

Social Mobility and the Role of Women in Pre-industrial Societies

Faculty Member: [Jose-Antonio Espin-Sanchez](#)

Proposal Description:

The recent increase in inequality in the U.S. and other developed countries has stimulated the debate among economists. This debate is best exemplified by Thomas Piketty's *Capital* in the twenty-first century and his critics. Taking aside the predictions for the future and the role that capital gains play in this debate, a deeper question is: what is a "normal" level of inequality in historical terms? In other words, if we take the estimates at face value, and inequality today is similar to that of the 19th century and higher than most of the middle of the 20th century, which one is the historical anomaly? Is it normal to have high levels of inequality, and the 20th century was an exception, or is it normal to have low levels of inequality and the 19th century was an exception? Without information on inequality before the 19th century, it is hard to answer the above questions.

The role of women in mobility studies has been underplayed due to the lack of information on women's income. Moreover, since most of the studies are focused on Anglo-Saxon countries, where it is customary for the bride to take the last name of the groom, it is not possible to construct matrilineal family trees. In contrast, this was not the case in Spain, even in the pre-modern era. Therefore the study could shed a new light on the role of women on inequality and social mobility.

Requisite Skills and Qualifications:

The RA will help analyze the dataset using econometric techniques. Knowledge of econometric software such as STATA or R is required.

Award: Michael

Lewis

Tobin Application Link: [Tobin Application](#)

Project Type: Tobin RA

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