

3 Leaving home to help the family?

Male and female temporary migrants in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Spain

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In peasant societies based on family farms, temporary and seasonal migrations were a resource on which most households periodically relied, one of the few sources of cash apart from the sale of dairy goods and other forms of domestic production.

In eighteenth-century Europe, factors relating both to the demand for (increasing labour opportunities in industry and, due to city growth, services) and to the supply of (growing need for peasant families to make payments in cash for taxes, etc.) labour led to an increasing dependence of peasant families on these migrations. As a result, 'migration time' became an essential part of the peasants' life-cycle, playing a fundamental role in the process by which peasants adapted themselves to urban and new working environments and fundamentally shaping their skills, income and possibilities of social mobility.¹

Differences between female and male workers involved in flows of temporary migration have been described with reference to the decision to migrate itself, the distance of the migration and the age at which the migration started.

First, the decision to migrate: in some places migration appears as almost totally a male experience. This seems to have been the case in regions where migration was usually across the sea,² and it has been explained by three reasons: first, the single man's greater need to obtain resources in order to establish his own family. In areas where the inheritance system or the property system prevented men from having access to sufficient resources, out-migration would have functioned as an alternative means of achieving these resources. Second, men have greater access to family and external financial (credit) resources, for instance, to buy boat passages. The third explanation given is men's greater chance of finding a job as a migrant worker, and their higher salaries which, in theory, make 'man's migration' the best family strategy.

It is not only long-distance migration that has been defined as mostly male, however. In mountain areas of Europe, seasonal and temporary

short- and medium-distance migration was apparently mostly male too, since most of the growing demand for labour from urban centres was for male workers (stonemasons, masons, etc.).³

A second difference is distance travelled to find work. Where both female and male migration existed, female migration tended to be over short distances with male migration over longer distances. Ravenstein (1885) made of this one of his laws of migrations.

The third difference is that women appear to have migrated at a younger age than men.⁴ This seems to be related to the greater importance of employment in domestic service for women (both girls and boys were taken into domestic service at a very young age), and the earlier age of marriage for women.⁵

However, although they have been noted, sex-differentiated migration patterns have not been examined with a view to determining male/female role and status differences. In this chapter I argue that an analysis of this type requires an understanding of the experience of men and women migrants, including not only the nature of the task involved but also the social relations under which work was carried out. As a contribution to such an analysis, the chapter focuses on temporary migrations as mechanisms for gaining access to resources, here conceptualised as economic resources and also the skills and experience that were to prove fundamental for workers' later conversion to permanent waged work.

Emphasis on the conditions and relations under which temporary migrations took place is important, since peasant women and men who undertook temporary migrations (temporary work for wages) did so as members of families, as heads of households or as wives, that is, as components of an established relationship in which duties and rights were defined in terms of both consumption and production. They did not go as individuals choosing to undertake certain activities at different moments of their lives.

The position of the migrant within the family relationship conditioned his or her access to wage labour in two ways: first, it determined entrance into the labour market. In some places, women were precluded from participating in seasonal and temporary migratory flows which were primary sources of earnings in their local economies, in what could be seen as an antecedent of the nineteenth-century construction of wage labour as a male realm.

Second, the intent is to determine the migrants' access to the earnings derived from their migration. This chapter analyses two internal migratory flows existing in Spain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, originating in the same area, the northern province of Santander. The first one was a female flow, to work as wet nurses in Madrid, at a distance of about 400 km. The second was a male flow, to work as dockworkers at the southern seaport of Cádiz, at about 1,000 km.

Both were well-established flows, well known to contemporaries. In both cases, the workers involved in them were adult members of peasant families,



Map 3.1 Map of Spain showing significant places mentioned in this chapter

married (married migrants tended to be temporary and seasonal migrants, while for single migrants temporary movements often meant the first step towards permanent migration, which included getting married), travelling to an urban centre to work for some years for wages that were intended to be invested in the family farm. Yet the cases analysed show that working as temporary migrants, spending an important period of their adult lives working away from home, had rather different effects for women and men workers, especially in regard to their respective capacities to use the earnings generated by their own migration and those generated by the migration of family members.

The construction of migration as male

'The deeply seated image of women in these times as sedentary, as tied to home and family, is simply not true for the lower classes; that is, the majority of the population.'⁶

This image is due partially to the sources traditionally used to study migration.⁷ But it also reflects a reality: women had no access to most long-distance migratory flows. Highland areas all over Europe, like the region studied here, were important sources of temporary emigration.

The gender pattern of these migratory flows was always very similar: during the winter months men would leave for the plains to work as artisans, stonecutters, woodcutters, clockmakers.⁸ Excluded from apprenticeship by guild regulation and social custom, women had no access to these migratory flows; instead they went into domestic service or remained at home working in domestic textile industries or agriculture. The special difficulties of identifying domestic workers further reinforce the invisibility of women as migrants for the historian.

Women's participation in agricultural migratory flows, on the other hand, was directly regulated. A good example of such external regulation is provided by the sustained attempt to exclude women from the gangs of Gallego harvesters. Migration to Andalusia and Castile to harvest attracted each year some 25,000 to 30,000 young women and men, and was the main source of income for inland areas without access to the fisheries. Female participation apparently accounted for about a third of this flow of migration. This became, during the eighteenth century, a matter of deep concern for authorities. In an attempt to put an end to it, a series of prohibitive measures were enacted.⁹

Prohibitions came from the State, the city councils and the Church. In 1736, emigration of single women to Castile 'who go in the company of their fathers, uncles or brothers, as well as for married women, not in the company of their husbands' was forbidden. The town councils also tried to prohibit the migration of those women who 'with the pretext of going to work' abandoned Galicia (1748). Meijide Pardo (1960) mentions 'endless announcements in all the parishes'. Also in 1748 jail sentences or the confiscation of property for those contravening the prohibition were announced.

In 1754 an order from the administrative authority of Galicia revealed that women were emigrating in men's clothes:

That no gang boss nor other person who goes to the works of Castile takes any woman, under penalty of twenty *ducados* for each one taken, and of ten years of jail in one of the presidiums of Africa; that no husband, father, brother, or relative or master, permits his wife, daughters, sisters, relatives or servants who are under his custody, to go to such works, under the same penalty; that justices and officials be vigilant in the observance of this and let it immediately be known when any woman from their parish is missing, and take and place an embargo on the properties of the person under whose custody she is. If the justices do not enforce this law they must pay fifty *ducados* and thirty to the officials; in cases of women being found going to the work dressed in men's clothes, besides the said penalties, she and the man taking her must be punished by public shaming.¹⁰

In 1766 a new order by the minister Aranda recalls the endless regulations to impede women from migrating to Castile 'in men's gangs'.

The notion of restricting women's mobility was widespread. Describing the province of Santander, an enlightened author complained in 1798 that

in the valleys of Camargo, Piélagos, and villages of the Abadía, there are perverse women whose excessive behaviour runs to coming to Santander [town] with small bundles of fagots on their heads and that for the eight or ten *quartos* they make for each of them, they tear their clothes to gather the fagots and they never know in practice the spindle or the distaff. For a wage of a real it is possible to find women ready to go thus loaded two or three miles, but no one who wants to spin even if the price be doubled. It follows from this a distraction from their proper work, the fact that they get accustomed to idle loafing, to eating and drinking in the taverns, to the crowds that the roads provide to seduce their ignorance rather than to a modest behaviour; and finally that they escape from spinning, weaving, and sewing, and every labour that restricts them to the home.¹¹

The ideal of domestic seclusion was in sharp contrast to the activities that women had traditionally undertaken. But it inspired Catholic opinion, propagated every week in the churches, and, above all, policies and regulations concerning the labour market. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, women migrants found employment only in domestic service.

However, it was not only a matter of occupational segregation. Regulation or direct prohibition of women's participation in flows of temporary or seasonal migration denied them access to the most dynamic part of the emergent market economy, thus preventing them from improving their working skills, earning wages, and achieving social mobility through wage labour.

Migration of women from La Montaña to Madrid to work as wet nurses

The region between the Basque country and Asturias was part of the province of Burgos until the mid-nineteenth century and was known as 'the Mountain'. The economy of the interior part of this Cantabric region consisted of a mix of arable and dairy farming. The marginal character of most of the land meant low productivity, and the egalitarian system of inheritance (after continuous partition) resulted in very small plots. For these reasons, Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria and the Basque country, which were mountainous regions, became, during the nineteenth century, main sources of temporary, seasonal and permanent migrant workers.

The valley of Pas, located in the interior part of the province of Santander, is a good example of such an economy. The isolation resulting from bad communications and distance from urban centres was overcome by the initiative of its inhabitants, who tirelessly walked roads which no

animals could traverse to transport their dairy produce to the local markets. This short-distance movement (to sell dairy produce or for smuggling), played an important role in accustoming Pasiego people to mobility and giving them contact with towns and urban markets.¹²

Pasiego women became famous nationwide as wet nurses, an activity that they performed in most northern capitals and, above all, in Madrid, where they were wet nurses to the offspring of the royal family. Wet nurses of the royal family had traditionally come from Castile. King Fernando VII (1814–1833) was the first to choose a Cantabrig wet nurse to nurse one of his children, reflecting a change in the demand in the Madrid market for wet nurses.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, a series of changes in the wet nursing market increased the opportunities for women from the northern regions. Influenced by the criticisms of doctors and politicians of the high rates of infant mortality (due, according to them, to the practice of taking the babies to the wet nurse's village), urban middle- and upper-class families began hiring and bringing wet nurses into their homes and this occasioned a shift in the geography of the market: wet nurses no longer needed to be from areas near the cities, so women from distant regions gained access to the wet nursing market.¹³ A particular preference for northern women, who were considered healthier and also of the purest blood (not contaminated by Protestant or by Muslim blood, as was often the case in the southern regions), eventually became a main feature of the Madrid market. The fact that the royal family chose its wet nurses from these regions further reinforced the demand.

As a result of this confluence of supply and demand factors, by the end of the eighteenth century most wet nurses employed by the well-to-do families of Madrid were from the northern regions. Although women from Asturias were by far the majority of them, the most sought after were from the Cántabro valleys, especially from the Pasiego valley. Pasiego wet nurses became so famous that the term Pasiega is still synonymous with wet nurse.¹⁴ Writer Emilia Pardo Bazán explained this identification at the end of the nineteenth century:

The litoral of our Cantabrig Sea provides Madrid mostly with this human commodity, which most advantaged type is produced in the famous Pas Valley, from which the name 'pasiega' comes, with which we designate all wet nurses, although the natives of Bierzo in the Mountains of León are equally good.¹⁵

I have studied the temporary migration of wet nurses to Madrid through the *Diario oficial de Avisos de Madrid*, a journal that began publication in 1758.¹⁶ The flow of Pasiego women to Madrid started in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The first advertisement of a wet nurse identifying herself as Pasiega appeared on 4 November 1786, though it is likely



Plate 3.1 Late nineteenth-century postcard of Pasiego wet nurses

that others were already working as wet nurses in Madrid. In any case, this was the beginning of a migration that rapidly organised itself and that would last over 150 years.¹⁷

The purpose of getting employment as wet nurses is what brings these peasant women to Madrid, a few weeks, or even days, after giving birth. 'They walk the road with bread and wine', goes the old Spanish saying, and a Pasiega fulfils that saying in her trip to Madrid, considering herself very lucky if she can add to those foodstuffs some other nutritious substance that neither her wealth, nor the assortment of the wayside inns provide. Half dressed, halfshod, walking during the day, and sleeping during the night on the hard soil, these unhappy women make their journey. But their health, their robustness, and strong nature resist everything, and they arrive at Madrid as ruddy and fresh as if they had not undergone any deprivation.¹⁸

Group movements, characteristic of seasonal and temporary migrations, appear also in the flow of Pasiego wet nurses to Madrid. Unlike other migrations, though, the rhythm of this depends on a personal circumstance, the timing of a baby's delivery. Women from the same village who had decided to look for a job as wet nurse in town would wait for each other to recover from a birth to travel together.¹⁹ In order to keep their milk, they carried a puppy with them:

They undertake with virile resolution the path to the Court, either alone segregated in a covered wagon, or together walk in group. The first thing they do, until, as they say, they find an arrangement, is to provide themselves with a newly born puppy, which during the expedition works as a baby and applying it to the breast, keeps and maintains the nutritious juice, object of speculation.²⁰

The hiring process

Once in Madrid, if they did not already have lodgings, they would go to the square of Santa Cruz, near Plaza Mayor, the town's centre. Surrounded by arcades with fabric stores, this place was an outdoors labour market:

At the plaza de Santa Cruz, in Madrid, there is a daily market in human flesh, one whose effect on social custom has yet to be considered. Those who pass, look, see a group of Pasiegas sit on the floor, or on the stones that form the edge of an entrance hall, some with a baby, others without, and without paying more attention, or thinking about it, continue on their way [. . .] What are these poor and robust Pasiegas doing here, some eating crumbs of bread, others with an envious face?²¹

From at least the second half of the eighteenth century this place was also frequented by Pasiego itinerant sellers, men and women, who sold in Madrid the fabrics, especially muslins, that they smuggled in from the fiscally exempted Basque provinces. Pasiego wet nurses probably arrived in Madrid with these itinerant sellers and were helped by them at the beginning of their stay in the capital. An advertisement for fashion fabrics that appeared in the *Diario* on 30 September 1802, refers to the stall as 'the stall that Pasiego women have': 'In the stall that Pasiego women have in the plaza de Santa Cruz there is a great assortment of fine spotted muslin of high quality and fashion designs'. These Pasiego women sellers of fabrics acted probably as the link with the Pasiego women who arrived to work as wet nurses, some decades later.²²

Different means of hiring were used:

They come to the Court, they stand in the plaza de Santa Cruz and trusting their ruddy complexion and robust appearance, among other qualities proper to wet nurses, they insert in the *Diario de Avisos* an advertisement, the content of which is with small variations as follows: 'X., 23 years old, with milk four months old, wants to find a nursling at the parents' home; she is robust and has some one to recommend her. A reference will be given at Barquillo street.' Through this means, or by effect of private recommendations and after the necessary arrangements, the Pasiega enters the home of an opulent family, of a

noble Grande de España perhaps, or the Royal Palace itself, with the object of breastfeeding one or more children successively.²³

Once a family had contacted the wet nurse, she had to go through a medical examination, which was determinant of the choice, and is described in all the gynaecology books. Indeed, there is evidence that women were instructed by colleagues and friends on how to respond to the doctors' questions. The importance of the nurse's physical condition, and of the quality of her milk, explains how doctors and midwives became heavily involved in the hiring process, often as mediaries.²⁴

Working conditions of wet nurses in Madrid

The resident wet nurse became a characteristic figure of the nineteenth-century urban theatre. The rise in demand for such women increased their wages, and to have such a nurse became a status symbol. Part of the wet nurse's working day was spent at public places like parks, where she, sometimes with the help of a young assistant, took the baby. A key element of this new social figure was the uniform, a mystified version of the northern peasant costume that proclaimed the origin, and, hence, the cost, of the wet nurse.

It is six o'clock. Let us walk towards the Puerta del Sol, but not without first stopping for a while in the gardens in the first part of Alcalá street. They are full of children playing, of servant girls, of wet nurses with dresses with blue and red fringes, carrying on their backs, in a bamboo basket covered with a bright scarf, a baby lying in its covers.²⁵

The pattern of employment at the parents' home had two main variations: families that could afford it kept on the wet nurse for around two years, the period for which she was physically able to breastfeed and that was viewed as an appropriate weaning time. She then went back to her village and bore another child, returning to Madrid after each new delivery:

The Pasiega Santos Diega, just arrived, solicits a nursling at the parents' home: milk two months old; having breastfed at the homes of the *Secretario de Cruzada* and the *Contador de Espolios y Vacantes*, twenty months in the first one and two years in the second. They will inform on her good behaviour and quality.²⁶

When the wet nurse was kept only for some months she had to find a new home:

Antonia de Villegas, Montañesa, looks for a nursling at the parents' home: she is *primeriza* [had her first baby], and with milk six months

old; just finished feeding a girl at D. Vicente Goldoni's, silver maker, who lives in Olivo Baxo Street, 13, where she currently is, and there the best references will be given.

(3 January 1805)

Cases where the same wet nurse appears in different advertisements at intervals longer than a year indicate either a very long period of breast-feeding or two different migration periods. The following advertisement appeared on 13 November 1860: 'María Mazón, a native of the province of Santander, wants a child to feed'. She had already so advertised on 3 July 1859, sixteen months before.

In any case, there existed a clear tendency among the wet nurses who had travelled from distant regions to prolong breastfeeding as long as possible to maximise the profit derived from their emigration. Time away from home was time for the accumulation of money.

Wet nurses were among the best-paid of all servants, probably the best-paid of all female servants after cooks. Pasiago wet nurses were the highest-paid of all wet nurses in Madrid. Few advertisements included information about wages offered or requested. In the period 1758–1799 only two mentioned the wage offered: 60 and 150 reales per month. Taking the latter as the better indicator of wages paid to Pasiago wet nurses, this monthly wage meant an annual income of 1,800 reales around the end of the eighteenth century. In the same years, a master mason or carpenter was paid 14 reales at day (equivalent to a monthly income of 280, considering twenty working days per month, and an annual income of 2,800, considering ten months of work per year), while a mason apprentice was paid 7–8 reales (140–160 reales per month, 1,400–1,600 per year) and a carpenter apprentice 10 reales (200 a month, 2,000 reales a year). These figures are consistent with the idea that in this period women's highest wages were similar to those of male apprentices.

But comparison between wages of servants and other workers is meaningful only if the monetary equivalent of the payment in kind (food, lodging, clothes) that servants received is included. If we do so, despite the longer working day, domestic service appears as a good choice for women, even in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and as a less good choice for men, who had many other opportunities, with higher wages and fewer working hours.²⁷ Benefits and premiums were also frequent. In the case of wet nurses, for example, parents were generous if their babies blossomed.

Royal wet nurses were in addition generously rewarded when they finished the nursing, and recompensed with the title of *hidalguía* for themselves, their husbands and descendants. While working, they occupied a privileged place in public ceremonies according to protocol, and they exerted their influence also in a public way by eliciting favours.²⁸

Evidence exists about strong links of affection developing between the wet nurse and the family she worked for. It was not uncommon, for

instance, for the wet nurse to stay at the former parents' house while looking for a new family in subsequent migrations. Former employers usually provided references and even placed the new advertisements, in some of which they offered to show the wet nurse's portrait. If the wet nurse was literate, her correspondence was often kept and the children raised by her considered her a second mother, sometimes visiting her at her village. This personal relation seems to have had important material consequences: the baby's parents became protectors of the wet nurse's family and helped her and the members of her family to solve bureaucratic problems or to start a small business in Madrid.

Living conditions of wet nurses in Madrid

As was the case for all domestic servants, the standard of living enjoyed by Pasiago wet nurses in Madrid depended not only on their wages but on the family for which they worked and on the personal relationship they managed to develop with that family.

Wet nursing meant the permanent care and feeding of a baby, and a heavy daily workload. Babies had to be fed every three or four hours, bathed, put to sleep and taken care of; their clothes had to be changed and washed, etc. The nurses shared the room with the baby so as to feed and comfort it at night. Wet nurses spent time out for the baby's daily walks and, in general, on any occasion decided by the family, such as visits to relatives, summer trips, etc.²⁹ Unlike male immigrants of rural origin, for whom the urban working experience included a pattern of socialising centred around the drinking tavern, wet nurses were precluded from access to such public places and thus from such patterns of workers' sociability.

On the other hand, this physical proximity to the family's baby was advantageous for the wet nurse in terms of clothes and, more so, food. Satirical articles in the press suggested that wet nurses' access to food had no limits, since the parents believed a rich diet was good for the baby.³⁰ They were also very well dressed, since the external appearance of wet nurses was part of the family's visible status. In fact, wet nurses wore uniforms the family chose for them. In many respects, and setting aside the emotional tug of home and of babies left behind, these years may have been the most comfortable of their lives.

Wet nurses and their families

Their stay in Madrid finished, wet nurses returned to their land and to their families. Although single mothers were not uncommon among wet nurses, this seems to have been rarely the case among Pasiagos. In every case during almost two centuries, they were married women who migrated as a part of a family strategy to increase the family income. They intended to invest the capital saved on the family property.

The saving capacity of wet nurses working at the parents' home was very high, amounting to almost all their wages, since they had no free time to spend, and clothes, food and lodgings were provided by the family.

Wet nurses [...] when they finish raising the little angel, go back to their lands bringing the husband some onzas, with which he buys a couple of cows and devotes himself to the expansion and enlargement of his property, while the hapless wife gives birth to another offspring, whose breastfeeding will be taken care of by a woman neighbour for a meagre amount, and she returns to the Court, where she will find, by recommendation of the parents of her first nursling, another similar home, which after a year she will leave again to bring the lucky husband a similar or greater amount, with which the number of cows will be increased, and some lucrative speculation made.³¹

This capital input was the most important financial resource of the Pasiego family. In fact, migration of Pasiego women to Madrid (and other cities) to work as wet nurses became during the nineteenth century perhaps the most important source of capital for Pasiego families. Most Pasiego families invested the wife's savings after working as wet nurses in the purchase of cattle, since this was, indeed, the basis of the local economy. As a result of this investment in cattle, a complete transformation of the cattle-rearing economy took place during the second half of the nineteenth century. A woman's time away from her family translated into a general economic advancement of her family.

Migration of men from La Montaña to Cádiz to work as dockworkers

A tradition of male migration existed from the same area to a more distant point, the southern seaport of Cádiz, where men from La Montaña, usually involved in commercial activities, were known as *jándalos*.³²

Seaports were main centres of economic activity in pre-industrial Europe. Merchants were ready to pay high wages to guarantee that expensive commodities were unloaded as quickly as possible to prevent deterioration, but also to unlock capital. They became a source of male employment and often attracted men from distant regions.³³

From the time of Colón's second expedition, the seaport of Cádiz was the point of departure and arrival for the expeditions between Spain and the New World. The monopoly of transoceanic trade between Spain and its colonies was granted by the Crown to Seville and its two nearby seaports of Sanlúcar de Barrameda and Cádiz, and a long fight for the privilege began. During the seventeenth century, Cádiz merchants complained that most ships already being over 200 metric tonnes were at

risk at the sand bar of Sanlúcar and could not go up the river without great effort and loss of time to arrive at the docks of Seville. In 1717 the long dispute was finally resolved in favour of Cádiz, and a period of expansion and sustained demographic growth started with 41,000 inhabitants in 1700, 50,500 in 1750 and 71,500 around 1786.³⁴

Cádiz dockworkers were organised in the *Compañía del Palanquinado* (1566–1836), in two different 'companies', the *Compañía de Carros y Trabajadores de la Real Aduana* and the *Compañía de Aljameles*.³⁵ There is evidence of the first having ninety members, at least from 1797 to 1821, while the second had fifty-two members during those same years, 142 workers in total.³⁶ There were also *jornaleros*, workers who were not yet members of the companies.

The work consisted of the unloading and transportation of commodities '*a pie como a caballo*', by foot and by horse. In 1805 horses were replaced by small hand-drawn carts or two-wheel horse-drawn carts.

For the delivery of the effects through the city, and for the unloading of the ships that import and export them, there are some groups of gallegos who carry sometimes on their backs, sometimes in two-wheels carts, to the point of destination,

wrote Madoz in his famous mid-nineteenth century dictionary.³⁷

Besides working in the carrying and transportation of the merchandise from the ships to the warehouses, or to stores in different parts of the town, members of the company also performed other tasks. *Jornaleros* worked at the repair of carts, like Diego Pérez, 38, who declared in 1799



Plate 3.2 View of the new cart built for transport inside the city, Cádiz, 1804

that he was working 'in making the new wheel barrows that he has been ordered to'. All members were responsible for the horses and mules allotted to them. The most privileged among them were appointed by the superiors to travel to other towns to buy horses or grass for them.

The company organisation: the hiring process

The hiring process started with the announcement of vacancies:

to proceed in the vacancies that have occurred in the positions of Workers of the Palanquinado [...] to choose an individual suitable in every way for the work [...] if he is or is not able to serve and perform with his strength and Robustness all the works and tasks, by foot as much as by horse, in which he will have to alternatively occupy himself.

Candidates for vacancies had to write their names on a piece of paper and put it in a *cántaro*, a jug acting as a ballot box, from which the name of the appointed was drawn.

In the election of 1754 there were twenty-nine certificates or *cédulas*,

and on each of them written the Name of each of the participants [...] and well folded they were put into a hat, which once covered, the said certificates were shuffled and one by one three certificates were taken out by the second overseer of Aduana, Juan Domingo de Quirós, and of them, without opening them or reading them, Sr. Prior chose one that happened to contain the name of Bentura González upon whom the remaining vacancy was conferred.³⁸

The new member was 'from the Cabuérniga valley [...] in the Mountains of Burgos, and thirty years old'.

In August 1811 a conflict arose during the hiring process of a candidate who, not being a native from the mountains of Santander, was backed by Patricio Gutierrez de Terán, overseer of one of the societies, who 'insists on the placement of this individual against the will of the two companies'. Other officials complained that candidates had always been 'Young men, agile and from the Mountains, from which country and not from any other it has been the custom and tradition of these companies' to recruit their members.³⁹

The basic structure of the two companies was similar, with a small group of 'proprietors' of the jobs and *jornaleros* or day labourers who worked for long years waiting their turn to become proprietors. The company had developed a complex system of benefits to be granted to members who retired or had become disabled by accidents. In order to pay for these benefits the company created an intermediate position between the *jornaleros*

Table 3.1 The job ladder of Cádiz dockworkers

Name	Age	Years of work		
		as jornaleros	as terceristas	Total
<i>At applying for access as terceristas:</i>				
Son of Josef Gutiérrez		3		
Francisco González	22	3		
Manuel Rodríguez		8		
Antonio Clemente	28	3		
Domingo de Montes				
<i>Recommended by:</i>				
Diego Pérez	38	15		15
Manuel Huyán		10		10
Pedro Sánchez		3	4	7
Josef Gutiérrez		6	13	19
<i>At retirement:</i>				
Antonio Díaz de Casa Ferniza		7	16	23
Francisco Sánchez Rubin		7	19	26
Francisco García de la Vega	63			34
Juan González Adán	65			
Manuel Viana de Tezanos				27
Francisco Balbás Rebollo	60			34
Josef Díaz Ruiloba	49	6	22	28
Antonio Salceda	60			25
Diego Pérez	60			30
Diego Gutiérrez del Dosal				43

and the proprietors, called *terceristas*, workers who were to become proprietors of one of the positions and who, in the meantime, were paying for these future benefits.

In June 1799, there were twenty-seven *terceristas* with sixteen or more years of work as such ('working for merits'). The documents presented by the candidates usually described long years of work for the company, as Table 3.1 shows.

Dockworkers started as day labourers or *jornaleros*. There were *cuatro cuadrillas*, four groups of four men each, working as *jornaleros* in the Real Aduana, but there were also men working *sin estar en cuadrilla*, out of the group, like Pedro Luzán, 22, who also applied to be included in the selection. The career of those already at the top of the ladder is described by Josef Gutiérrez in a document presented in 1792 on behalf of his son. He had worked 'as a Jornalero six years and as Aljamel five and a half, and thirteen that I work in the said Real Aduana', that is, a total of twenty-four and a half years working for the company.

The job ladder can be identified with the working life-cycle. Dockworkers consistently tried to have their sons hired by the company, and sent for

them to come from their home towns. As a result, the work was seen as hereditary.

In theory, age and seniority defined the way up the job ladder, but family relations and contacts within the company structure seem to have played a major role. Access to a position which was a 'property' was difficult and only achieved after many years of work, first as day labourer and then as *tercerista*, or through the intervention of powerful friends. In fact, in the process of hiring a new worker, support from friends and relatives was fundamental. Having a relative, especially father, as a member of the company was an important comparative advantage in relation to other candidates. Workers' sons seem to have had a preferential right to be hired. The father himself could apply on behalf of the son, like Josef Gutiérrez de San Juan, worker for over twenty-five years, who in 1792 applied for a position for his son, already a *jornalero* for three years.⁴⁰

Domingo de Montes, for his part, complained in 1799 of working as a *jornalero* for eleven years, 'having not been able to succeed in that time in being included in the poll by the company for not having a sponsor'.

Wages, benefits, pensions

The company functioned rather like the guilds: it was highly protective of the members, and had a well-structured internal organisation.

Very little is known about wages. They were paid by the company, since in cases of debts to families or private people the debtors would directly address their complaints to the company, which in turn would deduct from the worker's pay the amount of the debt. In 1792, Bernardo de la Peña was obliged to send a third of his annual benefits to his family in Santander. This third part was established as 1,200 reales, from which we can deduce an annual income of 3,600 reales.⁴¹

But more important than wages were the other forms of benefits and pensions, which were exceptional for the time. The system guaranteed important benefits to its members, who for their part were expected to pay for them during their working lives. Entrance to the company was costly, and most dockworkers were indebted for years. The main expense was the horse or mule that the company gave the new member.

He who is received as a new member has to pay for the horse or the mule that he is given and when he leaves, he gets reimbursed [. . .] the current value is between 4,500, 4,000 and 3,500 [. . .] he who temporarily leaves [. . .] can be assisted on occasion of his leaving with a loan of 750 reales, which he will pay back with that which he will earn on his return.⁴²

In case of sickness and accidents, which were very frequent occurrences, an entire year with 'the entire part', that is, full wage, was granted. In

1819, Diego Ruiz de Celis asked for this one-year licence 'receiving the entire part that is due to me so that I can sustain and recover my poor health' (it was denied for reasons of drunkenness).

Age of retirement was regulated in 1820 at 60 or after twenty-five years of service, if solicited. There are instances, however, of workers retiring after much longer periods, like Diego Gutiérrez del Dosal, who retired in 1799 after forty-three years. Retirement pension was fixed at 'the third part of what corresponds to a worker' until the time of his death, that is, 1,200 reales per year. This was the same percentage that seven years before the company had decided Bernardo de la Peña should send his family back in La Montaña.⁴³

Living conditions

The town at which these Montañeses arrived was one of the most dynamic and wealthy in Spain. Around 1842 it was described as 'one of the cities of Spain in which the manners of people are sweeter, and the habits of life more agreeable', in the dictionary published by Madoz.

The dock occupied the centre of the town's economic and cultural life. In the mid-nineteenth century Madoz wrote:

the position of the seaport of Cádiz is one of the most convenient for grand scale trade. Placed at the entrance of the Atlantic Ocean [. . .] Foreigners of all nations had their factories on it, their houses and warehouses; ships from all over the world continuously arrive, and there were always from 500 to 600 ships on its bay [. . .] from cereals to legumes; meats, wines, woods, coals, irons, paper, threads, cottons, silks, fabrics, every thing is the action of its commerce [. . .] Tobacco, sugars, spices, arrive at Cádiz as a deposit point, to be distributed later through Spain.

A cigar factory employing over 1,220 women provided inspiration to Romantic travellers. There were also hundreds of small workshops: 'there are as many establishments with door open to the street as the number of buildings in the town, among them nine coffee shops, fifteen inns, 200 shoe makers, 104 barbers', Madoz wrote.⁴⁴

In this environment, dockworkers seem to have enjoyed a good deal of freedom of movement. Working outdoors allowed them to ignore the permanent control to which indoor workers were subjected and allowed them to spend time at the taverns, the main spaces for male socialising. Instances of heavy drinking are documented frequently. Some workers were denied the right of retirement by their companions in cases of accidents, on the basis of the many days of work lost because of their drunkenness.

Socialising was highly gendered, with most public places and opportunities for consumption reserved for men. Besides taverns and tobacco,

prostitution and gambling were the main sources of expenses. A pattern of high expenditure on consumption seems to explain the inability of men to save in nineteenth-century urban centres, and this is to be contrasted with female migrants, mostly in domestic service, who seem to have managed to save most of their earnings.

Demands and complaints to the company often mention unpaid debts of workers. In 1810, the owner of a food store denounced four dockworkers who had debts from food purchases; in 1791, the president of one of the confraternities, the *Hermandad de Gracia*, demanded a dockworker pay a debt of 300 pesos, borrowed to put in the company's fund when he first joined.⁴⁵

The status of head of the household enjoyed by married men granted them the opportunity of travelling at least every three years back to Santander, which meant crossing the whole of Spain. However, some of them never came back to their families, finding other jobs, probably through acquaintances made in the course of these long journeys.⁴⁶ For the male absentees then, that work gave them new personal freedom and money. It is unclear how much of this money was seen by their families back home.

Dockworkers and their families: the State's intervention to guarantee maintenance

For the State, dockworkers were in the first place heads of households and their rights as workers depended on the fulfilment of their duties as such. To guarantee this, the *Compañía del Palanquinado* obliged them to return to their homelands every three years and after retirement.⁴⁷

Although most dockworkers adhered in part to the rules, members of the companies seem to have refused to return to their homes, or to return at the periods fixed by the law, and to fail consistently to bring with them the certificates extended by the local priests and the written agreement from the wives, a situation tolerated by the authorities.⁴⁸ According to the edict on retirement of 8 May 1807, 'some individuals from these Companies that obtained their retirement have abused of this grace, keeping themselves out of the towns of their domicile and separated from their families'. They will have to prove their permanence in their countries 'as the head of their families' or 'they will be deprived forever of the said benefit'.⁴⁹

Instances of intervention of the company's authorities to oblige the workers to periodically return to their families are frequent. On 30 May 1807,

The major overseer of the Company of the Real Aduana and the official of the Company of *Aljameles* will let the *compañeros* of the said their respective companies, Juan González de los Ríos, Juan Pérez

González, Antonio de la Mata Linares, Antonio González Camberas, Franc[cis]o de la Llera y Manuel Rubín know that in the precise term of eight days they must come to this Tribunal del Consulado to obtain their respective licenses to travel to their homes to live and remain there with their families for an entire year; for they are married in their home lands and have been absent from them for the three years permitted by the Real cédula of 6 April 1783 issued by the Supremo Consejo de las Yndias. If they do not do so within the said term, they will be suspended; and if by the day 15th of June next they have not left this town in use of their licenses, they will remain deprived of their positions, which will be immediately announced. The same deprivation of their position and subsequent announcement will take place if within mid-July they would fail to send, by hand of the said overseer and official, certification for their respective parish priests, legalized by *escribanos*, that attest that they are with their families, with mention of the day that they have checked it; and at their return they have to present another similar document, also legalized, in which it is said that they have lived and remain united to their families for an entire year, without including the days of their round trip; and also that they return to serve their positions on renewed agreement of their wives; if they fail to do so, they will be deprived of their position.⁵⁰

Despite the legal obligation, and despite claims by dockworkers themselves to be heads of households and to have family responsibilities in order to get hired,⁵¹ it is unlikely that most of them actually maintained their families in Santander. In some cases this was due to an inability to save, like Domingo de Montes, who after working for eleven years as a day labourer declared himself 'in most need, unable to maintain his family, which obliges him to have his wife serving in a House, not only in the present times, but in time of peace'.⁵² In other cases it was due to an interruption of contact with the family.

It is interesting, however, that wives actively exerted their rights over their husbands' salaries. Among the dossiers kept by the Consulado 'on demands, claims, and other matters related to the Companies of the Palanquinado', from 1790 to 1820, it is possible to find the cases of workers denounced for failing to send any money to their families. For example, on 29 September 1790, Bernardo de la Peña asked the authorities that his wife Bárbara Gutiérrez de Celis be obliged to leave Cádiz and to return to the mountains to take care of their daughters. The wife had travelled to Cádiz to claim abandonment. She appears to have stayed for, on October of the same year, an agreement was signed: the overseer would ensure that Bernardo would receive just one-third of his salary, while the second third would be for his wife and the remaining third to be kept by D. José de Oviedo 'so that by his hand the debts contracted up to last July begin to be repaid'.⁵³

'Persuaded by the Prior' (the highest authority of the Consulado), husband and wife agreed to put aside a third part of Bárbara's share 'for the help of their daughters who are in the Mountains, until the said Bárbara returns there, which she said she would do around May, whence she will take her third part entirely'.

On 11 August 1792, Bernardo de la Peña sent a memoir denouncing his wife and seeking the order granting her the third part to be annulled, because

for my wife and my two single daughters that remained in the Mountain, to maintain themselves 100 silver ducados [around 1,000 reales] are enough, of which still something must be left, for she does not need to pay for a house, having land to cultivate according to the custom of the country, and cattle at her disposal, in which circumstances there is no reason why I must be robbed of the proceeds of my work any longer.⁵⁴

A decree of 17 August 1792 certifies that 'the said Bernardo de la Peña remains from now obliged to help by his hand his wife with 1,200 reales a year, sending them to her by the transport drivers, half in the season of San Juan (24 June) and half in the season of San Miguel (29 September).'⁵⁵

Despite the agreement, Bárbara issued from Santander an authorisation to a legal representative in Cádiz to claim 'before the person or persons in charge of the satisfaction and payment of that third part of utility that belongs to me, so that he perceives and collects it, at the times and occasions accustomed'. In September 1792, Bárbara's legal representative is denied the dossier of the case since 'the authorisation that he presents has been conferred by a married woman without competent licence'.⁵⁶ In fact, married women had no legal capacity to represent their interests in court. This is precisely the cause of many of the problems faced by the wives of absent migrant men.

In a second case in 1797, Antonio Morante, of Cádiz, brought an action to oblige the retired Juan de Prío, his son-in-law, to pay for the maintenance of Juan's daughter:

for ten years he has under his responsibility a granddaughter named Ysabel de Prío, whom he has been maintaining and sustaining in clothing and shoes to a decent level [...] and the said Ysabel de Prío has as her father the named Juan de Prío who was here in the Company of Workers of the Real Aduana, and five years ago he retired to the Mountains with the third part, where he is to this day, and when he left this town he was a widower and up to the present he has made in the said Mountain two marriages: and the said Antonio Morante his father-in-law having asked with the good reasons he gives for the

maintenance of the said Ysabel, never succeeded [...] he has written to him during all this time different letters which have even been handed in personally: and he has pretended to be deaf and mute before all of them, not having wanted to respond to any of them, being that the principal that still remains in the said Aduana belongs to the said Ysabel de Prío, for it was her mother's, may she rest in peace, her father Juan de Prío, having taken his half of the principal when he left for the Mountain.⁵⁷

In another case, Josef Santiso, of Saja, is granted his pension on 16 March 1805

with the precise condition that immediately he has to return to his country, in which he has to enjoy with his wife Rosa Sánchez the product of the third part that remains to him of the utilities of the entire position he has served; if he does not do so, or gives motive for new complaints from his wife, he will be deprived absolutely of the said third part, and he will be considered separated and excluded from the said Company.⁵⁸

A complaint by his wife, Rosa Sánchez, is attached, in which she states that

five years ago he left me in the said town destitute, with no property, and he has neither fulfilled the order to come and cohabit with his wife. Nor has he even contributed money for my food, clothes, payment of the room (that I use out of charity), royal and town charges, for I only survive (though very miserably) with the small produce of my hands, and the charity of my neighbours, who (if I fall in some sickness) will have to assist me through piety or Justice. All of which, if you doubt, you can be informed by Juan González Adán, Antonio de Salzeda and Antonio González Camberas, my neighbours and from other compañeros.⁵⁹

Rosa Sánchez begs a third part of the husband's income or, in case he is still paying the principal, a third of the two parts he receives, to be given to one of these neighbours. A note at the side of the wife's complaint explains that, in fact, Santiso is still paying former debts, and

no doubting the truth of what his Wife Rosa Sánchez says in view of the evidence of the two Parish priests and because Santiso himself has acknowledged it as well as the said Casa Ferniza [...], from next week [...] 15 reales will be weekly discounted from the said Santiso and the said discount will be given to Juan González Adán, so that through him it arrives to the hands of the said Rosa Sánchez.⁶⁰

In 1815, Manuel Sánchez, living in Cádiz and native of Serdio in 'the mountains', complains that his sister (another) Rosa Sánchez, married to José del Valle, who 'although is retired, has secured the part that corresponds to him, lives in Seville, where also he works and gains'. He is acting on behalf of his sister, who on 22 December 1814, wrote him a letter (also included in the dossier): 'my husband sends to me nothing nor does he return to his house to maintain his family.' The resolution appears at the margin: 'that all that exists at present produced by the said third part, and all this third part will produce from now onwards, the mentioned official ensures that it will be forwarded to Rosa Sánchez, wife of the said Valle'.⁶¹

In fact, Josef González del Valle had asked for his retirement fifteen years before, in December 1800. It was granted on the condition that

as soon as the roads to his homeland become traversible he has to do so, and subsist there and not in this one nor in other towns around; if he does not, he must remain excluded from the position, and this requirement he will bear in his Licence so that he cannot allege ignorance.

On 24 January 1801 he is in Seville, from where he sends an authorisation to his cousin to sign the agreement, since 'for my poor health' and 'the absence of means' he is unable to travel to Cádiz.⁶²

More frequent seem to have been instances of dockworkers refusing to travel to their families every three years. They themselves often asked to have their licence for temporary return cancelled, for different reasons: in 1804 eight of them succeeded in having their temporary licences cancelled after alleging the epidemic in the northern regions.⁶³ In 1807, Juan González de los Ríos, de Los Tojos, 65, asked for the suspension of his temporary licence for 'having some interests of consideration among some people who owe him, which he needs to receive without retiring from this'.⁶⁴

Leaving home to help the family?

In this chapter, I have presented two flows of temporary migration to work for wages. By comparing them it is possible to see that male and female temporary migrants differed in their skills (all dockworkers could read and write while their wives could not), their legal status, their access to public spaces, their access to family resources, level of consumption and obligations towards the family unit.⁶⁵ These differences reflected their relative status as members of a family. They were daughters or wives, sons or husbands, and they migrated as such.

In the period studied here, the disruptive effects that individual wages could potentially have on the family organisation of labour failed to

materialise for two reasons: first, because access to migratory flows and wage labour was not open to all members of the family, and second, because heads of the families had a legal right on the earnings of family members, which was not reciprocal.

Families redistributed the earnings of their members according to principles which were founded not upon need or work done, but maintenance of a hierarchy, which in turn reflected a power relation. This explains why, as the cases described here show, families could coexist with completely different standards of living under the same laws, types of production, inheritance rules and demographic patterns. With a husband working as a dockworker, two similar families could live an easy life or be dependent on charity; two wet nurses working for the same period for the same wages could see their family patrimony increase or disappear, given that back home it was in the hands of their husbands.

Some of the changes experienced by wives of male migrants have been pointed out by the literature: increased workload, a general worsening of living conditions, increased dependence on local lenders, etc. Yet male out-migration had also positive aspects for wives, who gained a new control over the family resources (farm, cattle, land), scarce as these could be. Paola Corti speaks of a 'progressive change of the relationships between the sexes' in the alpine areas which remained in the hands of women for long months during the year or long years. Rose Duroux of 'the powers of women left alone'.⁶⁶ One significant indirect indicator of the positive consequences of male migration for women was social criticism, the 'sarcastic references to the customs of these women without men' (Corti), to their idleness, the disorder and dirtiness of their homes. And, of course, to the shameful consequences of the lack of sexual control: adultery, illegitimate births (interestingly, social criticism affected both migrants' wives and female migrants: it was probably the temporary rupture of the family, which always involved an important degree of 'world turned upside down', that was at stake).

The documents discussed in this chapter throw new light on the living situation of the wives of male migrants who remained behind. It is probably true that long-distance and long-term migration of their husbands turned into a new situation for them, into more freedom. But things were not that easy. Their legal status as married women remained unchanged: they could not defend themselves, their children or their property legally; they faced the pressure of both local public opinion and the in-laws, who carefully watched over these 'women without men'.

In the cases seen here, the economic and social instability of migrants' wives originated with the desertion of their husbands. But in other cases the conflicts arose because the husband resented the new situation of the wife. In July 1799, in the Alfoz de Lloredo valley, in La Montaña, doña Antonia Isabel Sánchez was killed in her house.⁶⁷ In the long trial that followed the crime, her husband for nineteen years, don Domingo García,

was accused of having instigated and paid for the murder. Domingo García was a *jándalo*, as male migrants from Cantabria to Andalucía were called. Together with a friend from the same village, Udías, he owned two food stores in Seville, where he was at the time of the crime, and witnesses described him as bearing the external signs of economic success in their visits to the village (a horse, good clothes, spending money . . .). The declarations of the witnesses speak of constant physical and psychological abuse of his wife, public death menaces and also his public preference for their female servant. But at the bottom of this and similar cases involving violent male migrants was the resentment felt by husbands due to the inversion of roles in their marriage caused by their absence. In the hard times of the last two decades of the eighteenth century in Spain, difficulties were increased for the wives of male migrants, who had to cope 'with the interruption of money sent by husbands, decreasing rents generated by the family properties, and decreasing capacity to generate income through her own work'.⁶⁸ The different strategies developed by these women to face the situation, be they new, more independent, positions in the labour market or increasing reliance on more powerful male relatives or neighbours, were all seen by husbands as endangering their traditional power, and their wives' traditional dependence on them.

It is usually assumed that families functioned with their members pooling their earnings and having equal access to the fund. The documents analysed here show that while female migrants, particularly married ones, were legally forced to pool their earnings, married men could easily refuse to do so. There is an obvious contradiction between the model (the ideal situation, the norm, represented by the laws and by the company rules, and supported by the idea that men had had a preference for having access to higher wages just because their families depended upon them) and the practice, in which men acted as they wanted.

Wives clearly viewed themselves as entitled to a part of their husbands' earnings. This supposition was backed by the law and the State's institutions, to whom deserted wives or daughters complained and went for help. In the case of Cádiz dockworkers, the company itself established the part that families were legally entitled to ask for as one-third. Although this seems to have been difficult or impossible to enforce, some wives, with the help of the parish priests, seem to have succeeded in having the authorities intervene in their favour.⁶⁹

Women's economic and social benefits from migration were invested in the household: married women's migration was an important source of income for their husbands and families, as evidenced by the massive investment in milk cows made possible by Pasiego women's employment as wet nurses in Madrid. Savings were also used, for example, to build a new house, pay for a son's education or to buy him out of military service. And since most of the skills acquired through migration were related to domestic work or to children, women's work as carers and housewives was

reinforced. This investment of savings and skills was not a choice: married women were legally obliged to return to their husband's place of residence and did not have the right to spend the money themselves.

Married men's return to their family home, on the contrary, depended on their will, and was unlikely to take place if they had established a new family. In such cases, the original families were almost unavoidably pushed into poverty: while the absence of the husband left the wife with sole responsibility for the daily running of the family farm, her legal incapacity prevented her from doing it successfully, being either forbidden or impeded in the selling and buying of cattle and land, attendance at cattle markets, taking decisions on the organisation of family labour, etc. Instances of male relatives intervening in favour of children whose fathers never returned are common, since the legal defence of the property against neighbours could not be undertaken by the mother. These gendered differences were backed by a legal system which had a fundamental role in structuring them.

In the northern region where the two migratory flows studied here came from, the fundamental institution of local power was the *Concejo*, the town council to which all married men belonged. The *Concejo* often overruled higher institutions, and governed local life with the help of a body of rules called *Ordenanzas municipales*. The domestic process of decision-making cannot be explained without reference to this instance, where 'anomalous' situations, like households in which women had greater decision-making power than men, were corrected. One example will allow us to understand women's position in the same village and during the same years that the migratory flows studied here were taking place.

On 17 November 1876, Doña Serafina Abascal Crespo, of Vega de Pas, the region where the most celebrated wet nurses came from, appeared as plaintiff before the local judge. She was a married woman, 'devoted to the occupations proper of her sex', and she was accompanied by don Manuel Abascal Crespo, her brother, 'not appearing the husband of the plaintiff for being incapacitated and without sense'. Don Juan Oria Ortiz, her neighbour, a married proprietor, appeared as defendant. 'It was requested by the plaintiff that the defendant be punished for having made highly injurious statements publicly against the plaintiff's honour, repeating and telling to Juan Oria and to Bernardo Abascal, husband of the plaintiff, that her daughter is not her husband's daughter.' The defendant answered that 'if the plaintiff does not have a permission from her husband, she completely lacks the faculty to appear at a trial, and the trial cannot occur, and the Judge should not have admitted the complaint, therefore he protests this trial'.⁷⁰

In fact, the new Civil Code enacted in 1889 repeated these norms: 'the husband must protect the wife and the wife must obey the husband' (art. 57, title IV, 'Of marriage'). 'The husband is the representative of the wife. She cannot, without his licence, appear at a trial by herself or by means

of an attorney' (art. 60). One century before, in the first case seen above, relating to Bernardo de la Peña and Bárbara Gutiérrez de Celis, Bárbara's legal representative was denied the dossier of the case since 'the authorization that he presents has been conferred by a married woman without competent licence'.

Differences in saving practices, commitment to family needs and legal ability to earn and to spend, account, among other factors, for a very distinctive male/female pattern of contribution to, and use of, family earnings. Male and female migration, and earnings made through migration, are key to an understanding of the economic workings of marriage.

Notes

- 1 A first version of this chapter was presented to the Conference on *The Historical Construction of Working Time*, organised by Olwen Hufton at the European University Institute, Florence, in 1994. I am indebted to Olwen Hufton and sociologist Mary Daly for their helpful comments.
- 2 C. B. Brettel, *Men who migrate, women who wait: Population and History in a Portuguese Parish*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press (1986). For Spain, C. Yáñez, *Saltar con red: La temprana emigración catalana a América, 1830-1870*, Madrid, Alianza (1996) and C. Soldevilla Oria, *La emigración de Cantabria a América. Hombres, mercaderías y capitales*, Santander, Estudio (1996). For Italy, P. Corti, 'Donne che vanno, donne che restano. Emigrazione e comportamenti femminili'. *Annali dell'Istituto 'Alcide Cervi'*, 12 (1990): 213-235.
- 3 See for Spain, B. Alonso Ruiz, *El arte de la cantería. Los maestros trasmeranos de la Junta de Voto*, Santander, Universidad de Cantabria (1991), and for Italy, P. Audenino, 'Le custodi della montagna: donne e migrazioni stagionali in una comunità alpina' in P. Corti (ed.), 'Società rurale e ruoli femminili in Italia tra Ottocento e Novecento', *Annali dell'Istituto 'Alcide Cervi'*, 12 (1990): 265-287.
- 4 In the nineteenth century, 'British female rural-to-urban migrants were younger than their male counterparts during the 1840s. Among emigrants from Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century, males also tended to be older than females.' T. Guinnane, 'Age at Leaving Home in Rural Ireland', *The Journal of Economic History*, 52, 3 (1992): 651. The age difference was probably reversed among transoceanic migrants, women not being able to migrate without spending a previous period in domestic service to save for the passage money.
- 5 A. Chatelain, 'Migrations et domesticité féminine urbaine en France, XVIII^e siècle-XX^e siècle', *Revue d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, 47, 4 (1969): 506-528.
- 6 L. C. van de Pol, 'The Lure of the Big City: Female Migration to Amsterdam' in E. Klock, N. Teeuwen and M. Huisman (eds) *Women of the Golden Age: an International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-century Holland, England and Italy*, Hilversum, Verloren (1994), pp. 73-86. An image originally 'meant for the middle classes of society, the nucleus of calvinist, affluent burghers of the cities of Holland', is still alive for it 'fits in with the preconceptions of women's lives of modern historians', p. 74.
- 7 For a critique of the use of marriage registers to study immigration to urban centres, L. C. van de Pol, 'The Lure of the Big City'.
- 8 From eighteenth-century Bellino, in the Italian Alps, departed every year for six months in summertime men who worked in the fields, as masons, itinerant sellers and artisans, and others in the wintertime to work as hospital workers at Toulon, shoe cleaners, etc. Women found work in agriculture, spinning or in the domestic service. A. Dionigi, M. Dossetti and S. Ottonelli, 'Società ed emigrazione nell'alta valle Varaita in età moderna', *Bollettino Storico Bibliografico Subalpino*, 86 (1988): 117-169. On temporary migrations of French and Swiss clockmakers, D. Landes, 'The Round of Horological Migrations', in *Le migrazioni in Europa, secc. XIII-XVIII*, Istituto internazionale di Storia economica F. Datini, 25 (1993): 561-566.
- 9 A. Meijide Pardo, 'La emigración gallega intrapeninsular en el siglo XVIII', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, CSIC, IV, 2 (1960): 463-606. See esp. pp. 532-533, and for 'female exodus', pp. 532ff.
- 10 Meijide Pardo, 'La emigración gallega', p. 534. Dressing in men's clothes to enlist in the army or to sign on to the fleet was almost a tradition for poor women in Northern European countries. In seventeenth-century Holland, 'a man could always become a sailor or a soldier and was thereby assured of at least housing and food. Women, who were already at a disadvantage because of far fewer possibilities to work and far lower wages, had no such last resort.' R. Dekker and L. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, London, Macmillan (1989), p. 32.
- 11 J. Manso [1798], *Estado de las fábricas, comercio, industria y agricultura en las Montañas de Santander*, ed. T. Martínez Vara, Santander, Librería Estudio (1979), p. 244. The tradition of the identification of activities to be performed at home as the activities more suitable for women can be traced back to the theoreticians of the Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century, fray Luis de León (1527-1591) wrote in *La perfecta casada* that 'the house [...] is the space around which the woman has to stir her feet, and the places for which she has to walk and [...] the field of her course, that is her own house, and not the streets nor the plazas, nor the orchards, nor the extraneous houses'. Fray Luis de León, *La perfecta casada*, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe (1980), p. 128. For an analysis of this work, M.A. Durán, 'Lectura económica de Fray Luis de León', in *Nuevas perspectivas sobre la mujer*, Seminario de Estudios de la Mujer de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (1982).
- 12 A more comprehensive description of the Pasego community in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be found in C. Sarasúa, 'Understanding Intra-family Inequalities. The Montes de Pas, Spain, 1700-1900', *The History of the Family*, 3, 2 (1998): 173-197.
- 13 Throughout Europe, the demand for wet nurses generated important flows of female migration during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They were mostly internal flows, from rural to urban areas, but there is also evidence of migration of wet nurses from country to country, such as from different Italian regions to France and Egypt. P. Corti, 'Donne che vanno', p. 227. For internal migration of wet nurses in Italy, D. Perco (ed.), *Balie di latte. Una forma peculiare di emigrazione temporanea*, Milan, Feltré (1984).
- 14 The process by which women from some regions developed a specialisation as wet nurses and eventually became identified with this activity seems to have occurred in most European countries. In Paris, women from Normandy were most sought after, while in the German cities Saxon wet nurses were much in demand. V. Fildes, *Wet-nursing: a History from Antiquity to the Present*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell (1988).
- 15 M. Bretón de los Herreros, 'La nodriza', in *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos*, Madrid (1851), p. 36. 'Asturias, Galicia, and the Mountains of Santander send annually to Madrid an endless amount of mothers ready to be such of the first that appears [...]. This does not mean that only those countries produce wet nurses; the rest of the provinces of Spain also produce them, but from here comes the main number', explained *El cascabel. Periódico para hacer reír*, in 1864.
- 16 C. Sarasúa, *Criados, nodrizas y amos. El servicio doméstico en la formación del mercado de trabajo, Madrid, 1758-1868*, Madrid, Siglo XXI (1994).

- 17 'Reference will be given in San Benito street, house of the Cars master. And she is Pasiega.' The same year advertisements of women defining themselves as 'native of the Mountain' or 'Montañesa' began to appear. Anthropologist S. Tax Freeman interviewed in the 1970s some Pasiego women who had worked as wet nurses in different cities. She suggests that their migration started in the first decades of the nineteenth century: 'This form of temporary migration of women grew, flourished, and diminished in approximately one century, beginning in the 1830s if not slightly earlier.' S. T. Freeman, *The Pasiegos: Spaniards in No Man's Land*, Chicago, Chicago University Press (1979), pp. 146–147.
- 18 *Teatro social del siglo XIX*, vol. II, Madrid 1846, quoted in A. García Lomas, *Los pasiegos. Estudio crítico, etnográfico y pintoresco (años 1011 a 1960)*, Santander, Estudio (1977), p. 167.
- 19 Escolástica Suárez, 19, and Antolina Martín, 20, from Iglesias, in the Castilian province of Toledo, arrived together in Madrid, advertised themselves in the *Diario* the same day (1 March 1868) and gave the same address. One of them had milk three months old, the other four months old.
- 20 A. García Lomas, *Los pasiegos*, p. 167.
- 21 *ibid.*, pp. 166–167.
- 22 'A wet nurse of total satisfaction and healthiness solicits a nursing for her place: reason can be found in Toledo street, store of linen from Entrambasaguas.' *Diario*, 2 December 1801. Entrambasaguas is a village near the Pas valley.
- 23 A. Esperón, 'El Pasiego' in *Semanario pintoresco español* (1851), pp. 390–392. Wet nurses working for the royal family were chosen by the doctors in their own towns.
- 24 In France doctors were very actively involved in the business, and they owned the most important private agency for wet nurses in Paris. F. Fay-Sallos, *Les nourrices à Paris au XIXe siècle*, Paris, Payot (1980).
- 25 L. Teste, 'Paseo por Madrid' in *Viaje por España* (1872). On 19 August 1795 the *Diario* announced: 'On sale. A Pasiega dress, of fine cloth, bordered with stripes of fine gold.'
- 26 *Diario de Avisos*, 22 June 1804. The mentions refer to court positions of prestige.
- 27 In Paris, the value of the payments in kind to servants amounted to around 850 annual francs, when female servants received 480 in wages, and male servants 720. T. McBride, 'The Modernization of Woman's Work', *Journal of Modern History*, 49 (1977): p. 240ff. The different significance that domestic service had for men and women helps to explain the feminisation of the sector in all European countries since the seventeenth century.
- 28 In 1715, the town of Tembleque, in Toledo, solicited the king through Bárbara de Flores, 'Wet nurse who has been of S.A. Príncipe de Asturias and of the Serenísimo infante D. Felipe', that a Company of Flanders Guards that was installed in the town would abandon it. The king accepted. In Archivo Histórico Nacional, section Estado, legajo 2675, documentation on royal wet nurses corresponding to the period 1708–1840 can be found. The reports of the doctors of the Palace after their trips in search for wet nurses, in the archive of the royal palace, sección histórica. Cf. also L. Cortés Echánove, *Nacimiento y crianza de personas reales en la Corte de España*, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (1954).
- 29 In early twentieth-century Barcelona, bourgeois families sent their wet nurses with the babies and other servants to the opera performances scheduled for children in the mornings. 'The juridical condition of the [Liceo] boxes as private property had repercussions on the audience. Children invaded them on Saturday with governesses and retainers, and even wetnurses'. W. McDonogh, *Good Families of Barcelona: a Social History of Power in the Industrial Era*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press (1986), p. 196.
- 30 Chocolate was included in some advertisements asking for servants as part of their wages.
- 31 *El cascabel*, Madrid, 1864.
- 32 The source for the study of this migration flow is Archivo General de Indias (AGI), in Seville, section Consulado, legajos 1775 to 1786, and books 1167 to 1169. In fact, this is the source for all the quotes taken from male migrants to Cádiz in this chapter. See A. Herrera Heredia, *Inventario de los fondos de Consulados del Archivo General de Indias*, Ministerio de Cultura (1979), p. 11.
- 33 Men from Galicia, for example, migrated to work at the Portuguese seaports of Lisbon and Porto, where they spent most of their working lives with short intervals at home. 'Tous les travaux qui demandent de la force se font par des galiciens qu'on peut appeller les portefaix et les forts de la halle de Lisbonne', wrote the English traveller Murphy around 1789 (quoted in A. Mejjide Pardo, 'La emigración gallega', p. 551). They continued to participate in these temporary migrations until they were about 50, when, if they had not formed a new family, they would return to Galicia. Typically, Gallego men migrants to Portugal were water carriers, stonemasons, etc.
- 34 M. Bustos, *Burguesía de negocios y capitalismo en Cádiz: los Colarte (1650–1750)*, Cádiz, Diputación Provincial de Cádiz (1991), p. 22. For the history of the merchant institution, A. Herrera Heredia, 'Apuntes para la historia del Consulado de la Universidad de cargadores a Indias en Sevilla y Cádiz', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, XXVII (1967): 219–279.
- 35 'Palanquin', hand chair, from the Portuguese 'palanquim', hindu 'palaki', bed. M. Moliner, *Diccionario de uso del español*. 'Aljamel' is Andalusian for 'Alhamel', 'mozo de cuerda o arriero que se alquila para llevar carros', J. Corominas, *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana*.
- 36 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1778.
- 37 'Gallego', or native of Galicia, in northwestern Spain, was a generic name for northern immigrants in the nineteenth century, but the use of the expression here is due to the existence of a third company called *Compañía de gallegos*, as all its workers were from this region. It functioned from 1791 to 1832 and was also called *Compañía de la puerta de Sevilla y San Carlos* for it was in charge of the unloading of merchandise through these two doors of the town. AGI, Consulados, leg. 1781 and books 1167 and 1168.
- 38 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1778.
- 39 Leg. 1778, 'Expedientes de nombramientos y elecciones (1789–1830)', cuader-nillo n° 5, 1811.
- 40 'having been the said his father in the said Real Aduana as a Jornalero six years and five and a half as Aljamel and thirteen that he is at the present working in the said Real Aduana and this be sufficient so the said my son enters in the jug' (AGI, Consulados, leg. 1778).
- 41 As was seen above, top annual salaries of Pasiego wet nurses in Madrid amounted to 1,800 reales.
- 42 Decree of 1815 establishing the way of adjusting the account to the individuals entering or leaving the *Compañía de Aljameles*.
- 43 'Individuals of the Company who want to retire having twenty-five years of service in it, or sixty of age, will be considered as retired workers, and will receive the third part of what corresponds to workers at the moment of their death', Cádiz, 24 October 1820.
- 44 Madoz' *Diccionario*, under 'Cádiz' (1842).
- 45 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1782.
- 46 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1779, 'Titles and forms and licences of individuals to temporarily leave Cádiz'.

- 47 By a Real Cédula of 6 April 1783, the Supremo Consejo de las Yndias ordered the members of the Companies who were married in their countries to return to their families at least every three years. On 8 May 1807, a decree was published that 'the Retired workers of the Companies of Palanquinado go to enjoy the benefits of their Retirement to their Domiciles, or in union to their Families'.
- 48 In 1807 the Company announced that 'This Consulate, understanding that the individuals of the Companies of workers of Aduana and Aljameles Francisco González Cavanazón, Bruno de la Torre, Miguel Yglesias Coballes, Feliciano González, Francisco González Cordero, Antonio Callejo Palenque, Francisco Guivar and Lorenzo Elguera have returned from their countries working at the said Companies, not having presented the certificates of the parish Priests [...] nor the one that justifies that their wives agree on their return to the said Company [...] the Consulate permits that these continue working at their positions (and) must present within two months the said documents [...] so that in the future they do not proceed with the indifference shown until now in the obeying of the [thing] ordered by this Tribunal about the presentation of the said certificates', Cádiz, 20 December 1807.
- 49 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1778.
- 50 *ibid.*
- 51 Manuel Huyán, who had been working as a day labourer for ten years, affirms in his application for a position in 1792 to have invested 'all his little gains in Feeding his poor parents, that have no other shelter, Wife and Family'. Pedro Luzán, 22, from Uceda, 'in the Mountain, with obligation to sustain his elderly Parents', declared himself to have been serving as a day labourer in Cádiz for some years; or Antonio Clemente de la Madrid, 28, working three years as a day labourer, 'and with the anxiety of remedying the urgent needs of his poor and old parents'.
- 52 10 June 1799.
- 53 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1779.
- 54 *ibid.*
- 55 *ibid.*
- 56 *ibid.*
- 57 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1780.
- 58 *ibid.*
- 59 *ibid.*
- 60 *ibid.*
- 61 *ibid.*, folder year 1815.
- 62 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1780, dossiers regarding retirements.
- 63 For they had no money to pay for the trip and 'a Province that in the day only offers calamities, hunger and misery, and where its inhabitants only present sickness, nudity and all the qualities of a famine and contagious illness, those representing do not believe its mention be desirable to any rational, mostly when for the penury of goods, their habitation in such a Theatre would only serve to increase the number of victims sacrificed to such penury.'
- 64 AGI, Consulados, leg. 1780.
- 65 One of the wife's legal obligations regarded precisely her mobility: 'The wife is obliged to follow her husband wherever he establishes his residence', an obligation of which the tribunals could exempt her if he moved abroad or to a foreign country (Civil Code 1889, title IV, chapter I, art. 58).
- 66 P. Corti, 'Donne che vanno', p. 223. R. Duroux, 'The Temporary Migration of Males and The Power of Females in a Stem-family Society: the Case of 19th-century Auvergne', *The Journal of Family History*, forthcoming.

- 67 T. Mantecón, *La muerte de Antonia Isabel Sánchez. Tiranía y escándalo en una sociedad rural del Norte español en el Antiguo Régimen*, Alcalá de Henares, Centro de Estudios Cervantinos (1997).
- 68 *ibid.*, p. 89. See note 62.
- 69 The right of deserted wives to use the summary courts against their husbands for maintenance was not possible in England until 1878. The English Common Law recognised the husband's obligation to maintain as a counterpart, since at matrimony, the law 'conferred on the husband total economic dominion over his wife, by depriving her both of rights against him and resources of her own'. M. Finer and O. R. McGregor, 'The History of the Obligation to Maintain', appendix 5 to Department of Health and Social Security, *Report of the Committee on One-Parent Families*, vol. 2, London (1974), p. 96. Yet 'while recognising the husband's obligation, the common law refused recognition of any corresponding right on the part of the wife to enforce the obligation against him', since 'it would have amounted to an invasion of the spiritual jurisdiction', p. 98. Cf. also L. Holcombe, *Wives and Property. Reform of the Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-century England*, Toronto and Buffalo, University of Toronto Press (1983).
- 70 Archivo Municipal de Vega de Pas (Santander), box 1, oral trials.