

## Abstract

### **Approaching migrations through family names: the Barcelona area at the 16th century**

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Because of the absence of appropriate registers, migrations are the most difficult demographic phenomena to measure, at past as much as in present days. Parish archives allow for direct estimations of fertility, mortality and nuptiality, but migrations have to be estimated indirectly.

Information on family names offers a privileged source of information to approach the study of migration. Classically, where family names are permanent along life, the comparison of names at baptism and at burial throw estimates of out-migration (baptism without burial) and in-migration (burial without baptism).

The challenge we have to face is to approach migration when the individual follow-up is impossible because only one event is available. Our contribution aims to illustrate the potentialities of the use of family names under that constriction, by an application to the area of Barcelona during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, using the names in the marriage licenses register available at the Barcelona Historical Marriage Database (BHMD).

#### **Rationale and Methodology**

When family names are transmitted from one generation to the following under the same form and with fixed rules, the emergence of new names can only be explained by exceptions in the transmission rules, occasional replacement by nicknames, misspelling or, more likely, in-migration. The comparison of the stocks of existing names at different moments allows for gross estimations of in-migration and establishment of its trends.

The Barcelona area during the 16<sup>th</sup> century offers a privileged field for this kind of approach. On one side, a strong migratory flow of French subjects has been documented through numerous monographs. On the other, we have access to exceptional data: the family names of all men and most women getting married in the 90 parishes of the *Oficialitat de Barcelona* from 1481 to 1600 (BHMD) and the names of all household heads in Catalonia, by an enumeration of 1497 and of part of them by a partial enumeration in 1553. In the first case, we are speaking of 70.000 marriages, in the second we deal with 60.000 individuals in 1497 and 46.000 in 1553.

Our objectives are:

- . Comparing the names of the wed with the household heads in the enumeration of 1497 and with the accumulated stock of names at a given moment, to detect the exact moment of appearance of new names. These could be analysed quantitatively (rates, trends) and qualitatively (which are the new names?).
- . Detecting abnormal increases of certain family names, which cannot be explained by natural dynamics and would suggest in-migration of persons wearing these names or the assignation of these names to new migrants.
- . Comparing the new or inflated names with the maps of family names in 1497 and 1553, referring to the whole Catalonia (about 1.900 parishes) to establish possible origins and allowing the isolation of the unexplainable ones, which could have more distant origins.

### The poster

Our aim is to produce a poster for the 10thEPC in Stockholm, illustrated with graphs and maps, that we cannot show here because this part of the BHMD is still under construction until December 2011. The data from the censuses of 1497 and 1553 are already available. The first signer, Joan Pau Jordà, has already worked on this subject in a research work cited below and he is in charge of the harmonization of family names of the BHMD in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The other signers are members of the project "Five Centuries of Marriages" (5CofM) at the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* and *Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics*.

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