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FEUDAL ECONOMY IN EARLY MODERN WESTERN SLOVENIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents an interpretation of the fundamental economic characteristics of the manors in the southern Hapsburg lands, today's Western Slovenia, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Relying on official estimates of manors, it presents the structure of the landlords' rents and an attempt of evaluating the presence and extent of an active landlords' approach to the economic activities within their manors. The paper aims to put the case of Western Slovenia into a European context and to contribute to the study of the differences and similarities in the feudal systems development in early modern Europe. The feudal economy of Western Slovenia results to be characterized by the weakness of the demesne economy, by a strong share of money incomes in the manorial rent, and by a rather high degree of non-agricultural activities among the rural population of the area.

Key words: feudal system, feudal rent, demesne economy, Central Europe, Western Slovenia, 16th–17th Centuries

ECONOMIA FEUDALE NELLA SLOVENIA OCCIDENTALE IN ETÀ MODERNA

SINTESI

L'articolo presenta un'interpretazione delle caratteristiche economiche di fondo delle signorie feudali delle terre asburgiche meridionali, corrispondenti all'attuale Slovenia occidentale, tra gli ultimi decenni del Cinque e i primi del Seicento. Basandosi sulle stime ufficiali del valore delle signorie feudali, il contributo presenta la struttura della rendita percepita dal possessore della signoria e un tentativo di valutare la presenza e l'estensione di un approccio attivo da parte dei signori alle attività economiche nell'ambito delle signorie. L'articolo mira a collocare il caso della Slovenia occidentale nel contesto europeo e a contribuire allo studio delle affinità e differenze nello sviluppo dei sistemi feudali europei nella prima età moderna.

L'economia feudale nella Slovenia occidentale risulta caratterizzata dalla debolezza dell'economia della grande riserva signorile basata sulle corvées, dall'ingente quota di entrate in denaro nell'ambito della rendita signorile e dal rilevante grado di attività extra agricole della popolazione rurale dell'area.

Parole chiave: sistema feudale, rendita feudale, economia della riserva signorile, Europa Centrale, Slovenia Occidentale, secoli XVI–XVII

INTRODUCTION

The paper presents an interpretation of the fundamental economic characteristics of the manors in the southern Hapsburg lands,¹ that is in the County of Gorica/Gorizia (*Grafschaft Görz*) with a part of the Duchy of Kranjska/Krain/Carniola, today's Western Slovenia², in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The research relies on a lesser-used source typology, the estimates of manors (*Herrschaftschätzungen*), a very interesting source to consider since they allow us to survey and compare wider areas. The source allows an insight into the material foundations of the aristocracy in the form land revenues, the orientation of production in agriculture, and structural outlines of social relations. Specific attention is dedicated to the attempt of evaluating the presence, nature and extent of an active landlords' approach to the economic activities within their manors. The main different directions and strategies to increase income from land to which such active approach led in 16th and 17th century Europe, as recognized by the historiography, may be probably summarized as follows: a renewed introduction of 'forgotten' payments and duties and a more strict control over the peasants' duties in Western Europe, the activation of all production potentials in Central Europe (*Wirtschaftsherrschaft*), the large, market-oriented agricultural estate managed directly and based on the peasants' *corvée* labour in Eastern Europe (*Gutsherrschaft*), the spreading of different kinds of short-term tenancy contracts (most known is the *mezzadria* in Southern Europe, parts of Italy and France in particular) besides the 'large lease' of large-scale farms managed with increasingly capitalist criteria to be found in different regions of early-modern Europe (from

1 An extended version of this paper was presented at the World Economic History Congress 2009 in Utrecht, session N7 »The development of the rural economy and the 'demesne lordship' (Gutsherrschaft): East-central Europe, c. 1500–c. 1800«.

2 That is the area between the Julian Alps and the Northern-Adriatic littoral area, in today's Slovenia referred to as the region of »Primorska«.

Lombardy to England passing through the Netherlands). And what about Western Slovenia: where does it belong? What might be her contribution to the »East-and-West-of-the-Elbe debate«? What are the striking features and are there any particular features to be observed there? By answering to these questions, the paper aims to put this specific case into a European context and to contribute to the study of the differences and similarities in the feudal systems development in early modern Europe.

The examined area encompasses the mountainous Soča/Isonzo Valley, the Vipava Valley, and the Karst. Politically and administratively, from the 16th through the 18th centuries the area was divided between the County of Gorica/Gorizia and the Duchy of Carniola, and bordered Venetian Friuli in the west and Venetian Istria in the south. The border character of this area was not only defined by its division between the Hapsburg hereditary lands and the Republic of Venice but also reflected in the economic, social, and ethnic fields.

Briefly describing the border and transit character of the examined area in terms of trade, we can say that it represented the hinterland of the north-eastern Adriatic space, in particular the Hapsburg towns of Trieste and Gorizia and the Venetian towns of Koper and Piran. The countryside was traversed by cross-border merchant flows between the Austrian and Pannonian spaces on one hand and the Italian and Adriatic spaces on the other. The local countryside population was involved in these merchant activities with horse packing, carting, trafficking, and contraband. The peasants participated in long-distance commercial exchange while being connected with the local market, both in towns as in the countryside (Gestrin, 1991; Panjek, 2002).

The border area was characterized by different agrarian structures as well: that in Carniola and the eastern part of the County of Gorica/Gorizia considerably differed from the structure prevailing in Hapsburg and Venetian Friuli, the Trieste area, and Venetian Istria. In Primorska (the Slovenian name for the region), and in particular in Karst and the Vipava and Soča/Isonzo Valleys, the economic and administrative structure was marked by relatively large and compact manorial estates (*Herrschaft*) with ample manorial courts (*Landgericht*). Large manors were in fact usually coupled with judicial authority, which means that the holder of the manorial court would usually be the largest feudal lord in that area. In the vicinity of towns the serfdom system was more scattered (Vilfan, 1980a, 200; Panjek, 1997a)³ and thus the high number of estates in the surroundings of the towns of Gorizia and Trieste can be attributed to their relatively small size. The peasantry could hold farms in the form of life-long tenancy, which tended to be *de facto* hereditary or based on the »purchase right« (*Kaufrecht*), which legally granted the peasant the right to inherit and sell the farm. This situation was generally common to a major part of Inner Austria (*In-*

3 Smaller and scattered manors and estates were prevalent in number in for instance Carniola (Gestrin, 1991, 39, 72).

nerösterreich or the group of Hapsburg provinces of which the area we are analyzing was part).

In Goriška Brda/Collio, the plain of Gorizia, the lowlands of Friuli, and the area of Trieste large estates were significantly more scattered and fragmented and not necessarily coupled with judicial rights. The population could hold farms and plots of land based on long-term tenancy contracts, or could also own them; however, short-term tenancy contracts with mixed tributes were much more common (*affitto misto*, form of agricultural lease with fixed and proportional tributes), in addition to other forms of land lease (as the *livello*, which could hide forms of credit). The same types of contract were widespread in Venetian Friuli and Istria as in a large part of northern and central Italy.⁴ Hence, in terms of its agrarian structure the Primorska area represented a land of transition between the central European and Mediterranean spaces.

It is the former Hapsburg part of Western Slovenia and the area characterized by the manors in particular that is addressed by this paper. With the acquisition of the County of Gorica/Gorizia (1500), the Hapsburgs acquired large manors and ample forests that became part of the Inner-Austrian »Court Chamber« (*Innerösterreichische Hofkammer*), which managed the estate-properties and finances of the sovereign (the Hapsburg archduke). In the 16th century the Hapsburg archdukes would grant the manors in this area in the form of »pledge« (*Pfand*) to old and new nobles while in the first decades of the 17th century they would sell them. The pledges and the sales brought to a sensitive concentration of administrative, judicial, and economic power in the hands of few noble families, each having control over large portions of the countryside, irrespective of the location of the manors in the County of Gorica/Gorizia or in the Duchy of Carniola: the Coronini family held the large mountainous area of the upper Soča/Isonzo Valley (manor and district of Tolmin), the Thurn family held the manor of Duino/Devin (Tybein), the Petazzi the manors of Schwarzenegg (today Podgrad pri Vremah) and Socerb (St. Serff), and had territorial jurisdiction in Novigrad na Krasu; these bordering manors constituted a compact whole, similarly to the manors of Reifenberg/Rihemberk and Vipava (Wippach) of the Lanthieri and the manors of Senožeče (Senosetsch) and Prem of the Porzia. The Gradisca County, created to be granted to the Eggenberg, can be added to this list. In addition to the alienation of the largest manors, numerous sales of minor manors and estates took place in the 17th and 18th centuries. In the plain of Friuli no manors were created and the primary object of concession and alienation was jurisdictional rights. The granting of other rights by the Chamber (*Hofkammer*) was recorded as well. Therefore, the first two centuries of the modern era were marked by a long process of temporary or permanent devolution of administrative, jurisdictional, and economic rights as well as cameral estates to the benefit of local elites (Panjek, 2005).

4 On the forms of production relations in Italian agriculture see Giorgetti, 1974.



Fig. 1: Approximate extension of the analyzed area in Western Slovenia (Public information, Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia, 1 : 1.000.000 National General Map of Slovenia, November 15, 2009).

Sl. 1: Približen obseg obravnavanega območja v zahodni Sloveniji (Javne informacije Slovenije, Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije, Državna pregledna karta v merilu 1 : 1.000.000, stanje podatkov na dan 15. 11. 2009).

THE LANDLORD'S INCOMES: THE SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

The existing archival material offers two types of sources that provide a relatively integrated picture and are particularly valuable for the historical research of the economic and social reality of the countryside: these are land registers (*Urbar*) and summaries of annual income of manors (*Einkommens-Extrakt*). Land registers have been extensively used in Slovene and Austrian historiography,⁵ which is why they will not be dealt with here, except when they may facilitate the interpretation of the main source used in this paper, which are summaries of annual income. These have been used in research, but less so in Slovenia (Vilfan, 1980a, 204; Blaznik, 1980; Gestrin, 1991, 230–231; mostly Umek, 1982; in Austria Knittler, 1989; Bastl, 1992).

Summaries of annual income were created within the process of estimates of manors before these were given in pledge or sold. Given that up to the first decades of the 17th century all large manors in the Primorska region had still been owned by the prince who put them on sale right then (and thus had estimates made), these sources allow an examination of a large and compact part of the countryside that extends from the mountainous area of the upper Soča/Isonzo Valley (Tolmin area) to Karst and Istria. In the 16th century the manors would be given in pledge (*Pfand*) while in the first decades of the next century they would be sold, in both cases against payment to the Chamber. The amount of the payment (pledge amount or purchase money) was determined by a Chamber commission after the estimate of the manor and verification of its return. Temporally and generally, the sales in the first half of the 17th century in Primorska can be compared to similar operations carried out in Hapsburg hereditary lands from 1575 through 1625. The estimate not only included the income from the feudal census or tribute (*Zins*) but income of any kind (tithes, jurisdiction fees, *corvée* labour or demesne economy). Both the pledge (*Pfandkaufweis*), which could be hereditary or not, and the sale (*freier rechter Kauf*) could be revoked by the prince (*wiederruflicher Kauf*).

Even though on one hand the pledge had the character of feudal benefice,⁶ in fact manors were leased out in exchange for a loan to the Chamber. Income from the manor belonged to the lender and represented the interest rate that he was entitled to for his loan. Therefore, the pledge amount (*Pfandsumma*) represented a long-term loan to the state treasury (Vilfan, 1980a, 178) while the feudal rent represented the interest on the loan capital (Knittler, 1989, 23–24). This was a financial-real property transaction between the Chamber and the nobleman, in which the 'state' financed itself through a temporary pledge of its property while the nobleman made a cautious, certain, and profitable investment. Revocable sale, too, represented a »form of credit operation« (Vilfan, 1980a, 180). The objective of the estimate procedure (*Herrschaft-*

5 For the Primorska region e.g. Kos, 1954.

6 For the relation between pledge and benefice, see Boutruche, 1984, 209–210.

sschätzung) was the calculation of the value of the manor: to this purpose the rent and real property value were summed in the »summary of annual income« (*Summari Extract der jährlichen Einkommen*). The summary included and calculated, though not always, some basic expenses, primarily taxes and wages for stewards (*Pfleger*) and salaries for judges. Given their inconsistency in these estimates, expenses will not be examined and calculated; in addition, the stated expenses could not have been the only costs and expenses of manorial operation and the source does not provide any data on the revenue generated by the demesne economy, which is why they would not lead to satisfactory and consistent estimates of net income across all manors. Therefore, the analysis will first focus on gross rent income, supported by much more homogeneous data. The second phase represents an attempt to quantify the demesne economy despite being based on incomplete and non-homogeneous data.

In terms of its form and content the summary of annual income is a synthetic list of all income of the manor: it lists the *Zins*, the tithe, different leases, the vineyard tax, the grazing fee, *corvée* labour, and receipts from public law offices and rights (fines, death duties, transfer fees, road tolls, taxes, mills, hunting and fishing fees etc.). In addition, the summary includes the value of demesne property or revenue generated by the demesne economy. Income from land can be divided into income in kind and income in money. Among tributes in kind in the form of *Zins* as well as tithe various types of grain and other crops are listed separately, so is white and red wine as well as livestock. A variety of other tributes is also listed, ranging from money to eggs. Non-agrarian income includes fines, transfer and inheritance fees, taxes from artisans and parish fairs, excise duties, road tolls and customs duties, depending on the extent of the rights of each manor. The *Zins* is a relatively good indicator of current receipts while tithe receipts represent the average (mostly triennial) return. The quantification of other receipts, primarily those from public functions, is based on bookkeeping records only to a minor extent; instead it mostly relies on estimates of probable (sometimes minimal) receipts. The commissioners' estimates were based on the geographical size and traffic position of the manor, population size, and last but not least enquiries among the serfs. Statements made by peasants were also used to determine the average amount of the tithe rent when they lacked documented data or when cooperation from the nobleman was scarce.

The analysis and processing of the material open a series of methodological questions. These include different measuring units, the value of produce expressed in money value (price), the information provided by the *Zins* and tithe, the estimate and calculation of *corvée* labour and demesne property, the differentiation between revenue and rent, and a logical systematization of the diverse forms of income, that have already been presented and discussed elsewhere (Panjek, 2002; 2004). The category »land-rent income«, as used here, consists of tributes and payments in money and in kind that the manorial lord received on the basis of different rights over cultivated

and non-cultivated land or the agrarian activities of the peasant population: for farms, plots of land, common meadows, pastures, and forests (*Zins* and vineyard taxes [*Bergrecht*], tithes, rents, grazing fees etc.). The category »income from public functions« consists of receipts of the manorial lord that derive from his public rights and competencies in a broader sense (manorial court, royal prerogatives, taxes) and that were not directly connected with agrarian activities: court taxes and fines, inheritance and sales taxes for farms, road and bridge tolls, taxes levied on goods entering the area, excise duties, parish fair dues, artisan taxes, and receipts from hunting and fishing. The third category used here consists of rent in labour services, which refers to various services that the manorial lord was entitled to and the peasant was obligated to (the calculation of the rent in labour services will be based on the money value of *corvée* labour as estimated by the commissioners).

The analysis of the feudal economy from the perspective of the landlord's rent will be followed by an attempt to estimate the importance of the demesne economy within the broader manorial economy. Here the analysis and interpretation will be limited by the mentioned methodological limitations and the scarcity of available data on demesne economy and demesne estates. Most of our estimates from the early 17th century include the real property value of demesne estates, and not their revenue. In these cases the methodology adopted in the attempt to quantify the importance of demesne economy is the comparison between the real property value of the demesne estate and the capitalized values of different groups of rent income of manors. Under the given circumstances this is the only method that allows comparisons between comparable categories (capital-value with capital-value) despite having a series of limitations. Firstly, we lack knowledge concerning the estimate procedure of demesne estates, and secondly, different aspects of demesne estates may be involved (land, facilities, forests); these were subject to different forms of management and had a different role within the production process.⁷ In addition, part of the income from forests was included in the land-rent. An additional problem is again *corvée* labour. On one hand, methodological consistency requires the inclusion of *corvée* labour into the category of capital components of the estate based on the fact that it undoubtedly was a component of the total value of a manor; on the other hand, in the actual production process part of available *corvée* labour was used for the cultivation of demesne land. Anyway, in these cases we will analyze the capital structure of the manor, in which differences and comparisons will be made among capitalized land-rent, capitalized income from public functions, capitalized *corvée* labour, real property value of the demesne, and real property value of forests. Where available, the information on the quantity and typology of labour obligations of the serfs will be used in an attempt to interpret the role of demesne economy in manors.

⁷ About the uses and exploitation of woods and forests in early modern western Slovenia see Panjek, 2007.

THE LANDLORDS' RENTS

The analysis of manors clearly indicates the very different conditions prevailing in each. The main factors that determined the local specific character of manors derived from environmental characteristics and the geographical location of the area, and from the rights and competencies that each manor and area held. Despite differences, it is the common features that will be described here.

Among the most salient common features we can find the high level of concentration of land and rights (*Zins*, vineyard taxes [*Bergrecht*], tithe, dues for uncultivated and cleared land, judicial and fiscal competencies) and thus power in the hands of landlords, particularly in large manorial estates (Tolmin, Duino, Reifenberg, Vipava, Schwarzenegg). Within the judicial area of these major estates there were other landlords or manorial lords, while the manors also held farms located beyond the boundaries of their manorial court. Considerably smaller and fragmented manors also existed; with the exception of the Socerb manor these will not be dealt with in this paper.

Common features across these manors include the structure of the feudal rent. The share of tributes in kind ranged from one to two thirds, with the exception of the mountainous manor of Tolmin, where it reached only a fifth of total value. The share of the land-rent ranged from one half to 80%. An exception in this respect was the Socerb manor because of high income from tollhouses (*Maut*). Therefore, the feudal rent was generally based on the land-rent, which was prevalently exacted in kind but also in money, given that everywhere the land-rent contained approximately 15 to 20% of money. Hence, in all manors money income exceeded one fifth of the total rent, and the existence of tollhouses among the competencies of the manor in particular tended to increase the share of money income to two thirds. An example where money income reached a share of two thirds is the manor of Tolmin (StLA, 10); here, however, this was a result of the clear orientation toward tributes in money in the land-rent itself, which can be compared to other alpine regions.⁸ In manors with vast lands and therefore a higher number of *Hube*, *Korb/Keuschler*,⁹ and consequentially serfs, *corvée* labour held a significant portion in the total rent, ranging from one tenth to one fifth of its value; in other cases the economic potential and importance of *corvée* labour was much lower (Tables 1–3). In large manorial estates the total value of the feudal rent ranged from three to six thousand *gulden* a year while in the extensive Tolmin manor it exceeded 10,000 *gulden* (Table 5).

Some common features can also be noticed with regard to the structure of the rent in kind. Wheat and oats prevailed among grain in all manors. Conditions permitting, a significant role was held by wine, in some cases (to a lesser extent) small cattle

8 *Zinsen* and rents in money were common in the alpine territory. These can be found, to make two examples, both in Carnia (Morassi, 1997, 165) and in Trentino (Pastori Bassetto, 1986, 71).

9 Farms/heads of farm with lesser land, cottagers.

(Table 4). All manors were entitled to the exaction of the tithe, though not necessarily across the entire area, and this income significantly contributed to the variegated structure of the land-rent and its total amount.

The preference for wheat, oats, wine, and money as constituents of the land-rent was realized through the traditional *Zins* and tithes, the selective tendency toward the intensification and expansion of the same cultures, and the commutation of tributes in kind into tributes in money. However, as confirmed by the wide selection of grain and other produce mostly but not only as parts of the tithe, agriculture was essentially polycultural and directed by the nutritional needs of the peasant population. Another reason for the wide range of grain can be identified in harsh natural conditions, typical of karstic and mountainous worlds. Nevertheless, the prevalence of wheat and oats can be attributed to land register regulations and demands of the rent receiver as well as their market value for the peasant, if any were left after he had settled the various obligations.

The share of the natural rent in the examined manors is not negligible (Table 2). The receivers were provided with saleable market goods favoured by the location of Karst, the Vipava Valley and the Tolmin area in the hinterland of the towns of Gorizia and Trieste and along the border with the Republic of Venice. However, calculations indicate that produce from the largest rents in this area (Table 4) would not be sufficient to meet the alimentary needs of a single neighbouring town; the grain from all rents could feed 800 people for one year while there would be enough wine for 369 people for one year only.¹⁰

Table 1: Rent structure across manors: land-rent, public functions, labour services (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 131).

Tabela 1: Struktura rente v gospostvih: zemljiška, javnopravna, storitve (tlaka) (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 131).

Manor	Land-rent %	Public functions %	Labour services %	Total %
Senožeče 1615	57.24	39.47	3.29	100
Schwarzenegg 1618	77.13	9.45	13.42	100
Socerb 1620	41.86	55.89	2.25	100
Duino 1637	54.14	29.48	16.38	100
Reifenberg 1624	75.21	6.53	18.26	100
Vipava 1624	82.74	6.16	11.10	100
Tolmin 1633	47.03	38.74	14.23	100

¹⁰ The calculation includes average daily consumption of 0.6 kg of grain per person, the weight of 75 kg for 1 hl of grain, and 37.5 kg for 1 hl of oats; daily wine consumption was estimated at 0.67: Panjek, 2004, 49–50; Malanima, 1995, 500; Fornasin, 2001, 56–57; Panjek G., 1992, 155–163).

Table 2: Rent structure across manors: money, kind, labour services (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 131).*

Tabela 2: Struktura rente v gospostvih: denar, naturalije, storitve (tlaka) (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 131).**

Manor	Money %	Kind %	Labour services %	Total %
Senožeče 1615	55.23	41.48	3.29	100
Schwarzenegg 1618	23.93	62.65	13.42	100
Socerb 1620	66.76	30.99	2.25	100
Duino 1637	51.29	32.33	16.38	100
Reifenberg 1624	22.75	58.99	18.26	100
Vipava 1624	26.77	62.46	10.77	100
Tolmin 1633	68.66	22.28	9.06	100

* Where income from public functions includes tributes in kind, these are included among tributes in kind; dues in money include the Robotgeld, if collected, and the tithe collected in money.

** Kjer so med javnopravnimi dohodki prisotne dajatve v naravi, so te vključene v odstotek naturalij; kjer je izpričano plačevanje robotnine in/ali desetine v denarju, so ti zneski vključeni v dohodke v denarju.

Table 3: Money income in the rent of manors (Panjek, 2004, 46; 2002, 130).

Tabela 3: Denarni dohodki v renti posposte (Panjek, 2004, 46; 2002, 130).

Manor	Land-rent in money (<i>gulden</i>)	Income from public functions in money (<i>gulden</i>)	Total <i>gulden</i>
Senožeče 1615	235.88	563.60	799.48
Schwarzenegg 1618	455.78	297.50	753.28
Socerb 1620	156.27	803.12	959.40
Duino 1637	1,362.45	1,739.07	3,101.52
Reifenberg 1624	752.67	304.33	1,057.00
Vipava 1624	1,152.91	350.00	1,502.91
Tolmin 1633	2,729.31	4,269.28	6,998.59
<i>Total</i>	<i>6,845.27</i>	<i>8,326.90</i>	<i>15,172.18</i>

Table 4: Main forms of natural income in the rent of manors (quantities) (Panjek, 2004, 48; 2002, 130).

Tabela 4: Glavni naravni dohodki v renti gospoŝtev (koliĉine) (Panjek, 2004, 48; 2002, 130).

Manor	Wheat (hl)	Oats (hl)	Other grain (hl)	White wine (hl)	Teran wine (hl)	Small cattle (head)
Senoŝeĉe 1615	90.10	91.95	39.22	37.51	3.88	81.0
Schwarzenegg 1618	130.91	205.67	219.35	0.00	0.00	359.0
Socerb 1620	16.96	23.72	37.02	38.80	0.00	0.00
Duino 1637	107.10	143.48	15.26	17.62	66.77	318.0
Reifenberg 1624	185.93	186.18	142.38	191.76	97.34	11.5
Vipava 1624	187.18	154.90	156.65	251.58	197.25	150.0
Tolmin 1633	147.43	407.76	253.49	0.00	0.00	118.0
Total	865.61	1,213.66	863.37	537.27	365.24	1037.5
Total in kg ¹¹	64.921	45.512	64.753	-	-	-

Table 5: Total rent across manors (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 132).

Tabela 5: Skupna renta gospoŝtev (Panjek, 2004, 47; 2002, 132).

Manor	Total rent (gulden)	Landlord (gulden)
Senoŝeĉe 1615	1,427.97	Porzia
Schwarzenegg 1618	3,146.96	Petazzi
Socerb 1620	1,436.95	
Duino 1637	5,899.05	Thurn
Reifenberg 1624	4,641.34	Lanthieri
Vipava 1624	5,683.61	
Tolmin 1633	11,026.01	Coronini
Total	33,261.89	

THE LANDLORDS' DEMESNE ECONOMY

Following a description from 1624, the demesne estate of the manor of Vipava consisted of one *Maierhof*,¹² 11 meadows, 7 fields, and 4 vineyards (according to the

11 The calculation is based on the weight of 75 kg for 1 hl of grain and 37.5 for 1 hl of oats.

12 Originally the *Maierhof* had often been farms that later passed under direct management: »Die Eigenwirtschaft erfolgte meist in der Weise, daŝ aus eingezogenen Bauerngtern oder aus Gemeindeland

1572 estimate their yield amounted to 655 litres of white and 1,035 litres of red wine), and the (unpopulated) Baumkircherturm complex. According to the 1572 estimate, another *Maierhof* (with land covering a total of 9 *Tagbau* – approximately 3 hectares), one garden, 3 vineyards, and some meadows could be found here. The Baumkircherturm complex was cultivated with *corvée* labour of 16 *Hube*, each of which had to provide four days of *corvée* labour with draft animals and eight days of manual *corvée* labour (1572). No data concerning the quantity and form of *corvée* obligations is available for a major part of the manor. It is only known that *corvée* labour was compulsory for a total of 196 *Hube* and 220 *Keuschler* (1624). The different capacity of the latter is implicitly stated, namely that »all have to at least help in manual *corvée* activities [...] so that *corvée* labour of each cottager can be calculated with that of another,« that is on average or approximately. The 1624 estimate also mentions that the landlord implemented new, »unordinary« ploughing *corvée* labour on demesne land, which amounted to 14 days of labour and was to be added to the regular *corvée* labour; however, the peasantry would rather pay the *Robotgeld* than work. The new *Robotgeld* was significantly higher than the value of the 'old *corvée*' (StLA, 1; 2; 4).

Based on the 1624 estimate, the demesne estate of the manor of Reifenberg consisted of 5 meadows (52 *Tagbau* – approximately 18 hectares), 2 uncultivated fields (less than 1 hectare), 2 *braide*, some gardens, a wine cellar at Štanjel, and some partly derelict facilities (*Maierhof*). *Braide* refer to plots of land with a variety of cultures, including trees, vines, grain, and vegetables. In this case one *braida* included a vineyard and a cultivated field (2.5 *Tagbau* – a bit less than 1 hectare, in addition to six rows of vines), while the other included one cultivated field (10.34 *Tagbau* – approximately 3.6 hectares). There is no data on the extent of the gardens »situated all around the castle hill.« The manorial lord of Reifenberg could use *corvée* labour provided by 249 *Hube*, many of which were inhabited by several serfs (heads of families), »all obliged to labour«, and 524 *Keuschler* (tenants of farms of the *Korb* type, cottagers). The source does not specify the type of service nor the number of days of labour requested from each peasant. The sum of the *Hube* and cottagers, at 773, which also represents the minimal number of days of labour at the disposal of the landlord, allows us to conclude that *corvée* labour was more than sufficient to cover the necessary activities on 54.25 *Tagbau* of meadows and 12.84 *Tagbau* of arable land (partly covered with vines and gardens), which the demesne consisted of. It is thus probable that part of the labour force remained unused and that *corvée* labour was converted into a money tribute. The 1624 summary does not provide any data on revenue yielded by the demesne economy. In 1572 the average yield of the *braide* was 13 hl of white wine, 97 hl of *teran* red wine, and 100 *pesenali* of

Meierhöfe angelegt wurden, deren Bewirtschaftung die restlichen Bauern als zusätzliche Robot übernehmen mußten. Diese Entwicklung begann [...] ähnlich wie im Burgenland bald nach 1500 und erreichte nach 1600 ihren Höhepunkt« (Tremel, 1969, 240).

»various grain« (rye, spelt, millet, and oats, approximately 1,600 kg). In addition, there were two *Maierhof*. In 1572 the one located in Branik, the village near the castle, maintained an independent cultivation function, producing 70 *pesenali* of mixed grain. Another was converted into a stable and winter and summer pasture for a flock of approximately 400 sheep, of which the income is unknown (StLA, 3; 5).

Demesne land at Schwarzenegg was larger. In 1618 it consisted of two *Maierhof* of unknown size (one was cultivated as a garden, orchard, and *teran* vineyard), and various fields and gardens, divided into four entire *Hube* for a total of eighty *Tagbau*. In addition, there were some meadows, their production being estimated at 200 *Fueder* of hay, and forests. Similarly to other demesne estates, no indications are available concerning the income earned from forests; what is known is their attributed real property value, which represented a significant share of the total value of the demesne estate. The Schwarzenegg summary accurately lists the *corvée* obligations of the subject population: 157 transports, 81.5 days of ploughing, 146.5 days of unspecified *robota*, 367.5 days of manual work, 268 *Fueder* of hay and grain to be transported to the castle, 30.5 days of manuring, 450 days of various forms of manual *robota* owed by the *Untersassen* (villagers with virtually no land), 36 days of hoeing and reaping of the demesne *braide* situated near the castle by the closest *Hube* (1 day each), in addition to the complete maintenance of castle gardens that had to be done by eight *Untersassen* who lived in their vicinity, and construction work at the castle. The records on the demesne estate do not provide all data concerning the size of agricultural land. Nevertheless, a comparison of its size with compulsory *corvée* labour allows a partial estimate of its use in direct production. 81.5 days of ploughing is close to 80 *Tagbau* of field area, the delivery of 268 sheaves of hay can be related to meadows whose size was estimated at 200 sheaves. Considering the low productivity of *corvée* labour, the quantity and variety of *corvée* obligations as well as the larger size of the demesne estate, it can be deduced that in Schwarzenegg the majority if not all available *corvée* labour was utilized. Only with reference to packing or carting to Gorizia, Rijeka, and Trieste (*Samfahrt*, *Weinfahrt*), the commissioners explicitly stated that unused obligation was to be converted into one *gulden* of *Robotgeld*.

In 1637 the demesne estate of the manor of Duino consisted of one *Maierhof*, several meadows, a garden in front of the walls of Duino borough (*Merkht Tybein*), the vineyard below the castle, two fields, and forests. Significant differences between two real property estimates of this manor can be observed. One of the reasons for the higher (second) estimate, as stated by the commissioners of the Chamber, was that in the first the estimated value of demesne estate was too low: the former and the current owners bred a high number of cattle and horses, and the commissioners also thought that the first estimate of forests was »very low«. Speaking of *corvée* labour, the estimate states that Count Thurn used *corvée* labour for the construction of two mills and that the castle was mostly built using compulsory labour. The accurate

quantity and typology of agricultural obligations are not mentioned and data concerning the size of the demesne estate is also absent. Therefore, any conclusions as to the use of *corvée* labour on demesne land would be uncertain.

The size of the demesne estate at the manor of Socerb was limited. In addition to three gardens and some meadows it mostly consisted of woodland. The description of *corvée* obligations is not complete: only 33 days of labour are mentioned while the type of the majority of obligations remains unstated. The extent of *corvée* labour certainly was low.

In the »manor and district« (*Herrschaft und Hauptmannschaft*) of Tolmin, in the mid-18th century the hill of Tolmin castle, unpopulated by the time, was surrounded by small demesne fields and meadows (*Acker- und Wiesflegken*), *braide* and *dobrave* (meadows). The tillage of the *braide* was performed by 82 *terrenari* coming from nine different villages. 54 *terrenari* (heads of *Hube*), each of whom had to plough seven *vaneze* and a half while sowing was a duty of their women, were sufficient for the 420 *vaneze* that were cultivated each year on average (rotation). In addition, each *terrenaro* had to supply the manorial lord with fifteen »two-wheeled *zagotto*« of manure, of which only approximately thirty would actually be used. Reaping, raking, and transporting hay from the lowland meadows (*dobrave*) were divided among eight communities. One village community was bound to a transportation of hay to the manor »house«, enjoying in return the right to pasturing in the *dobrave* where the manorial lord was only entitled to the »first grass«. The meadows in the mountains, producing two *mede* of hay a year, were reaped on alternate years by villagers from two communities, compensated with 8 *lire* each time.¹³ The wood needed by the manorial lord »in his house for burning« had to be delivered free of charge while it was the duty of the *terrenari* from three villages to supply the castle with the necessary water and that of the *cossani* (heads of *cossania*, *Keuschler*) from a village to repair the access road to it. In numerous cases the obligations exceeded the needs. Many services were remunerated with meagre payments and the cost of labour in the *braida*, for instance, amounted to approximately 38 *lire* a year. Transportation activities were included as well: the manorial lord could ask a serf to carry out two transports a year reaching beyond the boundaries of the manor but still within the counties of Gorica/Gorizia and Gradisca, for which he would be paid by the number of horses he used. Transport *corvée* services within the boundaries of the manor would be remunerated based on the daily rate of one *lira* for each man and another for each horse. These *robote*, too, could be converted into money tributes. In the district of Cerkno (covering approximately one third of the territory) all *corvée* services were converted into money value (ASPG, 1). This is what the situation was like in the mid-18th century. For the previous century we only know the value of demesne

13 On the Venetian money in the Southern Hapsburg lands, see Panjek, 2002 (with bibliography), and the more recent Darovec, 2008.

production and of all *corvée* labour generally converted into money, based on an estimate made by the Chamber in 1651; nevertheless, we are neither able to provide a reasonable approximation of the quantity of *robote* effectively used for production purposes nor the part that was used for transport services. In any case, if compared to total manorial income the importance of demesne production clearly appears as marginal; it would be even more so were we able to include the share of *corvée* labour not used for cultivation.

Taking into consideration the defined methodological criteria, some cases allow an estimate of the importance of demesne revenue compared to other sources of income: percent values range between modest three to slightly more than five percent (Table 6). The modest role of demesne economy is confirmed if the real property value of the demesne is used as an indicator: in no case its value exceeds 3.5% of the capital value of the manor (Table 7). Although we have noted that the value of the *corvée* labour in several cases represented a consistent share of the rent, since it could reach 18% (Tables 1 and 2), and that also its capitalized value was significant (17%, Table 7), it appears quite clearly from the analysis here above that in most cases the landlords did not exploit this resource to such an extent within their demesne economy.

Table 6: *Demesne revenue in relation to the land-rent and income from public functions (StLA, 1; 3; Panjek, 2002, 94 – Tolmin).*

Tabela 6: *Prihodki od pristavnega gospodarstva v primerjavi z zemljiško rento in z javnopravnimi dohodki (StLA, 1; 3; Panjek, 2002, 94 – Tolmin).*

		Land-rent	Income from public functions	<i>Robotgeld</i>	Demesne revenue
Vipava 1572 (without Baumkirchenturm)	<i>guld.</i>	2,897.14	90	N/A	124.17
	%	93.12	2.89	N/A	3.99 ¹⁴
Reifenberg 1572	<i>guld.</i>	2,130.17	100.65	N/A	125.67
	%	90.4	4.27	N/A	5.33
Tolmin 1633/1651	<i>guld.</i>	5,168.07	4,271.50	568,44 ¹⁵	350.00
	%	49.98	41.17	5,48 ¹⁶	3.37

14 Only the wine demesne production is calculated.

15 Incomplete sum.

16 Incomplete sum.

Table 7: Value of the demesne estate in relation to the capitalized income value (StLA, 4; 3; 6; 7; 8).

Tabela 7: Vrednost dominikalne posesti v primerjavi s kapitalizirano vrednostjo dohodkov (StLA, 4; 3; 6; 7; 8).

		Capitalized land-rent	Capitalized income from public functions	Capitalized <i>corvée</i> labour	Real property value of demesne	Real property value of forests	Total
Schwarzenegg 1618	<i>guld.</i>	48,546	5,950	8,443.2	1,880	7,733.00	72,552.20
	%	66.91	8.2	11.64	2.59	10.66	100
Socerb 1620	<i>guld.</i>	12,030.2	16,062	646.6	294	1,999.33	31,032.13
	%	38.77	51.76	2.08	0.95	6.44	100
Duino 1637	<i>guld.</i>	63,878.8	34,781.4	19,320.8	736.67	6,000	124,717.70
	%	51.22	27.89	15.49	0.59	4.81	100
Reifenberg 1624	<i>guld.</i>	69,813.2	6,066.8	16,946.8	3,368.5	0	96,195.30
	%	72.57	6.31	17.62	3.5	0	100
Vipava 1624	<i>guld.</i>	94,058.8	7,000	12,613.4	2,939.5	0	116,611.70
	%	80.66	6.00	10.82	2.52	0	100

WESTERN SLOVENIA IN A CENTRAL-EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

With a broad stroke of the brush, Ferdinand Braudel saw the »second serfdom« expanding »across ample spaces, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, to the Balkans, to the kingdom of Naples, Sicily, and from Moscow (a very particular case), crossing Poland and central Europe, to the approximate line that connects Hamburg with Vienna and Venice« (Braudel, 1981, 261–262). More recent economic historiography, however, is abandoning the overly simplified distinction between Western Europe west of the Elbe and Eastern Europe, characterized by a harsher feudal regime and general economic underdevelopment, to the east of this river. »*Un schéma classique oppose au système agraire de l'Europe occidentale au XVIe siècle, celui qui se développe au même moment en Europe centrale et orientale. Le rôle essentiel y appartient à la réserve seigneuriale (folwark) qui est exploitée directement*« (through the exploitation of *corvée* labour, Wyczanski, 1974, 772). Wyczanski used this definition of the distinction between the two parts of Europe as a starting point for several clarifications, in particular those concerning the freedom of economic action of the Polish rural population and the direction of development of the feudal structure. Aymard's criticism concerning the interpretation of the feudal system in Western Europe (»between the Loire and the Rhine«) and of its evolution as the »central and

original« model, compared to which other systems of development in space and time are referred to as underdeveloped or delayed, can be placed within the same trend (Aymard, 1981, 426–435).

The issue concerns socio-economic (Maczak, Samsonowicz, Burke, 1985) but also political structures (Zernack, 1995, 1–10). The arguments used by several authors to put forward and support the idea of »East-Central Europe« (*Ostmitteleuropa*) from the historical-economic point of view are convincing in many respects. The territory this term embraces varies among authors yet always includes the kingdoms of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary (Burke, 1985). Historical Austria should, but has not been placed within this context.¹⁷ In terms of feudal regimes, the Hapsburg hereditary lands (since the early 17th century also including Bohemia) were characterized by significant differences between the western (Tyrol) and eastern parts (Upper and Lower Austria, Inner Austria); in addition, there were strong analogies between Bohemia and the bordering Upper and Lower Austria while the differences between the latter and Inner Austria were not negligible (Valentinitsch, 1995). It seems that comparative studies have not yet produced results based on which a coherent representation of the feudal regimes and directions of their development in this area could be drawn (Harnisch, 1986, 251–274; Peters, 1995; Schmale, 1995).¹⁸ These are the reasons why this paper uses the term Central Europe, perceived as an area of transition and conjunction.

German language historiography has defined the large demesne based on *corvée* labour of the subject rural population, which constitutes the model of feudalism considered to be typical of Eastern Europe, with the term *Gutsherrschaft*. It represents the result of the fundamental transformation of the agrarian structure that occurred between the 16th and 17th centuries, resulting in a new form of feudal system in which the peasants lost their medieval liberties and became serfs, while the exaction of rents in money or in kind was replaced by direct or indirect management by the nobles (Topolski, 1985, 128). The preconditions for this change to happen were considerable expansion of land on which extensive agriculture could be practiced, similarly ample availability of *corvée* labour, the existence of a market for the produce, and communication routes to reach it. Harnisch stated that if the rent in labour is lower than two or three days a week per farm, the rent in kind maintains an important role in manorial receipts (*»grundlegend wichtiges Unterscheidungskriterium der Gutsherrschaft gegenüber der Grundherrschaft ist das Vorherrschen der Arbeitsrente,«* Harnisch, 1986, 251–252). An important aspect related to the extent of demesne based on *corvée* labour has been highlighted by Hobsbawm: »Given the incredibly low level of agriculture based on the compulsory labour of peasants, it could only be

17 It is an integrated part of Central Europe in a description provided by e.g. Petraň, 1965, 217–222.

18 On the need for and the state of research within comparative studies based on archival sources within this topic field, see in particular Schmale, 1995, 101.

convenient for a large feudal lord to deal with the difficulties concerning the organization and control of huge masses of rebellious serfs in the light of the profits he would earn from the management of his own property such as a large grain-growing estate.« (Hobsbawm, 1968, 49). The roles played by the internal and foreign markets are still disputed. While Topolski supports the higher importance of internal demand for Polish grain, Zytkowicz highlights the export-orientation of the production of grain and wine and cattle breeding in Hungary, while in Bohemia, located at a distance from the main long-distance traffic routes and with no inland waterways, the internal market prevailed (Topolski, 1985, 128; Zytkowicz, 1985, 68, 83).

In addition to aristocratic predominance at the political, social, and land holding levels, these changes were caused by increased demand for agricultural produce and raw materials in the 16th century (Zytkowicz, 1985, 80). Besides these general analogies, the forms of development display significant differences. Grain production prevailed in Poland while in Hungary vine growing and animal husbandry, in particular cattle, had an important role (although here also the direct production of the nobility was primarily oriented toward the production of grain, Pach, 1965, 232). The coincidence of the high level of urbanization and the eccentricity to major international commercial flows in Bohemia directed the major demesne activities toward the production of beer, fish farming, and animal husbandry for the needs of the internal market. The pace of development of the *Gutsherrschaft* was different as well: first in Poland and then in Hungary (starting from 1530 and on a large scale since the early 17th century). In Bohemia the process of concentration of land property, the role of demesne, and of *corvée* labour, without ever reaching Polish levels, strengthened only in the mid-17th century. At the same time the rural population ceased to be the main source of supply of foodstuffs for the market (Zytkowicz, 1985, 59–83; Mátkai, 1985, 24–35; Wyrobisz, 1985, 36–46; Kiss, 1985, 84–96).

The importance of fish farming, beer production, and the long-standing relatively low importance of *corvée* labour represent further elements of analogy between the demesne in Bohemia and that in Lower Austria.¹⁹ In fact, in the Austrian Hapsburg lands the tendencies to escape exclusive dependency on the rent can be observed, too. In order to make a distinction between this reality and those expressed in other parts of Central Europe, the concept of *Wirtschaftsherrschaft*, an intermediate form between the *Grundherrschaft* (manorial estate) and the *Gutsherrschaft*, was put forward within Austrian historiography. In other words, this would be a *Grundherrschaft* that did not complete its development in the direction of a *Gutsherrschaft* (Valentinitsch, 1995, 293).²⁰ Tremel interpreted the *Wirtschaftsherrschaft* as a result of the reor-

19 For these aspects in relation to Lower Austria see Knittler, 1989, 146–203.

20 The term *Wirtschaftsherrschaft* was proposed by Hoffmann, 1958, 123–131. For the contextualization of the case of Austria within the framework of Central Europe; Harnisch, 1986, 251–274; Knittler, 1993.

ganization of the manorial system toward major »centralization« and accentuation of the dependency of the peasants, also realized through an increase of *corvée* labour: this is supposed to have represented a more rational economic system. In addition, one of the characteristics of feudalism in the mercantilism period is, according to Tremel, the fact that it ceased to be exclusively based on the possession of land and that it, to an extent previously unknown, also included »economic rights«, »enterprises«, the management of tollhouses and royal roads, and thus »commercial control«. The »strengthening of manors«, therefore, is considered to be »the first sign of the mercantilist state« while the *Wirtschaftsherrschaft* is considered to represent a minor-scale reproduction of the tendencies of the state to constitute itself as an economically coherent organism based on mercantilist principles (Tremel, 1969, 230, 242–245).

Despite the absence of targeted research, the phenomenon of large, market-oriented demesne based on *corvée* labour appears to be marginal in Inner Austria, composed of the provinces of Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and the County of Gorica/Gorizia (Valentinitsch, 1995, 279–297). Here the geographical conditions significantly limited the opportunities for large-scale exploitation of compulsory labour (Tremel, 1969, 242). In this respect Western Slovenia reflects the environmental conditions in Inner Austria, where the prevalently hilly and mountainous landscape significantly limited the space suitable for demesne complexes oriented toward extensive agriculture. A further significant obstacle to the development of the tendencies of manorial lords to adopt the *Gutsherrschaft* system can be identified in the legal *status* of the Austrian rural population, who were personally free and not bonded to the land. In addition to that, in mountainous areas in particular the peasants were fully aware of their rights and willing to defend the forms and conditions inherited through customs and tradition (Tremel, 1969, 235–236). The practice of taking legal action to try and affirm their reasons and rights against their landlords was very diffuse among the rural population of the area. Furthermore, from the late 15th to the 18th centuries the southern Hapsburg lands were stirred by a long series of local uprisings as well as peasant rebel movements permeating several provinces at the same time. Irrespective of the immediate and contingent results of peasant movements, long-term latent rebelliousness and attention to the preservation of rights had a detrimental effect on the freedom of action of manorial lords. Meaningful episodes of rebellion with strong anti-manorial elements occurred in the Gorizia area as well (Tolmin 1627, the whole county 1713: Panjek, 1997b). Other facts that underlay the difficulty of the manor-system typical of this area to adopt economic solutions that would reach beyond the usual framework of operation (the *Urbar* and life-long tenancy in particular) are mentioned discussed elsewhere.

In western Slovenia, the main feature shared by holders of manors was the marginal economic role of direct management. Among the analysed manors, the highest was registered in the Schwarzenegg manor on the meagre Karst highlands, where

land cultivated by means of compulsory labour amounted to at least 80 *Tagbau* of arable land. Direct management only contributed to 3.37% of total receipts in mountainous Tolmin.²¹ In several cases the demesne partly consisted of vacant farms, which was a common mechanism aiming at the formation of ampler demesne complexes in Inner Austria (Valentinitsch, 1995, 284, 290). However, there are no indications of systematic action of eviction of peasants (*Bauernlegen*) in the area. In Western Slovenia the percentage values clearly bespeak the absence of a phenomenon of an extent that could be compared to that in Lower Austria manors, where one can reasonably speak of *Gutsherrschaft*, since the role of direct management could exceed 50% of total receipts (Bastl, 1992). With the exception of these cases and those of the manors located in the eastern territories of the present Republics of Austria (Burgenland) and Slovenia (Prekmurje), which belonged to the Hungarian lands at the time, a general tendency for the commutation of *corvée* labour into tributes in money was observed (Gestrin, 1991, 223–224; Valentinitsch, 1995, 290; Vilfan, 1980a, 174).²² Almost needless to say, this kind of development is contradictory to any tendency to attribute an important economic role to direct management following the *Gutsherrschaft* model. Within the area analysed here, the tendency to commute servile obligations and tributes into tributes in money was most obvious in Tolmin and Duino: in this sense the situation in Western Slovenia did not differ from the rest of Carniola and Inner Austria in general. If it is true that in the analysed manors demesne land was a structural part of the feudal production system, it is also necessary to highlight that in Western Slovenia the availability of *corvée* labour did allow the existence but not necessarily determined the extent and consequential economic importance of the demesne. Therefore, the causal relation between the possibility of exploitation of compulsory services and the development of the demesne based on compulsory labour as proposed by Topolski, who stated that »The creation of demesne based on *corvée* labour contributed to the second feudalisation of vast territories. This refeudalization was not caused by the process of concentration of land by the nobility (a phenomenon that was present across Europe) but by the existence of *corvée* labour« (Topolski, 1979, 230), is not applicable in the case of Western Slovenia. Despite the persistence of the (rather small) demesne and the presence of *corvée* labour, the development in this area was far from being analogous to those in other parts of East-Central Europe. In addition to the reasons outlined earlier, the further development of the »demesne based on *corvée* labour and a producer of grain« was

21 See Table 6. In Hungary, too, vine growing was based on farms: »Obwohl sich auch der herrschaftliche Weinbau im XVII. Jh. mehrerenorts ausdehnte, blieben die »allodialen« Weinerträge als Quellen der Weinekünfte im Vergleich zu den Abgaben der bäuerlichen Weingärten weit zurück. Der Weinhandel der Gutsherren, vor allem der Weinausschank, beruhte auch zu dieser Zeit im überwiegenden Teil auf den Weinabgaben der Bauern« (Pach, 1965, 323).

22 For monographic studies on single estates see Blaznik, 1973, 293–296 and Koropec, 1972.

hindered not by the absence of a market, a necessary stimulus (Topolski, 1979, 213–228), but primarily by the environmental conditions of karstic and mountainous land, unsuitable for large-scale production of grain (Panjek, 2006).

In addition to the major or minor role of demesne economy, the understanding of the direction of development that the feudal system undertook in the first centuries of the modern era is based on the increase or decrease of personal dependency of the serfs and their burdening with tributes. Despite being »largely unresearched«, Vilfan thinks that in Slovenia the »second serfdom« »developed to different extents, decreasing from the east toward the west« and that »serfdom least considerably intensified in the Mediterranean part« of today's Slovenia (comprised in the area analyzed in this paper). In general, intensifying tendencies are believed to have predominated over reducing tendencies and personal dependency is supposed to have gradually increased between the 16th and 18th centuries (Vilfan, 1980b, 341). In fact, in the Primorska region no harsh intensification of compulsory labour services was observed so far; where this was the case, the increase primarily concerned the demand for transportation services, which is accordant with the tendencies expressed by the manorial lords in Carniola (Gestrin, 1991, 298–302). Furthermore, through a comparison of the amount of the feudal rent in labour and the extent of demesne land, we have observed how the existence of surplus labour force is more likely to have been the case than a full exploitation of available compulsory labour (with the probable exception of Schwarzenegg). The existence of urban markets, though limited (Trieste and Gorizia together counted about 10,000 inhabitants), interregional commercial relations (Carinthia), and international commercial flows that crossed the territory did not activate *corvée*-based demesne activities. This interpretation can be confirmed by previous findings, for instance Blaznik's, that »in Primorska *corvée* labour in general was used very little,« and Vilfan's, that in Slovenia »efforts for the restoration of the demesne economy« were absent, being least perceptible in the West and stronger in the East, most so in Prekmurje, nearing Hungary (Blaznik, 1980, 265; Vilfan, 1980a, 197–199). These interpretations confirm Gestrin's placement of the Primorska region into the framework of the feudal system in Slovenia (Gestrin, 1991, 40, 72) but also consistently into the structure of Inner Austrian reality, where the phenomenon of large and *corvée*-based manorial economy was marginal (Valentinitsch, 1995, 279–297).

»In terms of this development the Slovene lands were somewhere in the middle, yet closer to the West than to the East,« Gestrin concluded (Gestrin, 1991, 302). Not only were the manors in western Slovenia 'somewhere in the middle', but also the ones in Inner Austria and Central Europe in general. In fact, the examination of the differences among feudal regimes unveils diversity, deviations, transition forms, and specificities, which lead toward the abandonment of the dichotomous representation of a clear divide between a 'harsher' Eastern European and 'easier' Western European

feudal system. More than about a clear dividing line we shall perhaps think of a transition area and thus interpret Central Europe as an area of transition between Western and Eastern European prevailing feudal models. On the other hand, it is possible to observe that within the Central European area itself different models can be identified. Based on the results of this research it is undoubtedly possible to coherently place the Primorska feudal economy into such Central European framework.

RENT IN MONEY AND PEASANTS ON THE MARKET

As early as 1552 the provincial estates of Carniola claimed that »in particular in Carniola and Karst the peasants could not remain on their farms without trade and packing,« while according to Gestrin around the year 1600 »the involvement of the countryside in market economy and the dependence of a major part of the peasant population on it was such that the process of commercialization could not be stopped« (Gestrin, 1991, 79–80, 252). The activities related to merchant flows leading to Trieste were particularly important and necessary for »numerous cottagers« between the borough of Postojna and the Adriatic coast (Blaznik, 1970, 170).

In the whole period examined here, a large part of the population of the Western Slovenian countryside continued to trade with all goods existing on the local and neighbouring markets, carrying them on their shoulders, with donkeys and horses, carts and handcarts, establishing autonomous flows and entering middle-range ones, in particular those running from the east to the west and those from the south to the north. What prompted the peasants toward what appears to have been a kind of general mobilization on the market? In 1634 the exactor of the tollhouse in Tarvisio, Carl Rechpacher (Rechbach), wrote to the Carinthian provincial estates, which he depended on, that the Predel-pass road (near Bovec, along the Soča/Isonzo road that connected Gorizia to Carinthia) was largely »used by the serfs and cottagers of near-by jurisdictions with their horses so small and weak that sometimes they could barely carry 3 or 4 buckets of wine in order to find some subsistence and satisfy their overlord (*Obrigkeit*)« (KLA, 1). Among the serfs coming from 'near-by jurisdictions' we could certainly find peasants from Tolmin (Panjek, 2000; Hassinger, 1987, 223, 237). The participation of the peasants from the mountainous part of the County of Gorica/Gorizia in trading should be placed into a broader context in which commercial activities of the rural population constituted a widespread phenomenon in the northern Adriatic hinterland as well as in the Alpine area in general and in Europe. Among Slovene historians Gestrin in particular explored this theme, noticing a contest between the towns and the countryside to gain control of the trade and transport in the countryside. In proving the importance that non-agricultural income had for the rural population, it is relevant to also recall his observation that demands for rights in trade and transport were a constant request in all major peasant uprisings in Slovenian

lands, so that the struggle against obstructions to rural commerce was one of their essential constituents (Gestrin, 1973a; 1973b).

Being a zone of transit and active contraband, occasionally accompanied by acts of intimidation and violence against the archduke's customs guards by the local rural population, intense illegal traffic was present in 16th and 17th century Karst, too. It is equally important that illegal traffic of the peasants was not only tolerated but openly defended by the local manorial lords. Here the noblemen not only claimed the right of first instance concerning illegal commerce and denied collaboration to archduke's toll officials and guards, but openly hindered them in their control of traffic crossing the countryside, as was claimed by those in charge of the Chamber's tollhouses in the Gorizia area in 1567 as well as 1691 (StLA, 9, reports of Petter Julliani 1567, and Antonio Conduzi 1691). In disdain to royal and archducal regulations, the very judicial bodies of the Karst manors (Reifenberg, Štanjel and Žablje²³) would not allow the guards of the Gorizia customs office to enquire into and resist contraband. Therefore, the widespread participation of the rural population in commerce could rely on the support on the manorial lords. Clearly, these interventions were neither disinterested nor a mere expression of antagonism between local authorities and officials in the service of the state, which did exist and constitute one of the aspects of the relation between the centre and periphery. When the manorial lords denied the customs officers armed support in the repression of contraband or in some instances hindered their operations, they acted in a very precise direction. The participation of the rural population in the market, whether legal or illegal, represented a means for the monetization of agricultural production *surplus*, activating redundant resources of time and labour. The toll officials and guards had to cope with the hostility of noblemen because the integration of subsistence margins of peasants increased the fiscal basis at the disposal of the manorial lord.

In this respect the behaviour of the manorial lords in Primorska was entirely in line with what Gestrin noted: »With no recourse to non-agrarian activities, with only the income from farms, the peasants would not have been able to meet the increased feudal and state burdens. The feudal lords were well aware of this fact,« so that in the 16th century and later on they opposed the attempts of towns to restrict rural commerce as well as the continuous intentions of the Chamber to increase fiscal burdens. The statements made by the feudal lords in defence of rural trade and transport activity »can be synthesized as follows: without commerce the serfs could not survive on their farms nor could we collect tributes from them and demand taxes.« These were indeed self-interested arguments that, however, were not objected to: »not even the prince, or his provincial officers, the *Vizedomini* in Ljubljana, ever questioned them, despite knowing the situation well« (Gestrin, 1991, 250–251).

23 The manorial lords of Reifenberg were Carlo and brothers Counts of Lanthieri, the lord of Žablje was Giovanni Count of Lanthieri, and the lord of Štanjel na Krasu was Count Cobenzl.

Undoubtedly, the manorial lord could only benefit from the merchant activity of the serfs, however minute (though capillary) it might have been. The peasant, part of whose subsistence depended on extra-agricultural activities, managed higher monetary resources and his dependence on land produce was less exclusive. As a result, the receiver of rural tributes had ampler possibilities to direct tributes into money payments and/or preferred produce without immediately and irreversibly broaching the basis of subsistence of his serfs. The second factor to consider, not less interesting and certainly mirroring the first, is the fact that in Karst, like in Tolmin, the mobilization of the rural population on the market was driven by the structure of tributes. The conditions coincide with those observed in most manors in Carniola where through the 16th century the rent was becoming more and more monetary in nature, particularly so in the manors situated in areas crossed by or close to merchant routes. »Tributes in money were favoured by the feudal lord in many respects. They freed him from the collection, conservation, and sale of tributes in kind. The peasant benefited from them, too. They allowed him higher freedom of management of farms, but he had to enter the market« (Gestrin, 1991, 245).

Let us now try and have a look at the extra-farm activities of the Western Slovenian rural population from the peasant's point of view. Their involvement in variegated merchant and transport activities was undoubtedly a widespread necessity: for the majority of peasants the accumulation of extra-agricultural income represented a compulsory choice to reach the level of subsistence and be able to collect the amount necessary for paying their feudal, provincial, ecclesiastical, and state tributes. But the sole fact that it was a necessity does not yet necessarily mean it was a passively accepted solution. The multiplication of family nuclei beyond the level of subsistence provided by land resources indicates, in fact, that the rural population counted on and exploited the possibility of access to integrative and/or alternative activities, such as the entry into trafficking. In this respect the proximity of the towns of Trieste and Gorizia and of the border with the Republic of Venice, as well as the existence of a consolidated network of long-distance commercial flows and local streams, legal or illegal, crossing the countryside, represented a kind of guarantee.

Referring back to the schematization proposed by Aymard in his questioning the relation between self-consumption and market (Aymard, 1983, 1392–1393), distinguishing among the recourse to the market to the minimum possible extent (Chayanov), the direct response of farms to market demands (Labrousse), and the impasse of growth as a consequence of the reaching of the maximum possible ratio between population and production as a result of technical inertia (Le Roy Ladurie), the solution adopted by the rural population in Western Slovenia appears to be still a different one: the recourse to various forms of activity external to their farms that allowed them to exceed the limits set by environmental conditions and monopoly over land held by the nobility. New family nuclei could thus develop also without access to

enough land to grant them subsistence based on self-consumption only. Given the characteristics of the major part of the territory, unsuitable for large-scale agriculture and quite limiting as far as specialization potentials are concerned (wine and stock-farming partly excepted), and that the feeble specialization present was in many aspects a consequence of *Urbar* rules and of the demand of the receivers of tributes (wheat, oats, and wine), the peasants' response to market demand was not exhibited at the level of choice and kinds of produce but rather at the level of major or minor opportunities to enter extra-farming activities. The quest for monetary resources certainly was a response to tributary demand but also represented an element of a more complex, or global, economic strategy of the rural population in which one part of the subsistence was provided by the farms, and the other by external activities, ranging from illegal commercial activities to working as day labourers. Since the phenomenon did not subside throughout the early modern era, and even later, it may and should be considered a structural element of the rural economy in this area (Panjek, 2002, 171).

Table 8: Money income compared to total rent across manors (data from Tables 3 and 5. Panjek, 2004, 46; 2002, 130).

Tabela 8: Denarni dohodki v primerjavi s skupno rento gospostev (podatki iz tabel 3 in 5. Panjek, 2004, 46; 2002, 130).

Manor	Money income in the rent of manors (in <i>gulden</i>)	Total rent (in <i>gulden</i>)	Ratio between money rent and total rent
Senožeče 1615	799.48	1,427.97	
Schwarzenegg 1618	753.28	3,146.96	
Socerb 1620	959.40	1,436.95	
Duino 1637	3,101.52	5,899.05	
Reifenberg 1624	1,057.00	4,641.34	
Vipava 1624	1,502.91	5,683.61	
Tolmin 1633	6,998.59	11,026.01	
<i>Total</i>	<i>15,172.18</i>	<i>33,261.89</i>	

The analysis presented in this paper, based of summaries of annual income of the major manors in the area, further confirms and allows us to roughly quantify the phenomenon: almost a half of the income of the manors consisted of receipts in money (Table 8). Although a part of the money incomes came from tolls and fees paid by

²⁴ Percentage calculated on the basis of hypothetic sums in the table and therefore representing a rough estimate.

people who were not subjects of the manors ('foreign' merchants, traders etc.), the amount of the tributes in money as well as the practice of conversion of natural tributes into money, indicate a lord that directs his serfs toward the market and supports their efforts in non-agricultural activities. Based on these findings, it's reasonable to put forward the interpretation that in Western Slovenia the instrument used by the feudal lords to increase their income from landed-estates was, much more than direct demesne production, the support to the mobilization of the rural population in the market. And, in parallel, that the economic strategy adopted by a relevant part of the rural population in the region was 'plural activity'.

FEVDALNA EKONOMIJA V ZAHODNI SLOVENIJI V ZGODNJEM NOVEM VEKU

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POVZETEK

Prispevek predstavlja interpretacijo temeljnih gospodarskih značilnosti gospoств v zahodnem slovenskem prostoru oz. na Primorskem v zadnjih desetletjih 16. in prvih desetletjih 17. stoletja, pri čemer se poslužuje komparativnega pristopa. Analizirana gospoства so pripadala grofiji Goriški in vojvodini Kranjski. Kvantitativni del razprave sloni na cenitvah deželnoknežjih gospoств, ki so se v 16. in na začetku 17. stoletja opravljale z namenom njihove podelitve v zastavo ali prodaje s strani deželnoknežje komore. Vir omogoča tako spoznavanje materialnih osnov plemstva v obravnavanem prostoru kakor tudi primerjavo temeljnih značilnosti fevdalne ekonomije na Primorskem z drugimi območji notranjeavstrijskih dežel ter s širšo srednjeevropsko in evropsko stvarnostjo. Na osnovi uradnih cenitev vrednosti gospoств, razprava predstavlja strukturo gosposke rente in poskuša oceniti morebitno prisotnost in razsežnost aktivnega pristopa gospodov h gospodarskim dejavnostim v njihovih gospostvih. Namen prispevka je vpeti primorski primer v evropski kontekst ter prispevati k preučevanju razlik in podobnosti v razvoju fevdalnih sistemov v Evropi v zgodnjem novem veku. Posebno pozornost razprava namenjena preučevanju aktivnega pristopa gospodov h gospodarskim dejavnostim v njihovih gospostvih. Glavne usmeritve in strategije, s katerimi so si v 16. in 17. stoletju zemljiški gospodje v Evropi prizadevali povečevati svoje dohodke od zemljiške posesti, je na podlagi zgodovinopisja najbrž mogoče strniti, kot sledi: ponovno uvajanje 'pozabljenih' dajatev in bremen ter okrepljen nadzor nad dolžnostmi kmečkega prebivalstva v Zahodni Evropi, aktiviranje

vseh gospodarskih potencialov gospostva v Srednji Evropi, veliki pristavni obrat sloneč na tlačansko delo v Vzhodni Evropi, širjenje različnih oblik kratkoročnih pogodbenih odnosov med katerimi je najbolj znano klasično spolovinarstvo v Južni Evropi (posebej v delih Italije in Francije), poleg 'velikega zakupa' velikih kmetijskih obratov v raznih predelih Evrope (od Lombardije do Anglije preko Nizozemske). Kaj pa slovenske dežele in kam v tem okviru sodi Primorska? Na to vprašanje razprava poskuša najti odgovor tako, da v interpretacijo rezultatov analize arhivskega gradiva pritegnje tako slovensko kakor mednarodno literaturo. Na osnovi pridobljenih rezultatov se kot značilnosti fevdalne ekonomije v zahodnem slovenskem prostoru kažejo šibka razvitost pristavnega gospodarstva, relevantnost denarnega deleža v sestavi gosposke rente ter razmeroma visoka stopnja vključevanja podeželskega prebivalstva v neagrarne dejavnosti. Fevdalno ekonomijo zahodnega slovenskega prostora v zgodnjem novem veku je mogoče koherentno umestiti v (sicer pisani) srednjeevropski okvir.

Ključne besede: fevdalni sistem, fevdalna renta, pristavno gospodarstvo, srednja Evropa, zahodna Slovenija, 16.–17. stoletje

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