

# UNDERSTANDING INTRA-FAMILY INEQUALITIES: The Montes de Pas, Spain, 1700–1900

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**ABSTRACT:** *This article deals with the family organization of labor in a peasant community in Northern Spain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It uses this case study to review some of the assumptions with which peasant family history is being written, namely, the idea that from historical evidence of family members "working together," a vision of families as cooperative, i.e., egalitarian units, can be deduced. Contrary to this idea, the article argues that coresidence cannot be taken as an indicator of equal economic status for all family members. The article proposes a method to identify inequalities between family members, based on a comparison between each member's working contribution to the household and access to family resources, including income generated by each member's own work.*

The conceptualization of family work has come a long way in the last two decades. The traditional identification of work with market work, and workers as market workers, with the subsequent identification of families as non-productive units, has been replaced by the increasing recognition of non-market work, and of the fact that it is mainly done in families. On the other hand, the mythological breadwinner and his family of consumers has been replaced by an increasing awareness of the fundamental contribution of all family members to production.

Yet our knowledge of how family work was organized in the recent past is still impressionistic while the construction of a valid theoretical framework to grasp it still in process. This article is intended as a contribution to this discussion. It is part of a broader research

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on the formation of the labor market in Spain and on the origins of its segmentation, particularly of its gender dimension.

The article is divided into three parts: first, the interpretations of the gender division of family labor are analyzed, and in particular the cooperation argument vs. the vision of families as potentially conflictive units. Second, an area of family farms in Northern Spain is presented, and the local organization of work described, stressing the working contribution of all family members as required for a successful running of the family farms.

The article argues that an analysis not only of the contribution of family members to the generation of family resources (production) but also of their access to resources (consumption) is needed in order to grasp the different economic status of family members. This is not an easy task. The fact that, in pre-industrial as much as in industrial societies, consumption takes place within families has a paradoxical effect: while it places families at the center of economic activity (a position further reinforced by their productive role in pre-industrial societies), it partially precludes the very possibility of describing real levels of individual consumption. Official sources, the basic tool for the quantification of economic processes, have always been respectful of families' privacy. In our days, this tradition of respect is present in many historical, sociological, and economic works. Debates on the levels of consumption, and descriptions of the expansion of wage work are filled with references to family income, family strategies, and family consumption. They say nothing, though, about how the family income was gathered (did all members have an equal obligation to contribute their incomes? were all of them equally granted by the law the ownership of their incomes?), how consumption was internally organized (who had access to what, who had the right to spend the family money on what), or how family strategies were defined (who decided what to do with family money, land, cattle? who decided on family members doing wage labor, when, for how long, in which sectors?).

Answering these and many other similar questions is very difficult. Yet this does not mean that posing the questions is less fundamental to advance our knowledge of what kind of economic institutions families were when industrialization and the expansion of labor markets began to occur. In an attempt to do so, the last part of the article presents some evidence on different access to family resources by male and female members of the family.

### **INTERPRETATIONS OF THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR IN FAMILIES**

Given the fundamental political and economic implications of being defined as a "worker" in industrial societies, much political debate has centered in the last two decades upon conflicting views of "production" and of definitions of "worker." The dichotomy family/work that existed until the 1970s has been replaced by an increasing understanding of both housework and work for the market.

The first accounts of women's work from late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were concerned with the effects of industrial work and wage labor on women.<sup>1</sup> Although many of these works tended to idealize the role of women in pre-industrial work, pushed by factory work to abandon their homes and their children, they led to the realization of the complexities of women's position as wage workers. First, much of the work done by women for the market in early industrialization had not been recognized as such by historians because it was done at home. In fact, in its most extreme, or 'pure', version, the def-

inition of work as market work hinged upon the definition of market work as factory work. As women had played a major role in domestic manufactures and services for the market they had been ignored by the historical accounts of (factory) work.<sup>2</sup>

Second, female wage work, even when it was factory work, that is, even when it was "real" wage work, presented features that differed greatly from male work. Women's working life cycle was different from that of men, a type of evidence which led to the conviction that women's market work could not be understood isolated from their "other" work, (unpaid) housework.

By focusing on rural industry and the strategies of peasant families, proto-industrialization studies described families as units of production and income generation as a collective process. Thus, they confirmed the important contribution of both men and women to the survival of peasant and industrial families.

These analyses demonstrated that the improvement of living conditions, and often the very survival of families, depended not upon the work of the head of the household, but upon the joint effort of all its members.

Scholars had already argued for the industrial sector that a complementarity existed between work done by different family members (Berg 1994; Hareven 1982). Although a sexual division of labor existed in early factory work, earnings of both men and women were equally fundamental to the family. To a large extent, the family's capacity to reproduce itself depended upon the capacity of all its members to engage in wage work.

The problem then was to explain a gender division of work in which women remained at home while men were in the market. This question was not even posed by most authors. In fact, the most common interpretations of the gender division of labor in the family consisted in not interpreting it, that is, in describing the different working patterns of male and female members of families without raising the question as of why this was this way. By failing to ask this question, this type of work in fact implies that the gender division of labor belonged, to a less or greater extent, to the world of nature, and not to society.

The persistence in today's society of an important percentage of the female population who develop their productive life outside the market, working unpaid in households in order to supply their members with goods and services, was first recognized as a problem by economics.

Two main explanations were developed: Marxists described the gender division of labor as caused by the market and functional to capitalism. The fact that women worked outside the market as unpaid domestic workers was a market outcome, from which capitalism benefited: by keeping an important part of the population doing unpaid work for the social reproduction of workers, capitalists were able to pay much lower wages to male workers, and hence increase their rate of profit.<sup>3</sup> Neoclassical economists considered households as a basic unit of economic analysis. In Becker's theory of the family, the gender division of labor was explained within the framework of economic rationality and individual choices and described as functional to individuals and families, which were cooperative units (Becker 1981, 1985).

The *interpretation of the gender division of labor as being the result of complementary working roles* has been very pervasive.<sup>4</sup> It has been particularly successful in the definition of peasant economies where intense participation in work of both men and women is most evident. In fact, a popular variation of the "women's fundamental role" position focused on peasant economies to argue that women had a "special relationship with the soil." Using

mainly proverbs and sayings as a source to prove her point about love between peasant husband and wife in nineteenth-century France, ethnographer M. Segalen affirms (1983, p. 2): "Woman's place in the rural family is unique, too. It will become evident that, though the law made her inferior, she was, in fact, viewed as a producer and, as such, had a special relationship with the soil. Whatever the economic level of the farm, its future largely depended on woman's labor."

Such a statement would seem to imply that the fact of being a producer (as women were, and in areas of male out-migration often the main or the only adult producer of the farm) precludes the possibility of having an inferior position. In fact, as Segalen herself mentions in passing, historical evidence shows that women were both producers and (legally, economically, culturally) inferior to their menfolk.

### Families as Sites of Conflict

While the economic functions of families have been generally accepted, how families function internally as productive and redistributive units is much less agreed upon. An interpretation of families as economic institutions in which family members had conflicting interests was rendered difficult by the "natural" vision of families embedded in both neoclassical and Marxist conceptions, which in turn reproduced the religious vision of families as natural God-ordained institutions.<sup>5</sup>

Since the 1970s however, the assumption of families as fundamentally cooperative units was seriously challenged. The works by Delphy ([1974]1984; [1976] 1984) and other feminist sociologists questioned some of the traditional assumptions of this discipline, such as the definition of families as units of consumption and measures of social stratification. By describing the internal hierarchical structure of contemporary peasant families, these works challenged the idea that coresidence, considered a basic feature of families, indicates a shared standard of living for all family members. Folbre (1982) criticized from an economic point of view the Marxist assumption that exploitation occurs only in the market, and suggested the study of family mechanisms of internal distribution.<sup>6</sup>

The vision put forward by Segalen has also been challenged by other anthropologists. Working on a small peasant community in Galicia, in Northern Spain, Méndez (1988, pp. 15-16) refers to this interpretation of the peasant family division of labor as complementary to the "peasant wife's power":

Segalen (1980) talks about the complementarity between man and woman in the rural milieu, particularly regarding the work distribution; Verdier (1979) defends the so-called feminine arts and considers them as an indicator of a feminine power; Weiner (1983) insists on the feminine power...I found peasant women without any acknowledged social power, without any weight in the decision-making process, and women farmers who became helpers of the head of the farm in the local census...I was not in front of a loss of power but in front of a non-power.

The desire to contribute to the recognition of the importance of women's work, and women's contribution to production, previously denied or ignored, led these historians into the voluntaristic affirmation of women's agency, and the denial of women's passive role in history, and specifically in economic life.

Yet although women's work, in both peasant and rural industrial families, was valued and a first attempt to describe its complexity made, this interpretation is misleading because it implies that from the fact that women (and often children) worked at least as hard as men did, can be deduced that women worked *in the same conditions and with the same economic and social results* as men.

By focusing on the work done by each family member, isolating work from the legal and economic framework in which women and men worked, or ignoring evidence of this, these studies suggest that economic and social differences in their status were nonexistent before the expansion of the labor market. In other words, it is assumed that, if anything, they were caused by it.

By insisting upon the importance of housework, this literature forgets the fact that housework was unpaid, and fail to provide an explanation for the fundamental question of why it was that women had to do it. Why were women in charge of housework and child care if they were also working at the loom and the division of labor of the peasant family was based on complementarity? Answers to this question range from Segalen's idea of the kitchen and the orchard as women's kingdom, for which men felt a deep envy, to the acknowledgment of unpaid housework as a problem.

Contrary to the idea that peasant pre-industrial families were egalitarian work units, and that it was the market which created differences between male and female workers, historical evidence shows that the origin of the historical situation in which men became privileged wage workers and women second-class workers, should be looked for *outside* the market and considered in every way to predate it.

The valuation or undervaluation of tasks is not arbitrary but related to the material and social structure in which they are inserted. As Delphy ([1976] 1984, p. 198) has explained, *task* is not synonymous with *trade* or *job*.<sup>7</sup> This distinction between *task* and *work* is immensely helpful to an analysis of the gender division of labor, because it helps us to avoid such traps as to insist on the "importance" and "value" of certain tasks. By pointing to the *social relation* before any inherent characteristics of the task, it is possible to see the division of labor as the *result* of social hierarchy, and not its cause. This is of special importance in analyzing the gender division of labor, because of the ideological tradition that links women's and men's different social positions to biology.

In this article, the status of family members is described by assessing: (a) each individual's participation in family work, and (b) each individual's access to family resources. From the comparison of these two levels of economic activity, a series of mechanisms appear that formed the family internal system of distribution and indicate the existence of hierarchies within families.

In this way, criteria such as "respect," "importance," or "affection" are replaced by criteria such as the legal position, the right to property, the access to family money, and the level of education. I argue that only the latter set of criteria permit a discussion on the status and relative position of family members and a realistic comparison between them.

### MONTES DE PAS: THE FAMILY ORGANIZATION OF LABOR

The Montes de Pas "lies on the northern slopes of the Cantabrian mountains facing the Atlantic Ocean and the port city of Santander...the mountain crests which form the divide between coastal and inland Spain."<sup>8</sup> It is formed by three villages, two of which, San

Roque de Riomiera and San Pedro del Romeral, are in the high lands, and the center, Vega de Pas, in the valley formed by the river Pas. The difficult access through the years to this small, mountainous region has contributed to maintaining the distinctive *Pasiego* economy and way of life.

The main source used for this study is the *cadaster* known as *Catastro de Ensenada*, recognized as the fundamental source to explore the economic basis of eighteenth century Spain.<sup>9</sup> The *Cadaster* is an ensemble of statistical and fiscal data, collected between 1750 and 1752 in 22 provinces of the old Kingdoms of Castille and León. The massive collection of data intended to serve the establishment of a unified fiscal system to replace the many different existing local taxes, to reduce the costs of tax collection, and to increase, as a consequence, the revenues of the Royal Hacienda. The base of this fiscal project was the imposition of taxes on wealth, the General Tax, and on personal productive activity, the Personal Tax. Establishment of this second tax required collection of information on the structure of activity of each town.

Data were collected locally and organized in two main bodies; the *Respuestas generales* were the answers given by local authorities to a printed questionnaire of 40 questions regarding the administrative situation of the town, its limits, situation, and population; qualities of the soil and crops; industrial, agricultural, and livestock production; buildings; communal properties; public revenues and expenditures; activities of the services sector; convents; and properties and rents belonging to the king.

The *Memoriales*, or householders' schedules, were the personal declarations of householders. (For the number of households in Montes de Pas between 1752 and 1877, see Table 1.) These listed all the individuals living in the said house (relatives and servants),

TABLE 1  
Population of Montes de Pas (households)

	1752	1797	1822	1828	1835	1877
San Roque	292	247	249	249	247	
Vega de Pas	648	600	601	537	601	487
San Pedro	427	389	372	380	390	
Total	1,367	1,236	1,222	1,166	1,238	
Inhabitants (4.5 persons per house-hold)	6,151	5,562	5,499	5,247	5,571	

TABLE 2  
Land Ownership, San Roque de Riomiera, 1752

Plazas (*)	Owners (farmers)		Owners (nonresidents)		Total owners	
		%		%		%
0-4	6	2.0	1	1.2	7	1.9
5-19	28	9.6	32	38.5	60	16.0
20-49	119	40.7	36	43.4	155	41.3
50-79	80	27.4	1	13.3	91	24.2
80-99	33	11.3	1	1.2	34	9.0
100 and more	26	8.9	2	2.4	28	7.5
Total	292	99.9	83	100	375	99.9

Note: (\*) One plaza = 311 m2.

**TABLE 3**  
San Roque de Riomiera. Uses of land (%)

	1752	1885
Crops	5.5	2.2
Meadows	94.5	97.8

Source: Echevarría 1985.

their occupations and properties. This information was checked by local officials who compiled from these data a book of the town's properties.

Family farms were the basis of the property system in the Pas villages. The structure of the property of the land in the mid-eighteenth century in one of the three Pasiego villages, San Roque de Riomiera, was as follows (see Table 2).<sup>10</sup>

Each family owned between four and five meadows spread through the mountains, each of them with a *cabaña*, the herder's combined home and stable. The number of plots depended not so much on the family's wealth, but on its working capacity, for Pasiego farms were run almost exclusively by family workers.

Pronounced variation in altitude of the land made cultivation very difficult. By mid-eighteenth century, only in the lower parts of the valley around La Vega were some corn and vegetables being grown in the orchards kept for family consumption. The rest of the soil was devoted to pasture, the main activity of Pasiego villages being herding. At the end of the nineteenth century, extension of meadows had further expanded, as a result of the region's complete specialization in cattle breeding (see Table 3).

The structure of land property revealed by the distribution of pasture is consistent with livestock ownership: only 5.5 percent (sixteen) of all San Roque farms had no cows, while 5.1 percent had just one, 47.6 percent had between two and four, 37 percent had between five and nine, and only 4.8 percent had more than ten cows. Further, 90.4 percent of San Roque families also owned goats or sheep: 162 families (55.5 percent) had goats and sheep, generally five to eight heads; 127 neighbors (43.4 percent of the total), had "a pig for their consumption"; and 30 of them had two (one had three). Twelve of them, among them the two parish priests, also declared the property of pigs "to raise" or "to sell" (usually one or two, only in one case three).

Production of poultry is difficult to trace, since the *Catastro* did not include it, nor was it part of the tithe, the tax collected by the Church (products exempted from the payment of tithe tax were grass, beehives, chickens, wool, cheese, and butter). However, there are references to its importance as part of the family's economy and diet. There were also 83 beehives in the village, owned by 28 families, of which the main one was the priest's who had eight.

Natural conditions did not permit self-sufficiency. Some corn, a few orchards, and pastures is all that San Roque householders declared in 1753. So Pasiego people developed a highly specialized economy based on cattle-breeding and dairy production.

To take advantage of the highest pastures, families moved their cattle from one meadow to another so that the animals always had fresh grass. These moves, called *mudas*, took place every few weeks, depending on the number of meadows the family owned, and the relation between number of cows and the size of the meadow. Although *mudas* permitted Pasiego people to maximize the yield of their meadows, feeding their cows in the best con-

ditions, and hence improving the quality of the meat and milk produced, the system demanded constant mobility of men, women, and children. It also made their lives extremely hard. Only the periods spent in the plots near the town meant some lightening of this hardship, carrying water and walking to the markets requiring less time, and there were some more opportunities for social life, and possibilities for children to attend school.

The same natural conditions that had forced them to specialize on cattle breeding made them dependent on the market to buy the products they lacked (grain, wine, textiles) and to sell the very few that their land produced.

Travelers described men and women walking down from the Pasiego towns, helping themselves with long sticks, to the valley markets. All transport was made in big baskets called *cuévanos*, carried on their backs. In the depositions made by San Roque householders, only eight of 292 declared to own a horse or mare "for the government of their cattle," among them the town clerk, the tavern keeper, and some of the main cattle owners. No mule, donkey, or ox was reported. A market took place every Sunday morning in the plaza of Vega de Pas. Pasiegos were also present at markets in the near valleys and urban centers such as Santander, Reinosa, or Burgos.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOR

According to the *Respuestas generales* of the Cadaster, in San Roque and San Pedro all men were occupied in farming and grazing. In San Pedro del Romeral the only exception were three clergymen, the only householders to employ maidservants.

In Vega de Pas the occupational structure was slightly more complex, showing two main differences compared to San Roque and San Pedro. The first is the existence of agricultural wage workers. While in San Pedro and San Roque the only wage workers were the priests' three maid servants, in the two books of the Cadaster remaining of the original three corresponding to La Vega, five householders declared to have male servants working on their farms (which means that a total of perhaps eight existed). Two of them were natives of Vega de Pas and one was a native of San Pedro del Romeral. In Vega de Pas there was also a slightly higher division of labor: Santiago Gómez Santayana was recorded as a tailor and a few more instances of artisans are known through indirect references. The question of the non-agricultural population deserves in fact closer attention.

Activities other than grazing were undoubtedly performed by inhabitants of the Pasiego towns. Stoneworkers and carpenters existed, some of them very skilled and proud enough of their technical capacities as to have engraved their names on the doors of the cabañas they built. Remains still exist in the area of some cloth mills, where Pasiegos made blankets and wool cloths for their own consumption.

Despite abundant evidence of activities other than grazing in the Pasiego towns, Pasiego men defined themselves, almost in their totality, as farmers. It could be that these activities were undertaken during some periods of the year, and so were regarded as complements to the main activity; it could also be that the dominance of grazing as a cultural model, defining the identity of Pasiego people, led them to define themselves as such even when their main source of income came from other activities.

Whatever the reason, the occupational structure described by the Cadaster is very simple and extremely homogeneous: adult men, and only they, formed the active population, comprising two groups, male householders, and male helpers over eighteen (most of them rel-

atives, such as sons). All of them declared to be occupied in the same activity, farming/grazing; family farms were the unit of production. Hence work was, with few exceptions, family (nonwaged) work.

So, according to the Catastro, the only difference in the occupational status of men depended not on their relation to wage or family labor, their degree of skill or their activity, but on their family status, which in turn depended on their position within the life-cycle: single male relatives of the head of the household (usually sons) working in the family farm were described as "agricultural laborers." After their marriage, a new household (*cabaña*, land, and cattle) was settled, the former "worker" becoming then a farmer.

This apparently very simple structure of activity was an *interpretation*, rather than a description of the work organization. The Pasiego productive system was based upon family work and could have not existed without it. While in other cattle-breeding regions cattle were stabled and fed with grass and, in Pas cattle were migrant. This transhumance took place within the limits of the Pas Mountains because, being small proprietors, Pasiego farmers took their cattle to their own meadows, rotating the cattle movement during the year in order to take the best possible advantage of the grass.

Transhumance required the periodical separation of families, especially during the summer. One of the parents, usually the husband, and some children would take part of the herd to the higher pastures, while the wife and rest of the family remained with pregnant cows and very young calves nearer the town, in charge of producing and marketing dairy produce. This system was only possible if at least two adults worked on the farm. As wage work seems to have been an exception, other members of the family besides the head had to be involved in the cycle of farm work.

This pattern of transhumant cattle breeding, together with dairy production, required the constant work of all family members. For instance, evidence on the fundamental importance of childrens' work since very young ages to run the farm and take care of the livestock is abundant; it was a major problem for their schooling until recently. And travelers were surprised at the hardship of women's work.<sup>11</sup>

A hypothetical reconstruction of the Pasiego occupational structure alternative to that offered by the Cadaster must redefine Pasiego active population as to include all men and women between ages 10 and 65. The second element of this alternative reconstruction concerns the closer than apparent links with the market economy, including the frequency of wage labor.

Two conditions had led to specialization in cattle breeding. The most important was ecological, or the impossibility, in an alpine area, of using the soil for agriculture. The second was financial, or the heavy indebtedness of Pasiego villages arising from the long conflict since the seventeenth century against the Carriedo Valley, to gain their jurisdictional independence, that required heavy payments by all householders.

These factors favored an almost total dependence of the Pasiego economy on the market. At its own time, this economy based on contacts with distant markets developed (and it was possible by) a local culture where mobility was essential. From some hours-long walks to the nearby markets, to the few hundreds of kilometers to urban centers like Madrid, to traveling to the American colonies, moving was a fundamental part of Pasiego identity.

Mobility was a structural element of the Pasiego economy, and was at the basis of the Pasiego organization of labor.<sup>12</sup> This has been defined as a common feature to all alpine economies, where mobility began with constant transhumance of animals and people from

the higher to the lower meadows, and was reinforced by the strong seasonality of the labor demands of the farms. This allowed the development of a seasonal pattern of activity with summers devoted mainly to the cutting and storing of the grass, and winters to seasonal employment in trade activities outside the region (Viazzo and Dionigi 1990; Fontaine 1984, 1990, 1993).

So, when by the late eighteenth century agricultural returns were decreasing due to the marginal character of most land, and to the partible system of inheritance that, after continuous partition, had resulted in too small plots, temporary migrations appeared as a natural outcome of the traditional economy.

Pasiego family farms marketed most of their production: fruits, wax for candles, certain implements and wooden tools, such as carrying baskets. But it was dairy production which would become a Pasiego specialization, to the point that the region became identified as producer of butter and cheese. Evidence of Pasiego women transporting and selling the dairy produced by themselves or other women of their families is documented for as early as the sixteenth century. Yet the comparative advantage that Pasiegos may have enjoyed as traditional producers never developed into an important industry. Some attempts were made in the last decades of the eighteenth century in this sense, but they never took hold (Domínguez Martín 1989, p. 137). The gradual growth of the urban demand for butter favored other markets (in the late eighteenth century, butter from Flanders and Holland was being sold at the town of Santander) and Pasiego dairy farming remained a domestic activity, done by women on a family scale.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, commerce became the main activity of many Pasiego women and men, who began to frequent urban markets as itinerant sellers. Initially limited to the marketing of the butter and cheese produced by the family farms, it soon included smuggling goods, first muslin, later tobacco.<sup>13</sup> The knowledge on the part of Pasiego people of the most inaccessible paths linking Castille with the Cantabrian seaports allowed them to successfully occupy themselves in the smuggling of articles from the French border and the Basque provinces (fiscally exempted thanks to their privileged fiscal system), mainly textiles (silks, muslin) that they then took to Madrid and other towns. The combination butter-muslin became very popular: "*No verás una pasiega/vendiendo tela y manteca/sin delantal bien cumplido/y colgando una tijera.*"<sup>14</sup>

Pasiego women also sold second-hand clothes, which they bought in France to sell in Spain. Traveling through Northern Spain in the 1840s, Lieutenant March (1852, p. 146-148), saw them:

On entering a wayside-inn to light a cigar, we found ourselves in the midst of a group of females drinking *aguardiente* (spirits) and eating bread for breakfast. Their discordant voices, rough manners, tanned wrinkled faces, patched lemon-colored petticoats, where

"Tawdry yellow strive with dirty red"

and other faded hues, rusty cloth jackets, and immense panniers strapped to their shoulders, proclaimed them to be Pasiegas from the mountainous district of Santander, on their way to Bayonne, to purchase second-hand wearing apparel for the purpose of retailing it again on their return home....Such is the ostensible calling of these Amazons, but smuggling is their principal one. They are followed at a distance by bands of husbands, brothers and kinsfolk, who station themselves at certain solitary and almost

inaccessible points of the frontier, ready to receive the contraband goods purchased in France. The latter are fierce and cunning as wild cats, and as dexterous in the use of the *cuchillo* (knife) as of their tongues. They can walk their ten leagues a day, bearing huge loads of rags upon their backs, and are never molested, although known to possess more money than their wretched appearance would lead anyone to suspect. On the present occasion two of them carried cradles instead of panniers, in which we beheld to our astonishment two lovely chubby infants, fair skinned and plump as Murillo's cherubs....It was almost impossible to believe that such exquisite little beings could be the children of these hags; yet such was the case. The fact is, that hard work out of doors, and exposure to all descriptions of weather give the Pasiega an appearance of premature old age, without harming their robust constitutions. Hence this fine-baby phenomenon. We have been informed that these women are in great request in Spain as wet-nurses, and many a puny grandee, who has inherited a feeble system from ailing parents, owes life to the invigorating milk of these broad-beamed healthy peasants. When in the service of rich families, they wear their national costume trimmed with silver lace, and composed of the finest materials.

Pasiegos were identified with peddling in fabrics as early as in the last decades of the eighteenth century. References to Pasiego women selling second-hand clothes and fabrics exist in Madrid and other cities. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century Granada had, near the Cathedral, the Plaza de las Pasiegas, so called since 1807 because some Pasiego women had their fabric stores in it. In Madrid, since at least the second half of the eighteenth century the Plaza de Santa Cruz, near the Plaza Mayor, was frequented by Pasiego itinerant sellers, who sold their smuggled muslin there. An advertisement of fashion fabrics appearing in the *Diario* on September, 30, 1802, reads: "In the stand that Pasiego women have in the plaza de Santa Cruz there is a great assortment of fine 'spotted' of high quality and fashion designs." The importance of commerce for the nineteenth-century occupational structure of La Vega is carefully recorded by the 1877 census (Sarasúa 1996b).

One century before, however, the 1753 Cadaster records no trader or dealer. This could suggest the under-recording of female occupations (coexisting with the permanence of farming/grazing as the family's main occupation). Yet the organization of family labor as described above seems to preclude the possibility of long-distance migration of members of family farms specialized in transhumant cattle. It is possible that migrants were members of a "new type" of Pasiego families that had developed a specialization in trade, the increasingly intense dedication to commerce suggesting in this case a growth of population not absorbed by the cattle economy. By looking more closely to temporary migrations we can suggest an answer.

Intense commercial activity not only provided the Pasiegos with an important source of income: by requiring frequent and long distance moves outside the region, making Pasiegos familiar with roads and urban labor markets, it worked as a first stage of what would become an important flow of permanent migration.<sup>15</sup> Pasiegos established two types of business: fabric stores and *vaquerías*, first in the towns next to the region, by the nineteenth century in Santander and Madrid and even in the American colonies.<sup>16</sup>

### Wage Labor as a Complementary Source of Income For Family Farms

According to the vision provided by the Cadaster, in the mid-eighteenth century the local economy was based on family, unpaid labor. Wage labor appears as an *external* mechanism to the Pasiego society, yet very much sought after.

In the 1780's, Pasiegos were carrying coal for the nearby Royal armaments Factory of La Cavada. Jovellanos, reporting to the government in 1791 on the industrial consumption of Asturian coal, observed:

[n]eed has discovered a way of transportation that admirably joins the interest of His Majesty and that of His peoples. Coal is currently transported on shoulders by the Pasiegos. In my trips to Lunada and San Roque I met large groups of them who climbed for those high and rough paths with great agility and content. Men, women and children, all carried their baskets loaded and at a good price, from 10 to 12 *reales* the load, depending on the distance of the mountains.

The system was convenient for the State and also for the Pasiegos, who "with no cultivation other than their pastures and no property other than their cattle, multiplied by their frugality and strength" were forced to accept any possibility of income (Jovellanos [1791] 1956, pp. 179-180).

In 1797, Jovellanos [(1797)1956, p. 247] explained that:

[t]he Pas land includes at least 15.000 inhabitants and the character of this people, hard and industrious, inclines them naturally to these occupations, compatible with their scarce and ordinary subsistence, based on the raise of few and poor cattle. Men, women, children, all occupy themselves without distinction in this transport, carrying the coal in their *cuévanos*, with such a zeal that the load of a robust man equals that of a donkey or exceeds it.

Demand for wage workers was more likely to be further distant than this from Pasiego towns. In fact, for Pasiego people, possibilities of working for wages were always associated to the "outside," that is, to the need to migrate. Temporary and, later, permanent migrations, developed increasingly as a fundamental way of obtaining resources additional to the income derived from the family farms.

### Temporary Employment in the Domestic Service: Wet Nurses

The most important of the migratory flows that involved Pasiego people was that of the Pasiego women going to Madrid and other cities to work as wet nurses. This migratory flow went on for at least 150 years, probably involving an important percentage of Pasiego women at some time in their lives and, since urban wet nurses were very well paid domestic servants, it generated resources which appear to have been fundamental for the family economies of the women migrants.

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 criticisms of doctors and politicians on 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 wet nurses at home instead.

The hiring of wet nurses who would live at the parents' home originated a shift in the geography of the market: wet nurses no longer needed to be from areas near the cities and women from distant regions gained access to the wet nursing market. A particular preference of Northern women, who were considered healthier and also of a "purer" blood, eventually became a primary feature of the Madrid market.<sup>17</sup>

The flow of *Pasiego* women to Madrid started in mid-eighteenth century. The first advertisement in the *Diario Oficial de Avisos de Madrid*, which began being published in 1758, of a wet nurse who identified herself as *Pasiega* appeared in November, 4, 1786.<sup>18</sup> It is likely, however, that by these years a certain number of women from the Cantabrian valleys were already working as wet nurses in Madrid. In any case, this marked the beginning of a rapidly organized migration that would last over 150 years:

[t]he aim of getting employment as wet nurses is what brings these peasant women to Madrid, a few weeks, or even days, after giving birth. With bread and wine the road is walked, goes the old Spanish saying, and *Pasiego* women accomplish that said in their trip to Madrid, considering herself very lucky the one who can add to those foodstuffs some other nutritious substance that neither her wealth, nor the assortment of the roads' inns permit to be very select. With this and some semi-clothes and semi-shoes, that hardly retain the "semi" at the end of the trip, walking during the day, and sleeping during the night over the hard soil, these unhappy ones make their expedition. But their healthiness, their robustness, and strong nature resist everything, and they arrive at Madrid as reddish and fresh as if they would not have passed any privation (Sarasúa 1994, pp. 163-179).

Once in Madrid, if they did not already have an accommodation, they would go to the plaza of Santa Cruz, near Plaza Mayor, the town's center. This was surrounded by arcades that harbored fabric stores and it acted, indeed, as an outdoors labor market. *Pasiego* wet nurses offered themselves in the same place where, since at least the second half of the eighteenth century, *Pasiego* itinerant sellers were selling their fabrics. Obviously these two migratory flows were connected in more than one way: probably *Pasiego* women first came to Madrid to work as wet nurses after their women and menfolk had informed them that such a possibility existed. An interesting piece of evidence of this connection is this advertisement of a wet nurse looking for a job: "One of total satisfaction and healthiness solicits a nursling for her place: she can be found in Toledo street, store of linen from Entrambasaguas."<sup>19</sup> This street, very near Plaza Mayor, is in the small area of Madrid where *Pasiego* sellers of fabrics and clothes were concentrated.

In short, in the mid-eighteenth century the *Pasiego* economy was based on: (a) a specialization on cattle breeding under a mixed regime of pasture and stable, system that demanded the periodical move of the herd, (b) a multiplicity of complementary activities, many of which also demanded moves, like marketing of products in local and urban markets, and temporary migrations, and (c) families as productive units, with a labor system based on the maximization of family labor resources and the internal division of labor. Wage work developed in Pas as a temporary mechanism that made possible the improved functioning of family farms, which remained as the basis of the economic and social system.

### FAMILY MEMBERS AND FAMILY RESOURCES: EQUAL ACCESS ?

Two main kinds of economic resources can be identified in Pasiego society: non-movable goods, such as land, cattle, and *cabañas*, and income generated by wage work. Access to the property of non-movable goods, the fundamental indicator of economic and social power, was mainly through inheritance. The inheritance system prevailing in Pas was based upon partible inheritance, as a recognition of the fundamental importance of the work of both female and male children for the family farm.<sup>20</sup> As the documents establish that male and female children were endowed with equal portions of the estate, it would seem that equality governed the process of transmission between generations.

Yet comparable contribution of property by men and women to their own marriages failed to assure their equality as wives and husbands. Only the latter were granted by law the right to *administer* the entire family estate. This right meant in practice that husbands were the only owners of the family estate. This evidence is consistent with the double distinction between (a) legal ownership rights and actual ownership, and (b) ownership and effective control, especially managerial control, which has been found to be relevant to explain the links between subordination (particularly women's) and property in peasant societies (Agarwal 1995, p. 284).

In Pas, instances of married women filing complaints against their husbands for having sold their properties without their agreement or even their knowledge (that is, acting as the actual owners of the properties), were frequent. In 1868, Fermina Gutiérrez filed a complaint with the local judge against her husband, Juan Martínez, for having sold to another man of Vega de Pas

half a house and an orchard in the site of Guzparras, and he has no right to sell this, for it was my dowry...belonging to the estate of my deceased father...I ask for the deal to be declared null (Archivo Municipal de Vega de Pas [AMVP], Caja 1, Juicios de conciliación).

A second mechanism limiting women's access to family resources was the structure of income-pooling. The importance of both male and female temporary wage labor has been described. However, while women were pressed by social norms and obliged by law to contribute their whole earnings to the family (in fact, husbands owned their wives' incomes), there is strong evidence on limits to income-pooling on the part of men (Sarasúa 1996a). This seems to be a common pattern of most peasant societies (although I would not characterize it as a *peasant* feature).<sup>21</sup>

Partially as a result of the second mechanism, a third mechanism of differential access to family resources was consumption.<sup>22</sup> I refer here to two types of expenses as examples of differential consumption within eighteenth century Spanish peasant families: expenses derived from socializing activities (drinking and gambling; data on expenses on prostitution has not been looked for yet), and expenses derived from education of children.<sup>23</sup>

In Vega de Pas, on May 3, 1870, José Calleja denounced Manuel González and asked that he repay a debt of 4,520 *reales*. The offender claimed that this amount was given to him

the greatest part raised through a betting game in his house with two colleagues and the owner of the house. Each one took 500 reales and gave it to the said owner and then they lent the same amount until the sum I had been asked for was reached (...) and that

finding themselves in that tavern for eighteen hours, the first night in the company of many people, and everyone having left for home when it was morning, only three remained until 11 or 12, at which point (he) said "Boys, let's go home," to which the owner of the house replied "Don't go, I've sent out some cards asking people to come here to play," and immediately a fellow gambler came in, and then another (AMVP, Caja 1. Juicios de conciliación).

The very dispersed pattern of settlement of Vega de Pas meant that gambling probably always took place in some of the few houses of the center of the town, either the tavern or a private house, such as the one mentioned in the case above.

According to the Cadaster there were three taverns in La Vega and one in each of the other Pasiego towns. Taverns were a municipal property and leased periodically (usually every year, as all other public services and rights). Town councils were interested in their existence because they collected good taxes from them, but also because they attracted travelers. Article 12 of the municipal regulations of San Pedro del Romeral, from 1692, regulated the tavern and inn and obliged the tavern keeper to "assist the tavern without absence from dawn to midnight for the provision of locals, travelers and passers by, and for each day that he missed he must be fined 200 ducados..." (AHN, Consejos, leg. 7.558).

Taverns played a fundamental role in the local economic and social life of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries peasant Spain. They developed as places to drink alcoholic beverages and at the same time as inns for travelers. This gave taverns an especial significance, as the only places where inhabitants of peasant communities could meet new people. As with most public places, they were only for men.<sup>24</sup>

Freeman (1979, p. 112-113) provides an interesting account of twentieth century leisure patterns that can be used as a starting point to describe them one hundred years before. She described leisure in Pas as

principally associated with stock fairs rather than with any other collective events of social life (...) visiting is casual (...) it is usually young men rather than young women who travel through barrio space exclusively for social ends; young women travel freely (and also extensively) in the context of work but stay home to receive social visits from young men (...) The pursuit of leisure by adult women is generally confined to visiting in the cabañas or to such activities as laundering or going shopping together. The demands of caring for children and cattle and the preparation of meals and other household tasks typically occupy women's time and discourage extensive socializing. While men may perform all the household's tasks, cook, and care for both livestock and children, standard household management, child-care, and often much caring for cattle as well are frequently left by married men to their wives while they themselves gather to play cards. Men socialize in large groups in the taverns of the Casco.... Their leisure hours typically begin after the noon meal, and perhaps after a brief siesta, sometime after one or two in the afternoon. Most return home in the late afternoon, around milking time, and barrio families eat their supper and retire early, especially in areas without electricity. Many men enjoy their afternoon leisure even when they must walk to the Casco from considerable distances.... Within the larger meadows there may be enough friends to gather, but the tendency is for men to prefer to gather in public places away from the cabañas.... Whether men spent more of their leisure time in the barrios in an era when they had less spending money is hard to say, for the Casco has been important as a place of enjoyment for as long as anyone can remember. Many Casco tavern keep-

ers in the past maintained bowling greens on their premises to attract patrons. Bowling (skittles) was a male sport associated with tavern visits.

### Education

No mention is made in the 1752 Cadaster of teachers or schools in any of the three Pasiego villages.<sup>25</sup> Yet an early reference to education in Pas appears in the Municipal Regulations of San Pedro, from 1692.<sup>26</sup>

In 1784 a Pasiego migrant to Mexico, Juan de Rebueta Fernández Alonso, from San Roque de Riomiera, "householder and of the Trade in this Town of Santa Fé, Guanaxato," made a donation in his will of 4,000 *pesos* to establish an elementary school in San Roque, with the following conditions:

first, the school has to move to three places of the said town, which will be the parish church of San Roque for the months of September, October, November and December, having freed the month of August because of the little or no attendance that may have of pupils, and following to the other neighborhoods, it will be in one of them during January, February, and March, and part of April, and in the other May, June, and July, alternating in these, the year that would be in the place of Merilla or in La Concha, the following year will be for those three months in the other place...the teacher will be instructed in reading, writing, counting, Christian doctrine, elements of grammar, calligraphy, and methods of teaching (AHN, Clero, libro 11.584).

As this account of the moving pattern of Pasiego livelihood shows, the work of Pasiego children was fundamental for the family farms. Also, the fact that this early initiative to fund a school in his native village comes from a successful merchant indicates that literacy and education were regarded in eighteenth-century Pas as a means to improve the commercial activities that were so fundamental to the local economy.

Eighteenth-century schools were for boys only. Schooling of female children was almost nonexistent until 1816, when a decree was published "on the establishment of schools for the education of girls in the religious convents."<sup>27</sup>

TABLE 4  
Vega de Pas, 1877. Literacy and Schooling

	Literate population				Students			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
Casco	158	73.5	102	45.3	15	20.8	6	6.4
Corcus	33	53.2	12	19.3	0	0	0	0
Yera	34	48.6	5	9.1	4	11.4	2	9.1
Partillo	27	30.0	5	6.4	4	9.7	3	10.0
Rucabado	18	28.1	0	0	1	3.6	1	3.4
Pandillo	27	34.2	6	8.9	1	2.8	1	3.6
Candolías	40	46.0	13	12.3	4	10.8	5	12.5
Biaña	73	55.3	20	14.8	6	12.5	2	4.0
Gurueba	63	32.5	11	5.4	5	7.5	2	2.8
Guzparras	27	37.0	6	6.1	—	0	1	2.6
Total	500	46.9	180	16.5	40	9.7	23	5.4

According to Madoz's (1845-1850) famous *Diccionario*, by the mid-nineteenth century there was a public elementary school in Vega de Pas. The census roll of 1877, that included questions on the inhabitants' ability to read and write, permits us to describe the level of local education. Table 4 shows the literate male and female population out of the potentially schooled population, defined as the population under sixteen.

Pasiego rates of literacy (46.9 for men and 16.5 for women in 1877) were lower than the provincial average literacy rates which, according to the census of 1860 were 64.1 percent for men and 26.5 percent for women (Martínez Vara 1979, p. 116). Women's rate was seven points less distant from the regional rate than men's.<sup>28</sup>

As regards to students, in 1877 there were 36 male and 23 female students in La Vega, but only 31 and 22 respectively attended the local schools. There were probably two schools, one for boys and one for girls, for the census records two teachers, Jerónimo Ruiz, aged 33, from Salinas (Santander), and who had arrived with his wife 10 months before, and Asunción Fernández Rfos, 30, from San Vicente de la Barquera (Santander), arrived to La Vega five years before, and who in 1877 had married a Pasiego *propietario*.

Of the six absent students, five were male (aged 12, 14, 30, 13, 22, three of them in Madrid, one in Burgos, one in Santander and one in Villacarriedo, in the province of Santander). The only female student was nineteen and was in Santander. But the fact that 91 percent of the female "students" were illiterate (21 out of 23, including the nineteen year olds studying in Santander) while only 42 percent of the male students were (17 out of 40), reveals that there was something more than a too short period of schooling, probably the different content of male and female education.

Patterns of family expenditure on children's education prove that in fact an unequal access of male and female children to family resources existed. Families paid for the education of their male children but not for their female children. This is clear in the more expensive medium and superior education, but is equally evident in elementary education (Núñez 1992).<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, the education of sons was often paid at the cost of a reduction in the daughters' capacity to gain access to their own resources, even less that their legal quota. When in 1804 Jovellanos (1956, p. 259) asked his sister from prison to solve some of the family problems regarding wills and inheritances, she answered from the convent where she had retired:

As far as I am concerned, the whole of the will has been executed, unless it is understood as a misunderstanding to say that he has met the dowries of his sisters. Our good father offered 2,000 ducados to each of them, and only 1,500 were given to Doña Juana Jacinta, and 19,000 reales to Doña Catalina; but they all gave a letter of payment, convinced that at our good father's death a *censo* had to be taken for over 13,000 ducados with royal permission over the one already existing of over 6,000 to compensate the debts originated in the expenses of your career, that is, yours and of the three brothers, and there being no free goods at home but the 10,300 ducados to aggregate to the *mayorazgo*, not enough to the capital, the successor was not obliged to fulfil the 2,000 ducados, of which the sisters convinced, they gave authentic letter of payment, as I said.

This document shows the extent to which nonegalitarian *practices* often overrode the egalitarian *norm* regarding inheritance. Since education of male children was a fundamental investment for middle class families, hoping to achieve upward social mobility through

it, family resources were mobilized to this end, including the sisters' legal quotas, and loans were taken upon the families' properties. To pay for the careers of four brothers, such as was the case of the Jovellanos family, the sisters renounced part of all of their dowries, given nevertheless letters of payment, as if they had been given their shares. Education, particularly superior education, that was most costly, but at the same time perceived as the only means for the most provincial hidalgos to make a career, implied an important transfer of resources from the daughters and other female members of the families to the brothers and male members.

Unequal access to education was fundamental for two reasons. First, it was probably the main mechanism of redistributing family resources from female children to male children.

Secondly, education was the main mechanism used to foster upwards mobility for male children and, specifically, to permit them entering the labor market above the lower, non-qualified, badly paid occupations, a possibility that remained precluded to Spanish women until the 1920s (Scanlon 1976).

For those same years, Olóriz, a doctor interested in the causes of female illiteracy, suggested that "women's work" was in fact a *cause*, and not a *consequence*, of women's situation:

many families ready to make some small sacrifice to instruct their men, would never do it for their women, as it is a common principle that these do not need it to serve God, care for her home, and obey her husband, the only mission of almost all Spanish women (Núñez 1992, p. 249).<sup>30</sup>

**TABLE 5**  
Vega de Pas. Structure of Activity, 1877

	Men	%	Women	%
Agriculture-cattle	491	67.9	286	39.7
Proprietors	65		32	
Farmers	295		203	
Day laborers	52		24	
Cattle breeder	73		19	
Shepherds	6		8	
Manufactures	33	4.6	10	1.4
Barquilleros	15		4	
Milliners	8		6	
Others	10		—	
Services	70	9.7	50	6.9
Servants	25		28	
Wet nurses	—		16	
Commerce	11		2	
Guards, military	9		—	
Professionals	8		1	
Others	17		3	
Non occupied	47	6.5	23	3.2
Retired	7		—	
Students	40		23	
'At home'	82	11.3	352	48.8
Total Occupied	723	100.0	721	100.0

In fact, unequal patterns of consumption within the family by female and male members can be analyzed as playing a two-fold role: they show male members having a *higher value* in peasant culture, explaining why families consistently invested more in their male than in their female children, why men had the control over the "family" money and resources, which in turn allowed them to develop privileged patterns of expenditure. That is, unequal patterns of access to family resources are the *consequence* (the expression) of family hierarchies. But they are, at the same time, one of the main *causes* explaining why at the moment of the expansion of labor markets, men and women were so differently placed in relation to paid and unpaid work.

Table 5 shows the occupational structure of Vega de Pas as shown by the local census of 1877. Half of the female population declared "her home" as their occupation.

### CONCLUSIONS

By studying the work organization in different peasant societies at a micro level *before labor markets developed*, it is possible to show that the features regarded as characteristics of industrialization and capitalist relations (and particularly the gender division of labor) predated these. They formed part of the preindustrial family work organization and were carried into the new relations of production as these developed during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Preindustrial families were organized not only through a division of complementary tasks; they were hierarchical institutions. They worked as a filter, internally redistributing the income according to criteria which were different from need or merit; instead, they were based on rank and hierarchy. Differences within families appear when work done by each family member is described in connection with the legal, social, and economic framework in which women and men worked. It is thus clear that from the fact that women worked at least as hard as men did cannot be deduced that women worked in the same conditions and with the same economic and social results as men.

The preindustrial gender division of labor had deep economic and social consequences. Its economic consequences centered on the fact that in market economies wage labor developed as the main source of income for individuals, conditioning, to a large extent, access to property, patterns of consumption, entitlements, and access to other resources. Social consequences arise because the status of the (waged) worker is what confers social and political identity in modern societies.<sup>31</sup> The position within the family determined the individual's access to property, or whether he or she would have to perform certain tasks, their social and political rights, patterns of consumption of goods and services, and use of the public and private space. In other words, differences within the family were fundamental in shaping the different position from where women and men entered the labor market, i.e., in shaping the new capitalist relations of production.

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## NOTES

1. One of the pioneer analysis of Spanish women's working conditions was written in 1884 by penalist and reformer Concepción Arenal as a chapter for *The Woman Question in Europe*. As elsewhere, the first criticisms of Spanish women's working and living conditions were made by women writers. Emilia Pardo-Bazán ([1882]1981) described the work of cigar makers in the factory of La Coruña in *La Tribuna*, and Concha Espina ([1922]1976) in *La esfinge maragata*, a novel about women's lives in an extremely poor agricultural area in León, with massive male out-migration to America.

2. Boarding is one of the many examples of economic activity in the services sector ignored by historians for having been done by women (Pérez-Fuentes 1993). Lace-making is a good example for the manufacturing sector; see Sarasúa 1995.

3. For a critical summary of Marxist accounts of the family, see Delphy and Leonard (1992), in particular chapter 2, "Traditional Marxist Accounts of the Family," and chapter 3, "Marxist Feminist Accounts of the Family."

4. The title of Gullickson (1986) implies precisely this: men and women did different tasks (women spun, men wove), but both tasks were equally fundamental for the final cloth. Gullickson is in this way assuming Scott and Tilly's account (1978) on the persistent division of work between men and women: "Although the jobs they performed may have differed, the work of husband and wife was equally necessary to the household" (p. 53). Quataert (1986), writing on eighteenth-century Saxon homeweavers, concludes: "the preindustrial, subsistence peasant world relied on considerable sex role divisions. Men's work and women's work existed separately...yet each individual in the household provided indispensable services to the survival of the whole: the death of one member put extraordinary strains on the household unit. Men and women were crucial productive members of this peasant family economy" (p. 4).

5. The Spanish model of a Christian woman in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is studied in Barbazza (1988). An economic interpretation of this model is found in Durán (1983).

6. Folbre (1994) argues that economic arrangements are determined by complex "structures of constraint," defined as "sets of asset distributions, rules, norms, and preferences that empower given social groups."

7. "To reduce a trade or a job to a technical task allows a false question to be put: namely, what is more interesting about the *tasks* of a company director than the *tasks* of a schoolteacher; the tasks of schoolteacher than the tasks of a road sweeper? The sophism of the question lies in the fact that in this problematic the definition of a road sweeper is: a man who pushes a broom. Nothing could be further from the truth. A road sweeper is a man who pushes a broom *on the instructions of someone else and in exchange for a derisory wage.*"

8. Susan Tax Freeman (1979), p. xviii. The Pasiago mountains have long attracted the attention of anthropologists, due to their isolation and the preservation of their traditional life style.

9. "The thousands of volumes of the catastro of Ensenada containing detailed information on the ownership of property throughout Castile...are today one of the most remarkable sources anywhere of information on the society and economy of a preindustrial state" (Herr 1989, p. 10). The best study on the Catasto as a source is Camarero 1989.

10. Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santander (AHPS), section Ensenada, book 803. The problems inherent in the identification of the number and location of farms echo the problems encountered by attempts to identify the number of householders. Owning farms in nearby towns (and moving to them in some periods of the year) was frequent for Pasiago families. As San Roque householders declared to the officials of the Cadaster: "in this said Town there are Two Hundred and eighty one Householders and sixty five Widows, and of these the One Hundred and sixty nine and a Half...are Householders in the neighborhoods of Valdezio and Calseca, Valley of Sova, Ruesga, Miera, Renierito, Liérganes, Penagos, Cayón, Llerana, Varzena de Carriedo, Selaya de Carriedo and

Villa de Espinosa de los Monteros, in which in different times of the Year they live and feed their cattle in the respective properties which in the said Towns and Valleys they have" (AHPS, Ensenada, book 803, folio 17).

11. According to the descriptions of contemporaries (Alarcón 1858), in Northern Spain the gender division of labor concerned the amount of work done by men and women as much as the division of tasks. Women are depicted as doing most of the work, even the hardest and dirtiest tasks. Hardship of women's work was interpreted by travelers as proof of the backwardness of the region. Novelist Pedro Antonio de Alarcón wrote in 1858, after a trip in a region near the Pas: "The montañesa race finds itself subsumed in the most miserable state of abjection and ignorance. Just one feature will reveal this to you. Women...carry out here the hardest part of the work and toils. They plow, they sow, they harvest, they drive the cart, guard the cows, and suffer all the rigors of the weather. Thus, they appear ugly, dirty, ragged, with the basket on their backs and the baby in it, crouched over the earth, with no decoration in their dress or hair, while the men walk around proud and well-dressed, reddish and robust, occupied in fishing or in taking their animals to the fairs."

12. A witness called to the trial of 1689 said that "as a boy, young man and married man, he has walked all over these Mountains, working in the sale and purchase of small and large livestock, of wool and cattle, as well as herding them. And pasturing them, he has a special knowledge of these lands" (Leal 1991, p. 60).

13. In Hufton (1974) smuggling is identified as one of the main activities of poor European peasants in the eighteenth century, when unorganized tax systems permitted great differences in tax rates among regions and countries.

14. "You will not see a Pasiego woman/selling fabrics and butter/without a good apron/and a good pair of dangling scissors" García-Lomas (1977, p.156).

15. This is not exceptional in this province which always had a moderately important net migration rate until the twentieth century.

16. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the *Cadaster* mentions few householders absent: in Vega de Pas, Don Pedro Antonio Madrazo, marquis of Valle de Colina, is mentioned as resident in Mexico, while Leonardo Diego Madrazo is absent in Orán (probably as a soldier). As with many others from the province of Santander, some of these Pasiego migrants were successful. In 1784, Don Juan de Rebuelta Fernández Alonso, from San Roque, died in the Mexican town of Santa Fé, where he was "householder and dealing with Trade," leaving a small fortune, part of which was devoted to the creation of the first school of San Roque (AHN, Clero, libro 11.584).

17. Documents from the archive of the Royal Palace at Madrid show the deep concern of royal doctors when the moment of delivery found a female member of the royal family in the South, due to the difficulty of finding a good wet-nurse in such regions. The reason was the impossibility of proving the purity of their blood, given the contamination with Muslim, and (more surprising) Protestant blood. Colonies of European foreigners existed by the late eighteenth-century in different places of Andalucía, such as Cádiz, Jérez, and the *Nuevas poblaciones* in Jaén.

18. "[r]eason will be given in San Benito street, house of the Cars master, who will respond by her. And she is Pasiega." The first advertisements of women defining themselves as "native of the Mountain" or "Montañesa" appeared that same year. See Sarasúa 1994.

19. December 2, 1801. Entrambasaguas is a village at north of the Pas valley.

20. "The ideal structure of the autarchic family corresponds at the normative level with the egalitarian principle, which establishes the distribution of paternal goods among the children. Equality was the norm culturally approved as the most adequate to carry on the division of the domestic patrimony....[In Pas] the system of bilateral or *cognaticio* heritage, by which male and female inherit equivalent parts and at the same time, prevails....The system characteristic of the Pasiego area, i.e. donation of the goods while the parents are alive, is responsive to the environment and the habitat in which Pasiego people live. Scarcity of land, increasing amount of livestock and the difficulty of the land, make life extremely difficult. Thus the parents, once retired and assured a rent from the chil-

dren, donate their goods to children....The practice of donation is a result of the impossibility for old Pasiegos (and above all, for parents whose children have left) to maintain the farm and the transhumant cycle to feed the cows. Once the cows are sold, meadows and cabañas lose all their functions, and parents retire to a *vividora* near the center, or move in with one of the children, which, in this case, can be 'mejorado' in terms of heritage" (Rivas 1991, p.111).

21. In large parts of South Asia, "a systematic bias is noted against women and female children in intra-household access to resources for basic necessities such as health care, and in some degree also food. This is revealed in gender differences in one or more of the following indicators...: malnutrition, morbidity, mortality, hospital admissions, health expenditures, and female adverse sex ratios (females per 1,000 males) although the evidence on food allocation per se is less conclusive" (Agarwal 1995, p. 272).

22. "Notable differences have been found in how men and women of poor rural households spend the incomes under their control: women typically spend almost all their incomes on the family's basic needs; men usually spend a significant part on their personal needs (tobacco, liquor, etc.)." Evidence on this has led to develop a "welfare argument" to defend women's access to land rights in peasant societies now, since "research findings also suggest that children's nutritional status tends to be much more positively linked to the mother's earnings than the father's" (Agarwal 1995, p. 272).

23. Anthropological studies provide, in my opinion, a more refined understanding of consumption than economics, particularly in peasant societies, where rank was established not only by direct consumption or display of certain goods, but by occupation of the public and private space, prerogatives, deference, use of certain utensils, such as firearms and horses, as well as non-material or symbolic consumption.

24. A variation of this norm of spatial segregation existed in places where women could eventually enter these places. Then a special only-for-men room or floor was created, usually at the interior part, to play cards, etc. In England, where working women sometimes entered the pubs, "pub vaults were for men only" (Davies 1992, p. 42).

25. In an analysis of schooling in Santander based in the Cadaster, Amalric (1987), pp. 9-27, sees this absence as caused by the "relief tourmenté et au peuplement disséminé en villages le plus souvent minuscules; la taille de ces petites communautés montagnardes autant que la difficulté des communications suffit sans doute à expliquer une sous-scolarisation évidente...c'est le cas...des Montes de Pas, qui ne comptent aucun maître pour plus de 400 feux."

26. "It is also ordained that the ordinary Judge of the said village and its town council pay particular attention and are obliged to [make sure] that there is a school in the said Village in the most convenient parts of it, for the teaching of children and the rehearsal of the Christian doctrine, and fail they to do so, any resident householder can complain against them" (Article 19, AHN, Consejos, legajo 7. 558).

27. "R. D. sobre los establecimientos de escuelas de educación para las niñas en los conventos religiosos, aprobado por S. S.," on July 8th, 1816. Fernando VII, concerned for the "education of the sex that has so much influx on the good and the bad of society," asked and obtained from the pope authorization for the establishment of schools for girls in female convents whose rule permitted the nuns to perform this activity. This new possibility remained however open almost exclusively to urban girls.

28. The provincial literacy rates in 1887 were 44 percent for women and 67.8 for men. See Reher, Pombo, and Noguera (1993, pp. 235).

29. Comparing the public and private schooling systems, she affirms that "in one as well as the other girls were the ones who attended school without paying fees with a greater frequency, which indicates that when schooling implied direct expenses for the families, these were more ready to finance the education of their male children" (p. 249).

30. "El analfabetismo en España," published in 1900. Quoted in Núñez (1992), p. 249.

31. As Jacob (1994) has recently pointed out, an identification between worker and holder of property (and then political) rights lies at the basis of the Western contemporary notion of work.

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