in rural areas*

In the SOCPO scheme the main dimension used to classify craftsmen is skill. Unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and super-skilled workers are coded in SP level 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Moreover the employment status also does matter. Master artisans, being small-scaled employers, are coded in SP level 4. For the majority of craftsmen, however, the employment status is not taken into account, simply because it is not known. This is not as problematic as it seems. The guild system eroded gradually, even before its formal abolishment (Lis & Soly, 1986, 200). In the 18th century, for example, there was no longer an 'automatic' guild career. Becoming a master was a marginal and temporary business (Crossick, 1978; Kuczynski, 1967; Alter, 1978, 79).¹⁶ If it

¹⁵. Apart from persons who were formally assigned to a hierarchical position (the managers, SP level 5, and the supervisors, SP level 3).

¹⁶. Another issue concerns the self-employment status of craftsmen. Earlier, we coded those craftsmen who were entitled as master or boss or similar as SP level 4. In other words, a formal indication of property or hierarchical position was required. In villages, we seldom observe such indications. Does this imply that all these craftsmen were not self-employed? For

is not explicitly stated that a person was a master, an employer or self-employed, we assign the SP level based on the skill level. This is the same as claiming that the employment status of these craftsmen did not offer enough power sources to legitimate a classification in SP level 4 (Van de Putte & Miles, 2005, 68).

The interpretation of the power sources of rural craftsmen such as shoemakers, blacksmiths, masons, tailors, carpenters, cartwrights and coopers, is quite difficult. According to Braudel (1984) there is no doubt that rural craftsmen could not compare in skills and income with urban craftsmen. Problems regarding the classification of these craftsmen should not be neglected, as the total group could be quite large. In the rural areas of the Belgian province of Eastern Flanders, around the year 1800 they counted for about 27% of the active population. About 10 to 15% was engaged in crafts that supplied the local market (wood and building industries, food, clothing, other sectors), the others were engaged in the textile industry (Jaspers & Stevens, 1985, 92-102). In 'pure' agricultural areas, their proportion was smaller. In the Scanian parish of Kågeröd, for example, these craftsmen made up for about 7% of the active population.¹⁷

We address this important, but general, statement of Braudel for five specific categories of craftsmen.

Category 1: Rural craftsmen working for the local market

First we discuss rural craftsmen such as shoemakers and tailors who work for the local market and who perform basic, general tasks. They do not perform any typical rural craft, and, consequently, they have to compete with urban colleagues. To what extent are these skilled workers? To evaluate this we rely on the definition of skill of Froomkin and Jaffe (1953, 43). They define a skilled occupation as one

sure not. But there are some arguments to believe that their self-employment was in many cases insufficiently solid to permit a classification in SP level 4. A general statement in this line is made by Dhaene (1986: 191), who suggests that (rural) craftsmen were basically wage-earners. Typically, these were people working alone (but with their family members) or with a very small staff. For that reason, we do not code these in SP level 4. If however it can be shown that there is a reasonable amount of property (e.g., like farmers had), or in the case of many staff members, or when they possessed a large atelier/workshop or much equipment, we can consider an upgrade to SP level 4. The question is, then, what the precise boundary is. Is a blacksmith who owns a workshop, coded in SP level 3 or 4? Is a miller coded in SP level 3 or 4 (mind that many millers were not the proprietor of their mill, see Brumagne, 1999).

¹⁷ Scanian Demographic Database

"which requires some special knowledge or manual dexterity for which the demand is relatively great and the supply relatively limited and which requires a considerable length of time to learn".

The characteristics of demand and full manual dexterity are not necessarily present for this category of craftsmen.

First, the population density of many villages was probably not high enough to provide enough work (Vandenbroeke, 1984, 209; Daniels, 1993). The larger the market, the more specialised the workers and the higher their income (Duranton, 1998, 558).¹⁸ This is quite evident for those artisans that offered expensive services, such as silversmiths and chaise makers. They required a large, prosperous population to support them, and they will simply not be present in most villages. Makers of simpler, less expensive products could be found on the countryside (Almquist, 1983; Leenders, 1983). But also for these tailors, tanners, stonemasons, joiners and shoemakers, it is not sure that they performed every task associated with their occupational title. These craftsmen needed a higher concentration of (more prosperous) customers to enable them to be fully employed as an artisan, that is, to be a tailor or shoemaker performing full-time skilled work (Leenders, 1983, 170; Daniels, 1993, 753; Brumagne, 1999).¹⁹

Secondly, they had to compete with their urban colleagues. Some occupations were highly over-represented in urban centres. This can point at the presence of specialised, skilled workers, who also served the rural market (for the case of specialised construction workers, shoemakers, etc. see Jaspers & Stevens, 1985, 108-110).²⁰ However, this competition by urban artisans varied across societies depending on degree of urbanisation as well as topography and level of transportation.

¹⁸. In a more extreme case, the greater specialisation could be that far-reaching that it led to de-skilling, and reduced occupational tasks to a very narrow range of skills (e.g., a separation between leather cutters and assemblers in the shoemaking industry).

¹⁹. Mind however that, unlike tailors and shoemakers, some of these craftsmen faced considerable barriers to entry. For this reason, house carpenters, joiners, shipwrights, cabinetmakers, tanners (Daniels, 1993) and brick makers (Leenders, 1983) should not be devaluated without strong evidence of a clear lack of skill, as this possession confers social power once the barriers are surmounted. Furthermore, there are examples of rural tailors who possessed an atelier with quite some equipment, a shop with many items such as buttons, silk, thread, ribbon, etc. and of course cloths (see van Hoorick, 1999, 255).

²⁰. These 'urban' specialists sometimes also had a different, more specialised occupational title (e.g., hat makers). Furthermore, on the countryside, there is no similar guild system as in the city. And therefore, artisans on the countryside may be different than those living in the city. Are those on the countryside not simply those who could not make it in the city and who just make simple products? Do they have independent workshops? Are they not less protected?

These are strong limitations imposed on this category of rural craftsmen, what may resort effects on their skill level. Consequently, their work as a craftsman will probably not provide an income that is comparable to what can be expected as a skilled worker. There are some indications that support this vision. First, these craftsmen attempted to raise their income by other activities. In rural areas it is far less certain that a person for whom it is indicated that he or she is for example a shoemaker, did only perform this occupation. Typically, that person was involved, to some extent, in farming work. Gadd (1991) claims that not only proto-industrial workers but also craftsmen, working for the local market, worked part-time in agriculture, often on their own small farm or croft. Even among craftsmen in small towns, there was time-sharing between craft and agriculture. This pattern seemed to have been present in many regions of pre-industrial Europe (Kuczynski, 1967, 30; Gobyn, 1980; Vandenbroeke, 1984, 209; Van Isacker, 1984, 50; Gadd, 1991, 417; Vanhaute, 2004).²¹ If one did not perform this occupation on a daily basis, it is also quite probable that *not all activities* related to that occupation were performed. Were rural shoemakers not simply shoe-repairers? The true skill level, as defined by Froomkin and Jaffe, was possibly not as high as can be expected by simply evaluating the occupational title.

A second indication is that historians regularly make a distinction between this type of local craftsmen and those who work for the agricultural sector (such as cooper, blacksmiths etc., see *infra*). Brumagne (1999) for example typifies weavers and construction workers such as masons, carpenters, thatchers, as clearly less valued as the category of craftsmen working for the agricultural sector.²²

If this view is correct, this implies that the level of replaceability assumed by the skill level of the typical urban worker is an overestimation of the real level of replaceability of the rural craftsmen with the same occupation. In other words, the SOCPO scheme assumes that artisans have a full-time job as an artisan and have all the required skills. In rural societies these conditions are not always fulfilled. Coding these rural and urban craftsmen in the same way will create bias.

²¹ The numerous researchers (Leenders, 1983; Vandenbroeke, 1984; Jaspers & Stevens, 1985) who examined the distribution of occupations over regions and countries seem, implicitly, to agree that the very fact of observing occupations implied that ordinary people no longer performed the tasks now performed by (more or less skilled?) specialists.

²² Nevertheless, the situation is not always the same in every village. In 17th- and 18th-century Flemish polder village of Verrebroek carpenters were clearly well equipped and possessed a quite large amount of timber (van Hoorick, 1999, 247). For masons, there is perhaps more agreement on their weak social power situation (see also *Ibid.*, 250).

This conclusion urges us to consider a devaluation of these occupations to a lower SP level (typically from SP level 3 to 2). In order to decide whether to devalue or not, we first apply a set of specific rules. First, we use information on multiple occupations in the occupational title. It is possible that the difference between rural and urban craftsmen is reflected in the occupational title (e.g., 'carpenter and farm worker'). The presence of multiple occupations shows that the artisan is not a full-time artisan. Being a part-time artisan may indicate that the artisan is not skilled, but rather semi-skilled; at least he is not fully engaged in artisan crafts.²³

This is a specific example of a more general problem regarding the coding of multiple occupations. Let us consider the situation in which there are different occupations that, if separately coded, lead to SP levels that differ at least two levels (e.g., 'cooper and farm worker'). The fact that a low SP level occupation is included, suggests that the high SP level occupation does not offer full access to the power sources typically associated with it. If a cooper (SP level 3) also has to work as a farm worker (SP level 1), this signifies that his work as a cooper did not offer as much resources as coopers that do not have to work as a farm worker typically have. But this person does possess more power sources than an ordinary farm worker. We apply the following rule: if an individual combines two SP levels that differ more than one level, he or she is assigned to the next higher level than the lowest SP level.²⁴ The final SP level for 'cooper and farm worker' is SP level 2. We do not apply this rule when the occupations combined in one title only differ one level (e.g., 'crofter and carpenter'). We code these individuals in the highest SP level. For example, the crofter carpenter is coded in SP level 3.²⁵

Secondly, we use extra information in the occupational title that refers to the presence of skills and steady employment. In countries like Sweden, some artisans were appointed by the Crown to be "parish-artisans" upon request from the parish council (Gadd, 1991). These artisans were probably

²³. A variant of this rule could be to apply this rule to occupations and not to individuals. For example, if we find that occupation x is very unstable over time for most individuals that have occupation x, or that it is combined with other occupations in occupational titles, this occupation is always devaluated – for every individual.

²⁴. The rule typically leads to upgrade some of the ordinary workers. Note that the combination of an SP level 1 occupation with an SP level 4 or 5 occupation is seldom observed. And if it did occur, it was typically with vague titles such as house owner, a title that can refer to a person who rents out many houses or to a person that just owns his own house.

²⁵. Sometimes a general occupation is combined with a specific occupation (e.g., 'painter, house painter', 'soldier artillerist'). The specific occupation describes the general occupation more precisely. In this case we choose to code the specific title.

evaluated by the parish council on their skills and probably had a more permanent position than other artisans. We do not devalue these occupations.

Thirdly, we look for extra historiographical information on the rural craftsmen. If for specific occupations there is firm evidence that the skill level is overestimated, they are devaluated. It is however not easy to find much information for every specific occupation in every research area. An alternative source of information is the database itself. We can measure for example whether the distinction between agricultural and artisanal occupations was quite strong by comparing the occupational titles recorded for one individual during his or her career. In case artisans never are registered as farmer, farm worker or another agricultural title, this at least can show that the artisanal and agricultural sectors were separated. Another strategy is to examine the extent to which occupations are concentrated in a family. If so, this would support the view that there is something that can be acquired and protected against the outside world: an atelier, some tools, an installation, or simply skill.²⁶

The outcome of the procedure proposed here is possibly not valid in every context. It is up to the researcher to decide on whether some craftsmen are only semi-skilled part-time workers or not.

Other rural craftsmen

Not all rural craftsmen are however in the same situation. A *second category* of craftsmen are those who work for the local market but perform necessary services for the agricultural sector: coopers, car-makers, millers, blacksmiths, saddle makers, basket makers, etc. They, by definition, performed the full scope of activities suggested by their occupational title. In their niche of the market, there are no urban craftsmen who can perform the same service, nor is the size of their market very small. Typically, the social status of these persons is rather high (Brumagne, 1999, 39). Blacksmiths in particular seem to have been among the notabilities of the village (Leenders, 1983, 178), but also coopers and basket makers were appreciated as being 'skilled'.²⁷

²⁶ Perhaps, this does not imply that these craftsmen were by definition skilled. It cannot be excluded that they were semi-skilled workers that kept the tradition of performing a specific trade in their family. Yet, this is unlikely. If it would be easy to acquire these installations and this semi-skill, we should observe the presence of these occupations in many families, as ordinary farm workers must have found it both advantageous and possible to try to acquire these. If in a given context craftsmen such as brewers, house carpenters, joiners, shipwrights, saddlers, cabinetmakers, millers, weavers, tanners (Daniels, 1993) and brick makers (Leenders, 1983) faced considerable barriers to entry, this would give additional evidence that the occupation should not be devaluated.

²⁷ They are even called the 'artists' of the village (Van Isacker, 1984, 51).

Furthermore, a substantial investment was typically needed. Unlike a tailor or shoemaker, the blacksmith needed a separate work site, tools and supplies (Daniels, 1993), and this indicates the presence of property.²⁸ Consequently, there does not seem to be an overestimation of the social power of this category.

A *third category* is that of craftsmen who work for the local market but perform tasks that were demanded by the majority of the population and could not be performed by urban competitors (e.g., bakers, butchers, and other food producers, thatchers). From this point of view it can be argued that rural bakers and butchers were perhaps as skilled as urban ones. Yet, some doubt remains. First, one can assume that the demand for fine luxury products was less strong on the countryside. Secondly, to some extent they also have to compete with their customers. In many regions such as in the Highlands of Scotland, "every farmer must be a butcher, baker, and brewer for his own family" (Smith, 1937, 121-122; for Flanders, see Vandenbroeke, 1984, 143; van Hoorick, 1999, 284 on brewers). But for sure, this was not the case for every rural area. In particular in proto-industrialised regions, commercialisation and market dependency was probably stronger, what resulted in a higher density of butchers, bakers, etc. (Jaspers & Stevens, 1985, 111; Vanhaute & Van Molle, 2004, 18). Also in more purely agricultural economies some process of economic diversification was observed from the 18th century onwards (Brumagne, 1999, 38). In case someone was entitled as a baker or butcher, this indicates that a process of division of labour had taken place. Tasks originally performed in the household, were now performed by specialists. Although this may have affected their replaceability in crisis periods, in normal times they could profit from their specialisation.

A *fourth category* is that of craftsmen who work for an external market, such as the proto-industrialised workers. In many cases, the emergence of the proto-industry was related to the strategy of farm workers and cottagers to increase their income. In the rural area of Eastern Flanders smallholders dominated, with 78% of farmers having access to less than three hectares. These smallholders did not typically combine this with working as day-labourers on large farms (there were too few of these), but with working as spinners and weavers (Jaspers & Stevens, 1985), although there was a high level of regional specialisation in specific industries (see Jaspers & Stevens, 1985, 109; Vanhaute & Van Molle, 2004, 18). The employment conditions in

²⁸. This does however not imply that they were comparable to urban masters. Typically, these rural craftsmen are not big employers. By coding them in SP level 3 we seem to be in accordance with Van Isacker (1984) who ranked these rural craftsmen below notaries (SP level 5), school teachers, civil servants etc. (SP level 4).

the proto-industrial sector varied from region to region. Nevertheless, a common characteristic of many branches in proto-industry, cottage industry or domestic industry is that not much skill was required (Vandenbroeke, 1984, 175).²⁹ Although some of these workers were proprietors of their machines and products, and worked 'independently', their situation, especially in the textile industry, was typically one of strong dependency towards the merchants and entrepreneurs organising the industry. Before the 19th century the Flemish rural textile workers had some control over their activities, for example by shifting to agricultural work according to the season or by decreasing their work effort in good times (Dhaene, 1986). Afterwards, their situation and self-exploitation worsened (*Ibid.*, 166-168).³⁰ These are typically coded in SP level 2.

The *fifth category* is that of unskilled workers without fixed employment arrangement. The type of work they perform is dependent upon the demand at a given moment. They work as farm worker, street sweeper, digger, or whatever type of unskilled work (Kuczynski, 1967, 33; Leenders, 1983, 170). They are coded in SP level 1.

2.4. Different sources of cultural power

2.4.1. *The peasant social status*

The word 'peasant' has different meanings in different regions (e.g., Wolf, 1966; Rösener, 1994; Scott, 1998). Generally it refers to a small-scale producer holding land. But sometimes even agricultural workers are defined as peasants. Often the peasant status is connected with a traditional interpretation, implying that he or she is devoted to subsistence-type activities in a society without division of labour. The peasant status has therefore also been connected to backwardness and to a conservative attitude towards change. However, in other contexts peasants have been seen as the upper part of the rural social structure in a village; peasants held land, in opposition to landless agricultural workers.³¹

It is possible that in some contexts peasants had a better 'reputation' than other villagers. In this way, the peasant's social status is a social evaluation

²⁹ But they were not unskilled, rather semi-skilled (Dhaene, 1986, 161).

³⁰ Some 18th-century Flemish linen weavers were small entrepreneurs who possessed their own loom and raw material, and who were also responsible for selling their products (Thijs, 1982, 171).

³¹ For an elaborated discussion on the concept of "peasant" see e.g., Blum (1978), Ellis (1988) and Scott (1998).

that conferred cultural power. This situation is of course present in many villages. Large landowners typically hold the key positions in village politics, and their life style is a model for many other well-to-do villagers (e.g., see Brumagne, 1999, 36-39). The question is however whether there was enough *additional* cultural power based on the peasant social status that legitimises to classify the peasants in a higher SP level than the one to which they are assigned by evaluating their landholding.

Using the Swedish example, the most common way to define peasants is as non-gentry, non-noble persons with land that was registered by '*mantal*' (e.g., Winberg, 1981; Gadd, 1999; Svensson, 2001). These people had enough land to pay land tax but the size of the land could differ from below subsistence to large landholdings generating a surplus. In this sense, a peasant in Sweden corresponded to both the aforementioned small-scale peasant and to a surplus-producing farmer; the heart of the matter was that it was a social position different from that of the gentry and the nobility as well as that of the landless population. Peasants in Sweden had some political power. Freeholders and Crown tenants, but not tenants under the nobility, had political representation both on the local and the national level and paid tax to the same extent. In the Swedish case, voting power was in relation to the size of the landholding and, thus, depended on landholding and not on the 'peasant' status.³² Generally, the peasant status in Sweden is not regarded as strong as to change their situation compared to other groups in a decisive way (e.g., Gadd, 2000, 207-208); it was the landholding in itself that was significant.

Before the 19th century, in many European countries but Britain, the majority of the people in the rural sector were peasants, i.e., they were referred to as peasants or farmers regardless of size of landholding (e.g., Bull, 2005; Pélissier, Rébaudo, van Leeuwen, & Maas, 2005). Some of these peasants had certainly land below subsistence size and most of them lacked political representation in historical times. Following this, as well as the Swedish case, we state that in general the peasant's social status is not important enough to upgrade the peasant smallholders (tenants or freeholders with landholding below subsistence level) from SP level 2 to 3, those in SP level 3 to level 4 (in which for example school teachers and civil servants are classified), or those in SP level 4 to level 5 (in which for example the village priests are classified). In other words, this peasant's social status is highly redundant in case of landholding and is, in general, no source of additional cultural power.

³². Moreover, peasants had the responsibility of paying the tax for their household as well as for possible crofters and other households situated on their land. On the other hand, also some independent crofters paid tax for their houses, as did the artisans for their business.

2.4.2. Sources of pure status

In this section, we aim to refine the pure status dimension and coding rules. In the SOCPPO system the pure status dimension is used to code occupational titles that refer to nobility titles. Although there is no reference to economic power dimensions, persons for whom nobility (e.g., 'count') and prestige titles ('knight in the king's order') are recorded typically belonged to the highest economic classes of society. These are coded in SP level 5.

Apart from *nobility and prestige titles*, there are titles with a similar function but that do only refer to, say, a *lower level* of pure status. As a first subcategory we distinguish those titles that refer to *honorary functions and occupations*. These are prestigious tasks that were not a full-time occupation and did sometimes not result in much payment, if any. But for these functions typically only 'high-quality' people were asked. Good examples for Sweden are church board members (*kyrkvård*) and regional judges (*nämndeman*). Mind there is quite some difference within this group, with some titles being very *important* (the rural judge), while others are only moderately important (the church board member). For the former category we add the coding rule that very important honorary functions and occupations can lead to an upgrade to SP level 5 in case it is combined with an SP level 4 code (e.g., in case the person is a school teacher or a farmer who is a self-sustainable proprietor). Mind that only an upgrade of one SP level is allowed. The logic behind this rule is that this additional cultural power cannot correct a situation that is inferior in terms of economic power. For example, even being a rural judge did not make a crofter (SP level 2) as independent as, for example, a proprietor who owned much land (SP level 4). The presence of a low SP level occupation suggests that the person had to perform other, less valuable, activities, and this indicates a social power situation that is not very advantageous. Consequently, a crofter who is at the same time a rural judge will be coded in SP level 3. Of course, these situations seldom occur – most persons with an honorary function or occupation will have large landholding or high-ranked occupations. For *moderately important honorary functions and occupations* we have a different rule. They can maximally be upgraded to SP level 4 (e.g., 'shoemaker and church board member'), unless there is other information that permits to code this person in SP level 5 (e.g., in case the landholding situation of this person fits to the conditions to be coded as SP level 5). Also for this category only an upgrade of one SP level is allowed.

As a second subcategory we distinguish titles that are simply *personal prestige titles* without any reference to a specific function or occupation.

Swedish titles such as '*herr*' (Mister or Esquire), '*borgare*' (burgher) and '*mademoiselle*', belong to this category. For these personal prestige titles we apply the same rule as for moderately important honorary functions and occupations (maximally SP level 4, unless there is other information that leads to code this person in SP level 5). Mind that also for this category only an upgrade of one SP level is allowed. For example, a "carpenter's assistant" (SP level 2) for whom a personal prestige title is recorded, will only be assigned to SP level 3, as the personal prestige title is not strong enough to upgrade that person directly to SP level 4.

There is furthermore a variety of titles, such as 'poor', 'beggar' etc., that refer to *low status* positions. There are some difficulties with these titles. First, being poor is as such not a basic dimension of social power, rather a consequence of an absence of social power. It is only an indirect indicator. Secondly, being poor refers to a multitude of different situations. The poor may live in a poorhouse, be a permanent lodger or being lodger in different households almost every week. Some of the poor work, but in that case, usually an occupation can be found. Whatever the ambiguity of these titles, we think that the most adequate solution is to code them as unskilled (SP level 1).

The rules explained supra are applicable in case the pure status title is combined with another occupational title. If only an honorary title, function or occupation is mentioned, we code these directly in SP level 4. We assume that the persons that received these honorary qualifications disposed of many valuable qualities: being literate, being a member of a family that had a high esteem and was traditionally involved in these church and legal systems (some functions were for example *de facto* hereditary). Although there is no direct evidence that this cultural power was backed by a substantial amount of economic power, that is, that the person himself disposed of for example large landholding, it is clear that it is very likely that his or her social situation was different from that of ordinary crofters or tenants. Yet, for the same reason, it is impossible to assume that, for example, the rural judge had as much social power as those in SP level 5. Compared to the nobility, the additional cultural power was not large enough to directly evaluate that person as someone who was completely independent.³³

³³. We refined the categorisation of pure status in this way: 3 = nobility (e.g., 'baron', hisco status code _51, and important prestige titles 'knight in the order of the king', status code _52); 2 = very important honorary functions and occupations ('local judge', 12910, relation code 31); 1 = personal prestige titles (status code _53) and moderately important honorary functions and occupations ('church board member', status code_54); 0 = negative pure status ('poor', 'beggar',...).

3. TRY OUT ON THE SCANIAN PARISHES

In this section we implement the SOCPO scheme and its rules, following the arguments made earlier in the text, to a rural society. Our aim is to find out whether the result of this implementation is consistent with established patterns of societal development derived from an extensive research on this area (e.g., Bengtsson, 2000; Dribe, 2000; Lundh, 2002; Olsson, 2002; Svensson, 2006). Thus, the proposed procedure was applied to the Scanian parishes in southern Sweden.

3.1. Data, sources, method

The data used comes from the Scanian Demographic Database (SDD) and concerns five parishes in Scania (*Skåne*), the most southern region of Sweden.³⁴ The database is based on family reconstitutions generated by both birth, marriage and death registers for the period 1646-1895. The demographic information is supplemented by information on landholding, ownership and type of holding from poll tax registers. These registers contain yearly information from 1766 to 1895. Furthermore, from 1813, catechetical examination registers are used that provide more evaluated information on household sizes and on external as well as internal migration.

In a lot of these sources occupational titles are frequent, e.g., marriage registers, birth and death registers, poll tax registers and examination registers. All in all 2,077 different standardised occupational titles were found. These were coded first into HISCO and then into the SOCPO system. Together with the information on landholding this forms the basis for a social stratification analysis.

Thus, data is available from the late 17th century to 1895 (and even to 1922 for the parish of Kävlinge). We have sorted the data by demographic events taking place for the individuals, e.g., birth, marriage, 'outmigration', 'immigration' and death. To this a yearly "event", information on housing conditions and landholding, has been added. The data is structured somewhat different depending on the event studied: at an individual's birth, information

³⁴ The Scanian demographic database is a collaborative project between the Regional Archives in Lund and the Centre for Economic Demography, Lund University, headed by Tommy Bengtsson (www.ekh.lu.se/ed/EN/databases/sdd.asp).

on occupation and landholding of the father is recorded, while for the other events the information concerns the individual's own conditions. Moreover, since the different events refer to different sources, information on occupation for example, may vary. In the empirical part we will use some of the events and explicitly explain the reason for using these events when discussing social classification and social structure.

The five parishes are all situated in the western part of Scania, mainly on the plains although two of them are partly more wooded. Hence, grain production formed the most essential part of the economy in all parishes. The sample chosen reflects the different types of landownership that existed in Sweden; in two of the parishes, Hög and Kävlinge, freehold and crown land dominated while in the remaining three parishes, Halmstad, Kågeröd and Sireköpinge, noble land dominated. From 1850 onward, about half of the noble land in Sireköpinge was sold to peasants. This meant that although it legally still was noble land it was actually owned by peasant freeholders (Dribe & Olsson, 2006). The population increased over time, most marked in the 19th century. In 1751 the five parishes had a population of slightly over 2,100 inhabitants and in the year 1900 there were almost 6,000 inhabitants (Palm Andersson, 2000).

The agricultural production was organised along the open-field system during the 18th century but by the early 19th century enclosures made way for individual management of the land. Besides the enclosures, the agricultural transformation contained the emergence of markets in land, labour and capital (Svensson, 2006). It eventually led to a social and economic differentiation of the population but the reliance on agriculture was still at hand in the mid-19th century. In the second half of the 19th century things started to change in this respect. One of the parishes, Kävlinge, was transformed into a small industrial town with a sugar mill, a leather tannery, a railway station and other new workplaces. At the same time the other parishes were also affected by industrialisation but to a much lesser extent, and agricultural production remained the main provision for the inhabitants in these parishes (Svensson, ongoing research).

3.2. The Scanian social structure: differences and evolution over time

In this section we address two topics. First, we examine the differences in social structure between parishes characterised by different property rights.

By following the procedures dealt with in this article we would expect significant differences in terms of where the peasants end up in the classification, based on differences in property rights. Possible differences in work organisation on freehold land and manorial land will be displayed in the distribution of the lower SP levels. Secondly, we examine the evolution over time of the social structure in one of these parishes. We do this in order to understand the effects of the agricultural transformation, particularly the enclosure movement, and of industrialisation and urbanisation.

SOCPO (merged landholding and occupation)	Halmstad	Kågeröd	Hög	Kävlinge	Sireköpinge
SP level 5	1.7	1.2	4.3	3.4	1.7
SP level 4	1.6	3.0	22.0	18.5	5.0
SP level 3	20.2	20.1	4.3	10.2	16.2
SP level 2	21.0	26.0	42.1	41.5	23.9
SP level 1	55.5	49.8	27.4	26.5	53.3
N	694	863	328	412	884

TABLE 3: FATHERS CODED BY OCCUPATION AND LANDHOLDING, EVENT: BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD, PERCENTAGES³⁵

We start by looking at the social structure for the different parishes. Table 3 gives an overview of the variable for the five parishes for the fathers at the event of the first-born child. The first thing we observe is that the elite constituted a small fraction of the rural population. Thus, there were only a small number of owners with large landholdings, nobility, and non-manual super-skilled persons residing in the parishes. Next we find clear differences in the parishes with regards to SP level 3 and 4 (Skilled and Middle class respectively). While SP level 4 constitutes a large part of the population in Hög and Kävlinge it is only a small part of the population in the other three parishes, and vice versa for SP level 3. This is due to the differences in property rights among the landholders in the different parishes. Freeholders and crown tenants with at least subsistence production dominate in level 4 while manorial tenants dominate level 3. Despite the clear differences in property rights among the peasants, there are still some individuals to be found in level 4 in Halmstad, Sireköpinge and Kågeröd. These are mainly very large landholding manorial tenants while the individuals in level 3 found in Hög and

³⁵ Data source: Scanian Demographic Database.

Kävlinge mainly are artisans. Finally, the higher share in SP level 3 for Kävlinge as compared to Hög, is to some extent related to the urbanisation and industrialisation at the end of the 19th century (refer to the following section).

Another major difference is the high proportion of SP level 2 for the freeholders' parishes Hög and Kävlinge. The reason for this is that the commercialisation of the peasant economy and the emerging land market in these parishes created a more differentiated social structure in landholding. As a result, there is a quite high number of smallholders. In Hög, these peasants made up for 32% of SP level 2, in Kävlinge this percentage was lower (about 15%). This pattern of division of farms on freehold land but not on manorial land, is confirmed in other studies on this area and other areas of Sweden (Fridlitzius, 1979; Gadd, 2000; Svensson, 2006). Secondly, in the freeholders' parishes there was a high number of soldiers. In Hög, about 30% of SP level 2 were soldiers and Kävlinge had about the same proportion. The lack of soldiers in the manorial parishes has to do with the organisation of the army where freeholders and crown tenants provided for soldiers as a way of paying their taxes, while noble land was tax-exempted.³⁶ Thirdly, there were many cottagers (*husmän*). In Hög about 30% of SP level 2 were cottagers. In Kävlinge there were 34.5% cottagers, and, on top of that about 7% crofters. However, these groups were also present in the manorial parishes.

Finally, we examine the evolution of the social structure in Kävlinge in some more detail. Table 4 shows the social structure for three different periods of time: the 17th and 18th centuries, the 19th century, and the turn of the 20th century. The first period is mainly the pre-transitional agrarian economy, i.e., the traditional economy based on village community and the open-field system. The second period is characterised by the agricultural transformation including enclosures and a general commercialisation. Finally the third period is the period of urbanisation and industrialisation, also within Kävlinge itself. Two major changes are discernible: the diverging patterns of SP level 1 and SP level 2 and the growth of SP level 3 over time.

The main change between the first and the second period is the increase of SP level 2 and the decline of SP level 1. In the first period SP level 2 was dominated by soldiers while SP level 1 consisted of landless workers to a large degree. During the agricultural transformation and particularly as an effect of the enclosures this changed. First, after the enclosures there were

³⁶. The tax exemption on noble land was in reality, of course, only applicable to the owner of the land, the landlord. Tenants on manorial land paid rent to the landowner, before the 1850s most often in the form of labour and thereafter increasingly in money (Olsson, 2005).

more frequent divisions of farms. Some of these farms were so small that they could no longer support a family (Svensson, 2001). The growth of the smallholders is one explanation for the growth in SP level 2. Secondly, the enclosures also opened up possibilities of selling very small plots of land, not registered in the poll tax registers, where crofters and cottagers resided with either work obligations or money payment to the peasant. Thus enclosures enhanced the opportunity for the landless to acquire a small plot of land (Svensson, 2006). In the second period, there are more cottagers (+ 5%, not within the SP level but in terms of the total group), soldiers (+ 6%) and crofters (+ 7%) (all coded as SP level 2), as well as more peasants 'åbo' (+ 20%, coded in SP level 2, 3 or 4).

SOCPO by merged landholding and occupational information	1610-1800	1800-1880	1881-1920
SP level 5	6.7	2.1	2.3
SP level 4	19.0	19.6	20.0
SP level 3	4.9	7.8	23.1
SP level 2	31.7	51.2	30.0
SP level 1	37.7	19.4	24.6
N	284	434	130

TABLE 4: EVOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN KÄVLINGE, FATHERS OCCUPATION AT BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD, PERCENTAGES³⁷

From the second to the third period the work organisation changed again in the agrarian economy. Cottagers and crofters were replaced by workers (Svensson & Adler, 2002). At the same time the SP level 1 increased, mainly because of the emergence of workers in industry. The total change was an increase in workers (14%) and a decline of SP level 2 for cottagers (- 17%) and crofters (- 6%). The most marked difference is, however, the increase in SP level 3. This change is related to the industrialisation and urbanisation of Kävlinge. The increase is diverse, with bricklayers (+ 3%), tailors (+ 3%), smiths (+ 2%) and carpenters (+ 3%) as some examples of emerging groups.

³⁷. Data source: Scanian Demographic Database.

4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this paper, we aimed to provide a methodological tool to accommodate the comparative analysis of social and marital mobility, and of any research that uses class as a key concept. More specifically, we proposed some solutions to cope with the rural context problem. Our strategy was based on the SOCPO scheme (Van de Putte & Miles, 2005) to which we added additional rules. The solution to the context problem presented here is a general solution, that is, it is framed in general terms. Yet, in order to apply this procedure, much knowledge on the context is required. But we do hope that the proposed procedures can guide the local researcher to code his or her data into a framework that allows class-based comparative research. However, it remains an open question whether the scheme is useful for all possible types of rural regions.

The application on the Scanian villages was, in se, not problematic. All problems concerning the underlying class dimensions (such as the use of information on landholding in the SOCPO scheme) could be solved. Although this was far from a routine job, we did not really encounter major theoretical problems. The advantage of the SOCPO scheme is precisely that it explicitly discusses the underlying dimensions of the social structure, rather than just assigning occupations to classes, and consequently this offered a solid basis to discuss new issues that emerged when applying the scheme to the rural context.

Are there limits to the application of the scheme? First, there is the question about the use of it for non-class-based analysis. This question relates to our decision not to include sector as a class dimension. Of course, this does not imply that the sector is never important in analysis. If one thinks that the sector rather than social power is important to explain a phenomenon, it can, of course, be useful to include it into analysis. It goes without saying that, for example in the analysis of mortality, if one wants to have variables in an analysis that control for class and sector in order to measure the effect of parish, neighbourhood or whatever variable on mortality, the SOCPO scheme can be extended. Researchers interested in the importance of the sector can always make subdivisions within each SP level (e.g., SP level 4A: non-agricultural middle class, SP level 4B: agricultural middle class). But as soon as one is interested in class as such, we think this is not the procedure to follow.

Secondly, what about the application of the proposed classification in databases that have less rich information, e.g., on landholding? In that case, the scheme will produce more noise in the results. If farmers are not very numerous, this will not be too problematic. Yet, the noise will be quite strong if there are many farmers, and it will lead to strongly biased results. There are, perhaps, some alternatives for individual-based landholding information. The average landholding in a given area and period can be used to evaluate the landholding of farmers. Of course, it is clear that in many cases the results will still be strongly biased. For sure, at least a bias control procedure for the farmers should be applied if no individual based landholding information is available.

ABBREVIATIONS

EGP	Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero
HISCLASS	Historical International Social Class Scheme
HISCO	Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations
SDD	Scanian Demographic Database
SOCPO	social power
SP	Social Power

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Het meten van de sociale structuur in een plattelandscontext. Toepassing van het SOCPO schema in Scania, Zweden (17^{de}-20^{ste} eeuw)

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SAMENVATTING

Een belangrijke uitdaging voor de classificatie van beroepen is het faciliteren van vergelijkende analyses van klassengerelateerde verschijnselen. Dergelijke analyses vereisen dat klasse in elk onderzoeksgebied op een vergelijkbare manier wordt gemeten. Onvermijdelijk roept dit de vraag op of en hoe de historische context belangrijk is bij de classificatie van beroepen. In deze bijdrage gaan we in op een specifiek aspect van dit contextprobleem: kan het SOCPO-schema, voorheen voornamelijk toegepast op stedelijke en industriële gebieden, ook worden gebruikt voor de analyse van plattelandsgebieden? En hoe moeten we SOCPO verfijnen om dit te doen?

We beginnen met een korte bespreking van het SOCPO-schema en een expliciete ontleding van het contextprobleem. Daarna bespreken we elk aspect van het contextprobleem in detail en laten we zien hoe we het SOCPO schema willen aanpassen om een oplossing te bieden. Tenslotte illustreren we het aangepaste SOCPO-schema met een analyse van de sociale structuur in enkele plattelandsparochies in Zuid-Zweden.

Onze resultaten tonen aan dat de toepassing van het SOCPO-schema in een landelijke context niet per se problematisch is. Alle problemen met betrekking tot de onderliggende klassendimensies konden worden opgelost. Het voordeel van het SOCPO-schema is juist dat het expliciet de onderliggende dimensies van de sociale stratificatie behandelt, in plaats van enkel beroepen toe te wijzen tot klassen, en bijgevolg een stevige basis biedt om nieuwe problemen die ontstaan bij de toepassing van het schema op de landelijke context te bespreken.

Mesure de la structure sociale dans un contexte rural. Application du système SOCPO dans la région de Scanie en Suède (du XVII^e au XX^e siècle)

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RÉSUMÉ

Le système SOCPO (pouvoir social) est un outil de classification des professions dans un nombre limité de classes. SOCPO est caractérisé par un ensemble cohérent et axé sur la théorie de principes de stratification sociale et de règles explicites de codification découlant de ces principes. L'analyse comparative des phénomènes liés aux classes constitue un défi majeur lié à la classification des professions. Ce type d'analyse exige que la classe soit évaluée de la même manière dans chaque domaine de recherche. Cela pose inévitablement la question de savoir si l'on peut simplement utiliser le même système de classes dans chaque domaine et période de recherche. Dans quelle mesure le contexte historique est-il important dans la classification des professions en différentes classes?

Nous abordons, dans le présent article, un aspect spécifique du problème du contexte: le système SOCPO, appliqué auparavant dans des contextes essentiellement urbains et industriels, peut-il également être utilisé pour l'analyse des zones rurales? Et comment pouvons-nous l'affiner pour ce faire? Nous espérons, de cette manière, répondre à la critique selon laquelle les systèmes de classification professionnelle ne tiennent pas compte des différences contextuelles.

Nous commençons par aborder brièvement le système SOCPO et analysons le problème du contexte en termes explicites. Ensuite, nous traitons en détail chaque problème lié au contexte et expliquons comment nous voulons adapter le système SOCPO pour apporter une solution. Enfin, nous illustrons le système SOCPO adapté par une analyse de la structure sociale rurale dans le sud de la Suède du XVII^e siècle au début du XX^e.

Nos résultats montrent que l'application aux villages de la Scanie n'a pas été, en soi, problématique. Tous les problèmes relatifs aux dimensions des classes sous-jacentes ont pu être résolus. L'avantage du système SOCPO est précisément qu'il examine de manière explicite les dimensions sous-jacentes de la stratification sociale, au lieu de se limiter à attribuer les professions à certaines classes, et qu'il offre ainsi une base solide pour débattre des nouvelles questions qui surgissent lorsqu'on applique le système au contexte rural.

Notre objectif était d'apporter un outil méthodologique visant à intégrer l'analyse comparative de la mobilité sociale et conjugale, et de toute recherche qui utilise la classe comme un concept clé. La solution au problème du contexte rural présentée ici est une solution générale, c'est-à-dire qu'elle est étudiée en termes généraux. Toutefois, il faut énormément de connaissances sur le contexte pour appliquer cette procédure. Mais nous espérons vraiment que les procédures proposées peuvent guider les chercheurs dans la codification de leurs données dans une structure qui permet une recherche comparative basée sur la classe.