

ECON 460: Women, Work, and the World Economy

Reading Guide:

“Girl Power: The European Marriage Pattern and Labour Markets in the North Sea Region in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period”

This paper is a survey article: it does not present any new data analysis. You should read it from start to finish, but pay particular attention to the authors' explanation for the European Marriage Pattern, and in particular the interplay between inheritance patterns and women's involvement in the economy. After reading the article, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1. What was the **European Marriage Pattern** (EMP), and when did it arise?
2. According to the authors, what are the three aspects of the EMP that most of the prior literature has focused on?
3. Which two possible explanations for (or mechanisms underlying) the EMP did John Hanjal suggest in the article he wrote in 1965?
4. What are the three factors that led to the emergence of the EMP in northern Europe (as described in Section II)?
5. How did the institution of marriage evolve in Europe during the middle ages, and what were the implications of these changes for women's bargaining power within marriage?
6. How did inheritance systems differ between northern and southern Europe?
7. How might the dowry system in place in Italy have created incentives for parents to arrange marriages for their daughters when they were relatively young?
8. How did the practice of becoming a servant differ between northern and southern Europe, and what were the implications of these differences for women?
9. How did the typical age-at-marriage differ between northern and southern Europe in the late middle ages and early modern period? Was the age gap between spouses similar in the two regions?
10. Why did parents in northern Europe invest more in girls' human capital, relative to parents in southern Europe?