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Remarriage in a Pre-transitional Italian Community

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DIFFERENTIAL FERTILITY IN THE PAST

Remarriage in pre-transitional Tuscany

Remarriage is a very difficult and complex topic to analyze in the pre-statistical period. In Italy the first statistics of marriages by marital status of spouses date back to the first years of 18th century. It is only with the political unification of Italy that the documentation became more continuous, allowing to point out the various and different marriage patterns existent within the national borders (Livi Bacci 1981). However, the descriptive and aggregative nature of such data did not permit to plan any research on the determinants that may play a role in the decision to remarry. Even the nominative approach, at least the techniques based on family reconstitution, did only allow partial analyses of remarriage. A situation due to either the few remarriages celebrated in a given parish community or the intrinsic technical problems of measure which impose to limit the analysis to an even smaller set (Knodel 1988; Wrigley et al. 1997). Notwithstanding these difficulties, some studies on small communities outlined some of the most important aspects of remarriage, especially those more linked to the biodemographic characteristics of widowed people. According to Blom (1991), they can be briefly summarized as follows: a) widowers were more likely to remarry than widows, generally shortly after wife's death, and to younger and never-married women; b) conversely, widows over 40 years of age did seldom remarry, mostly if they had dependent children; c) however, younger the widowed person, higher the chances to find a new spouse regardless of the gender of the widow(er).

This strong asymmetry by gender is associated not only to demographic constraints but also to economic, cultural and social factors linked to the different roles of men and women in marriage, family and in the inheritance system. It should be therefore of great interest to analyze remarriage in the light of the household characteristics. This is especially crucial in Italy due to the marked regional and socio-professional differences in the household structure and the importance of family ties in the Italian society of the past. Living in simple rather than multiple households could be indeed a key element on the chances to remarry. In a simple nuclear family, the spouse's loss could have dramatic consequences on the surviving one, which found him/herself alone in taking care of children. On the other hand, widowed persons living in multiple households could count on the other household members for help and support, even avoiding possible economic repercussions. However, we cannot exclude that this latter situation could dampen and make less urgent the search for a new spouse (Tittarelli 1991), hypothesis strongly influenced by gender and age of the widowed person and also by his/her position within the family group. The role of such factors is still largely unexplored since the linkage of individual data to information about the household and its socioeconomic status may result really difficult for past populations. A dataset with such specific information has been patiently set up for a Tuscan community – Casalguidi – in the period 1819-59,

therefore preceding the demographic transition. As we will describe in more detail further on, it was a rural population included in a territory dominated by sharecropping, an agricultural contract which favored large and complex households. Moreover, for this community recordings of the economic situation of families are available on annual basis. This enables and offers us the rare opportunity to investigate the consequences induced by widowhood on the socioeconomic status of surviving members according to the household structure and the kin network size.

The studied community: Casalguidi, 1819-59.

Casalguidi is a small town (2,400 residents on average) situated, in the period 1820-58, in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, only few kilometers from the city of Pistoia and not far from Florence. The proximity to important cities caused a constant exchange of people among those local populations, characterized by flows of immigration and emigration both of individuals and entire households (Manfredini 2003a).

The economy was mostly based on agriculture, which employed about 70% of the total active population. The Tuscan form of the sharecropping farm (*podere mezzadrile*) was common in Casalguidi and dominant in the area. Small independent farmers and day laborers existed too. Artisans, small shopkeepers and few bourgeois people completed the economic structure of the population (Breschi et al. 2004).

From the demographic point of view, the village show trends and patters quite similar to those characterizing the whole Tuscany (Breschi et al. 2004). The growth of the population is very similar in both trends and levels, while the annual average growth rate is the same: 8.3 per 1,000 in the period 1819-1859. This strong resemblance is also confirmed by the estimates of life expectancy at birth (35.0 and 36.2 respectively in Casalguidi and Tuscany) and TFR (5.3 and 5.1 children per woman).

Like in many other sharecropping communities of mid-nineteenth century Italy, the marriage pattern was based on two key elements: high age at first marriage and high celibacy rates among both males and females (Della Pina 1990; Rettaroli 1990; Cocchi et al. 1996). In the studied population men married at around 28 years and women at 25 years, and the proportions never-marrying were respectively 14.4 and 10.1. The form of living arrangement after marriage depended usually on the groom's occupation: sharecroppers followed a virilocal pattern due the important economic role of working men, whilst day laborers and artisans were much more likely to form brand new families after marriage, independent from parents' households (Barbagli 1988). Yet, exogamous weddings were all celebrated in the bride's parish regardless the residence chosen after

marriage. This custom was so widespread in Italy that parish marriage registers did never contain acts of wife-exogamous unions, and Casalguidi makes no exception (Manfredini 2003b).

Looking at the household in which the people of Casalguidi lived, the sharecropping influence stands out clearly. Between 1819 and 1859, 13.1% of the population lived in household containing two or more nuclear family (multiple family households); an additional 22.1% lived in extended family household. Consequently, about half of the inhabitants (48.2%) lived in complex households, against a similar proportion living in nuclear family units (49.6%). The rest of population was divided among solitaries (about 1%) and undefined households (1.2%).[1]

Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the socio-economic profile of the population of Casalguidi according to the type of residence. An average of 2,400 people lived in the village, and they are listed by head's socio-professional occupation (farmers, artisans-shopkeepers, middle-class), family tax (collapsed in three categories: high-middle, low and untaxed), and household structure (solitaries, nuclear, complex).

Table 1. Households by socioeconomic status and head's occupation. Casalguidi, 1819-59.

Class Tax	High & medium Tax	Low Tax	Untaxed	Total
Farmers	9.1	44.4	22.5	76.0
Artisan & shopkeepers	2.0	7.1	7.1	16.2
Middle-class & nobles	1.5	0.5	0.3	2.3
Unknown	0.0	0.0	5.5	5.5
Total	12.6	52.0	35.4	100.0

Despite the modest amounts the family had to pay, over 35% of the households were exempt from taxation for manifest poverty. If we add the families included in the low tax bracket to the untaxed, about 87% of households were in poor economic circumstances. Indigent and poor families were most common among artisans (7.1% on total households, 44.0% within the occupational group). Farmers had a slightly better economic profile than that of artisans. The poorest people lived in households headed by people without occupation or whose profession is unknown. At the top of the social ladder, the few members of the middle-class lived in a relative wellbeing: 65% of household heads paid actually the highest taxes.

Looking at the household structure in which people lived, a positive influence on socio-economic status stands out, in each socio-professional categories, for the members of complex

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[1] This category is connected with the impossibility to determine the household typology because information relative to the relationship to the head were missing for one or more household members.

family groups. One-fourth of those household heads paid a middle-high tax, virtually more than three times higher than heads of nuclear family units (6.8%).

Sources

Our sources for Casalguidi are annual nominative lists of inhabitants, supplemented by parish registers of vital events covering the period 1819-1859. The annual *status animarum* was a kind of annual census recorded by the parish priest on Easter. Data were organized by household. Age, sex, marital status, and relationship to the head of the household were noted for each person. Since these lists were made annually, it is possible to trace changes in household size and composition throughout the period studied. Vital events (registers of baptism, burial, and marriage) were linked to *status animarum* (Manfredini 1996) by means of nominative techniques.

The marriage registers date back from 1819 to 1859 and they actually include all the endogamous and husband-exogamous unions whose weddings were celebrated in the church of Casalguidi. These acts provide information about the wedding date, name and surname of spouses and parents, marital status at the moment of marriage as well as current spouses' place of residence.

Since in marriage registers there is no trace of marriages between local men and foreign women, it has been necessary to turn to annual *status animarum* to fill this gap. Thanks to their good continuity over time (only one year missed in the period studied), the nominative linkage of individual information from both vital and census sources have allowed to reconstruct the life-histories of the dwellers of Casalguidi. This opportunity made it possible to track down every single marriage involving at least one dweller of the parish, hence remedying to the lack of information of marriage registers on wife-exogamous unions. In fact, this can be easily accomplished by checking all the men who changed their marital status from "unmarried" (or "widowed") to "married" between two consecutive *stati animarum* (Manfredini 2003b). At the end, those two kinds of parish books permitted to reconstruct not only the entire set of marriages but also to define their exact order.

Parish registers do not usually provide information on socio-economic status. The *status animarum* of Casalguidi are a rare exception since they always report the name of the homeowner. We drew additional data drawn from the Tax Register. This source contains the name of the household head, his/her occupation, hamlet of residence, level of taxation, and other useful details for each taxable household.[2] All "miserable and needy households" were exempt from taxes, and

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[2] The number of tax brackets changed over the period studied. There were six levels between 1819 and 1848, seven in 1849, and ten in 1850. Finally, beginning in 1851, the number of brackets rose to fourteen. Despite these changes, the limits of each bracket changed little over the same period as the new classes were created by dividing the poorest categories into more groups.

therefore not recorded in the register. Data drawn from the Tax Register combined with those drawn from the *status animarum* allowed us to reconstruct the local socioeconomic hierarchy described above.[3]

It is then possible to trace the life history of each individual (as long as he/she remained in the community) by linking the *status animarum* to parish vital registers. By placing demographic events in the household context where they occurred, we go well beyond the classic family reconstitution technique to examine the relationship between family organization and individual life histories. This in turn opens new prospects for the understanding of demographic phenomena before the era of modern statistics in Italy. While the usefulness of civil population registers for the study of post-Unification Italy has been recognized for some time (Schiaffino 1979a, 1979b; Kertzer and Hogan 1989), our analysis of ecclesiastical sources is the first to our knowledge.

A demographic profile of widowhood

In total 1,028 marriages were celebrated between 1820 and 1858, but information about the marital status of both spouses were available for only 916 of them[4]. As shown in table 2, of those unions 716 (78.2%) were first marriages, whilst 200 (21.8%) were remarriages. In particular, 137 (15.0%) were between a widower and an unmarried woman, 26 (2.8%) between an unmarried man and a widow, and 37 (4.0%) between two widowed persons. Total percent figure of remarriage is similar to that for the whole Tuscany in the period 1853-60 (20.6%), although some difference is present among the single types of remarriage: for instance, unions between widowers and never-married women account for 12.3% against the value of 15.0% found in the community studied (Breschi 1990). Widowers living in Casalguidi remarried at 42.6 years (± 10.8) on average, whilst widows remarried earlier (37.6 ± 10.6), figures which do not substantially differ from those calculated at the national level in 1880, respectively 44.7 and 38.9 years (Livi Bacci 1981).

In Casalguidi, 20 men out of 100 were therefore widowed at the moment of marriage, figure which is almost three times higher than the corresponding value among women (only 8 out of 100). Yet, those percentages do not represent synthetic measures of remarriage, as they do not take into account the amount and the demographic characteristics of the population at risk to enter a new union. Although those information are hardly available for historic populations, in this study the

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[3] Unfortunately, the S*tatus Animarum* was drawn up at Easter while the tax register was compiled in autumn or January. Since we defined as "poor" those households listed in S*tatus Animarum* but not recorded on the tax registers, the imperfect synchrony of the two sources may have overestimated their number. Some of the unlinked households may in fact have been taxed. However, the proportion of households recorded on the tax registers but not found on S*tatus Animarum* is very low, under 5 percent.

[4] For some marriages reconstructed from *Status Animarum* it is impossibile to determine the marital status of foreign spouses coming to Casalguidi (see the paragraph about sources).

availability of census-like data and the reconstruction of individual life-histories allowed more precise evaluations of widowhood and remarriage.

Table 2. Types of marriages. Casalguidi, 1820-58.

M / F	Marriages		
	n	%	%
Bachelor/Spinster	716	69.6	78.2
Widower/Spinster	137	13.3	15.0
Bachelor/Widow	26	2.5	2.8
Widower/Widow	37	3.7	4.0
Bachelor/Unknown	67	6.5	
Widower/Unknown	30	2.9	
Unknown/Spinster	1	0.1	
Unknown/Widow	4	0.4	
Unknown/Unknown	9	0.9	
Total	1028	100.0	
Total both known	916		100.0
Total with widow(er)	234	22.8	21.8

In figures 1 and 2, it is possible to appreciate the variations, year after year, of the proportions of widows and widowers on the respective total populations of 15+ years (thicker line). Widows amounted to 12.6% on average against a much lower figure of widowers (4.5%). The gap between genders tended to become wider as age increased. Among people aged 15-34, widows and widowers were practically absent (<1% in both sexes), while in the 35-49-year group widows were around 9% of total women of that age, and widowers only 3%. Over 50 years, about 40% of women were widowed against a definitely lower figure of men, only 14%. Those differentials are only in part attributable to the lower female mortality at old ages: in Casalguidi, life expectancy of women aged 55 was of 17.4 years, against 15.9 among men of the same age. By the way, widows were more numerous than widowers even within the reproductive period, a phase really risky for women. In Casalguidi, 32 females died before reaching 50 years on 100 surviving at 15 years. Among males, the selection is at 26%. Although the gap was wider among the married population, widows were almost three times more numerous than widowers in the 15-49 age bracket.

The presence of widow(er)s does not show remarkable fluctuations in the short-mid term even though it is possible to detect the effects of two of the latest mortality crises occurred in Tuscany during the 19th century. In particular, the cholera epidemic of 1854-55 was marked by a generalized

increase of all the plotted curves, while the consequences of the typhus of 1816-17 are only partially appreciable. A certain downward trend of the proportions of widowed people was present only in the central part of the studied period, sign of either a reduction of mortality or higher intensity of marriage of whatever order (Breschi 1990).

Figures 1-2. Proportions of widowed individuals on residents by age. Men (left) and Women (right).
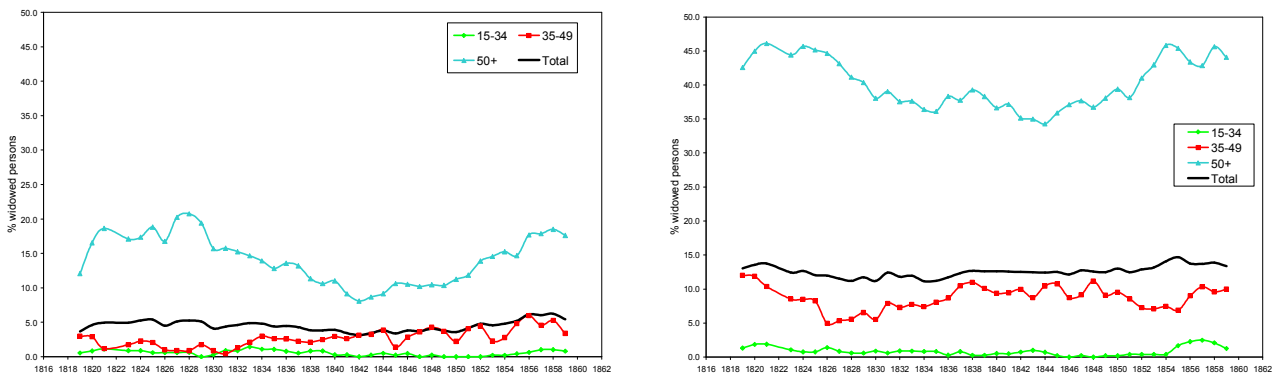
Another element useful to analyse the population structure by marital status is displayed in table 3, where we reported, for men and women respectively, the mean age difference between spouses by age at marriage of the bride/groom. The gap is relatively modest up to 34 years, with husbands around 4-5 years older than wives. As age at marriage increases, the two sexes show opposite behaviours. Older men married much younger women, whilst older women changed their marriage pattern by getting married to increasingly younger husbands.

Table 3. Age difference between spouses by gender and age at marriage. Casalguidi, 1819-59.

| Age at marriage	M	F
15-24	0.3	6.0
25-34	4.3	4.6
35-44	10.1	7.0
45-54	14.0	2.5
55-64	15.5	-0.8
65+	24.6	-7.0

This differential behaviour has much to do, as we will see further on, to the differential marriage markets of widows and widowers. The definitely higher number of widows with respect to widowers and the scarcity of never-married men at old ages addressed, in fact, unmarried women to

look for potential grooms much younger than usual, inverting a social tradition in which the wife had to be younger than the husband.

The structure by age and sex of the widowed population is the result of a complex combination of many factors, among which first-marriage pattern, differential mortality and, finally, the remarriage pattern. The following figures describe the latter two processes by means of age-specific rates, for men and women separately. In a cultural context where divorce was forbidden, marriages could be broken only by the death of one of the spouses.

The crude widowhood rate, here intended as the ratio between the number of widow(er)s and the total married population, is 16.4‰ among widows and 13.1‰ among widowers. Marriage breaking shows higher intensity at older ages (fig. 3) among both men and women, but from 40 years onwards, the widowhood rates of the latter are two times higher than those of the former.

Figure 3. Age-specific widowhood rates (x 1,000) for men and women.
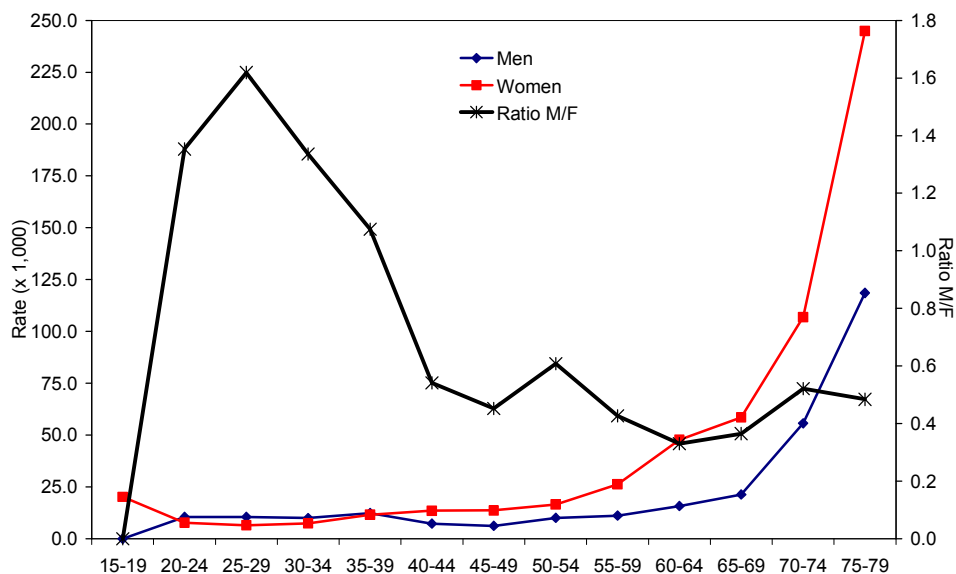

This finding could be due to the higher mortality of males and to the growing age gap between spouses, as above described. It is only during the reproductive period (20-40 years) that the risks associated to pregnancy and childbearing determined higher rates of widowhood among married men than among married women.

The gender differential is even more striking in the process of forming a new family. The crude remarriage rate is, in fact, 13.5‰ for widows against a figure six times higher among widowers (81.3‰). Such a higher propensity of men to remarry is constant throughout the life course and gets higher at older ages (fig. 4). At the end of the reproductive period (45-50 years), the chances to find a new spouse are almost null for widows, whilst one widower out of seven of the same age is still

able to remarry. At younger ages, a widow is more likely to remarry (1 out of 5), but widowers still show higher rates (1 out of 2).

Figure 4. Age-specific remarriage rates (x 1,000) for men and women.
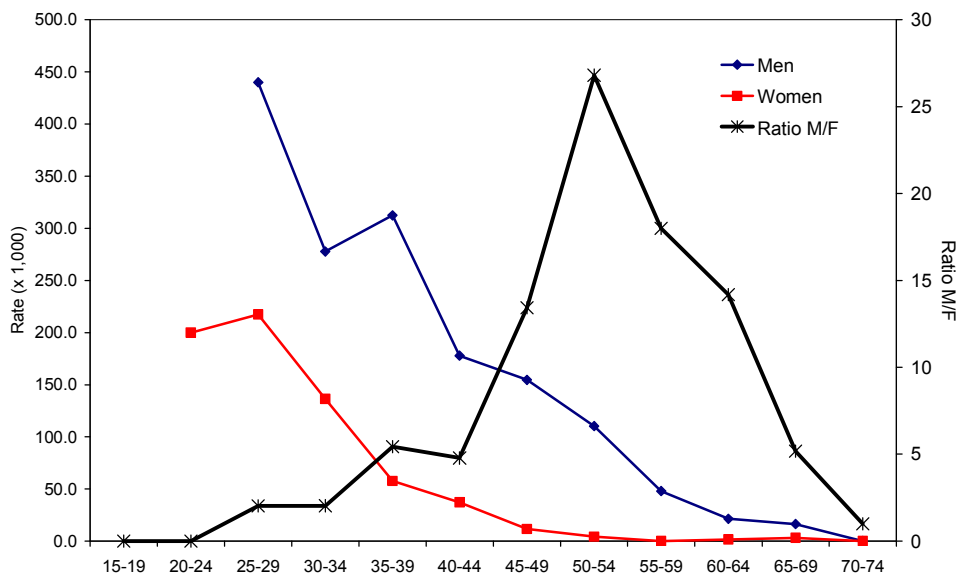
Besides age, other important socio-demographic determinants played a role on the chances to remarry, such as the number of children, their age, and the household typology. One could calculate various set of remarriage rates for each of the variable above mentioned, but this procedure would not allow to appreciate the complex mechanism of interrelationship among all those factors.

A correct evaluation of the determinants of remarriage as well as of their interrelationships is possible only through a micro-analytic approach. However, before moving on, we want to show an unusual but interesting analysis of the effects provoked by the spouse's death on the surviving members of the family. Some issues such as emigration and the survival of orphans have been already studied in previous works (Breschi, Manfredini 2002a, 2002b, 2003). Here, we are able to evaluate the socioeconomic consequences of the spouse's loss on the whole family group. We constructed a transition matrix (tab. 4) indicating the economic status of the family before and after the death of one of the spouses.

The analysis takes into account the households that were still present in the community the year after marriage breaking. Those who left were obviously taxed in the community of arrival and we do not have any information about that. The results displayed in the table do not however distinguish the surviving family groups that joined other resident households, but the outcome results however very different according to the gender of the surviving spouse. When it was the wife to die, the consequences were minor: only 6% of total taxed households benefited by a tax reduction in the year following the wife's loss, evidence of a limited economic effect on the

household members. The picture is completely different as far as families suffering from the father's loss are concerned. In those cases, over 60% of total taxed households benefited by a tax reduction, indication of a deteriorated wellbeing that was common across all the socioeconomic groups. This could cause difficulties in finding a new husband just for those widows that were much in need to remarry in order to find economic support.

Table 4. Family Tax before and after the spouse's death. Men and women, Casalguidi 1820-58.

	Same tax	Tax increase	Tax reduction	Total
MEN				
High & medium Tax	81.8	3.0	15.2	16.0
Low Tax	95.9	0.8	3.3	59.7
Untaxed	84.0	16.0	0.0	24.3
Total	90.8	4.9	4.4	100.0
WOMEN				
High & medium Tax	37.5	0.0	62.5	15.5
Low Tax	39.3	0.7	60.0	56.2
Untaxed	86.3	13.7	0.0	28.3
Total	52.3	4.3	43.4	100.0

Remarrying in a micro-analytical perspective

There is no doubt of the limited insight of descriptive analyses in studying remarriage patterns. Actually, the best way to analyze the determinants of nuptiality is to investigate the process in a dynamic perspective. Household co-residential patterns, previous marriage history, welfare status, SES, they are all factors whose impact on remarriage chances needs to be arranged and interpreted from a longitudinal point of view. Furthermore, the complexity of the explicative framework at the base of the mate choice makes descriptive statistics unfit to take exhaustively account of the multidisciplinary nature of such an issue. For all these reasons, Event History Analysis has been adopted as one of the best statistical technique to deal with longitudinal data such as those employed in this research. Because of the discrete-time nature of the data available, a logistic regression has been used.

Due to the marked differences by gender in either the intensity of remarriage or the possible differential role played by some factors on the chances to remarry, we estimated two separate models for widows and widowers respectively.

The variables included in the models reflect many of the factors emerged from descriptive analysis as elements potentially affecting the risk of remarrying. Some of the covariates concern the status of widowhood, such as the time since widowing and the number of co-resident children. These two variables have been supposed to influence largely the likelihood to remarry (Bideau, 1980; Corsini, 1981; Schiaffino, 1981; Knodel 1988; Van Poppel, 1995). While we expect that the longer the duration of widowhood, the lower the risk of remarriage for both sexes, the presence of children could act as a barrier to remarry, especially for widows. The economic burden that the arrival of many non-producer people into a family may put on the hypothetic new partner could in fact become unaffordable. Conversely, co-residing with children could be positively associated to the chances of remarriage for widowers as they could stimulate the search for a new bride able to provide them with more care and attention (Bideau and Perernoud, 1981).

As shown in the descriptive section, the socioeconomic status of widowed people could play an important role in determining the chances to remarry (Van Poppel, 1985), and that is the reason why we included in the models a covariate concerning the SES of the household head. Widows in the lowest economic position might need to remarry in order to gain some more security and economic support, whilst this condition was by far less pressing among well-off women. The same contrasting situation might be found among widows living respectively in multiple and nuclear households. Due to the possibility to find help and support in the largest family groups, the former could find less urgent to remarry than the latter. Due to the different social and economic role of men, the need to remarry among widowers was usually more inherent the necessity, as already mentioned, to provide care for children from previous marriage(s). This implies that we expect less variability in the risk of remarrying by social status.

Another important economic variable we introduced in the models is the grain price lagged by one year. Getting married was always an economic burden for families, and just like first-order marriages, the general economic situation could affect the chance of remarriage for both men and women. In hard times, widowers might want to avoid to burden the household with the arrival of a new "consumer" member (the bride), thereby postponing the wedding to better times. On the other hand, widows had to provide the dowry to their future husbands, an economic expense that could get so difficult to meet in times of crisis as to cause a delay of remarriage. At the end, the celebration of a new marriage might be negatively conditioned by hard times marked by rise in grain prices.

Finally, we introduced a covariate about the migratory history of individuals. The underlying hypothesis is that mobility and migration could act as a way to enlarge the marriage market thereby

facilitating the search for a new spouse. Conversely, rooted people, and especially widows, could be limited by the local marriage market size in their choice of a new partner.

Table 5 shows the relative risks and the p-values for each category of the variables included in the models. The most evident result is the clear distinct causation pattern of remarriage by gender. As expected, widows are the most sensitive to age, in the sense that the risk of remarrying decreases significantly as age increases. Widows aged 35-49 years show 87% lower risk compared to widowed women <35 years, figure raising to 99% over 50 years of age. Among widowers, this effect is less marked, and age becomes a significant factor in limiting the chances of remarriage only from 50 years onward. This effect of biological age is as strong among widows as to reduce the responsiveness of the risk to the duration of widowhood, which is conversely present among widowers. In this case, after only 3-10 years following wife's death the likelihood of remarriage decreases significantly by 62%, and from 11 years onward, the chances are negligible.

Another factor marking deeply the difference between men and women is the structure of the household where the widowed person lived. The degree of complexity was negatively and significantly associated to the risk of remarriage among widowers, positively but not significantly from a statistic point of view among widows. This means that widowers living in large and complex households were less pressed and less likely to remarry probably because they found within the family group the resources (human and/or material) to remedy the absence of the dead mother. Widows in complex households could experience the same situation, thereby being not so urged to remarry. Nevertheless, for lonely widows living with some children in a nuclear setting remarrying could be even a less probable event because of the difficulties in finding a new husband able to take care of them. These widows did not represent a good match at all.

These considerations find confirmation in the very strong and negative effect linked to the presence of young children living with the widowed mother. In this case, the risk of remarriage decreases significantly by 50% each additional child 0-11 years living in the same household of the mother. As expected and anticipated, the consequences of the presence of young children on the chances of remarriage were opposite for widowers, although the positive association did not result statistically significant. Widowers were conversely much more responsive to the presence of either older sons or older daughters. In such cases, the risk of remarriage dropped by 40-45% each additional child over 12 years of age. It is likely that this situation might be due to a decision of the widower, who could be not interested in looking for another bride maybe because his siblings were not so young to need a stepmother to provide them care and attention.

Table 5. Risk models. Determinants of remarriage. Casalguidi, 1820-58

Covariates	M			F		
	Means	Odds	p-val	Means	Odds	p-val
Age (ref. <35 years)	6.6	1.000		3.2	1.000	
35-49 years	17.2	1.168	0.665	17.6	**0.134**	**0.000**
50+ years	76.2	**0.234**	**0.000**	79.2	**0.006**	**0.000**
Household structure (ref. nuclear)	23.3	1.000		35.9	1.000	
Extended	51.1	**0.363**	**0.000**	44.5	1.285	0.534
Multiple	18.5	**0.399**	**0.008**	11.9	1.230	0.703
One-person family	5.3	**0.300**	**0.017**	6.7	2.007	0.285
Uncertain typology	1.7	0.155	0.105	1.0	-	
Number of co-resident children 0-11 yrs from previous	0.3	1.187	0.244	0.2	**0.509**	**0.000**
Number of co-resident sons 12+ yrs from previous	0.9	**0.573**	**0.002**	0.8	0.620	0.160
Number of co-resident daughters 12+ yrs from previous	0.5	**0.540**	**0.005**	0.5	0.568	0.105
Duration of widowhood (ref. 0-2 yrs)	25.6	1.000		13.2	1.000	
3-10 yrs	30.2	**0.388**	**0.002**	26.6	0.633	0.301
11+ yrs	12.5	**0.150**	**0.010**	17.0	0.637	0.495
Duration unknown	31.7	0.661	0.214	43.2	**0.372**	**0.022**
Migration experience (ref. Non migrant)	63.7	1.000		55.2	1.000	
Migrant	36.3	1.118	0.647	44.8	1.391	0.378
Tax level (ref. Untaxed)	22.3	1.000		51.1	1.000	
High & medium tax	19.9	0.547	0.138	11.4	0.552	0.330
Low tax	57.9	0.948	0.836	37.5	0.464	0.104
Logged Price of wheat at year t-1	3.1	0.968	0.956	3.1	**0.155**	**0.048**
-2 Log likelihood		577.0			352.6	
Person-years		1,343			3,562	

Finally, the socio-economic aspect of the question. Quite surprisingly, no clear evidence of a differential effect of SES on the risk of remarriage has been detected neither for widows nor for widowers. Nevertheless, people belonging to the well-off class, both men and women, would seem to be less prone to remarry than the poorest individuals (the untaxed category), which were, especially widows, much more in need to find someone able to provide them economic support. On the other hand, a worsening of the general economic conditions, marked by raise in grain prices, caused a significant decrease of the risk of remarrying for widows. Once again, it is the weakest part – the widow – to feel the most the effects of a negative economic cycle.

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