

= Anna Maria Rückerschöld =

Anna Maria Rückerschöld ( 5 February 1725 ? 25 May 1805 ) , born Rücker , was a Swedish author who wrote several popular books on housekeeping and cooking in the late 18th and early 19th century . She was an advocate of women 's right to a good education in household matters and propagated this view in public debate through an anonymous letter in 1770 . Along with Cajsa Warg and other female cookbook authors , she was an influential figure in culinary matters in early modern Sweden .

= = Biography = =

Rückerschöld was born in 1725 . She was the daughter of Emerentia Polhem and Reinhold Rücker , a judge of the local hundred who was employed at the high court in Stockholm . She grew up in Stjärnsund and Hedemora , being one of ten children in the family , seven girls and three boys . The family was not part of the nobility , but belonged to the upper echelons of society and the father was eventually knighted in 1751 , the same year as he died . Reinhold Rücker spent much time away from the home while working in Stockholm , leaving his wife to run the household . Rückerschöld was the granddaughter of inventor and industrialist Christopher Polhem and spent part of her childhood with her grandfather at his estate at Stjärnsund . When Rückerschöld was twelve , her three brothers were sent to be educated at the prestigious Uppsala University . The seven sisters remained in Hedemora without receiving any formal education , which was the customary upbringing of girls at the time .

In 1750 Rückerschöld married Jonas Jakobsson Dahl , an accountant employed by the high court in Stockholm . Dahl was educated at Uppsala University and was the son of a factory owner . Rückerschöld kept her maiden name throughout her life , changing it only after her father was knighted in 1751 and -schöld ( " shield " ) was added to his last name . Rückerschöld was 25 years old when she married and Dahl 33 , eight years her senior . The couple had their first child , Emerentia , in 1751 , and moved to Sättra gård in modern @-@ day Upplands Väsby , north of Stockholm in 1760 . Rückerschöld gave birth to three more children between 1759 and 1765 , Maria , Fredrica and Christopher . A fourth child , Chierstin , died only seven hours after her birth . The other three children reached adulthood . Emerentia married a lawspeaker in Småland while her sister Maria Fredrica remained a spinster . Christopher went to sea , but was never heard from after that . The family moved from Sättra gård to Stockholm . The earliest record of their residence in Stockholm is from 1775 , and the couple remained there the rest of their lives . Both parents survived their children ; Dahl died in 1796 and Rückerschöld nine years later , in 1805 , at the age of 80 .

= = Public debate = =

Rückerschöld is best known for her books on cooking and household work , but it has also been established that she wrote an article advocating household education for women . In February 1770 a letter with the title " Det Olyckliga Swenska Fruentimrets Böneskrift till Allmänheten " ( " The unhappy Swedish woman 's entreaty to the general public " ) appeared in the periodical Almänna Magazinet written by Fru D \* \* , " Mrs D \* \* " ( likely " Mrs Dahl " ) . The letter has been attributed to Rückerschöld since it is known that she wrote a letter to Carl Christopher Gjörwell , publisher of Almänna Magazinet and other papers , only a few weeks later . In the letter she is grateful to Gjörwell for having one of her writings published , and expresses her wish that she would " live to see even the smallest amendment to the suggestions that I have ventured to adhort for the benefit of my sex " .

The article was published during a period of intense public debate . Freedom of press had been established in 1766 and encouraged people to give their suggestions on how to improve Swedish society . Economy , emigration , agriculture and education were hotly debated issues , as well as the problematic situation for unmarried middle class women . Without a spouse a woman in 18th century

Sweden could have great difficulty supporting herself , especially as lower ranking servants were often promoted to maids and thereby lowering the number of employment opportunities for unmarried women .

Rückerschöld defended the " natural " division between male and female spheres of work , but also advocated schools for women where they could be taught household duties , such as cooking , sowing and basic household economics . She believed the need for practical household knowledge should have priority over social skills intended to please , such as knowledge of music , embroidery and art . Through allegories , the letter expressed Rückerschöld 's view on the relationship between the sexes , and her passionate concern for the well @-@ being of her fellow women . She attempted to illustrate the gravity of the situation by comparing the plight of women with that of Philomela , a character in Greek mythology who was raped by her sister 's husband and then had her tongue cut out to prevent her from speaking about the deed . She eventually managed to expose the husband by painstakingly explaining her story through embroidery .

Her passionate advocacy for the right of contemporary middle @-@ class women to a solid education in housekeeping has led journalist and writer Ingrid Årlemalm to describe Rückerschöld as a " cautious feminist " . In the letter in Allmänna Magazinet , she also shows signs of being well @-@ read and familiar with contemporary literature on pedagogy with quotes from François Fénelon 's *Traité de l'education des filles* ( " Treatise on the Education of Girls " ) , which had been published in Swedish translation 1762 . Like Rückerschöld , Fénelon strongly advocated household education to for young women .

= = Housekeeping and cooking = =

In 1785 , fifteen years after she wrote her plea for female household education , Rückerschöld published *En Liten Hushålls @-@ Bok* ( " A Small Household Book " ) . It was published in her own name , and contains various practical advice on efficient household management ; cooking , cleaning , washing , brewing , butchering , etc . Rückerschöld was influenced by the mercantilistic economic ideas of her time , and advised readers to take better advantage of local produce , such as berries and mushrooms and using locally available products in favor of imports , such as substitution of wine with juice or vinegar made from homegrown fruit . There are few actual recipes for cooking , and all of them describe more everyday dishes such as simpler porridge and soup . For more refined cooking , Rückerschöld recommended other contemporary cookbooks , of which Cajsa Warg 's is described as the foremost .

The book proved to be popular enough to be printed in two more editions and in 1796 Rückerschöld 's first genuine cookbook was published , *Den Nya och Fullständiga Kok @-@ Boken* ( " The New and Complete Cookbook " ) . It was far larger than her previous work , over 300 pages , and included recipes for more refined dishes . Nevertheless , Rückerschöld tried to hold fast to her frugal ideals . In the foreword to the book , she described Cajsa Warg's cookbook as being too extravagant , though this is partially excused because it was written in a time of more abundance and by an author used to the lavish resources of a wealthy kitchen . In the book Rückerschöld continued to promote her goal that all women should be skilled homemakers and cooks ; without such knowledge , they would not be able to fulfill their duties as women . Other than recommendations in the foreword , the book also contained a short chapter with descriptions of fictitious housewives that served as warning examples about neglecting housework in favor of beautification , reading , religion , or doing the chores of the servants . The ideal housewife is embodied only by the final example , Benignia . By being humble , studious and knowledgeable , and being first to rise and last to go to bed , she becomes " the pride of her husband , pinnacle of the household , joy of servants , delight of friends , assuager of the poor , solace of the inconsolable , haven of the oppressed , and , finally , the envy of mean @-@ spirited neighbors " .

Before her death , Rückerschöld would write two more books on the topic of housekeeping and cooking : *Fattig Mans Wisthus och Kök* , ( " Poor Man 's Larder and Kitchen " ) and *En Liten Hushålls @-@ Cateches* ( " A Small Household Catechism " ) . The first book was published in 1796 , and aimed for a broader readership than the previous books . This included not just modest urban

households , but also peasant wives who made up the majority of the population in Sweden at the time . Again Rückerschöld stressed the importance that women know proper housekeeping skills , and urged them to take good care of the household economy to keep incompetent husbands from wrecking the family budget . Other than directions for simple dishes , there was money @-@ saving strategies like baking one 's own bread or cooperating with neighbors to buy larger quantities of food at lower prices . In the book Rückerschöld portrays herself as going on inspection in a peasant household , being shown the barn , larder , vegetable garden , etc . , and having suggestions for improvements everywhere . Fattig Mans Wisthus och Kök was awarded a silver medal by Patriotiska Sällskapet ( " The Patriotic Society " ) for being the first cookbook written for poorer households . Twenty years earlier , the society had issued a challenge with this aim , but no one before Rückerschöld had managed to write such a book . In 1797 , one year after the book was first published , a second edition came out .

En Liten Hushålls @-@ Cateches came out in 1800 and was only 43 pages long . In her last book Rückerschöld repeated her previous stances about the importance of knowing household skills , and that girls should be allowed to partake in household work from an early age rather than being pampered and taught impractical skills . While stressing that a woman 's God @-@ given station was in the home and that she should be accustomed to humility and obedience , she also encouraged women to take matters in their own hands ; the lack of household education could only be alleviated by sharing information and passing on knowledge from one generation to the other .