

Bengt Nilsson

# Kvinnor i statens tjänst – från biträden till tjänstemän

*En aktörsinriktad undersökning av kvinnliga statstjänstemäns organisering, strategier och kamp under 1900-talets första hälft*

Akademisk avhandling som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen vid Uppsala Universitet kommer att offentligens försvaras i universitetets sal X, torsdagen den 26 september 1996 kl. 10.

## ABSTRACT

Nilsson, B. Kvinnor i statens tjänst – från biträden till tjänstemän. En aktörsinriktad undersökning av kvinnliga statstjänstemäns organisering, strategier och kamp under 1900-talets första hälft. (Women in Civil Service: from Helpers to Employees. An actor-centred study of female state servants: their organization, strategies and struggle in early 20th century Sweden.) Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. *Studia Historica Upsaliensia* 179. 335 pp. ISBN 91-554-3819-9.

The main theme of the thesis is the feminization of the Swedish state offices in the early twentieth century, and the trade union engagement of women clerks. The study has paid regard to the notion of class as well as gender. The occupational group in question has been little studied, in spite of this type of situation being an important gateway to women's employment. The individual actors have been placed in focus, so as to complement the dominant structuralist perspective. The collective strivings of women clerks have been studied through a study of *Kvinnor i statens tjänst (KST)*, the association of the women civil servants; its strategy and activity both locally and on the central level.

The result of the study is relatively complex. The majority of women clerks remained in the lower stratum of civil servants throughout the period. The collective ambitions of this group of women however resulted in major achievements concerning permanent employment, the possibility of combining family and wage labour, and also access to a limited type of career. The use of a so-called *trade union strategy* by KST and other women's trade unions underlines the importance of further developing the image of the early Swedish white-collar trade unions. The study also constitutes an attempt to recreate a balance in the the image of the Swedish women's rights movement. The struggle of women clerks has been viewed in terms pioneering efforts, which have played an important role in the shaping of norms concerning women's right to wage labour; and thus also in the shaping of the gender contract.

*Key words:* Women trade unions, white-collar, civil servants, 20th century Sweden, women's rights movement.

Bengt Nilsson, Department of History, Uppsala University, S:t Larsgatan 2,  
753 10 Uppsala, Sweden