Obradoiro de Historia Moderna,
N.º 16, 9-39, 2007, ISSN: 1133-0481

CRIADOS, SERVI, DOMESTIQUES, GESINDE, SERVANTS: FOR A COMPARATIVE HISTORY OF DOMESTIC SERVICE IN EUROPE (16TH-19TH CENTURIES)[1]

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Resumen. En este artículo, basado principalmente en fuentes bibliográficas, intentaré bosquejar una panorámica de las características y la distinta importancia del servicio doméstico en las diversas regiones de la Europa moderna. En primer lugar resumiré el contenido de algunos influyentes estudios publicados hace décadas por autores como Philippe Ariès, John Hajnal y Peter Laslett. Debido a su papel pionero en la investigación, estos trabajos merecen una cierta atención pese a que sus conclusiones hayan demostrado ser parcialmente incorrectas en la actualidad. Después discutiré los resultados de recientes investigaciones sobre la materia, centrándome en las similitudes y diferencias existentes a nivel europeo, y mostrando los límites de las más recientes y fascinantes hipótesis, como las de David Reher, sobre los lazos familiares en la Europa del sur y el norte.

Palabras clave: servicio doméstico, criados, género, lazos familiares, Europa.

Abstract. In this article, mainly based on the existing literature, I will attemp to draw an overview of the varying importance and the different features of domestic service in various regions of early modern Europe. Firstly, I will summarise the content of some influential studies published decades ago by scholars such as Philippe Ariès, John Hajnal and Peter Laslett. Because of their role in fuelling further research, these studies deserve some attention, even though, by now, their conclusions have proved to be partially wrong. Afterwards I will discuss the results of recent research on the subject, focusing on similarities and dissimilarities

1 Trabajo recibido el 15 de enero de 2007 y aceptado para su publicación el 23 de febrero de 2007.

at European level, and showing the limits of a more recent (and fascinating hypothesis) on families ties in Southern and Northern Europe put foward by David Reher.

Keywords: domestic service, servants, gender, family ties, Europe

1. Influential Studies

The publication of *Centuries of Childhood* by Philippe Ariès in 1960 and, possibly, even more that of the research developed by John Hajnal and Peter Laslett since the 1960s stimulated a growing historical interest in live-in servants, particularly in their number, age and marital status. Ariès concluded, among other things, that the development of the school system and the consequent decline of the custom to train and educate children by sending them to serve in a different household from their own was crucial to the rise of the modern family, characterised –according to Ariès– by strong emotional ties between parents and their off-spring[2]. The idea that earlier on family ties had been rather cold and unemotional provoked wide criticism and was eventually rejected by most scholars but it prompted a great deal of further research and also contributed to widening the interest for the role of domestic service[3].

John Hajnal and Peter Laslett suggested that domestic service played a central role in the European household formation system. In an influential article published in 1965, Hajnal wrote that Western Europe was characterised by a peculiar marriage pattern whose distinctive features were a high proportion of single people and late age at marriage. These two features reduced the birth rate and, consequently, population pressure. On the other hand, to the East of an imaginary line between Trieste and St. Petersburg, as well as in the rest of the world, marriage was early and almost universal. Thus, demographic pressure was much stronger than in Western Europe. According to Hajnal, Western Europeans married late because they had to acquire skills and means necessary to feed a family before marrying. They often reached this goal working as servants or apprentices. Furthermore, in the cities (adult) single peo-

2 ARIÈS, Philippe: *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*, Paris, Plon, 1960.

3 See for instance POLLOCK, Linda: "Parent-Child Relations", in KERTZER, David I. and BARBAGLI, Marzio (eds.): *Family Life in Early Modern Times 1500-1789*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 91-220; SARTI, Raffaella: *Vita di casa. Abitare, mangiare, vestire nell'Europa moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1999, (English translation: *Europe at Home*. *Family and Material Culture 1500-1800*, New Haven and London, Yale U.P., 2002, pp. 224-230; this book is translated in Spanish, too: *Vida en familia. Casa, comida y vestido en la Europa moderna*, Barcelona, Crítica, 2002; yet the pages I refer to have been added in the third Italian edition and in the English translation. They are not present in the Spanish version, which is a translation of the first Italian edition).

ple were often servants, too[4]. A few years later, in 1969, Laslett, analysing servants, concluded that "the substantial proportion of persons who turn out to be living in the households of others, other than those into which they were born, looks to us like something of a sociological discovery"[5]. In the second edition of *The World We Have Lost* (1971) he defined service as "practically a universal characteristic of pre-industrial English society"[6]. In 1977, noting that in Western Europe many servants were young and unmarried, he introduced the concept of "life-cycle service", suggesting that service represented, for a large proportion of the people involved, only a phase in their life. He also suggested that as many as 40% of the young worked as servants between the ages of 12 and 22. In other words, the presence of servants was a crucial characteristic of the Western family, as were nuclearity, late marriage and little difference in the age of husband and wife[7].

In the early 1980s Hajnal further complicated his model, stating that in North-Western Europe –i.e. in the Scandinavian countries (with the sole exception of Finland), in Britain, in the Netherlands, in the German area and in Northern France– marriage was late for both men and women (after 26 years of age for males and after 23 for females) and that life-cycle service was very common. According to Hajnal, in these areas servants –who from a social point view were not necessarily inferior to their masters– made up at least 6% of the population, often more than 10%. They were generally younger than 30 and normally ceased to be servants when they married. As far as marriage is concerned, available data also suggested that in North-Western Europe newly married men became heads of their households. As a consequence, joint households were very rare. Hajnal also stated that he did not want to discuss Southern Europe, Finland and the Baltic countries. Yet he mentioned scattered data suggesting that in at least some parts of these regions marriage was quite early in the 17th and 18th centuries and family forms were not the same as in North-Western Europe. In the other European areas (but he also analysed India and China), i.e. in Eastern Europe, marriage was earlier, newly married couples generally lived in a household headed by an older couple, joint families were common and could split into smaller units, while servants generally made up fewer than 2% of the popula-

4 HAJNAL, John: "European marriage patterns in perspective", in GLASS, David V. and EVERSLEY, D. E. C. (eds.): *Population in History*, London, Edward Arnold, 1965, pp. 101-135.

5 LASLETT, Peter: "Size and Structure of the Household in England over Three Centuries", *Population Studies*, XXIII, 1969, pp. 219.

6 LASLETT, Peter: *The World We Have Lost*, London, Methuen, 1971 (1965[1]), pp. 15-16.

7 LASLETT, Peter: "Characteristics of the Western Family Considered Over Time", *Journal of Family History*, II, 1977, pp. 89-115 (see in part. p. 104 and p. 110; references in the next notes refer to this version); other version in LASLETT, Peter: *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 12-49.

tion[8]. Service was thus at the very core of Hajnal's theory, that considered nuptiality rather than mortality as the most important factor in maintaining a balance between population growth and resources.

In the same period Laslett, partially revising some of his previous idea on family forms in Europe, suggested a four-part classification of European marriage patterns and family forms which involved servants too. He suggested that Europe could be divided into four areas, Western, Central, Mediterranean and Eastern. According to this scheme, moving from West to East and from North to South neolocality and nuclearity became rarer, age at marriage lowered (particularly for women) and the presence of life-cycle servants became less common. According to this classification, unmarried life-cycle servants were very common in Northern and Western Europe (in the areas Laslett defined as West and West/Central or Middle), not uncommon in Southern Europe, irrelevant in Eastern Europe; married servants (as well as servants who were kin of their masters) were common, according to Laslett, only in West/Central or Middle Europe[9].

In summary, both Laslett and Hajnal considered the circulation of young, unmarried servants as a crucial feature of West-European families. It was a feature that had far-reaching implications for the whole of society: because of pre-marital service people accumulated resources to establish their own independent (i.e. neolocal) families, married late and gave birth late, thus allowing the existence of a society with relatively low fertility (and mortality) rates and a relatively good balance between population and resources. Furthermore, service influenced the socialisation of children as well as family ties, since many children grew up in households where there were servants and many young people left their parents quite early to join a different household as servants. As for economy and politics, because of service farmers could adapt the workforce according to the need of their farms, and "the form of subordination, political and economic, as well as personal, was overtly familial"[10].

Laslett's and Hajnal's writings prompted enormous amounts of further research. Laslett and (maybe even more) Hajnal were conscious that the servants they focused on –young, unmarried, live-in, mainly rural ones– were a particular kind of servants[11]. Yet Laslett himself and other authors have not always distinguished be-

8 HAJNAL, John: "Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation systems", in WALL, Richard (ed.) in collaboration with ROBIN, Joan and LASLETT, Peter: *Family Forms in Historic Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 96-97.

9 LASLETT, Peter: "Family and household as work and kin group: areas of traditional Europe compared", in WALL, ROBIN and LASLETT (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 513-563.

10 LASLETT: "Characteristics of the Western Family", pp. 110-111.

11 Ibidem, pp. 102-105; LASLETT: "Family and household as work and kin group", section 4; HAJNAL: "Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation systems", p. 97.

tween different types of servants or have dealt with life-cycle servants as if they were the only servant type[12]. In particular, several scholars have dealt with urban domestic service as if the "institution of service" were also urban, while, at least in Hajnal's view, it was typically rural: "Purely domestic servants (often especially numerous in cities) or household heads whose occupation is 'servant' [were] clearly different from North-West European rural servants", he wrote[13]. So, while on the one hand research has made enormous progress, on the other hand data is not always comparable. This is also due to the fact that, in addition to data collected by family historians influenced by Hajnal and Laslett, there is also research conducted by social, economic, gender historians (more) interested in other types of servants (for instance urban domestic servants) and/or in other aspects of servants' history[14].

2. Service in North-Western Europe

So let me analyse the results of recent research on different European areas. As for service in North-Western Europe, Elizabeth Ewan argues for instance that domestic service in early modern Scotland fitted the North-Western European pattern, according to which "most young people undertook a period of service or apprenticeship from their early or mid-teens to their early or mid-twenties". In other words, life-cycle service "provided the underpinning for the north-western marriage pattern of relatively late female marriage age, companionate marriage and the establishment of new nuclear families"[15]. Sheila McIsaac-Cooper confirms that in early modern England, too, a high percentage of the young (possibly three-fifths) circulated among families, often from the same social strata as theirs, before marrying. The large majority of servants were life-cycle servants: only a few were lifetime ones (i.e. people who stayed in service all their lives or entered service in their adulthood and who sometimes were married or widowed). Many girls also served as live-ins before marrying in the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th (at that point domestic service was almost

12 As for LASLETT, Peter, see in particular the article "Servi e servizio nella struttura sociale europea", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, no. 68, pp. 345-354.

13 HAJNAL:"Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation systems", p. 97.

14 SARTI, Raffaella: "Who are Servants? Defining Domestic Service in Western Europe (16th-21st Centuries)", in PASLEAU, Suzy and SCHOPP, Isabelle (eds), with SARTI, Raffaella: *Proceedings of the Servant Project*, Liège, Éditions de l'Université de Liège, 2005 (but 2006), 5 vols., vol. II, pp. 3-59 (in the next notes: *PSP*).

15 EWAN, Elizabeth: "Mistresses of Themselves? Female Domestic Servants and By-Employments in Sixteenth-Century Scottish Towns", in *PSP*, vol. IV, also published in FAUVE-CHAMOUX, Antionette (ed.): *Domestic service and the formation of European Identity. Understanding the globalization of domestic work*, Bern-Berlin, Peter Lang, 2004 (but 2005, in the next notes AFC), p. 415.

completely feminised). Yet domestic service was no longer an occupation for people from any social class; "service was increasingly left to working-class youngsters"; "traditional" service survived into the early 20th century only in Northern England[16].

As for the Scandinavian countries, according to Beatrice Moring "servanthood was for a large part of the population, in 17th and 18th century Sweden and Finland, a life-cycle phenomenon. Even though there were individuals who spent their lives in the service of other people, the majority of servants were between 15 and 30 years of age"[17]. Similarly, as Sølvi Sogner writes, in Norway, in 1801, 74% of rural female servants (and 70% of the urban ones) were less than 30[18]. But let us go back to Sweden. The system of life-cycle service was still "well established in Sweden in the nineteenth century", as shown by Christer Lundh[19]. During the 19th century the number of servants declined: in 1800 live-in servants mad up 15% of the rural population, in 1900 only 5%. This change was due to several factors: the increasing production of cereals, which requires an irregular amount of labour over the year and made hiring servants on a yearly basis a less rational choice; the shift towards production (both of cereals and dairy products) on a larger scale with a clearer division of labour; the demographic growth that caused a diminishing average size of the farms and a wide proletarianisation of the labour force. In this context, unmarried live-in

16 MCISAAC-COOPER, Sheila: "Comparisons between Early-Modern and Modern English Domestic Servants", in *PSP*, vol. IV; EAD., "From Family Member to Employee: Aspects of Continuity and Discontinuity in English Domestic Service, 1600-2000", in AFC, pp. 277-296 (quotation at p. 287); EAD., "The Transition from Life-Cycle Service in England, 18th-19th Centuries", in *PSP*, vol. II; EAD., "Service to servitude? The decline and demise of life-cycle service in England", *The History of the Family*, X, 2005-4, pp. 367-386. As for the decline of servants in general see SCHWARZ, Loenard: "The Declining Number of Servants in England, 1650-1900", in *PSP*, vol. V; ID., "English servants and their employers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries", *Economic History Review*, LII, 1999, pp. 236-256. Lifetime servants were mainly represented by butlers, stewards and housekeepers. Additionally, there were washerwomen and charwomen who did not live with the families they served; charwomen were often adult or aged women; they were already stigmatised in early modern times (differently from other domestics) and seldom had regular employment. They were a particularly ill defined group, because many women could perform these duties on an occasional basis. On the decline of rural service see KUSSMAUL, Ann: *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 120-134; HINDE, Andrew: "L'influenza del servizio rurale e domestico sulla demografia inglese, 1850-1914", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, no. 68, pp. 541-571; GOOSE, Nigel: "Farm service in southern England in the mid-nineteenth century", *Local Population Studies*, 2004, nº 72, pp. 77-82.

17 MORING, Beatrice: "Servanthood, Marriage and Female Destinies in an Urban Environment", in *PSP*, vol. IV, and also published with the title "Migration, Servanthood and Assimiliation in a New Environment", in AFC, p. 43.

18 SOGNER, Sølvi: "Domestic Service in Norway: The Long View", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX, A. and FIALOVÁ, L. (eds.): *Le phénomène de la domesticité en Europe, XVIe-XXe siècles*, Praha, Ceská Demografická Sociologický Ústav av CR, 1997 (*Acta Demographica*, XIII, special issue), pp. 95-105.

19 LUNDH, Christer: "Life-cycle Servants in Nineteenth Century Sweden: Norms and Practices", in *PSP*, vol. III, and also published in AFC, p. 71.

servants (often represented by people from the same social as their masters, who served until they were able to get a farm and to marry) were increasingly replaced by a new type of servants, the so-called *statare* who, though hired on a yearly basis like traditional live-ins, were married and formed separate households. Indeed, many agricultural workers, not having any chance to inherit, buy or get a farm, married earlier than traditional live-in servants used to. Moreover, servants increasingly came from landless families and were increasingly feminised[20]. On the contrary, in Iceland, where – because of specific political choices – marriage was possible only for those people who had a farm, population growth often implied longer periods in service as unmarried live-ins or even the shift from life-cycle to lifetime service. Significantly, servants made up 23% of the total population in 1801, and even 26.7% in 1880[21]. As for urban domestic service, even in the late 19th century, as shown by Lotta Vikström in her paper on Sundsvall, a Swedish sawmill town, "few women stayed (...) a lifetime in this profession. Basically, it was a pre-marital experience where the young women achieved some domestic skill, built on their dowry, and maybe learned a few favorable things" from the family they served. In other words, "domestic service was a life-cycle phenomenon"[22].

Richard Paping, in his research on "the relatively capitalistic clay soil area of Groningen", in the Netherlands, concludes that life-cycle service, previously quite common, almost completely disappeared after the First World War. Servants, who between the 1830s and the early 1860s possibly made up 9-11% of the total population, decreased steadily from the early 1860s and in 1909 were only 2%. The breakdown of the traditional system was due to changing strategies by the supplying families, who – thanks to rising real wages and in spite of the fact that until the 1900s servant wages rose too – increasingly kept their children in their early teens at home to enjoy family life and ensure they had more freedom and, possibly, better chances for their future[23]. However, many Dutch rural women did not stop entering service,

20 LUNDH, Christer: "The social mobility of servants in rural Sweden, 1740-1837", *Continuity and Change*, XIV, 1999, p. 61y 72; ID., "Criados agrícolas en la Suecia del XIX. El caso de Escania", *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, nº 35, pp. 93-114. However, as early as 1800 8.4% of servants (both live-in and *statare*) were married (*ibid.*, p. 106).

21 GUTTORMSSON, Loftur: "Il servizio come istituzione sociale in Islanda e nei paesi nordici", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, nº 68, pp. 367-369.

22 VIKSTRÖM, Marie-Christine (Lotta): "Female Domestic Servants in Sundsvall. A Swedish Sawmill Town, during Industrialization", in AFC, p. 102; also published in as slightly different version as "Quantitative and Qualitative Aspects on Female Domestic Servants in Sundsvall: a Swedish Sawmill Town, during Industrialization", in *SPS*, vol. I.

23 PAPING, Richard: "Oferta y demanda de criados rurales en Holanda, 1760-1920. El caso de Groningen", *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, nº 35, pp. 115-142. The conclusions of the study by H. BRAS and J. KOK on Central and Western Netherlands were similar. "In the twentieth century (...) daughters and

as shown by recent research by Hilde Bras. Yet they experienced a change from "regional farm to urban domestic service", enjoying "increasing alternatives for out-migration within a centuries-old framework of life-cycle service"[24].

In summary, research on North-Western Europe confirms the importance of (rural) life-cycle service in early modern times, its role in delaying marriage as well as its proletarianisation and demise in the 19th century-early 20th century[25], a period during which in many areas urban domestic service, often also on a life-cycle basis, became an increasingly common experience for rural-born women.

3. Service in Eastern Europe

But what about the European East/West divide? Tracy Dennison has shown that it is simply false to say that "servants were virtually an unknown class of person in Russian serf villages"[26]. Indeed, "domestic servants and live-in labourers were present in serf households" of the village of Voshchazhnikovo she studied. However, "it does not seem, on the basis of available data, that service was the same sort of lifecycle phenomenon in Voshchazhnikovo that it was in England/northwestern Europe. The servants at Voshchazhnikovo were usually from the poorer stratum of society, largely male, and often married. Female servants were usually middle-aged widows or spinsters"[27].

Poland is an area "cut" by the Hajnal line. As a consequence, we would expect few servants, at least to the East of the line. In fact, servants turned out to be quite numerous both in rural and urban areas; additionally in small towns and rural areas servants were mainly young unmarried people who served before marrying. Only in the big cities of Krakow and Warsaw were lifetime servants numerous, generally

sons as well, left the parental home later and often did not even leave for work before marriage (...) family needs and demographic circumstances determined to a large extent the fate of adolescent children, but over the course of the twentieth century, the children's own skills and aspirations became more important in the decision to stay or to leave", see BRAS, Hilde and KOK, Jan: "Naturally, Every Child Was Supposed to Work. Determinants of the Leaving Home Process in The Netherlands, 1850-1940", in VAN POPPEL, Frans, ORIS, Michel and LEE, James (eds.): *The Road to Independence. Leaving Home in Western Societies, 16th-20th centuries*, Bern-Berlin. Peter Lang, 2004, pp. 403-450.

24 BRAS, Hilde: "Social change, the institution of service and youth: the case of service in the lives of rural-born Dutch women, 1840-1940", *Continuity and Change*, XIX, 2004, p. 258.

25 In Norway, rural servants made up 83% of the servants women in 1801, 57% in 1920. Yet in later years the proportion of rural servants increased again, see SOGNER: "Domestic service in Norway", p. 97.

26 LASLETT, Peter: "Characteristics of the Western Family", p. 103.

27 DENNISON, Tracy: "Serfdom and Household Structure in Central Russia: Voshchazhnikovo, 1816-1858", *Continuity and Change*, XVIII, 2003, p. 403 y 426; EAD." "Servants and Labourers in a Serf Society. The Role of Service in Rural Russia, 1745-1825", in *PSP*, vol. IV.

more specialised than rural servants, often married or widowed and with children, as recently shown by Cezary Kuklo and Małgorzata Kamecka[28].

As for the case of Hungary, Tamás Faragó has shown that in the Western part of the territory of historical Hungary, the proportion of servants among the total population was "more than 6% in every county, at certain places it was around 10%, while in the south-eastern region (...) hardly ever existed hired servants on the farms". This data seems to confirm the validity of the Hajnal line, though pushing it a little towards the East. Yet "it is not quite clear to what extent the hired farmhands belonged to the 'life cycle servant category'". Besides, in Hungary high and low servant percentages in the total population were not always associated, respectively, with simple and joint families, nor with high and low age at marriage[29].

Possibly, as suggested by Karl Kaser, there was a transitional zone, which included Hungary, Poland, and the Baltic, where features more typical of both the West and the East were to be found[30].

4. Service in Central Europe

According to Kaser, the presence of mixed features in the transition zone was mainly due to the influence of German colonisation of Eastern Europe, which also implied the introduction of the German *Hufenverfassung.* According to this law, the farm (*Hufe*, *Hof* in modern German) could not be divided and had to be passed onto one heir (*Anerbenrecht)*. As a consequence, siblings who were excluded from farm succession had to work as servants (sometimes even in the family of their brother

28 KUKLO, Cezary and KAMECKA, Małgorzata : "Être servant dans une famille urbaine polonaise aux XVI^{e}-XX^{e} siècles. Évolution du statut social et matériel des domestiques", *Obradoiro de Historia Moderna*, XI, 2002, pp. 119-132 (also published in a different version in PSP, vol I., with the title "Être domestique au sein d'une famille urbaine polonaise durant les XVI^{e}-XX^{e} siècles. Évolution du statut social et matériel des domestiques"). See also KAMECKA, Małgorzata. : "La domesticité dans le contexte socio-économique de la Pologne", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 41-49; KUKLO, Cezary: "La domesticité en Pologne à la fin du XVIII^{e} siècle, premiers résultats des recherches", Ibidem, pp. 51-56 ; ID., "Le modèle du *life-cycle servant* a-t-il existé dans la Pologne préindustrielle?", in BARDET, Jean-Pierre, LUC, Jean-Noël, ROBIN-ROMERO, Isabelle, ROLLET, Catherine (eds.): *Lorsque l'enfant grandit. Entre dépendance et autonomie*, Paris, Presses de l'Université Paris Sorbonne, 2003, pp. 717-732.

29 FARAGÓ, Tamás: "Different Household Formation Systems in Hungary at the End of the eighteenth Century: Variations on John Hajnal's Thesis", *Historical Social Research*, XXIII, 1998, p. 99; ID., "Servants and Farmhands in Historic Hungary before the First World War, in the Mirror of Figures", in *PSP* , vol. II.

30 KASER, Karl: "Serfdom in Eastern Europe", in KERTZER. and BARBAGLI (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 56-57. Kaser also noted that in some transition zones West of the line, i.e. Estonia and Kurland, there were few complex families but married servants were common.

who inherited the *Hof*[31]) until they had the means to marry and support their own family. Otherwise, they might stay single and in service their entire life[32].

Two different case studies are useful to illustrate the common features of this system and the different outcomes it could have. In the German parish (*Kirchspiel*) of Belm, near to Osnabrück, farms (*Höfe*) could not be divided and were passed onto one heir, generally the youngest son; the other siblings got only compensation. Besides farmers (*Bauern*) who had a farm there were landless people who generally leased a little house and some land from the farmers, paying them partly in cash and partly by working for them (they were called *Heuerlinge*). In addition to agriculture, people were engaged in proto-industrial activities. Between the 17th and the 19th centuries, servants consistently represented around 12% of the total population of the *Kirchspiel*, even though the population grew significantly. Married and widowed servants were non-existent. Servants were not, indeed, allowed to marry. However, there were almost no lifetime servants: in 1858 around 83% of both male servants and female servants were between 15 and 29. Furthermore, around 60% of them were not baptised in Belm[33].

In the Tyrolean village of Innichen, too, farms had to be passed undivided onto one heir, generally the first-born son, in this case; additionally, here, too, there were marriage restrictions for the poor. Yet in this case people, to be allowed to marry, had to possess a farm or a house. Since in the 19th century the village experienced a process of "re-ruralisation", the chances of getting a living outside agriculture diminished. Finally, local authorities had a very severe anti-immigration policy. As a result, there was a great stability of population over the century. The "price" paid to get this stability was an increasingly later age at marriage and growing celibacy rates. Around 1880, the mean age at marriage was 34 for males and 31 for females, while, in the district, around 50% of people aged 41-50 and 51-60 were single. Many of these single people were servants who were likely to stay in service all their life[34].

In other words, because of different policies and economic context, the role of domestic service in the two villages was different, even though in both cases (as in

31 MITTERAUER, Michael: "I servi nelle Alpi", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, nº. 68, pp. 437-467; LANZINGER, Margareth: "Una società di nubili e celibi? Indagine su una vallata tirolese nell'Ottocento", in LANZINGER, Margareth and SARTI, Raffaella (eds.): *Nubili e celibi tra scelta e costrizione*, Udine, Forum, 2007, forthcoming.

32 KASER: "Serfdom in Eastern Europe", pp. 54-57. See also SARTI: *Europe at Home*, pp. 52-55.

33 SCHLUMBOHM, Jürgen: "Gesindedienst als Lebensphase und als Klassenphenomen: Mägde und Knechte in einem ländlichen Kirchspiel Nordwestdeutschlands. 1650-1860", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.): Op. Cit., pp. 23-39.

34 LANZINGER: "Una società di nubili e celibi?", EAD., *Das gesicherte Erbe. Heirat in lokalen und familialen Kontexten, Innichen 1700-1900*, Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau, 2003.

many others in the German area) there was a similar system of farm transmission and no freedom to marry. Servant exclusion from marriage did not necessarily lead to a very high age at marriage and to a high proportion of people who never married, but it might contribute to this outcome. In any case, in Eastern Europe there was no prohibition of this kind. As far as I know, there was not one in Southern Europe either.

5. The (Missing) Relationship between Service, Marriage and Family Forms

According to Kaser, alongside the Hajnal line there was a transitional zone, where features typical of both the West and the East were to be found together. This is a fascinating hypothesis. Yet if we consider the whole of Europe, we discover that there was no necessary link between the spread of life-cycle service, late marriage, high celibacy rates and simple families on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the scarcity of life-cycle servants, early and universal marriage and joint families[35]. Actually, in 1977 Laslett wrote that his hypothesis, in fact, was "inclusive and weak, rather than exclusive and strong, maintaining that the four features which together describe Western-ness in the familial group during the stage of primary socialization were interdependent to same degree but never entirely so"[36]. Later interpretations were sometimes more schematic.

However, what matters is that in many European areas there was almost no connection between the aforementioned variables. In fact, the Hajnal line has a certain validity in distinguishing areas with different marriage patterns (though with important exceptions represented by part of the Baltic area, Ireland and the South of the Iberian Peninsula, where age at marriage was low even though these regions are to the West of the line). On the contrary, the efforts to find a strict link between marriage and family patterns have proved far less successful. Indeed East of the imaginary line between Trieste and St Petersburg people actually married quite young and life-cycle service really was rare, as far as we know, but there were also regions where nuclear families were common and/or males became head of their families when they married, i.e. parts of Greece, Hungary and ancient Lithuania, Romania and Bulgar-

35 In addition to the texts on the Mediterranean family quoted in note 39, see FARAGÓ: "Different Household", p. 100; SARTI, Raffaella: "La servitù domestica come problema storiografico", *Storia e problemi contemporanei*, X, 1997, p. 180; EAD., *Europe at Home*, p. 51.

36 LASLETT: "Characteristics of the Western Family", pp. 90-91.

ia[37]. Besides, there are some problems in relation to North-Western Europe as well[38]. However, from this point of view, the Mediterranean case is particularly important.

6. The Mediterranean

In his 1965 article, Hajnal quoted data on Italy as a whole, including it in Western Europe. Yet since the Italian peninsula lies from North/West to South/East, most of Central and Southern Italy would be Eastern of the Hajnal line, if one were to extend it after Trieste. However, in the 1983 paper in which he linked marriage patterns and family forms, Hajnal noted that some scattered data on Italy did not confirm the presence of a Western-European pattern. In the same year, Laslett used Italian data to suggest that in the Mediterranean region permanent celibacy was the case only for a few people; women (not men) married early, and joint families were very common[39].

In fact, in Southern Italy the female age at marriage was really low, but the new couples generally followed the neolocal rule, and families were mainly simple. In Central Italy, on the contrary, joint families were quite common but age at marriage

37 KASER, Karl: "The stem family in eastern Europe: Cross cultural and trans-temporal perspectives", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX, Antoinette and OCHIAI, Emiko (eds.): *House and the stem family in Eurasian perspective/Maison et famille-souche: perspectives eurasiennes, Proceedings of the C18 Session, Twelfth International Economic History Congress*, Eurasian Project on Population and Family History. International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto, 1998, pp. 168-192; KASER: "Serfdom in Eastern Europe", pp. 24-62; WALL, Richard: "The Transformation of the European Family Across the Centuries"; TODOROVA, Maria: "On the Epistemological Value of Family Models: The Balkans within the European Pattern"; PLAKANS, Andrejs and WETHERELL, Charles: "The Search for Place: East European Family History 1800-2000"; CERMAN, Markus: "Central Europe and the 'European Marriage Pattern': Marriage Patterns and Family Structure in Central Europe, Sixteenth through Nineteenth Centuries", all in WALL, Richard, HAREVEN, Tamara K. and EHMER, Josef (eds., with the assistance of CERMAN, Markus): *Family history revisited: comparative perspectives*, Newark, University of Delaware Press-London, Associated University Presses, 2001 (ed. or. *Historische Familienforschung: Ergebnisse und Kontroversen*, Frankfurt-New York, Campus Verlag, 1997); FARAGÓ, "Different Household Formation Systems"; ID., "Servants and Farmhands".

38 Research on Iceland has revealed a high presence of lifetime servants, see GUTTORMSSON: Op. cit; according to Martine SEGALEN: "French families did not as a rule place their children elsewhere as servants", see SEGALEN, Martine: "Life-course Patterns and Peasant Culture in France: A Critical Assessment", *Journal of Family History*, XII, 1987, pp. 213-224. Obviously also within France there were differences, see FAUVE-CHAMOUX, Antoinette: "Patterns of Leaving the House in 19th Century Stem-Family Society", in VAN POPPEL, ORIS and LEE (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 199-219. Moreover, as far as family forms, in some parts of England joint family households were not rare. Some parts of Iceland and Sweden, too, have been shown to be not "North-Western" as for family forms, while in Ireland age at marriage was quite low and possibly complex families quite common, WALL, Richard: "The transformation of the European family across the centuries", in WALL, HAREVEN, and EHMER, J. (eds., with the assistance of CERMAN): Op. cit., pp. 217-241; BARBAGLI, Marzio and KERTZER, David I.: "Introduction", in KERTZER and BARBAGLI, (eds.): Op. cit., pp. IX-XXXII.

39 HAJNAL: "European marriage patterns in perspective"; HAJNAL: "Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation systems"; LASLETT: "Family and household".

and the celibacy rate were high (or became high during early modern times)[40]. But what about domestic service? In rural Italy, servants were rare in the South. In a sample of 45 early modern Southern Italian villages, there were only 2.4% of families (out of a total of 43.623) with live-in servants. In certain areas within Southern Italy the percentage was even lower: from a sample of 12.354 families of 17th century Apulia, only 171, i.e. 1.4%, employed servants[41]. Contrastingly, in the countryside of Pisa, in Central Italy, between 29 and 44% of families employed servants in the 17th and 18th centuries[42]. In other words, even though, in the Italian case, there was no association between marriage pattern and family form, there was some association between the incidence of servants and age at marriage: where servants were more common, age at marriage was higher and *vice versa*. Yet we have to make clear that this data refers to live-in servants: in rural Italy live-out servants were rare, as far as we know[43], but live-out servants, often married, were common in the Italian cities[44] or in certain rural areas of another Mediterranean country such as Spain[45].

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40 BENIGNO, Francesco: "Famiglia mediterranea e modelli anglosassoni", *Meridiana*, VI, 1989, pp. 29-61; BARBAGLI, Marzio: "Sistemi di formazione della famiglia in Italia", in *Societá italiana di Demografía storica*, *Popolazione, società, ambiente. Temi di demografia storica italiana* (*secc. XVII-XIX*). Bologna, Clueb, 1990, pp. 3-43 and in BARBAGLI, Marzio: *Sotto lo stesso tetto. Mutamenti della famiglia in Italia dal XV al XX secolo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996 (1984[1]: but in the first edition this part was not still there), pp. 483-526; DA MOLIN, Giovanna: "Family Forms and Domestic Service in Southern Italy from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth century", *Journal of Family History*, XV, 1990, pp. 503-527; ARRU, Angiolina: "The Distinguishing Features of Domestic Service in Italy", Ibidem, pp. 547-566; KERTZER, David I.: "Household History and Sociological Theory", *Annual Review of Sociology*, XVII, 1991, pp. 160-162; VIAZZO, Pier Paolo: "What's so special about the Mediterranean?", *Continuity and Change*, XVIII, 2003, pp. 111-137; SARTI R.: "Nubili e celibi tra scelta e costrizione. I percorsi di Clio", in LANZINGER and SARTI (eds.): Op. cit.

41 DA MOLIN: "Family Forms and Domestic Service", p. 513; EAD., *Famiglia e matrimonio nell'Italia del Seicento*, Bari, Cacucci, 2002, p. 194.

42 DOVERI, Andrea: "'Padre che ha figliuoli grandi fuor li mandi'. Una prima valutazione sulla diffusione e sul ruolo dei 'garzoni' nelle campagne pisane dei secoli XVII e XVIII", in *Società italiana di Demografia Storica*, *La popolazione delle campagne italiane in età moderna*, Bologna, Clueb, 1993, pp. 427-449.

43 See previous note.

44 For instance ARRU, Angiolina.: "The Distinguishing Features of Domestic Service in Italy"; EAD., *Il servo. Storia di una carriera nel Settecento,* Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995; CASALINI, Maria: *Servitù, nobili e borghesi nella Firenze dell'Ottocento,* Firenze, Olschki, 1997, in part. p. 169; SARTI, Raffaella: "The True Servant. Self-definition of Male Domestics in an Italian City (Bologna, 17th-19th Centuries)", *The History of the Family*, X, 2005, pp. 407-433; etc. Dennis Romano found live-out servants (both men and women) even in Renaissance Venice, see ROMANO, Dennis: *Housecraft and Statecraft. Domestic service in Renaissance Venice, 1400-1600*, Baltimore-London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 117, 138, 145, 148.

45 GARCÍA GONZALEZ, Francisco: "Labradores, jornaleros y sirvientes en la Sierra. Organización doméstica y ciclo de vida (Alcaraz, 1753-1787)", in GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, Francisco (ed.): *Tierra y familia en la España meridional, siglos XIII-XIX. Formas de organización doméstica y reproducción social*, Murcia, Universidad de Murcia, 1998, pp. 152-192; ID., *Las estrategias de la diferencia. Familia*

However, both in Southern Italy and in Southern and Central Spain rural life-cycle service was almost non-existent[46] (actually, as shown by Isidro Dubert, life-cycle service was non-existent even in Galicia, which is not a Mediterranean but Atlantic region of Spain, with peculiar features[47]). According to Violetta Hionidou, "farm servants were virtually absent" in Greece too[48]. As far as we can see, the reasons for this varied: the organisation of land property and agricultural work, that, in many areas of these Mediterranean macro-regions, was characterised by a relatively high presence of day-labourers; the prevalence of the dowry system that made families responsible for providing daughters with a dowry and discouraged female work before marriage[49]; relatively women's early age at marriage of women; and cultural values about honour.

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y reproducción social en la Sierra (Alcaraz, siglo XVIII), Madrid, Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, pp. 217-222; ID., "Los sirvientes de los agregados domésticos de la Castilla rural a mediados del siglo XVIII", Paper presented at the *XIII*th *International Congress of Economic History*, Buenos Aires, 22-27 July 2002 (I am grateful to the author for allowing me to refer to this paper).

46 In addition to the essays quoted in the previous note see REHER, David S.: "Family Ties in Western Europe: Persistent Contrasts", *Population and Development Review*, XXIV, 1998, pp. 203-235. On the contrary, life-cycle service was quite common in some areas of Catalonia, see ROCA FABREGAT, Pere: "¿Quién trabajaba en las masías? Criados y criadas en la agricultura catalana (1670-1870)", *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, nº 35, pp. 49-92. As for Southern Italy, it was common only in Sardinia, where there was a family formation system quite similar to the North-Western one, even though, according to Gian Giacomo Ortu, over time there was a shift from life-cycle servants to lifetime servants mainly due to the development of capitalistic or proto-capitalistic forms of agrarian enterprise, see BARBAGLI: "Sistemi di formazione"; ORTU, Gian Giacomo, "Zerakkus e zerakkas sardi", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, nº 68, pp. 413-435 (p. 433); OPPO, Aanna: "Where There's No Woman There's No Home": Profile of the Agro-Pastoral Family in Nineteenth-century Sardinia", *Journal of Family History*, XV, 1990, pp. 483-502; MISCALI, Monica: "Servir au féminin, servir au masculin"; MISCALI, M.: "Los criados y la tierra en la Cerdeña del siglo XIX", *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, nº 35, pp. 27-48.

47 In Galicia, servants were more numerous in inland rural areas. In this region, there was an archaic agricultural system which concentrated many people on a single farm. This led to the formation of stem families through a non-egalitarian inheritance system which favoured the eldest child. As a consequence, there was a large number of single men and women who had almost no chance of getting a farm and starting their own family. They mainly worked as servants without marrying, as was the case in other areas of North-Western Spain. See DUBERT, Isidro: *Historia de la familia en Galicia durante la época moderna 1550-1830*, A Coruña, Edicións do Castro, 1992, pp. 73-83; ID., "Le service domestique en Espagne et en Galice rurale", in *PSP*, vol. I; ID., "The Domestic Service of Rural Galicia, 1752-1787: Labour Markets, Gender and Social Structure", in *PSP*, vol. IV; ID., "Agricultural Work, Social Structure and Labour Markets of the Rural Domestic Service in Galicia in the mid-18th Century", in *PSP*, vol. V in AFC, pp. 235-246.

48 HANTZAROULA, Pothiti: "The Status of Servant's Labour in State Policy, Greece 1870-1960", in *PSP*, vol. II; EAD.: *The Making of Subordination: Domestic Servants in Greece, 1920-1945*, PhD thesis, Florence, European University Institute, November 2002, pp. 72-73. I am grateful to the author for allowing me to read her still unpublished thesis; HIONIDOU, Violetta: "Domestic Service in three Greek Islands in the late 19th and early 20th centuries", *The History of the Family*, X, 2005, p. 486. I am grateful to Violetta Hionidou for allowing me to read this article before it was published.

49 SARTI: *Europe at Home*, pp. 62-66.

7. Domestic Service and Honour

In an article published some years ago, the Italian scholar Giovanna Da Molin states that in Southern Italian society, between 17th-19th centuries "to go into service was considered to be humiliating and a disgrace; in some cases it was almost better to starve (...) The southern male, and in particular the head of the household, protected the honor of his women (...) An 'honored' daughter (...) only left her family and home after marriage (...) it was not the custom (...) for young women to go out to work to earn the money necessary to form a new family (...) it was up to the male to save for marriage, while the woman's contribution, at the most, was to provide a dowry". As a consequence, servants were almost always low-class, marginalised women with no family (farm servants were almost absent, and domestic servants were mainly women, except in the families at the top of the social ladder and in very big cities such a Naples). Most servants, according to Da Molin, were orphaned or abandoned children with no alternative, dishonoured women and widows with no family. All these women, when entering service, further exposed their honour, since servants risked being sexually abused. It was quite common for them to bear illegitimate children who, however, in some cases lived with their mother in the master's house (servant mobility was quite low). Women servants had few chances to marry. For them service was often a lifetime occupation[50]. The sad end of the short poem in Neapolitan entitled *La Vaiasseide*, by Giulio Cesare Cortese (1612), can be interpreted as a literary transposition of this reality. The poem, indeed, tells the story of a group of female servants (*vaiasse*) who refuse their fate and flee from their masters because they want to marry. They take this decision after the mother of one of them convinces the master to allow her daughter (who is already 40) to get married. Yet most of the rebellious servants eventually become prostitutes, and die because of the *mal francese* (syphilis): a severe lesson for too "ambitious" maids[51].

However, according to Da Molin, families avoided sending into service not just their daughters but also their sons: male children started working very early but in the evening they went back home because they were under their father's responsibility until they married and created a new household. They would go back home even if they were apprentices[52].

50 DA MOLIN: "Family Forms and Domestic Service", pp. 521-522.

51 RAK, Michele: *Napoli gentile. La letteratura in "lingua napoletana" nella cultura barocca (1596-1632)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 259-269.

52 DA MOLIN: *Famiglia e matrimonio nell'Italia del Seicento*, p. 198.

Interestingly, according to Gian Giacomo Ortu and Monica Miscali, domestic service was looked at with suspicion as a source of possible dishonour even in Sardinia, where, in fact, it was common to serve, often on a life-cycle basis[53]. Families, as far as possible, avoided sending their children into service, and only extreme hardship (not rare, indeed, in such a poor island as Sardinia) convinced them to choose this painful solution; in other words, servants generally came from the poorest strata of Sardinian society. This might be one of the reasons why masters and servants were often kin. In fact, when this was the case, expectations were greater on both sides: servants expected a particular protection and legitimisation; masters uninterrupted service and assistance (even in case of illness or in their old age)[54].

In *Centuries of Childhood*, Ariès wrote that in the Middle Ages service was no degrading activity; Hajnal stressed that servants in pre-industrial North-Western Europe were not necessarily socially inferior to their masters while Laslett argued that they came from any social stratum (though thinking that it was probably impossible to be at the same time a servant and a gentleman)[55]. Clearly, the situation in Southern Italy in the 17th-19th centuries as described by Da Molin, and in Sardinia as described by Ortu and Miscali was very different. However, from the 18th-19th centuries service in North-Western Europe was increasingly performed by lower class people[56]. Thus it became quite a stigmatised and stigmatising activity in North-Western Europe, too[57]. However, it might have remained more problematic in Mediterranean Europe, particularly because of the emphasis on female sexual honour.

Pothiti Hantzaroula has interpreted domestic service as a source of shame even in the experience of the Greek women working as servants in Athens between 1920 and 1945 she interviewed. Sexual harassment was construed "as a shameful experience which made women perceive it as their own failing"; however, they felt ashamed not only because of their sexual vulnerability but also (and mainly) because they belonged to an inferior class to their employer's[58]. According to Violetta Hionidou, domestic service might have been a less than honourable occupation in some part of

53 See above, note 45.

54 ORTU: "Zerakkus e zerakkas sardi", p. 422; MISCALI: "Servir au féminin, servir au masculin"; EAD., "Los criados y la tierra en la Cerdeña", p. 39.

55 ARIÈS: *L'enfant et la vie familiale*, Part III, Chapter II; HAJNAL: "Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation systems", pp. 96-97; LASLETT: "Servi e servizio", p. 349.

56 See above, section "Service in North-Western Europe" and below, section "The Road to Independence".

57 See for instance HORN, Pamela: *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant*, Dublin, Gill-New York, Macmillan & St Martin's Press, 1975, p. 24; SARTI: "Who are Servants?".

58 HANTZAROULA: "Shame in the Narratives of Domestic Servants in Greece, 1920-1945", p. 89.

Greece, but not everywhere[59]. However, it seems likely that domestic service was more stigmatised in Mediterranean than in Northern Europe, even though we also have to remember that in Southern Europe there probably were important regional differences (in Italy, for instance female extra-domestic work was more stigmatised in the South than in the North).

8. Urban Domestic Service in Southern and Northern Europe

In spite of the possibly greater stigmatisation, in Southern European cities, servants were *not* less numerous than in Northern or Central European ones; actually, they were possibly even more numerous, even though there obviously were important differences among different cases due to the specific features of each city. Additionally, available data, which was collected by many different people in different epochs, must be assessed with a great deal of caution, (it is possible to define servants in many different ways)[60]. However, from the available information, it emerges, for instance, that in a sample of early modern English cities, they made up between 7.7 and 13% of the total population, while in a sample of Italian cities they were between 5.3 and 16%[61]. As far as we know, servants were numerous in Polish cities too. As shown by Kuklo and Kamecka, in Poland valets, female servants, cooks and wet-nurses made up (without apprentices) 16.4% of the population above the age of 10 in Lublin in 1680; 17.7% of that of Krakow in 1699; 20.9% of that of Lvov in 1662; 26.2% of that of Poznań in 1590 and even 27.5% of that of the old Warsaw[62]. They were also quite numerous in a Russian city such as St. Petersburg, where, in 1804, they made up 14.9% of the total population, while in Belgrade, in 1733-34, they made up 10.3 percent[63]. Thus it seems that Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux suggested too narrow a range when she wrote that servants were more or less 10-12% of the total population of the pre-industrial European cities, but she was right in stressing that proportions of servants in the total population of different European cities were quite similar[64]. In summary, from the available data, it emerges that differences in the inci-

59 HIONIDOU: "Domestic Service in three Greek Islands", p. 487.

60 SARTI: "Who are Servants?".

61 These percentages are taken from a wide range of comparative data I am collecting and will analyse in detail in a future essay.

62 KUKLO and KAMECKA : "Être domestique au sein d'une famille urbaine polonaise".

63 ZELLER, Olivier: "Géographie sociale, statut du chef de feu et composition des domesticités dans les villes modernes françaises", paper presented at the *XIII^th International Congress of Economic History*, Buenos Aires, 22-27 July 2002. I am grateful to the author for allowing me to quote from this unpublished paper.

64 FAUVE-CHAMOUX : "Servants in Preindustrial Europe", p. 115; FAUVE-CHAMOUX, Antoinette : "État de la question. L'apport de l'historiographie internationale", *Sextant*, nº 15-16, 2001, p. 14.

dence of servants in the population among different European macro-areas (Northern and Southern, Eastern and Western Europe) were probably much bigger in the countryside than in urban centres. Yet it has to be stressed that in Southern Italy, where rural servants were almost non-existent, there were few servants even in a medium sized city such as Bari, the main city of Apulia, where in 1636 the 2.683 families registered in a census employed only 57 servants[65].

Even though in most European cities the percentage of servants in the total population was not too dissimilar, "qualitatively" speaking, servants were likely to be very different. Domestic servants in the late 19th-early 20th centuries were much more likely to be women than in previous times[66]. In spite of this, in several cases there was no progressive and linear trend towards feminisation over time, but rather an oscillating trend. In some cases, during the early modern period there was even a long-term masculinisation. This was the case, in some Italian cities, i.e. Florence and possibly Venice[67] and Bologna[68].

Although data is quite scattered and –in this case too– different criteria employed by different scholars may have important consequences when one tries to make comparisons among different places, it seems that Angiolina Arru was not too far from the truth when she wrote, some years ago, that "Italian cities had a higher percentage of male servants (...) than other European cities"[69]. (On the contrary, in those rural areas of Southern Italy where farm servants were rare or non-existent, the few servants who were to be found were mainly women[70]). Arru's statement, in fact, probably over-emphasises the contrast between Italian cities and those outside Italy. Until more or less the mid-18th century, quite high percentages of male servants were

65 DA MOLIN: *Famiglia e matrimonio nell'Italia del Seicento*, p. 194.

66 SARTI, Raffaella: "Notes on the feminisation of domestic service. Bologna as a case study (18th-19th centuries)", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 125-163 and SARTI: "Who are servants?" (section "Domestic Service: a Female Job?"), with further references.

67 BELOCH, Karl Julius: *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, Berlin, Gruyter, 1937-1961 (Ital. transl. Firenze, Le Lettere, 1994), p. 59. Nevertheless, Roger MOLS as early as 1955-1956 noted the increasing presence of male servants not only among domestics but also in relation to the total male population, a fact that was in contrast with the growing importance of women in the total population of Venice, see MOLS, Roger: *Introduction à la démographie historique des villes d'Europe du XIVe au XVIIIe siècle*, Gembloux, J. Duculot-Louvain, Bureaux du recueil, Publications universitaires de Louvain, 1954-1956, vol. II, p. 181, 221; vol. III, p. 129. Venetian data of 1563, 1586, 1593 and 1642 refers only to strictly domestic workers employed by nobles and burgher families, and does not included apprentices and shop-hands while data of 1761 includes them. So we can speculate whether the trend noted by Mols was a real trend or only the result of the inclusion of apprentices (mainly male) after in 1761.

68 SARTI: "Notes on the feminisation", pp. 126-134.

69 ARRU: "The Distinguishing Features of Domestic Service in Italy", p. 549; see also ARRU, Angiolina : "Un métier négociable dans la Rome des Papes : les domestiques aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.) : Op. cit., p. 110.

70 DA MOLIN: "Family Forms and Domestic Service in Southern Italy".

present elsewhere as well. In Paris, for instance, according to the 18th century demographer Louis Messance, in 1754 male *domestiques* were even more numerous than female (respectively 50.4 and 49.6 percent)[71]. Yet, after the mid-18th century, Italian cities in truth had a percentage of men, among domestics, generally higher than elsewhere. Yet according to the information provided by Carmen Sarasuá, in 1860 –i.e. at a time when in many European cities women represented (well) over three quarters of domestic servants– female servants only made up 59% of the domestic staff working in Madrid[72]. However, this was not the case in other Spanish cities such as the Galician ones, as shown by Isidro Dubert[73], while in Milan the percentage was similar to that found in Madrid (60% in 1861)[74].

We can speculate at the reason for the high incidence of men among servants in Italian cities. Since the Italian case became increasingly peculiar after the mid-18th century, one of the reasons possibly lies in the growing marginalisation of the Italian economy after the conquest of America in the 17th-18th centuries and in the late start of industrialisation in the Italian peninsula in the 19th century. The lack of alternatives possibly pushed not only women but also men into the domestic sector (in this view it is less surprising that between the 16th and the late 18th-early 19th centuries there was even, in some Italian cities, a certain re-masculinisation of domestic workers). Significantly, while comparing domestic service in the industrial town of Prato and in the "aristocratic" city of Florence in 1841, Maria Casalini found that in Prato domestic service was more feminised than in Florence[75]. The Italian "difference" grew smaller as late as the early 20th century, i.e. at a time when Italy was making up for its late start in economic development. However, the interpretative framework according to which economic development and modernisation always imply first a feminisation of domestic service and eventually its strong reduction or even its disappearance has proved to be incorrect[76].

Significantly, for many Italians, particularly for men, domestic service was no life-cycle experience but rather a real profession they were likely to perform at any

71 MESSANCE, Louis: *Recherches sur la population des généralités d'Auvergne, de Lyon, de Rouen et de quelques provinces et villes du Royaume*, Paris, Durand, 1766, p. 186.

72 SARASÚA, Carmen: *Criados, nodrizas y amos. El servicio doméstico en la formaciòn del mercado del trabajo madrileno, 1758-1868*, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1994, pp. 39-40.

73 DUBERT, Isidro: "Domestic service and social modernization in urban Galicia", *Continuity and Change*, XIV, 1999, pp. 207-226.

74 SARTI: "Notes on the feminisation", p. 160.

75 CASALINI, Maria: "Il 'modello aristocratico' e la città industriale. Tipologie di servizio domestico a confronto: Firenze e Prato nel secolo XIX", *Popolazione e Storia*, 2001, nº 1, pp. 47-69.

76 DUBERT, Isidro: "Domestic service and social modernization in urban Galicia"; ID., "Modernity without modernization: aspects of the historical evolution of domestic service in Spain and Galicia between the 18th and 20th centuries", *Gender and History*, XVIII, 2006, nº 2, pp. 199-210.

age in their lives[77]. Possibly, for men this became increasingly the case over time[78]. However, not only in Italy but also in Spain service as an occupation for the young was probably less common than in Central and Northern Europe[79]. In Southern European cities, indeed, in the 17th-19th centuries, servants older than 30 made up at least around a half (often much more, particularly among men) of the total, and only in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in some cases is there a higher incidence of young domestics. On the contrary, in Northern and Central European cities, servants in this age group were never more than 50% of the total. In other words, in Northern and Central cities servants were generally younger. Yet it is not clear whether this result is due to "real" differences or to the servant category employed by different authors (Arru does not include apprentices among servants, and neither do Casalini and I, while we all also include live-out servants)[80].

9. The Road to Independence

The "age at leaving home"[81] and the "road to independence"[82] followed by children (to use the titles of a well-known 1978 article by Richard Wall and of a recent book edited by Frans van Poppel, Michel Oris and James Lee) have given rise to a particular interest among scholars. This interest is not surprising: establishing how many children entered service in a different household, at which age, for how long, and whether entering service implied severing ties with one's parents or not, are all crucial elements to understand how children became independent, and thus to make the role of the parental family clear in the upbringing of its off-spring and, more generally, in the relationships between people from different generations. Obviously, one could argue that "the wider dissemination of service and apprenticeship in the

77 MITTERAUER, Michael: "Gesindedienst und Jugendphase im europäischen Vergleich", *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, XI, 1985, pp. 177-204; ARRU: "The Distinguishing Features of Domestic Service in Italy", p. 549.

78 BARBAGLI: *Sotto lo stesso tetto*, pp. 211-212.

79 ARRU: "The Distinguishing Features of Domestic Service in Italy", pp. 549-550; other data in the Italian slightly different version of the article ("Servi e serve: le particolarità del caso italiano", in BARBAGLI, Marzio and KERTZER, David I.: *Storia della famiglia italiana, 1750-1950*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1992, pp. 273-306) and in ARRU A.: "Un métier négociable dans la Rome des Papes", p. 111.

80 These percetages are taken from a wide range of comparative data I am collecting and will analyse in detail in a future essay.

81 WALL, Richard: "The Age at Leaving Home", *Journal of Family History*, III, 1978, pp. 181-202; ID., "Leaving home and the process of household formation in pre-industrial England", *Continuity and Change*, II, 1987, pp. 77-102; ID., "Leaving Home and Living Alone: An Historical Perspective", *Population Studies*, XLIII, 1989, pp. 369-389.

82 VAN POPPEL, Frans and ORIS, Michel: "Introduction", in VAN POPPEL, ORIS and LEE (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 1-29.

early modern period brought about the prolongation of the period of social infancy; that paternal power was exercised on servants and apprentices; and that on the whole generational relations were characterised by adult domination and the strict control on the young". In part this was the case. Yet, at the same time the "mobility of young men away from home had the potential of undermining the parental authority, and (...) the status of a servant as a hired worker placed him in a semi-independent position as well"[83]. Domestic servants might have enjoyed more freedom and independence than we would expect[84]. Referring to service in husbandry, Ann Kussmaul maintained that it "was a site for preparation for independence"[85].

Research on these issues has found that the age at leaving home was generally higher than the first studies had led us to believe. In both English towns and countryside, servants have been found to be prevalent especially in the 15-24 age range: according to Kussmaul, approximately 75% belonged to this age group[86]. As for the Scandinavian countries, according to Beatrice Moring, in 17th and 18th century Sweden and Finland, the majority of servants were between 15 and 30 years of age[87]. In the material from the Scanian parishes analysed by Christer Lundh, there were "only occasional records of servants younger than ages thirteen or fourteen"[88], while in Norway, according to Sølvi Sogner, at the beginning of the 19th century, 74% of rural female servants and 70% of the urban ones were younger than 30[89]. In the Central European cases analysed by Mitterauer, the largest proportion of servants belonged to the 15-29 age group (between 44 and 77%in his sample). According to the Austrian historian, this "degree of concentration" was "somewhat more apparent in the towns than in the rural communities"[90]. We have just seen that in the Italian cities and in the Southern-Italian countryside servants were generally (much) older. In the zone of Alcaraz, in Central Spain, studied by Francisco García González, in 1753 45.5% of servants were in the 15-24 age range but the very young (14 or less) were only 8.5 percent[91].

83 KRAUSMAN BEN-AMOS, Ilana: "Service and the coming of age in seventeenth-century England", *Continuity and Change*, III, 1988, p. 41.

84 EWAN: "Mistresses of Themselves?"; ARRIZABALAGA, Marie-Pierre: "Urban Migrants and Domesticity in the 19th Century: the Basque Case", in *PSP*, vol. IV. On this point see also SARTI, Raffaella: "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", in *PSP*, vol. V, pp. 195-284 (section 4.5. "Towards Independence").

85 KUSSMAUL: *Servants in Husbandry*, p. 73.

86 Ibidem, p. 173, note 3.

87 MORING: "Servanthood, Marriage and Female Destinies", p. 43 in AFC.

88 LUNDH, Christer: "Servant Migration in Sweden in the Early Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Family History*, XXIV, 1999, p. 65.

89 SOGNER: "Domestic service in Norway", p. 99.

90 MITTERAUER: "Servants and youth", p. 15.

91 GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, *Las estrategias de la diferencia*, p. 218.

However, there were also contexts, where servants under the age of 15 were common. In the city of Schwäbisch Hall analysed by Renate Dürr about half of the servants entered service under the age of 14 in the period 1661-1690[92]. Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux has found a high percentage of very young rural servants in some villages in the Pyrenees as well (in particular in Espèche, where 62% of all servants were younger than 15, in 1793), and has interpreted it as survival of a medieval pattern[93]. In other areas, too, quite young servants were to be found: in the village of Putignano, in the countryside of Pisa – where servants were quite numerous – 85% of them were under the age of 14 in the period 1718-1741!

In Putignano, as in Espèche, they were mainly employed as shepherds and swineherds. For many young people service was a life-cycle activity but most servants went back home before they were 20, i.e. several years before marrying[94]. I know the case of a man – F.S. – born in 1933 in a town about 30 km from Florence who entered service in a rural family at the age of 10 and only served for a short period. He stated that, at that time, for the peasant families of that area, employing a *garzone* was as normal as having a hound and that a large number of children entered service (even at younger ages than he did, and stayed for longer periods, occasionally until they married)[95]. Recent research on an Italian village of the Western Alps, Roaschia, shows that even though servants made up only a small percentage of the population, working for some years as servant shepherds (mainly between the ages of 15 and 19) was quite a common experience for the children of peasant families as late as 1951[96].

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92 DÜRR, Renate : "La servante en ville. Une analyse des parcours à Schwäbisch Hall au XVII^{e} siècle", in *PSP*, vol. V; EAD., *Mägde in der Stadt. Das Beispiel Schwäbisch Hall in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt a. M.-New York, Campus, 1995, pp. 159-162.

93 FAUVE-CHAMOUX, Antoinette: "Pour une histoire européenne du service domestique à l'époque préindustrielle", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 57-73; EAD.: "Servants in Preindustrial Europe", p. 116; EAD.,"L'apport de l'historiographie internationale", pp. 17-18; EAD., "Patterns of Leaving 'House' in a 19th Century Stem-Family Society", in VAN POPPEL, ORIS and LEE (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 199-219. In Renaissance Tuscany, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber found boys put out as servants from the age of 7 to 14, and than apprenticed, KLAPISCH-ZUBER, Christiane: "Childhood in Tuscany at the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century", *Annales de Démographie Historique*, 1973, pp. 99-122 (also published in KLAPISCH-ZUBER, Christiane, *Women, Family and Ritual*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1985, pp. 106-108).

94 DOVERI: "'Padre che ha figliuoli grandi fuor li mandi'", pp. 443-444. High percentages of young servants were also found in some villages in Bohemia, see MAUR, Eduard: "Das Gesinde in Böhmen in der frühen Neuzeit", in FAUVE-CHAMOUX and FIALOVÁ (eds.): Op. cit., p. 80.

95 F. S., born in 1933 in Scarperia (Florence). I am very grateful to F. S., who unfortunately died in 2006, for answering my questions, and to Silvia SALVATICI, who asked them on my behalf and who also provided me with information about this case.

96 VIAZZO, Pier Paolo, AIME, Marco and ALLOVIO, Stefano: "Crossing the boundary. Peasants, shepherds and servants in a western Alpine community", *The History of the Family*, X, 2005, pp. 387-405.

These cases, confirm that life-cycle service did not necessarily affect the age at marriage, even though this was often the case. They also confirm that "leaving was always a process which took place over a number of years rather than a normative transition at a given age" and that "leaving home did not entail severing ties with the parental home"[97].

In order to understand the role of domestic service in shaping the "road to independence" it is important not only to establish the ages of domestic workers but also to know how many young people left their parents to enter service, even though serving was not the only possible way to live outside the parental home. Another outcome of the research on this issue is precisely the fact that domestic service never involved all of the young[98]. I have already mentioned that in Southern Italy, Greece, and many parts of Spain rural life-cycle service was almost non-existent and that in many Italian cites, as well as in Galicia, servants were not particularly young. It can be added, here, that, in these areas, the percentage of people in service in each cohort was often low. In a sample of six Southern Italian communities, for instance, servants made up around 1% of all males in the cohorts 15-19 and 20-24, and around 2% of all females in the same cohorts[99]. On the contrary, research on three communities in the countryside of Pisa in the 1720s has shown that servants made up 27% of the whole population in the cohort 15-19, and as much as 41% of males of that age (they made up a smaller share of the population in other cohorts)[100]. They also made up a similar percentage (43 percent) of males aged 15-19 in Parma, in 1545: some scattered data on 16th century Italian cities (Verona, Siena, Parma) shows that, at that time, male and female servants were likely to make up between a third and a quarter of people in that age group[101]. In other words, in Southern Europe, too, there were places where (at least at certain times) a relatively high proportion of the young left their parents to enter service (the data I just mentioned only refers to live-ins).

As for England, data by Laslett shows that servants made up 27% of the girls aged 15-19, and 40% of those aged 20-24 in a sample of six English pre-industrial

97 VAN POPPEL, and ORIS: Op. cit., p. 5. "The gradual nature" of the process of leaving home was caught by Wall as early as 1978, see WALL: "The Age at Leaving Home", p. 200, while in 1981 Ann Kussmaul stressed that "some servants returned home for a year or two in the middle of their career as servants", see KUSSMAUL: *Servants in Husbandry*, p. 73.

98 See the texts quoted in the previous note. According to Antoinette FAUVE-CHAMOUX, servants made up a quarter of the young (FAUVE-CHAMOUX: "L'apport de l'historiographie internationale", p. 13), but for precise data on the different European regions and different periods see below.

99 DA MOLIN: "Family Forms and Domestic Service", p. 519.

100 DOVERI: "'Padre che ha figliuoli grandi fuor li mandi'", p. 431.

101 BARBAGLI: *Sotto lo stesso tetto*, pp. 209-210.

communities, while for males those percentages were, respectively, 35 and 30[102]. Analysing a much wider sample (63 listings of parish inhabitants) Ann Kussmaul has found that servants made up about 60% of the young between 15 and 24[103], a percentage confirmed by Sheila McIsaac-Cooper[104]. In Central Europe, according to Michael Mitterarer, only in some communities were more than 50% of the young in service. "High proportions in service were recorded in upper-class and artisan districts and towns, but low ones in factory areas and suburbs. In the countryside, the proportions in service were high in regions with large farms and where cattle-rearing predominated (...) but in mining communities (...) or in places with protoindustry (...) the proportions in service were very low". Things changed over time: both in urban and rural communities "the percentage of servants aged between 15 and 29 was higher in the seventeenth than in the nineteenth century"[105].

Several studies research confirm, indeed, a certain "ageing" of servants over time[106], even though, in this case, too, there are exceptions: data on some Italian cities (where, as mentioned, servants were, however, older than in many other European cities, as far as we know) shows, indeed, a decrease in the 19th century of the percentage of servants aged 30 and over[107]. I have already mentioned the conclusion by Richard Paping, according to which Dutch parents increasingly kept their children in their early teens at home[108]. Similarly, in his research on England and Wales between 1850 and 1920, Kevin Schürer notes "a gradual decrease in the age at which children left the parental home" and a "decline in non-familial residence, most notably with the contraction of domestic service for girls and boarding and lodging for boys"[109].

Another major change stressed by several studies is that, over time, domestic service was increasingly left to lower class people. In England the nobles began to drop out of that "exchange of children" to which a consolidating function of vertical links in the social hierarchy has been attributed as early as the end of the Tudor

102 LASLETT: "Characteristics of the Western Family", p. 104.

103 KUSSMAUL: *Servants in Husbandry*, p. 3.

104 MCISAAC-COOPER: "The Transition from Life-Cycle Service in England".

105 MITTERAUER: "Servants and youth", pp. 15, 19-20.

106 On the aging of servants in the 18th century see FAUVE-CHAMOUX : "Pour une histoire européenne du service domestique à l'époque préindustrielle", pp. 63-64; EAD., "Servants in Preindustrial Europe", pp. 119-123; EAD., "L'apport de l'historiographie internationale", pp. 18-19.

107 This information is taken from a wide range of comparative data I am collecting and will analyse in detail in a future essay.

108 PAPING: "Oferta y demanda de criados rurales en Holanda".

109 SCHÜRER, Kevin: "Leaving Home in England and Wales 1850-1920", in VAN POPPEL, ORIS and LEE (eds.): Op. cit., pp. 33-84.

period[110]. In Italy, it seems, this happened during the Counter-Reformation, i.e. more or less at the same time[111]. But this trend did not only involve the highest ranks of society. It also involved craftsmen. In those Italian cities where it had been common, apprenticeships outside the parental home may have already started to decline in the late 16th century[112]. Some available data on Rome shows that the decline quickly progressed in the 17th-18th centuries: in the parish of Sant'Agostino, for instance, in 1653 exactly a quarter of households included at least a *garzone* but in 1716 the percentage went down to 16% and in 1796 it was only 2.8 percent[113]. Much more comparative research is needed, but from available scattered data it seems that in both England[114] and Germany the institution of apprenticeships in the master's house lasted longer and with a greater vitality than in Italy. However, this does not mean that there were no changes over time. In German cities, young people who, after finishing their apprenticeships, had no chance of becoming masters themselves (whose number was growing from the 16th century onward) increasingly stopped living under the same roof as their masters, thus becoming less similar to traditional live-in servants: they preferred to live in men-only inns (*Herberge*) or to marry. Apprentices, too, increasingly married, even though many German guilds forbade marriage both for apprentices and people who finished their apprenticeship but were not yet masters[115]. Similarly, in France an increasing number of *compagnons*, having finished their apprenticeship but having no chance of becoming masters, married and became heads of households, escaping a more or less servant-like fate and becoming more similar to modern waged workers[116]. In other terms, in some European areas the number of live-in apprentices had declined considerably even before industrialisation.

As for rural service, as far as we know, it not only declined, particularly from the beginning of the 19th century onwards (though with some exceptions) but also

110 MCCRACKEN, Grant: "The Exchange of Children in Tudor England: An Anthropological Phenomenon in Historical Context", *Journal of Family History*, VIII, 1983, pp. 303-313.

111 SARTI, Raffaella: "Obbedienti e fedeli. Note sull'istruzione morale e religiosa di servi e serve tra Cinque e Settecento", *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento*, XVII, 1991, pp. 91-120.

112 BARBAGLI: *Sotto lo stesso tetto*, p. 222.

113 ARRU: *Il servo*, p. 95.

114 On England see for instance KRAUSMAN BEN-AMOS, Ilana: *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 1994.

115 WIESNER, Merry E.: "Corpi separati. Le associazioni dei lavoranti nella Germania moderna", *Memoria*, 1989, nº 27, pp. 44-67; EHMER, Josef: "'Servi di donne'. Matrimonio e costituzione di una propria famiglia da parte dei garzoni come campo di conflitto nel mondo artigiano mitteleuropeo", *Quaderni storici*, XXVII, 1992, nº 80, pp. 475-507.

116 SEWELL, William H. Jr.: *Work and revolution in France: the language of labor from the Old Regime to 1848*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980 (Ital. transl. *Lavoro e rivoluzione in Francia. Il linguaggio operaio dall'ancien régime al 1848*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987), pp. 44-45, 63-65.

was increasingly performed by lower class people in those areas where it used to be quite a common experience for young people from better-off families as well. In four parishes of Scania (Sweden), for instance, only 10% of the children from peasant families did not become servants between 1740 and 1799 and between 1800 and 1859, while this percentage was 44% in 1860-1894. At the same time, the number of servants from landless or semi-landless households grew[117]. In Belm (Germany), in the 19th century only a few children entered service before the age of 14, while around 40% of the young between 15 and 24 were in service. This percentage was quite high. Yet service, at least in the 19th century, was far from being an experience shared by most people; on the contrary, it was a common experience among the children of landless families: 58% of them experienced it, in the early 19th century. It was far less common among the children of the richest farmers (only 10% of them served; children destined to inherit the farm served almost only if they were orphans)[118].

Even earlier on, the very fact of going into service, or at least the age at which people left their family home seems in some instances to have been dependent on whether the people were orphans, or on their parents' marital status, on their profession, on the position of their brothers and sisters, etc.[119]. In the city of Schwäbisch Hall analysed by Renate Dürr, for instance, about half the female servants entered service after the death of one or both parents. This percentage was much higher among girls who came from middle and upper classes than among lower class girls; furthermore, orphans were over-represented among the maids who entered services very young[120]. In other words, this study confirms that the age at leaving home varied and that it was affected by the family's situation[121].

Richard Wall, while focusing on the social and economic significance of the migration of servants, also calculates the "benefits accruing to the parental budget of daughters moving into service where their maintenance costs were met by the employers", benefits that obviously increased if the daughter transferred some of her earnings to the parents. In fact, in areas where proto-industrial employments were

117 LUNDH: "The social mobility of servants", p. 78.

118 SCHLUMBOHM: "Gesindedienst als Lebensphase und als Klassenphenomen", pp. 30, 33-34.

119 See for instance MAYHEW, Graham: "Life-cycle service and the family unit in early modern Rye", *Continuity and Change*, VI, 1991, pp. 201-227 (in 1660, nine-tenths of children aged over 16 and resident in Rye whose fathers were still alive lived with their parents); MCINTOSH, Marjorie K.: "Servants and the Households Unit in an Elizabethan English Community", *Journal of Family History*, IX, 1984, pp. 3-23; VAN POPPEL, ORIS and LEE: (eds.), Op. cit.

120 DÜRR: "La servante en ville"; EAD., *Mägde in der Stadt*, pp. 159-162.

121 On this point see also ARRU, Angiolina: "Lavorare in casa d'altri: servi e serve domestici a Roma nell'800", *Annali della Fondazione Lelio e Lisli Basso - Issoco*, VII, 1983-1984, pp. 132-133; CASALINI: *Servitù, nobili e borghesi*, p. 262.

available, keeping girls at home spinning or making lace represented earning opportunities for the family. As a consequence, the sex ratio in the offspring group easily skewed in favour of daughters. Where these opportunities were absent, as in most of 19th century England, more girls were likely to move into service, though not necessarily far from home. "In spite of the long hours which servants had to work, they might still meet [their family] on the servant's afternoon off"[122]. Angiolina Arru found that in 19th century Rome many maids served in households very close to their own[123]. F. S., entered service in a household 30 minutes' walk away from his parental home and on Sundays was likely to visit his family[124]. Leaving home for service did not mean cutting off the ties with one's family.

10. Domestic Service and Family Ties

Recent research has stressed that, today, family ties are stronger in Southern than in Northern Europe: in the South, children live with their parents longer than in the North, often leaving them only when they marry; elderly people are less likely to be looked after in rest homes and so on[125]. According to David Reher, this differing strength in family ties is rooted in the past and is mainly due exactly to the different incidence of life-cycle service in different European areas: in his view, where many children left their homes very young in order to enter service, family ties were weaker (this suggestion has some points in common with the "old" thesis by Ariès, an author not yet quoted by Reher). In the Mediterranean region "much of the aid given to vulnerable members of society came from the family or from individual charity, while in Northern societies this was largely accomplished through public and private institutions"[126]. In his view, the current differences between Northern and Southern European welfare systems have deep historical roots.

David Reher has collected a large set of data on the different incidence of servants in many different communities (mainly rural) in Northern and Southern Europe.

122 WALL, Richard: "The Social and Economic Significance of Servant Migration", in AFC, p. 27 and in *PSP*, vol. IV.

123 ARRU: "Lavorare in casa d'altri", p. 133.

124 See above, note 95.

125 BARBAGLI, Marzio: "Family and kinship in Italy", in GULLESTAD, M. and SEGALEN, M. (eds.): *Family and kinship in Europe*, London-Washington, Pinter, 1997, pp. 33-48; DALLA ZUANNA, Gianpiero: "The banquet of Aeolus: A familistic interpretation of Italy's lowest low fertility", *Demographic research*, IV, 2001, pp. 133-162 (http://www.demographic-research.org); BARBAGLI, Marzio, CASTIGLIONI, Maria and DALLA ZUANNA, Gianpiero: *Fare famiglia in Italia. Un secolo di cambiamenti*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003, in part. Chapters 1 and 4.

126 REHER: "Family Ties in Western Europe", p. 209.

Servants made up between 8.9 and 17.6% of the total population of the Northern and Central European cases he analysed (cases from Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Belgium, Austria, Holland, Germany and Northern France) while they never reached 10% in Southern Europe (cases from Southern France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, plus a reference to the Greek case, where also rural service were almost non-existent, as already mentioned)[127].

In other words, Reher contrasts Northern and Central Europe on the one hand and Southern Europe on the other. In fact, as I stressed above, differences within Southern Europe were quite important, as far as we can evaluate from available data on Italy, where servants were really few only in the South, and the Iberian Peninsula (data on Greece currently available does not allow to appreciate the differences among different regions). Servants for instance, made up 4.3% of the population in rural Galicia (1752-1787)[128] while they reached around 18-25% of population of Sant Pere de Terrassa, in Catalonia, between 1736 and 1834[129]. In many Southern Italian rural communities there were no servants at all[130]; in 16 communities in the area of Bologna, partly located in the Po valley and partly on the Apennines, in 1847 there were about 2.000 servants in a population of 64.000 individuals (3.1 percent)[131]; in the countryside of Parma, about 80 km. North of Bologna, in 1545 they made up 3.7% of the population[132]; not too far from Parma, in the countryside of Reggio Emilia, also partly extending in the Po valley and partly in the Apennines, in 1708 there were around 4.400 of them in a total population of almost 90.000 (4.9 percent)[133]; in the countryside of Carmagnola, in Piedmont (Northern Italy), they made up 6.8% of the total inhabitants in 1621[134]. Yet in the rural communities around Pisa (Tuscany) studied by Andrea Doveri, they made up 7-11.7% of the total population in the period 1656-1740[135], to quote but some examples. Reher is aware of the fact that "re-

127 Ibidem, pp. 228-229; the author mentions the Greek case, but without providing any data, on p. 222, note 10.

128 DUBERT: "Agricultural Work, Social Structure and Labour Markets of the Rural Domestic Service in Galicia". See also ID., "Criados, estructura económica y social y mercado de trabajo en la Galicia rural a finales del Antiguo Régimen", *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, nº 35, p. 17.

129 ROCA FABREGAT.: "¿Quién trabajaba en las masías?", p. 57.

130 DA MOLIN: "Family Forms", p. 513.

131 ANGELI, Aurora: "Strutture familiari e nuzialità nel Bolognese a metà dell'Ottocento", in *Società Italiana di Demografia Storica*, *Popolazione, società, ambiente*, p. 91.

132 My calculations on data provided by BARBAGLI: *Sotto lo stesso tetto*, p. 147, 211.

133 My calculations on data provided by MORETTI, Piero: "'Un uomo per famiglio'. Servi, contadini e famiglie nella Diocesi di Reggio Emilia nel Settecento", *Quaderni storici*, XXIV, 1989, nº 71, p. 409.

134 DA MOLIN: *Famiglia e matrimonio nell'Italia del Seicento*, p. 209 (there were 124 servants in a population of 1.778).

135 DOVERI: "'Padre che ha figliuoli grandi fuor li mandi'", p. 430.

gional differences in southern Europe were considerable". Nevertheless, he thinks that "levels of servants were never as high as they were in England and in other parts of central and southern Europe"[136]. As we have seen, communities with an incidence of servants similar or even higher than in Northern Europe were to be found in Southern Europe as well. Yet it seems true that, on a macro level, servants were less common in Southern than in Northern and Central Europe[137].

However, though very stimulating, Reher's thesis possibly undervalues the fact that when children left for service they did not cut the ties with their own families. In particular, they were likely to go back home in case of need by their parents[138]. He also overlooks the fact that some servants served in their own families (particularly, it seems, in areas where stem families were common[139]) or in families of kin[140]. Moreover, Reher does not take into account the fact that in Italy there was an early development of quite a large network of public charity[141]. Additionally, it was precisely the public authorities which might force children to provide for their parents in need, as shown by recent research on Rome by Angela Groppi[142]: families were not isolated entities with no connection with the "public". Finally, applying Reher's interpretation to the Italian case, one would expect weaker family ties in Central than in Southern Italy, because rural servants were more common in Central regions than in the South, as mentioned. But this is not the case. In 1991, for instance, widows aged 75 and over who lived alone were between 58 and 68% of the total in many Southern Italian provinces, while they only made up 39-47%in most Central Italian ones[143].

Interestingly, however, after the Second World War, the decline of domestic service was probably faster and greater in Northern European countries than in Italy or Spain, and this led to a reversal of a long-term balance: by then domestic workers became more common in Southern than in Northern Europe. This change also reversed the relationship between domestic service and welfare as described by Reher.

136 REHER: "Family Ties in Western Europe", p. 222.

137 This information is taken from a wide range of comparative data I am collecting and will analyse in detail in a future essay.

138 On this, see in particular, HANTZAROULA, Pothiti: "The Dynamics of the Mistress-Servant Relationship, Greece 1920-1945", in AFC, pp. 379-408 and in *PSP*, vol. I.

139 MITTERAUER, Michael: "I servi nelle Alpi", *Quaderni storici*, XXIII, 1988, nº 68, pp. 437-467; LANZINGER: "Una società di nubili e celibi?"; SEGALEN: "Life-course Patterns and Peasant Culture in France", p. 217; SARTI: *Europe at Home*, p. 52, with further references; etc.

140 SARTI R.: "Who are Servants?", with further references.

141 See for instance ZAMAGNI, Vera (ed.): *Povertà e innovazioni istituzionali in Italia dal Medioevo ad oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000.

142 GROPPI, Angela: "Il diritto del sangue. Le responsabilità familiari nei confronti delle vecchie e delle nuove generazioni (Roma, secoli XVIII-XIX)", *Quaderni storici*, XXXI, 1996, nº 92, pp. 305-333.

143 BARBAGLI, CASTIGLIONI and DALLA ZUANNA: Op. cit., pp. 209-214.

While, according to Reher, in the past public welfare had been more developed where servants were more numerous, after the Second World War their decline was particularly conspicuous in the Northern countries, precisely where a strong welfare system was developing and some care activities traditionally provided by families were taken over by the state[144].

In fact, however, things might even have been more complicated than argued by Reher in his article, which has, in any case, the merit of stimulating debate and further research on the link between domestic service and public/private care. In the past, too, indeed, one of the several possible reasons for servant keeping was to guarantee adequate care for the elderly and for the masters' children[145]. The analysis of wills, for instance, shows that legacies to servants in order to ensure their assistance were not rare[146]. Additionally, through domestic services, orphans, widows and other people without a family could find a kind of substitute family, even though this might also make them vulnerable to exploitation[147]. Peter Laslett himself, discussing in a well-known article the so-called "nuclear hardship hypothesis", according to which the members of nuclear families were/are particularly exposed to problems in the case of death, illness, unemployment of one of the family members etc., noted that "the institution of life-cycle service may have provided a quasi-familial remedy

144 See SARTI: "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", in particular section 5.3. "Expected Disappearance and Current Revival: Some Quantitative Data"; EAD., "Domestic Service: Past and Present in Southern and Northern Europe", *Gender and History*, XVIII, 2006, nº 2, pp. 222-245 On the transformation of domestic service in Northern countries after the Second World War see AUBERT, Vilhelm A.: "The Housemaid. An Occupational Role in Crisis", *Acta Sociologica*, I, 1955, pp. 149-158; SOGNER, Sølvi: "The Legal Status of Servants in Norway, from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century", in AFC, pp. 175-187 and in *PSP*, vol. III; PLATZER, Ellinor: "From Private Solutions to Public Responsibility and Back Again. The new domestic services in Sweden", *Gender and History*, XVIII, 2006, nº 2, pp. 211-221; etc.

145 As for children, see DELPIANO, Patrizia and SARTI, Raffaella (eds.): *Servants, Domestic Workers and Children*, special issue of *Paedagogica Historica*, 2007, forthcoming.

146 SARTI, Raffaella: "Servire al femminile, servire al maschile nella Bologna sette-ottocentesca", in NAVA, Paola (ed.): *Operaie, serve, maestre, impiegate*, Torino, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1992, pp. 237-264; ARRU: *Il servo*; CAVALLO, Sandra: "Family obligations and inequalities in access to care in Northwestern Italy, seventeenth to eighteenth centuries", in HORDEN, Peregrine and SMITH, Richard (eds.): *The Locus of Care. Families, communities, institutions and the provision of welfare since antiquity*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 90-110; MISCALI: "Servir au féminin, servir au masculin"; SARTI, Raffaella: "Uno di famiglia? Posizione e ruolo del personale domestico nella compagine familiare tra età moderna e contemporanea", paper presented at the conference *Generazioni. Legami di parentela tra passato e presente*, Pisa, Italy, 29 Sept.-1st Oct. 2005.

147 ARRU, Angiolina: "Protezione e legittimazione: come si usa il lavoro di serva nell'Ottocento", in CENTRO DOCUMENTAZIONE DONNE DI BOLOGNA, *Ragnatele di rapporti. Patronage e reti di relazione nella storia delle donne*, edited by FERRANTE, Lucia, PALAZZI, Maura and POMATA, Gianna, Torino, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1988, pp. 381-416; MISCALI: "Servir au féminin, servir au masculin"; HANTZAROULA: "The Status of Servant's Labour in State Policy, Greece 1870-1960"; EAD., "The Dynamics of the Mistress-Servant Relationship"; SARTI: "Who are Servants?", with further references.

for nuclear hardship"[148]. In his research on early-modern Rye, Graham Mayhew even concludes, on the other hand, that apprenticeship and service were "restricted to quite specific categories of individuals": master-servant relations were often "regarded as an extension of mutual parental and filial obligations" and "provided a background of security for the large numbers of young orphans and incomers who made up the bulk of the servant population". In his view, particularly for orphans, they "may often have been tantamount to modern-day adoption, whereby masters and mistresses took on the role of surrogate parents" [149].

Today, on the other hand, many domestic workers are hired exactly to provide care[150]. But this is another story.

148 LASLETT: "Family, kinship and collectivity as systems of support in pre-industrial Europe: a consideration of the 'nuclear hardship' hypothesis", *Continuity and Change*, III, 1988, p. 155.

149 MAYHEW: "Life-cycle service and the family unit in early modern Rye", pp. 221-222.

150 SARTI, Raffaella (ed.): *"*Domestic service since 1750*"*, in *Gender and History*, XVIII, 2006, nº 2, pp. 187-245.