



THE KAFALAH AND THE CASE OF THE HOUSE WORKERS

Among the various forms of exploitation of migrant workers is the cd. the kafalah (protection or sponsorship) system through which the countries of the Arabian Peninsula control the migration flows within their borders. The kafalah system originates from a Bedouin tradition, according to which foreigners arriving in the countries of the Gulf were entrusted to so-called Kafil (or guardians) who had the task of ensuring protection and security to their guests.

In the present day, and especially after the economic boom that has characterized the countries of the Middle East, the original meaning that had characterized the kafalah system has changed in the name of times migration policies to the acquisition of cheap labor and solely for the duration of the employment contract, without providing any rights or options for the stabilization of migrant workers.

Despite the fact that the kafalah system is applied to all foreign workers entering the Gulf areas, there are three categories which are most affected by the phenomenon: farmers and shepherds, who are forced to work in harsh conditions in the desert, and domestic workers. In the course of the article I will examine the case of domestic workers illustrating the situation in which they are forced to work and will highlight the lack of tools that can effectively protect and guarantee their rights.