**Female labour-demand seasonality, geographical mobility and family reproduction in a Mediterranean agrarian system: Majorca, 1650 – 1700.**

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In the second half of seventeenth century a large estate system was brought in the Majorca Island. Great farms in the mountains were specialized on olive-oil production to export to international markets, and in the plains cereals were in to set aside for the domestic market. The farms were managed by aristocratic landowners or their leaseholders, that hired wage-labour: servants (40%) and daily-wage workers (60%). The literature about this agrarian system has shown that almost 70% of the total daily-wage labour in both farming systems was supplied by female work-force. The olive-tree farms demanded labour in autumn and winter in order to maintain the trees and for the oil harvest from October to February. The cereal lands request labour to hoe and do the weeding in winter and spring (November to May), and for cereal harvest in the summer (June and July). So, the maintenance tasks in cereal farms and the harvest of olives had the same seasonality of work.  This coincidence could imply difficulties in the sense of recruiting labour but at the same time it entailed a double labour supply.

The labour-force of farms in both crops areas was supplied by the small tenancies where the land didn’t allow the reproduction of the family. Therefore, they had to transfer part of their labour-force to big estates to reach the income they needed to fulfil their economic and social reproduction.  Women in the plains could choose between working in the local market (cereal maintenance tasks) and engaging themselves in big groups for the collection of the olive harvest at the mountain farms. We do ask which factors would explain the incorporation of women and youngest males from poor peasant families to big farms:
A. High salaries and long contract, or crops typology? It seems that vineyards recruited more labour and for longer time than cereal farms, as it can be observe in parishes where vineyard was one of the main crops, the emigration was lower.

B.  The different stages of female life course? Probably single women were more likely to participle in the labour market.

C. Finally, was the economic situation of women (widow, dowries, spinsters, the poorest ones) that determined their participation in local or distant markets?

According to the prior approach the aims of the paper are as follow:
1.      To show the seasonal agricultural labour-demand of cereals and olive farms in order to analyze the coincidence of tasks.

2.      To assess the intensity and geographical origin of female workers employed at the olive farms.
3.      To reconstruct the life course of this female labour force in order to explore if the fact of working out of the domestic domain conferred peculiarities in their patterns of family formation and reproduction. For instance, it would not be surprising that their age at marriage was above the average of their counterparts who did not leave their birthplace to work. Actually, their incomes might be crucial in the constitution (dowries) or consolidation (land acquisition) of new households. Would it involve an early nuclearization of families? The construction of their life courses implies also the construction of their labour trajectories, through nominative record linkage among different kinds of sources.

Record linkage from three different sources – farm book-accounts, village fiscal accounts and parish registers (mainly baptisms and marriages) – will allow the construction of life and labour trajectories of women workers from two villages of Majorca: Binissalem at the mountains region, and Santa Margalida at the plain.