

CES Working Paper Series

WOMEN AND THE “SECOND SERFDOM”: EVIDENCE FROM BOHEMIA

Sheilagh Ogilvie
Jeremy Edwards*

Working Paper No. 177

December 1998

*Center for Economic Studies
University of Munich
Schackstr. 4
80539 Munich
Germany
Telephone & Telefax:
+49 (89) 2180-3112*

* Our special thanks to Markus Cerman, with whom the village database was established during joint research; Dana Štefánová, for discussions about Czech women's history; Lenka Matušíková and Hermann Zeitlhofer, for transferring sources from Prague and Vienna; and the Volkswagen Foundation, for funding the cooperative project “Social Structures in Bohemia“. For their very helpful and stimulating comments on earlier drafts, we thank Helge Berger, André Carus, Markus Cerman, Tracy Dennison, Stan Engerman, Sara Horrell, Dana Štefánová, and Richard Wall. We would also like to thank the *Center for Economic Studies* at the University of Munich for its support during the revision of this paper.

*CES Working Paper No. 177
December 1998*

WOMEN AND THE “SECOND SERFDOM”: EVIDENCE FROM BOHEMIA

Abstract

Women’s ability to conduct independent households is a useful indicator of their economic position. This article investigates female headship in Bohemia (the Czech Republic) under strong feudal and communal institutions. Bohemian female headship was extremely low by Western European standards, declined significantly between 1591 and 1722, and was decreasingly affected by socio-economic influences. The article argues that this was linked to the growing power of landlords under the “second serfdom”. Not only did landlords dissolve female-headed households as poor fiscal risks, but this economic rent was manipulated by village communities and other serfs for their own ends.

*Sheilagh Ogilvie
Faculty of Economics
University of Cambridge
Sidgwick Avenue
Cambridge CB3 9DD
United Kingdom
e-mail: sco2@econ.cam.ac.uk*

*Jeremy Edwards
University of Cambridge
Faculty of Economics and Politics
Sidgwick Avenue
Cambridge, CB3 9DD
United Kingdom*

Women and the "Second Serfdom": Evidence from Bohemia

Women's ability to conduct independent households is a useful indicator of their economic position. This article investigates female headship in Bohemia (the Czech Republic) under strong feudal and communal institutions. Bohemian female headship was extremely low by Western European standards, declined significantly between 1591 and 1722, and was decreasingly affected by socio-economic influences. The article argues that this was linked to the growing power of landlords under the "second serfdom". Not only did landlords dissolve female-headed households as poor fiscal risks, but this economic rent was manipulated by village communities and other serfs for their own ends.

Research on poor societies, both in the modern developing world and in the European past, suggests that the position of women plays a major role in economic development, particularly in rural areas.¹ But despite its emergence as a central development indicator, women's position has hardly been studied at all in one important group of pre-industrial societies: those many areas of early modern Eastern Europe where non-market institutions expanded greatly during the so-called "second serfdom".² This neglect is the more surprising given current debates about how economic development affects women. In both modern poor countries and Western Europe between 1500 and 1800, development is regarded as involving the transition from subsistence production in a framework of traditional feudal, communal and corporate institutions (the "family economy"), to commercial production within emerging market institutions (the "market economy"). It has been widely argued that the "market economy" harmed women by restricting their options outside the household and their bargaining power within it, compared to the relatively advantageous position

they enjoyed under the traditional pre-market institutions which typically surrounded the "family economy".³

Eastern Europe provides an excellent context in which to examine how women's options were affected by traditional institutions. In contrast to the development in Western Europe, in many Eastern European societies pre-market institutions became stronger between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, with the expansion of seigneurial powers under the "second serfdom". This article investigates women's position in early modern Bohemia (now the Czech Republic). It focuses on one of the few quantitative measure of women's options, the degree to which they were able to operate independent households. Figures on Bohemian female headship between the medieval period and the eighteenth century are presented and compared with those for other European societies. The socio-economic and institutional determinants of Bohemian female headship rates are analyzed using a unique village database for two estates in Northern Bohemia between 1591 and 1722. Finally, manorial court records are exploited, to show how these quantitative patterns were generated within the framework of feudal and communal institutions.

1. Patterns of Female Headship in Rural Bohemia

One of the few available quantitative measures of women's position in pre-industrial societies is the proportion of females heading households. But does this statistic tell us anything interesting? It could be argued that female headship reflects not socio-economic opportunity but demographic accident: a woman's lack, or loss, of a husband. But this ignores what we know from censuses and ethnographic studies. In pre-industrial Europe, including Bohemia, a woman without a husband had a spectrum of options. She could marry or remarry. She could live in contractual retirement (German Ausgedinge,

Czech výměnek), whereby the new owner of a farm provided lodging to the previous owner's family. She could dwell as kin in a household headed by offspring or other relatives. She could lodge as an inmate in a household of relatives or non-relatives. She could be a live-in servant. She could enter a hospital, poorhouse, or other institution. Or she could maintain her own household. The demographic event of losing or lacking a husband made a female-headed household possible. But whether this possibility was realized depended on other factors such as economic opportunities and institutional pressures. The fact that pre-industrial European female headship rates varied widely suggests that they may be an informative indicator of the extent to which the women in a particular community or society were able, willing and permitted to conduct an independent household, and thus of female options in that society more generally.⁴

Table 1 shows available information on female headship on the estates of Frýdlant (Friedland) and Liberec (Reichenberg) between 1381 and 1722, alongside comparative figures for six other Bohemian estates. Frýdlant and Liberec were located in the hilly, forested frontier zone of Northern Bohemia, bordering on Silesia and Upper Lusatia. With some settlements lying as high as 700 metres above sea level and generally poor soils, the geographical conditions favoured pastoral agriculture, proto-industry and forestry more than arable farming. The region was settled comparatively late, with the two small towns of Frýdlant and Liberec and some villages founded as early as the thirteenth century, but many new villages and a tiny mining town, Nové Město (Böhmisch Neustadt), established only in the sixteenth century, and several new "weaver-villages" created during the seventeenth. The two estates contained about forty villages by 1560, but new foundations and annexation of villages previously owned by local fief-nobles swelled this to 65 (38 in Frýdlant, 27 in Liberec) by the mid-seventeenth century. Village populations in a 1651 census varied between 16 and 356 inhabitants, although this low level probably reflected demographic losses from the Thirty Years'

War (1618-1648). Both estates were German-speaking, and were owned by the same noble landlord, although administered separately by different manorial officials.

The figures in Table 1 are calculated from a variety of sources: an estate register (1381), manorial rent lists (1560, 1591, 1592 and 1677), state tax cadasters (1654, 1677, and 1722), and one religious census (1651).⁵ A first consideration is whether they fully and consistently record all rural holdings, particularly the poorest where female heads often predominated. The unit recorded in all documents was the Stelle (holding), which was simultaneously the unit of residence, of manorial exaction, and of state taxation. Impartible inheritance meant holdings were indivisible, although forest clearance and settlement of commons could add new holdings. At any given time, a village consisted of a specified number of holdings belonging to designated legal categories (peasant, smallholder, cottager), and it is these which were enumerated in all documents. In principle, therefore, all the sources used in Table 1 enumerated the same unit, the rural holding, albeit for different purposes.

Because their purposes varied, however, accuracy may have varied across documents. For instance, because the purpose of the 1651 religious census was recatholicization, the enumerators may have lacked a material incentive to record holdings as thoroughly as in rent- or tax-lists. But Table 1 shows female headship rates in the religious census to be no lower than in manorial or fiscal sources. Alternatively, accuracy could have increased over time with more sophisticated record-keeping or growing fiscal extraction from poorer social strata. However, Table 1 shows female headship rates to be generally higher, not lower, in earlier documents, and from 1591 at latest lower social strata are known to have been thoroughly recorded. Finally, local knowledge might make manorial sources more accurate than state registers. In reality, however, the state tax and religious enumerations simply relied on the manorial officials, and through them on the village authorities. Additionally, the state tax cadasters involved an inspection of each holding by royal commissioners, a painstaking two-

month operation. Record-linkage between the 1651 census and the 1654 cadaster for the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec found almost all households listed in 1651 recorded as holdings in 1654; those abandoned by emigrants were recorded as such in 1654.⁶

The only major concern about comparability is evoked by the decline between 1651 and 1654. This decline - 4.8 and 2.7 percentage points on the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec respectively - is small in absolute terms, but within the narrow range of Bohemian female headship rates it stands out. The question is whether it results from changes in recording or in the underlying social situation. For the reasons already discussed, although it is possible that female-headed holdings were less thoroughly recorded in 1654 than in 1651, available evidence suggests the opposite: the 1654 cadaster benefited both from a direct inspection of holdings and from material incentives lacking in the 1651 religious census.

By contrast, Bohemian rural society underwent enormous upheavals between 1651 and 1654, as any adult reported as non-Catholic was ordered to convert or emigrate. By 1654, half of all holdings on the estate of Frýdlant and more than 7 percent on that of Liberec were lying abandoned. While one might expect this to open more positions for women, as in other European societies during demographic crises, here it was the opposite: controlling for other village characteristics, the share of deserted holdings in a village in 1654 was negatively related to its female headship rate.⁷ This may be because more female than male heads emigrated between 1651 and 1654, which would be consistent with the higher percentage of females reporting themselves in 1651 as non-Catholic with "no hope" of conversion.⁸ Or it may be because the emigration wave included more older couples, in which the woman was more likely to become widowed and set up a female-headed household; this is consistent with the age-distribution of confessional allegiances.⁹ Whatever the mechanisms at work, the 1651-4 emigration was associated with a statistically significant reduction in female headship. This suggests

that the fall in female headship between 1651 and 1654 was caused not by changes in enumeration but by the massive dislocation of rural society by the emigration wave.

The most striking finding in Table 1 is a further reason to regard these diverse sources as comparable. This is the fact that Bohemian female headship rates occupy a narrow segment of the low end of the European spectrum. On the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, the rate lay between 1 and 9 percent for the three and a half centuries covered by all the lists, and between 1 and 7 percent for the 162 years of the early modern period.¹⁰ On the other six estates, the rate lay between between 0 and 8 percent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In isolation, these low percentages may seem normal. A farm not headed by a married couple is often portrayed as unviable, whether in actuality or in peasant mentalities, a view reflected in the German term Rollenergänzungszwang (the obligation that certain household niches always be filled).¹¹ But figures compiled for Europe more widely, in Table 2, show that the Bohemian figures were unusually low.¹² Female headship rates varied widely in pre-industrial Europe, between zero and about 45 percent, but the average lay between 13 and 18 percent for the five centuries between 1400 and 1900. For the 147 European observations in the period covered by the Bohemian figures (1381-1722), the mean was 14.3 percent. At each date, 30 to 50 percent of the Frýdlant and Liberec villages contained no female heads, compared to only 2 percent of European villages over the whole period.¹³ Bohemian female headship rates were not untypical of Eastern Central Europe, as shown by the figures for Hungary, Austria and Serbia; but these were distinctly on the low end of the European spectrum. Moreover, the figures for Hungary and Austria increased over the early modern period, while those for Bohemia, if anything, decreased.

2. Determinants of Female Headship Rates

Why were there so few female heads in rural Bohemia? To answer this question, we sought to identify the factors that caused female headship to vary across villages and time-periods. We did so by formulating a general model of the variables which could theoretically affect female headship, and testing it statistically using data for four years (1591, 1651, 1654 and 1722) at which good information was available. No general explanation of variations in female headship has yet been formulated by historians. However, one can distill the separate components of a testable general model from the existing literature.

2.1. The Hypotheses

First, there are explanations in terms of endogenous demographic variables: female headship is high because the marriage rate is low (increasing spinsterhood), because the remarriage rate is low (increasing widowhood), because the age gap between spouses is wide (increasing female widowhood), because the household system includes few coresident non-nuclear kin and inmates (increasing solitary residence by widows), or because there is excess male emigration (increasing spinsterhood and widowhood). However, marriage, remarriage, spouse's age, residence, and gender-specific migration are not imposed exogenously on female headship, but rather chosen endogenously with it. Therefore, these variables do not belong in a general model of female headship, unless one were to attempt the highly problematic exercise of trying to estimate a system of simultaneous equations to explain all of them at once.

Turning to genuinely exogenous explanations of female headship, one demographic variable remains: mortality. Female headship may be higher if overall mortality is low, increasing the number of older women from which female heads may be predominantly recruited. Elderly persons (over age 60) were

certainly fewer in Bohemia in 1585-6 and 1651 than elsewhere in pre-industrial Europe, at less than 5 percent of the population compared to a typical 5 to 10 percent.¹⁴ But we can control for variations in population age-structure by examining the percentages of women in each age-group heading households, and these were also low for Bohemia relative to available figures for Western and Southern Europe.¹⁵ Moreover, on the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, the youngest female heads were aged 29. Thus low Bohemian female headship cannot be ascribed to a lack of elderly women from whom female heads might have been disproportionately recruited. A second mortality-related argument has greater importance. Female headship may be higher if male exceeds female mortality, whether overall or within marriageable age-groups. Unfortunately, since parish registers survive only fragmentarily before 1700, no information on gender-specific mortality is available for the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec. This variable could not, therefore, be included in our testable model, and must be regarded as a component of the village- and period-specific fixed effects discussed with reference to Table 4.

Economic activities in which female labour productivity was high relative to male are a second set of factors postulated as influencing female headship. Arable cultivation is regarded as unfavourable to women, because of its heavy physical demands and spatial incompatibility with household production. Conversely, pastoral agriculture is supposed to have favoured women, since care of animals involved less heavy labour and was less spatially separated from the dwelling.¹⁶ Proto-industry is also regarded as having high female labour productivity, because of its domestic location, its need for dexterity rather than strength, and the flexibility of combining it with other work.¹⁷ The last two characteristics also favoured female productivity in small-scale trading and services, including laundry, sewing, processing and serving foodstuffs and beverages, and casual day-labour.¹⁸

For the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, data were available on a number of measures of the dominant economic activities in each village. The two main ecological determinants of arable productivity in early modern Europe were altitude and soil quality.¹⁹ In our testable general model we therefore included the mean altitude of the village above sea-level and the percentage of good and medium-quality land it reported in 1722. Dependence on pastoral agriculture was measured by the ratio between pasture land and arable fields in the village in 1722. The availability of two of these measures only for 1722 was unfortunate, but even if the soil quality and pastoral-arable ratio changed over time (e.g., with soil exhaustion or price changes), it seemed not unjustified to assume that differences among villages at any one time reflected stable underlying differences in resource endowments.

The effect of proto-industry on women would ideally be measured by spinning, in which female labour usually predominated. Unfortunately no spinning figures survive before the mid-eighteenth century, but the number of linen-weaving holdings in each village was recorded in 1591-2, 1650 and 1722.²⁰ We regarded this as an acceptable proxy for two reasons. First, in other European proto-industries women comprised a non-trivial percentage of weavers.²¹ Second, given transport and transaction costs, women's earnings in ancillary proto-industrial activities such as flax processing and spinning would probably have been greater in weaving villages.

Finally, women's opportunities in small-scale trading and services for local customers are likely to have been greater in larger communities with more differentiated patterns of demand, so the model included the number of holdings in the village. Such employments might also have emanated from urban markets, so the model included the time it took to walk from the village to the estate town, according to a nineteenth-century cosmography.²²

Female headship could also be influenced by institutional pressures from communities or landlords. Village authorities might discourage female heads as high welfare risks or poor payers of collectively levied dues or taxes.²³ Landlords might regard female heads as likely to default on rents, harm future rents by maintaining farm infrastructure poorly, or fail to pay state taxes which landlords were responsible for collecting.²⁴ For the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, there was no way to measure differences in the coercive capacity of village authorities, but also no reason to believe such differences existed. But there were three measurable respects in which landlord pressure may have varied among villages. Landlord concern to ensure male labour supply might be higher in a village with a demesne farm requiring *corvée* from local serfs, so a dummy variable was created registering the presence of a demesne farm in the village. Fief-villages (Lehensdörfer) ruled by minor fief-nobles rather than directly by the Counts of Frýdlant are thought to have developed a tradition of more intense lordly regulation, so a dummy variable was created registering whether the village had previously been a fief-village. Finally, the intensity of manorial regulation might have varied across estates, so a dummy variable was created for whether the village was subject to the estate of Frýdlant or Liberec.

A fourth factor postulated as influencing female headship is social stratification: many studies have found that there were more female heads in lower social strata.²⁵ Underlying this empirical association are three possible causal relationships. Firstly, some argue that a large farm could not be efficiently farmed by a female head, whether because it needed a married couple, because it needed adult male labour which could not be hired, or because a woman lacked the requisite managerial skills or public authority; smallholdings and cottager holdings, by contrast, could remain economically viable under female headship.²⁶ Secondly, it is argued that although larger holdings under female headship were viable, they were still more vulnerable, and hence perceived as poor fiscal and welfare risks by communal and feudal authorities, which therefore discouraged their

formation.²⁷ Thirdly, the causation may be reversed, with female headship causing a previously richer farm or household to become poor (e.g., because of family labour shortage or gender discrimination), rather than the poverty of the holding facilitating female headship.²⁸

In Bohemia, the third explanation can be excluded since the social stratum of a serf holding was defined exogenously, in terms of its land area (which was indivisible) and its fiscal and feudal liabilities. At the top were the "peasants" (Bauern), who held enough arable land to live entirely from farming, owed the highest feudal dues and state taxes, and had to perform labour services with draught animals. Then came a stratum of smallholders (Chalupner), who held some arable land but not enough to survive on, owed lower dues and taxes, and rendered labour services by hand. The lowest independent holdings were those of the cottagers (Häusler), who held only their own cottages on the commons, owed some dues and taxes, and had to perform sporadic labour services on demand.²⁹ Since social stratum in rural Bohemia was defined in terms of the arable area and fiscal liabilities of the landholding, not the personal characteristics (such as sex) of the holder, it was exogenous to female headship. We therefore included in our model the percentage of smallholders and cottagers ("sub-peasants") in the village. This does not resolve the issue of whether any effect of social stratum on female headship emanated from economic or from institutional causes. However, the qualitative data discussed in the next section cast some light on this question.

2.2. The Econometric Analysis

The influences on female headship distilled from the literature therefore led us to construct a regression model, in which the dependent variable was the percentage of female heads in the village in a particular year, and there were ten explanatory variables: the percentage of good- and medium-quality land; the mean altitude; the pastoral-arable ratio; the percentage of linen-weavers; the distance

to the town; the number of holdings or households; the presence of a demesne farm; former status as a fief-village; the estate (Frýdlant or Liberec); and the percentage of "sub-peasants". It proved possible to obtain complete information on all variables for 44 villages in 1591, 50 villages in 1651 and 1654, and 63 villages in 1722, a total of 207 observations.

The data available to estimate the model therefore took the form of an unbalanced panel. Because the dependent variable was bounded between zero and one hundred, a Tobit regression model was estimated. Since six of the explanatory variables did not vary within villages across time, the general regression model could not be estimated using the fixed-effects estimator for panel data models. When the random-effects estimator was used, the estimated variance of the village-specific disturbance terms was negative, suggesting that the random-effects specification was inappropriate.³⁰ As neither of these two standard specifications for a model to be estimated on panel data could be used, the general model was estimated on the full panel, with interactive variables included to test whether the effect of each explanatory variable on female headship was constant over time. The interactive variables were created by multiplying each explanatory variable by three different dummy variables relating to three of the years in which the variable was observed (1651, 1654 and 1722). The three dummy variables for 1651, 1654 and 1722 were also included to allow for possible shifts over time in the intercept of the regression model. Table 3 reports the results obtained using this method of estimation after the imposition of a number of zero restrictions on the general model, which resulted in the exclusion of seven of the ten explanatory variables (and the corresponding interactive variables), as well as the three shift dummy variables. The zero restrictions which resulted in the model in Table 3 were acceptable according to a Wald test.

Remarkably, only three of the ten socio-economic variables significantly affected female headship: proximity to the town, percentage of sub-peasants, and estate. Low female headship in rural Bohemia

was not caused by women's low productivity in arable agriculture, since a village's soil quality, its altitude, and its pastoral-arable ratio had no effect. Nor did proto-industrial linen-weaving apparently create opportunities for female independence, despite the fact that in some villages one-third of holdings paid weavers' dues in 1591, rising to two-thirds in 1650 and 1722. Villages with more households may have had more differentiated patterns of demand, but there is no evidence that this made it more possible for females to head households there. The fact that these villages varied widely in their economic characteristics, which were exceptionally well-recorded by pre-industrial standards, and yet none of these characteristics affected female headship, suggests either that female and male labour productivity did not differ greatly, or that other factors were at work in Bohemian society which prevented higher female productivity from giving rise to more female-headed households.³¹

One economic characteristic did significantly affect female headship, although only in 1591: proximity to the town increased female headship, as is consistent with the theoretical arguments discussed earlier. Computed at the sample means, the marginal effect in 1591 of a village being one hour's walk nearer to the town was that its female headship rate was two percentage points higher. But the estimated effects of distance on female headship in 1651, 1654 and 1722, given by the sum of the estimated coefficients on *DISTANCE* and the relevant interactive *DISTANCE* variable, were not significantly different from zero. While in the 1590s, the commercial impact of towns on the surrounding countryside may have created openings for female economic independence, pressures were at work in Bohemian society which closed these opportunities off by 1651 at latest.

The second variable to affect female headship was village social structure. The estimated effect of the percentage of sub-peasants on female headship is positive and significantly different from zero at conventional levels for 1591 and 1651, and at the 0.084 level for 1722; it is not significantly different from zero for 1654. The absence of a positive effect of the proportion of sub-peasants in 1654 may be

due to the huge social disruption caused by the emigration wave of 1651-1654, discussed earlier. On the whole, the positive estimated effect for three of the four years of observation suggests that sub-peasant social structure did encourage higher female headship in Bohemian villages. We do not know whether this was because female heads were more economically viable, or because they were less subject to institutional pressures, on sub-peasant holdings than on large peasant farms. Some doubt is cast on the economic argument, however, by the fact that almost no other measurable economic characteristic of villages encouraged (or discouraged) female headship.

Although sub-peasant social structure did significantly encourage female headship in 1651 and 1722, the size of its effect was smaller than in 1591, as shown by the fact that the estimated coefficients of the interactive terms PSUB51 and PSUB22 are negative and significantly different from zero. This suggests that the openings created for female headship by sub-peasant social structure, as by proximity to the town, declined between the late sixteenth and the early eighteenth century. The statistical results do not explain why this was so, but the qualitative evidence discussed later will address this question.

The third variable to affect female headship was the estate on which the village was located. Its effect was not significantly different from zero in 1591 or 1651, but was negative and significantly different from zero at conventional levels in 1654 and at the 0.056 level in 1722. Computed at the sample means, female headship was approximately two percentage points lower in 1654 and 1722 if a village was subject to the estate of Frýdlant rather than the estate of Liberec. Interpreting this finding is not straightforward. It was not caused by differences between the two estates in village characteristics included in the general model, since the regression results showed that these did not significantly affect female headship. Nor can it be ascribed to differences in age-structure arising from greater depopulation: the estate of Frýdlant did not have fewer female heads than Liberec in 1651 (despite a

younger age-structure) and did have fewer in 1722 (despite intervening demographic recovery). The difference between the two estates may reside in unmeasured ecological, socio-economic or demographic characteristics (such as gender-specific mortality) excluded from the model. Or it may be linked to differences in manorial administration since, although owned by the same landlord, they were run by different officials. Differences in personnel could matter, as shown by Steven Hoch's study of a nineteenth-century Russian estate, where family fissions among serfs proliferated under one lax bailiff, but were strictly prevented by his predecessor and successor.³² Whatever the underlying cause, subjection to one estate rather than another emerged as a major determinant of female headship in these Bohemian villages after 1651, even as proximity to the town and sub-peasant social structure were affecting it less.

The effect of proximity to the town disappeared after 1591, the effect of sub-peasant social structure declined after 1591, and the effect of estate only emerged after 1651. This raises the question of change over time. Did female headship rates in these Bohemian villages fall over time, independently of any changes in the explanatory variables? This question was addressed by estimating a Tobit regression model with fixed village- and time-effects, the results of which are shown in Table 4. As has been noted already, a fixed-effect specification cannot identify the separate effects of any explanatory variables which do not vary over time for a particular village. However, Table 3 showed that the only explanatory variables in this category with a significant effect on female headship were estate and distance, and hence little information is lost by including the effects of estate and distance in the village-specific fixed effects. Furthermore, to the extent that there were village-specific effects on female headship which we wrongly omitted from the regression model because we could not measure them (gender-specific mortality, for instance), this specification will provide better estimates of the effects of those variables which do vary within villages.

The results in Table 4 confirm those already discussed. Allowing for time-specific fixed effects as well as village-specific ones, a sub-peasant social structure has a highly significant positive effect on female headship, while the other three variables which display within-village variation have effects not significantly different from zero. The estimated time-specific effects for 1654 and 1722 are significantly smaller than those for 1591 and 1651, showing that female headship was lower after 1651 than before, for reasons independent of the village characteristics included as explanatory variables in the regression analysis.

The statistical findings can be summarized as follows. Between the late sixteenth and the early eighteenth century, female headship in rural Northern Bohemia was not affected by most of the ecological and economic factors generally regarded as favouring women's economic independence in pre-industrial Europe. Proximity to urban markets does appear to have created opportunities for female independence in 1591, but these opportunities disappeared thereafter, despite increased rural commercialization.³³ A sub-peasant social structure did increase female headship, although its effect diminished between 1591 and 1722. In the same period, subjection to one feudal estate rather than another emerged as an important influence on female headship. Finally, for reasons unrelated to other measurable village characteristics, the openings for female-headed households deteriorated over time.

In 1591, female headship in Bohemia was already exceptionally low by European standards, and it declined significantly over the next 131 years. All social groups, including the sub-peasants, appear to have been increasingly subjected to pressures limiting women's ability to conduct independent households. While the quantitative analysis does not tell us what these pressures were, one possible interpretation of the effects of estate and of time is that they emanated from the manorial administration itself, and its interpretation and implementation of landlord powers which were expanding as the "second serfdom" intensified.

3. Social Pressures on Female Headship

This raises the question of what reasons might lie behind the decline in female headship, and the changes in its determinants, in these Bohemian villages between 1591 and 1722. One factor which naturally springs to mind is the advance of the "second serfdom". This is the name given to the growth in landlord power in many parts of Central and Eastern Europe during the early modern period. Regional studies provide rich evidence that Bohemian landlords expanded demesne operations, increased labour rents, extended them to sub-peasants, levied new dues on proto-industry, set up market monopolies, regulated demographic choices, and curtailed serfs' legal rights.³⁴ The precise timing is debated, with some claiming that Bohemia followed a Western development until the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), while others argue that it shared the earlier origins of the "second serfdom" with other Eastern European territories. Recent research on the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, however, supports the view that the decisive growth in landlord power dates from the early sixteenth century.³⁵

How might this growth in landlord power have influenced female headship? Qualitative evidence can help answer this question. Although Bohemian village courts kept no records other than land transfers, the next jurisdiction up, the Amt ("office" or manorial court) of Frýdlant, kept records which survive for scattered periods between 1583 and 1692. These show that by the late sixteenth century, manorial officials were already regulating who could head rural holdings, and females were a special (although not the sole) target of such regulation. Analysis of such cases reveals the underlying incentives of landlords, village communities, and other serfs with regard to female-headed households, and helps to explain the quantitative patterns in female headship identified in the preceding section.

3.1. The Landlord

Revenue-maximization created a direct incentive for landlords to get rid of female-headed households. Female heads were viewed as likely to default on rents, labour services, and state taxes (which landlords were responsible for collecting), and to reduce future rents by incurring debts and neglecting farm maintenance. In 1604, for instance, a widow in Horní Višňová (Oberweigsdorf) who claimed "that she had been keeping the farm in her children's best interests until she could provide for her children" was ordered to "provide the farm with a capable holder [tüchtigen Wirt], sell it, or marry off the daughter, within a year and a day".³⁶ A year later, she was "granted as a favour in the manorial court, that she may retain her farm, on condition of no ruination to the fields, pastures and woods, for her eldest daughter, until the latter is betrothed, either until Whitsun or at latest until Martinsmas this year".³⁷ In 1606, a widow from Bílý Potok (Weißbach) was granted permission to retain her cottager holding until she remarried, "in the best interests of the children", but was threatened with penalties "if in the mean time she shall reduce anything on the holding or incur more debts".³⁸ In 1609, a peasant's deserted wife tried to contract privately with neighbours to sow the barley and herd the cows, but the manorial court ordered that "the village elders shall look out for a good holder [guten Wirt] and a young man, and set him into the farm so that it may be maintained in a cultivable state ... the horses shall remain with the village court so that the pastor's labour rents may be rendered."³⁹ In 1685, the court ordered a widow in Heřmanice (Hermsdorf) to pay all feudal dues and military contributions, or else her cottager holding "shall be sold and a full holder [voelliger Wirt] be secured for it".⁴⁰ Even a woman of the local fief-nobility had to petition the manorial court in 1650 to be "granted the favour of being allowed to cultivate and set right the farm of Tschernhausen"; although she promised to import cattle and not diminish the arable fields, the court ordered that a Kaufmann (purchaser) be found within six weeks "to prevent further complete

ruination of the fief and the interests the overlord has resting on it".⁴¹ Manorial officials sought to replace female heads because they did not regard them as "capable", "good", or "full" holders.

To do so, they not only ordered female heads to sell up or marry, but also intervened in the terms of land transfers. This included retirement contracts (German Ausgedinge, Czech výměnek), important pieces of property in their own right which affected the price of the holdings to which they were attached and changed hands for substantial sums.⁴² In October 1650, for instance, the manorial court ordered that a retired peasant widow in Raspenava (Raspenau) should henceforth be allowed to use only one field and a small excess plot, while "the remainder of the retirement contract shall be altogether abolished". This was explicitly stated to be so that her widowed daughter-in-law could "the sooner secure a Kaufmann for the farm".⁴³

3.2. The Community Authorities

Careful reading of the records, however, suggests that straightforward revenue-maximization was not the only motivation behind landlord pressure on women heading households. In many cases, female heads were reported to the court by village elders or male relatives, seeking to manipulate seigneurial decisions for their own ends. That is, the landlord's power to dissolve serf households and intervene in land transfers constituted an economic rent for anyone who might benefit from such decisions, and hence created an incentive to engage in rent-seeking by persuading the manorial officials that a female-headed household was harming landlord interests.

In 1685, for instance, the "village court and community" of Heřmanice (Hermsdorf) complained to the Frýdlant manorial court that Anna, Jacob Schmied's widow, "wishes to pay very little from her cottager holding on the commons". The estate captain ordered that if she failed to pay up, "the

holding shall be sold and a full holder obtained for it".⁴⁴ That same year, the village of Horní Řasnice (Bernsdorf) reported Rosina, Hans March's widow, for fornication with another villager; the court ordered that "Hans Apelt with his wife shall move into the cottage with his daughter, the said Rosina, in order to prevent further whoring".⁴⁵ From the perspective of the better-off males who dominated community offices, it was never advantageous for their village to contain independent female heads of household, whom they regarded as poor and sexually unruly. This was the case throughout pre-industrial Europe; the difference in societies under the "second serfdom", such as Bohemia, was that institutional powers existed, and could be manipulated, to make it possible to get rid of female household heads rather than merely regretting their existence.⁴⁶

3.3. Individual Serfs

Male relatives, too, tried to use the landlord's powers to dislodge female heads. The main mover in a series of attempts to eject "die alte Teschnerin" ("Old Widow Teschner") from her farm in Horní Višňová (Oberweigsdorf) between 1604 and 1607 was her son-in-law Göрге Döring, who went so far as to submit a written petition against her. Döring persuaded the court to order that the widow should sell up or otherwise "equip the farm with a capable holder", and that "the village bailiff and elders shall from now on inspect the exterior of the farm". He also achieved his main aim, to get her to pay the remaining inheritance share due to him on behalf of his wife. Döring had challenged his mother-in-law's tenure of the farm to elicit payment of his own claims on it.⁴⁷ Likewise, Georg Krause's widow in Bílý Potok (Weißbach) was only brought to the attention of the manorial officials when her husband's brother Hans tried to dislodge her from the house and smallholding in 1606. Although unable to persuade the court to eject her outright, Hans succeeded in having her tenure declared strictly temporary and conditional: she might keep it only until Michaelmas, at which point she was to remarry, and her husband to apply to purchase the farm. Moreover, should Hans "find that she is

keeping house poorly, he shall report it to the court, whereupon it shall be inspected by the village bailiff and elders". Hans Krause had undoubtedly improved his chances of getting his hands on the holding by reporting his brother's widow to the landlord's officials.⁴⁸

3.4. The Role of Gender

It might be argued that these cases do not reflect the position of women in Bohemia, but rather the nature of inheritance custom and the seigneurial system. It could be held that the manorial court was merely enforcing North Bohemian inheritance practice, which favoured the ownership rights of orphans over those of widows, who were regarded as temporary holders on behalf of their offspring.⁴⁹ But gender was clearly an important criterion in the manorial officials' choice of a temporary holder, and it is hard to judge whether this reflected the best interests of the orphans or of the landlord. On no occasion did the Frýdlant court order a widow's second husband or son-in-law in temporary tenure of the farm during the rearing of minor heirs to sell up on the grounds that he was not a "capable" holder. Quite the contrary: the court oversaw the sale of one farm in Dětřichovec (Dittersbächel) in 1688 for 80 Schock, "although it would otherwise have been worth quite a lot more, and could have been sold for a higher price", because the buyer had agreed to marry the widow, pay the farm's debts, and rear the orphans as his own children.⁵⁰ By under-pricing the farm so as to get a male holder for it, were the manorial officials defending the interests of the orphans, or those of the landlord?

Likewise, it might be argued that dissolution of female-headed households had nothing to do with gender, since Bohemian landlords could order any unsatisfactory serf, male or female, to vacate a holding: this was merely part of the regional seigneurial system. However, careful analysis shows that gender did play a role. Court records were sampled for 48 years between 1583 and 1692, and 37 cases were found of threatened or actual ejection from holdings.⁵¹ As Table 5 shows, males predominated, at 76 percent of all cases, but since women headed only 1 to 6 percent of holdings, proportionally more of them must have been targeted. Moreover, as time passed, women increasingly predominated: between 1583 and 1616, female holders made up only 11 percent of all ejection cases, compared to 50 percent thereafter.

The justification given for ejecting a householder also varied by sex. Nearly 40 percent of all males were ejected for serious offences: resisting labour dues, disobeying the lord, fraud in office, or outright rebellion. No female heads were ejected on such serious grounds. Another 11 percent of males were ejected for severe and repeated conflict with kin, neighbours, or the village as a whole. No female heads were ejected for conflict. Conversely, debt and economic difficulties accounted for only 25 percent of male heads ejected, but fully 50 percent of female ones. Most strikingly, no grounds whatsoever were given for ejection in 40 percent of cases involving females, but only 5 percent involving males. To eject a female head, it was enough simply to assert that she was not a "full" or "capable" holder. In principle, Bohemian landlords could eject any household head, but in practice less serious justification was required to eject a woman than a man.

The qualitative evidence helps us to understand the quantitative findings of the preceding section. Local and regional studies show that the period under analysis saw an expansion of landlords' regulatory powers and their fiscal incentives to extend regulation to sub-peasant strata. Court records show that manorial officials did eject serf householders, that female heads were targeted disproportionately relative to their numbers, and that they made up a growing proportion of ejections as time passed. This may help to explain why, between 1591 and 1722, female headship declined significantly and responded less positively (or not at all) to factors such as proximity to urban markets or sub-peasant social structure. It may also explain why subjection to one feudal estate rather than another emerged as a major influence on female-headed households, as their survival depended more heavily on the discretion of manorial officials.

The fiscal motives for ejecting female heads revealed by the court records help explain why female headship was higher among the fiscally less important sub-peasants. Yet the presence of smallholders

and cottagers among cases of ejected householders explains why, by European standards, even sub-peasants had very low female headship rates in Bohemia. Case numbers are too small to test whether sub-peasants made up an increasing share of ejected householders as time passed, but if this were so it would explain why the gap in female headship rates between peasants and sub-peasants narrowed between 1591 and 1722. Finally, the rent-seeking behaviour against female heads manifested by communities and male relatives helps explain how landlords were able to exert such thoroughgoing pressure. The "second serfdom" operated not merely through direct monitoring by manorial officials, but through collaboration by serfs themselves, seeking to use seigneurial powers for their own ends.

4. Conclusion

Research on poor societies, both historical and modern, suggests that women play a major role in economic development. But little is yet known about women's position in those Eastern European societies which, in the centuries before industrialization, underwent not the "transition to capitalism" experienced in the west, but rather the intensification of landlord powers under the "second serfdom". This is an important lacuna, given the widely held view that women's position was worsened by the growth of the market economy and, conversely, favoured by the maintenance of the family economy within a framework of traditional non-market institutions.

This article has investigated women's position in Bohemia under the "second serfdom", by focussing on female headship, which it argues to be a good indicator of women's economic and social options. Female headship rates in rural Bohemia were found to have been extremely low by European standards between 1381 and 1722, and to have declined significantly between 1591 and 1722. Whereas in the later sixteenth century, proximity to urban markets and sub-peasant social structure created openings for independent female heads, these contracted or disappeared during the

seventeenth century. By contrast, subjection to one feudal estate rather than another emerged as a significant influence on female headship after 1651.

Qualitative evidence helps to explain these patterns. By the late sixteenth century, at latest, the landlord had the power to regulate who could head rural holdings. Motives of revenue maximization led manorial officials to eject female household-heads, who were regarded as poor fiscal risks. But the landlord's power to regulate headship also represented a potential economic rent, control of which was sought by other serfs. Village communities expressed the self-interest of better-off members by seeking seigneurial sanctions against female heads, whom they regarded as sexually disruptive and fiscally unreliable. Male relatives reported widows as "incapable holders", hoping thereby to obtain control of their holdings or payment of inheritance shares. Manorial officials had an interest in satisfying the more substantial elements of rural society, since even the "second serfdom" could not function without cooperation from the serfs themselves. Any favour which the landlord could costlessly grant to communes or influential individuals was a good political investment, given the ever-present threat of peasant revolt.

The power of Bohemian landlords to eject undesirable householders was only one aspect of the "second serfdom", just as independent household-headship was only one of women's options. But the findings of this article suggest that this landlord power, and its manipulation by village communes and male individuals, was decisive in constraining the options of women in Bohemia to a degree even greater than that experienced by women in most other parts of pre-industrial Europe. Whatever may have been the impact of markets on women, neither the feudal system nor the village commune created an institutional framework which favoured female economic independence.

REFERENCES

- Ånkarloo, B. "Agriculture and Women's Work: Directions of Change in the West, 1700-1900." Journal of Family History 4 (1979): 111-20.
- Bennett, J. M. "'History that Stands Still': Women's Work in the European Past." Feminist Studies 14 (1988): 269-83.
- Biraben, J.-N. "A Southern French Village: The Inhabitants of Montplaisant in 1644." in Household and Family in Past Time, edited by Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, 237-54. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Bohac, Rodney D. "Widows and the Russian Serf Community." in Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation, edited by Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel, and Christine D. Worobec, 95-112. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1991.
- Boškovska, Nada. Die Russische Frau im 17. Jahrhundert. Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau, 1998.
- Brettell, C. B. "Emigration and Household Structure in a Portuguese Parish, 1850-1920." Journal of Family History 13 (1988): 33-57.
- Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, Household Listings Analyses, Red Binders nos. 1-29b Britain (CAMPOP B(B)), Red Binders nos. 1-5 (other countries) (CAMPOP B(OC)).
- Cavaciocchi, Simonetta, ed. La donna nell'economia secc. XIII-XVIII. Prato: Istituto "F. Datini", 1990.
- Cerman, Markus. "Bohemia after the Thirty Years' War: Some Theses on Population Structure, Marriage and Family." Journal of Family History 19 (1994): 149-75.

- _____, "Proto-industrialisierung und Grundherrschaft. Ländliche Sozialstruktur, Feudalismus und Proto-industrielles Heimgewerbe in Nordböhmen vom 14. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert (1381-1790)." Ph.D. diss., University of Vienna, 1996.
- _____, "Gutsherrschaft vor dem "Weißen Berg". Zur Verschärfung der Erbuntertänigkeit in Nordböhmen 1380 bis 1620." in Gutsherrschaftsgesellschaften im europäischen Vergleich, edited by Jan Peters, 91-111. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997.
- Clark, Alice. Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century. London, Routledge, 1992.
- Danhieux, Luc. "The Evolving Household: The Case of Lampernisse, West Flanders." in Family Forms in Historic Europe, edited by Richard Wall, Jean Robin, and Peter Laslett, 409-420. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Eder, Franz. Geschlechterproportion und Arbeitsorganisation im Land Salzburg, 17.-19. Jahrhundert. Vienna and Munich: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik and R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1990.
- Ehmer, Josef. Sozialgeschichte des Alters. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1990.
- Gierach, Erich. "Das älteste Urbar der Herrschaft Reichenberg." Mitteilungen des Vereines für Heimatkunde des Jeschken-Isergaues 18 (1924): 101-14.
- Greene, William H. Econometric Analysis. 3rd edn. London: Prentice Hall International, 1997.
- Grulich, Josef, and Hermann Zeitlhofer. "Lebensformen und soziale Muster in Südböhmen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert." Jihočesky Sborník Historicky (1998) (in press).
- Hajnal, John. "Two Kinds of Pre-industrial Household Formation System." in Family Forms in Historic Europe, edited by Richard Wall, Jean Robin, and Peter Laslett, 65-104. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Hallwich, Hermann. "Friedland vor 500 Jahren." Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen 43 (1905): 357-428.
- Hammel, Eugene. "The Zadruga as Process." in Household and Family in Past Time, edited by Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, 335-74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

- Hanawalt, Barbara, ed. Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Hawelka, Walter. "Die Urbare der Herrschaft Reichenberg von 1591 und 1592." Mitteilungen des Vereines für Heimatkunde des Jeschken-Isergaues 27 (1933): 63-74, 27 (1933): 127-40, 28 (1934): 102-20, 28 (1934): 170-9.
- Hill, Bridget. Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.
- Hoch, Steven L. Serfdom and Social Control in Russia: Petrovskoe, a Village in Tambov. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Hroch, Miroslav, and Josef Petráň. Das 17. Jahrhundert - Krise der Feudalgesellschaft?. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1981.
- Hudson, Pat, and W. R. Lee. "Women's Work and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective." in Women's Work and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective, edited by Pat Hudson and W. R. Lee, 2-48. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990.
- Hufton, Olwen. "Women in History: Early Modern Europe." Past and Present 101 (1983): 125-41.
- Humphreys, Jane. "Female-Headed Households in Early Industrial Britain: The Vanguard of the Proletariat?" Labour History Review 63 (1998): 31-65.
- Humphreys, Jane, and Sara Horrell. "The Origins and Expansion of the Male Breadwinner Family: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Britain." in The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family? edited by Angelique Janssens, 25-64. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Izydorczyk-Kamler, Anna, and Andrzej Wyczański. "La femme et l'économie rurale en Pologne aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles." in La donna nell'economia secc. XIII-XVIII, edited by Simonetta Cavaciocchi, 275-82. Prato: Istituto "F. Datini", 1990.

- Janssens, Angélique. "The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family? An Overview of the Debate." in The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family? edited by Angélique Janssens, 1-24. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Jejeebhoy, Shireen J. Women's Education, Autonomy, and Reproductive Behaviour: Experience from Developing Countries. Oxford: Clarendon, 1995.
- Katalin, Péter. "Women Heading Households in 16th and 17th Century Hungarian Rural Society." in La donna nell'economia secc. XIII-XVIII, edited by Simonetta Cavaciocchi, 293-300. Prato: Istituto "F. Datini", 1990.
- Kertzer, David I. "European Peasant Household Structure: Some Implications from a Nineteenth Century Italian Community." Journal of Family History 2 (1977): 333-49.
- Klapisch, Christiane. "Household and Family in Tuscany in 1427." in Household and Family in Past Time, edited by Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, 267-82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Klíma, Arnošt. Economy, Industry and Society in Bohemia in the 17th-19th Centuries. Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1991.
- Kriedte, Peter, Hans Medick, and Jürgen Schlumbohm. Industrialization before Industrialization: Rural Industry in the Genesis of Capitalism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Laslett, Peter. "Introduction: The History of the Family." in Household and Family in Past Time, edited by Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, 1-90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Marchini, Antoine. "Poverty, the Life Cycle of the Household and Female Life Course in Eighteenth-Century Corsica." in Poor Women and Children in the European Past, edited by John Henderson and Richard Wall, 225-50. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Maur, Eduard. "Vrchnosti a poddaní za třicetleté války (Seigneurial Authority and Serf in the Thirty Years' War)." Folia historica bohemica 8 (1985): 241-64.

- McIntosh, Terence. Urban decline in early modern Germany: Schwäbisch Hall and its region, 1650-1750. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Medick, Hans. Weben und Überleben in Laichingen, 1650-1900 Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1996.
- Mitterauer, Michael. "Auswirkungen von Urbanisierung und Frühindustrialisierung auf die Familienverfassung an Beispielen des österreichischen Raumes." in Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas, edited by Werner Conze, 53-146. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1976.
- _____, "Als Adam grub und Eva spann...! Geschlechtsspezifische Arbeitsteilung in vorindustrieller Zeit." in Frauen-Arbeitswelten. Zur historischen Genese gegenwärtiger Probleme, edited by Birgit Bolognese-Leuchtenmüller and Michael Mitterauer, 17-42. Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1993.
- Ogilvie, Sheilagh. "Women and Proto-Industrialisation in a Corporate Society: Württemberg Woollen Weaving 1590-1760." in Women's Work and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective, edited by Pat Hudson and W. R. Lee, 76-103. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990.
- _____, "Women's Work and Economic Development: A German Industrial Countryside, 1580-1740." M.A. diss., University of Chicago, 1993. Forthcoming as Women's Work and Economic Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- _____, State Corporatism and Proto-Industry: The Württemberg Black Forest, 1580-1797. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Pešek, Jiří, and Václav Ledvinka, eds. Žena v dějinách Prahy (Women in the History of Prague). Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1996.
- Peters, Jan, ed. Gutsherrschaft als soziales Modell (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1995).
- Pinchbeck, Ivy. Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850. London: Virago, 1981.

- Procházka, Vladimír. Česká poddanská nemovitost v pozemkových knihach 16. a 17. století (The Property of Czech Serfs According to Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Land Transfer Registers). Prague: Academia, 1963.
- Richards, E. "Women in the British Economy since about 1700: An Interpretation." History 59 (1974): 337-57.
- Sabean, David. Property, Production and Family in Neckarhausen, 1700-1870. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Sieglerschmidt, Jörn. "Social and Economic Landscapes." in Germany: A New Social and Economic History, vol. II: 1630-1800, edited by Sheilagh Ogilvie, 1-38. London: Edward Arnold, 1996.
- Schlögl, R. Bauern, Krieg und Staat. Oberbayerische Bauernwirtschaft und frühmoderner Staat im 17. Jahrhundert. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1988.
- Schlumbohm, Jürgen. Lebensläufe, Familien, Höfe. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1994.
- Sommer, Johann Gottfried. Das Königreich Böhmen statistisch-topographisch dargestellt. Prague, 1833.
- Státní Oblastní Archiv Litoměřice, Pobočka Děčín (SOA Děčín), Fond Rodinný archiv Clam-Gallasů, Historická sbírka (HS).
- Státní Okresní Archiv Liberec, Archiv Město Liberec (SOA Liberec, AM Liberec).
- Státní Ústřední Archiv Praha (SÚA), Soupis Poddaných Podle Víry 1651 (SPPV), Berní Rula 1654 (BR), Tereziánský katastr 1722 (TK).
- Štefanová, Dana. "Die Erbschaftspraxis, das Ausgedinge und das Phänomen der "zweiten Leibeigenschaft" in den nordböhmischem Dörfern der Herrschaft Frýdlant. Ein Beitrag zur Existenz der Familie unter obrigkeitlicher Einflußnahmen (1650-1700)." in Wiener Wege der Sozialgeschichte. Themen - Perspektiven - Vermittlungen, edited by Franz X. Eder, Peter Feldbauer, and Erich Landsteiner, 225-41. Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 1997.

- Štefanová, Dana, and Hermann Zeitlhofer. "Alter und Generationenbeziehungen in Böhmen. Zur Ausgedingstruktur nord- und südböhmischer Dörfer 1650-1750." in Alter und Generationenbeziehungen in Deutschland und Oesterreich, edited by Josef Ehmer and Peter Gutschner. Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1998. (in press).
- Tilly, Louise A., and Joan Wallach Scott, Women, Work and the Family. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978.
- Vassberg, David E. "The Status of Widows in Sixteenth-Century Rural Castile." in Poor Women and Children in the European Past, edited by John Henderson and Richard Wall, 180-95. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Wall, Richard. "Women Alone in English Society." Annales de démographie historique (1981): 303-317.
- _____. "Does Owning Real Property Influence the Form of the Household? An Example from Rural West Flanders." in Family Forms in Historic Europe, edited by Richard Wall, Jean Robin, and Peter Laslett, 379-408. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Wiener Datenbank zur europäischen Familiengeschichte, machine-readable files from research project "Soziale Strukturen in Böhmen" (WDEF/SSB).
- Wiesner, Merry. Working Women in Renaissance Germany. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986.

NOTES

1. From a voluminous literature, see, for instance, Hudson and Lee, "Women's Work"; Humphries and Horrell, "Origins"; Janssens, "Rise"; Jejeebhoy, Women's Education; Ogilvie, "Women"; Ogilvie, "Women's Work"; and the essays in Hanawalt, Women; and Cavaciocchi, La donna.

2. Recent writings acknowledging this long neglect, while themselves beginning to redress it, include Boškovska, Die Russische Frau, pp. 8-13, 238-39; Izydorczyk-Kamler and Wyczański, "La femme", pp. 275-76, 282; Katalin, "Women", p. 293; and the essays in Clements, Engel and Worobec, Russia's Women, esp. pp. 1-2, 12-13, 17-20, 29-30, 75, 135-36; Peters, Gutsherrschaft, esp. pp. 301-26, 343-58; and Pešek and Ledvinka, Žena, esp. 9-12, 21-26.

3. The view that medieval or early modern women experienced a golden age, as a consequence of the fact that markets had not yet displaced traditional institutions, has been widely held for much of the twentieth century. See, for instance, Clark, Working Life; Pinchbeck, Women Workers; Richards, "Women"; Tilly and Scott, Women; Hill, Women. It is criticized in Hufton, "Women"; and Bennett, "History".

4. For further arguments that female headship was important, see Wall, "Women" and Humphries, "Female-Headed Households".

5. For 1381 (16 villages of Frýdlant estate), see Hallwich, "Friedland", pp. 368-99; for 1560 Liberec estate see Gierach, "Das älteste Urbar" (original archival source SOA Liberec, AM Liberec, Kniha 64, fol. 11-25); for 1560 Frýdlant estate see SOA Děčín HS, Karton č. 12a; for 1591/92 Liberec estate see Hawelka, "Die Urbare" (original archival source SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 281); for 1591-2 Frýdlant estate, see SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 12a; for 1651 (both estates) see SÚA SPPV, Herrschaft Frýdlant and Herrschaft Liberec, as recorded in machine-readable form in WDEF/SSB;

for 1654 (both estates) see SÚA BR, as recorded in machine-readable form in WDEF/SSB; for 1677 Liberec estate see SÚA Praha, Revisitace Berní ruly 1677, as recorded in machine-readable form in WDEF/SSB; for 1677 Frýdlant estate see SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 478; for 1722 (both estates) see SÚA Praha, TK, as recorded in machine-readable form in WDEF/SSB.

6. For detailed discussion of these sources, see Cerman, "Proto-industrialisierung", pp. 169-83.

7. A Tobit regression of the female headship rate on all ten variables used in the analysis for Table 3, plus the percentage of abandoned holdings, for 50 villages in 1654, yielded an estimated coefficient on the percentage of abandoned holdings of -0.288 (T-statistic -2.048) (significant at 0.05 level). For evidence that demographic crises increased female headship elsewhere, see Ogilvie, "Women's work", Table 5; and Katalin, "Women", p. 296.

8. Female heads 68 percent, male heads 61 percent; female inmates 87 percent; male inmates 61 percent.

9. Frýdlant estate: heads under age forty, 17 percent "no hope", heads forty or over, 82 percent. Liberec estate: 97 and 99 percent respectively.

10. The changing composition of the sample of villages over time did not affect female headship patterns.

11. See Eder, Geschlechterproportion, p. 126; Schlögl, Bauern, p. 153; Mitterauer, "Auswirkungen", pp. 66-67.

12. Table 2 is based on all European rural settlements for which we could find figures.

13. These were three Kentish mining hamlets in 1705; see CAMPOP B(B) 12, 14.1. Only about 10 percent of European villages had rates below 5 percent.

14. For Europe, see Ehmer, Sozialgeschichte, pp. 205-06; for Bohemia, see Cerman, "Bohemia", p. 154, and Grulich and Zeitlhofer, "Lebensformen", Table 3.

15. Among women aged 15 and over, less than 4 percent on the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec in 1651, over 11 percent in nine pre-industrial English parishes, over 7 percent in an eighteenth-century Italian village. Among women aged 60 and over, 18 percent on these Bohemian estates, 35 percent in England, 25 percent in Italy. See Wall, "Introduction", pp. 37-39.

16. Ankarloo, "Agriculture"; but see the sceptical remarks in Mitterauer, "Als Adam grub", pp. 27-29.

17. See Kriedte, Medick, and Schlumbohm, Industrialization, pp. 51, 56, 61-63, 70; Eder, Geschlechterproportion, pp. 124-28.

18. See Wiesner, Working Women; Mitterauer, "Als Adam grub", pp. 32-33.

19. Sieglerschmidt, "Social and Economic Landscapes", pp. 9-11.

20. For 1591 and 1722, weaving figures derived from same document as female headship; for 1651 and 1654, from separate 1650 list, SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 13.

21. In the Württemberg worsted industry, for instance, 17 percent of active weavers in the mid-eighteenth century were widows; Ogilvie, State Corporatism, p. 135.

22. Sommer, Das Königreich.

23. On community anxieties about female heads in Württemberg, see Ogilvie, State Corporatism, chapter 3.
24. On landlord pressures on female heads in Austria, see Eder, Geschlechterproportion, pp. 124-26.
25. Mitterauer, "Auswirkungen", p. 69; Mitterauer, "Als Adam grub", p. 32; Eder, Geschlechterproportion, pp. 121-26.
26. Schlögl, Bauern, p. 153; Eder, Geschlechterproportion, pp. 121-26.
27. Eder, Geschlechterproportion, pp. 124-26.
28. McIntosh, Urban Decline, pp. 28, 53-57, 268-69 (note 47).
29. Cerman, "Proto-industrialisierung", pp. 189-258.
30. See Greene, Econometric Analysis, pp. 627-28.
31. The male-female productivity gap is questioned by Mitterauer, "Als Adam grub", pp. 18-21, 23, 25.
32. Hoch, Serfdom, pp. 86-88 (with note 17), 156-57.
33. Klíma, Economy; Cerman, "Proto-Industrialisierung".
34. Hroch and Petráň, Das 17. Jahrhundert; Klíma, Economy; Cerman, "Gutsherrschaft"; Cerman, "Proto-industrialisierung", pp. 81-149.

35. For the former view, see Hroch and Petráň, Das 17. Jahrhundert; for a survey of both views, see Maur, "Vrchnosti"; on the estates of Frýdlant and Liberec, see Cerman, "Proto-industrialisierung", pp. 82-108; and Cerman, "Gutsherrschaft", pp. 91-92, 99-105, 109-49.

36. SOA Děčín HS, Karton č. 77, 6 Mar. 1604, fol. 4v-5r: "sie hette ihren Kind. das gutt [inserted: zum besten] gehalten, biß sie ihre Kind. versorgen möchte"; "in Jahr Vndt tag der gutt mit eim tüchtig. Wirtte besetzen, Verkauffen, oder die tochter Verheuraten".

37. SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 77, 26 Mar. 1605, fol. 29v: "ist im Ampt Vorgunstedt worden, ihr Gutt, ohne Vorwüstung an Eckern, Wiesen, Vnndt wäldern, ihren Eltesten tochter zu gutt zu behalten, biß dieselbe Vorfreyet werden, entweder biß auff Pfingsten, oder auff den langst biß zu Martinj diß Jahres."

38. SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 77, 18 Apr. 1606, fol. 45r: "den Kindern zum besten"; "so sie Zwisch. dieser Zeit was daran geringern oder mehr schulden machen wurde".

39. SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 77, 5 Nov. 1609, fol. 14v: "die Eltesten sollen auf einen gutten wirt Vnd jung. man achtung gebenn, denselb. ... ins gutt sezen, darmit das gutt in bewlich. weßen erhalten werden möchten, ... die pferde aber sollen im gerichte Vorbleiben, darmit dem pfarrher die dienst vorrichtet werden möchten."

40. SOA Děčín, HS, 2. část, pobátky (Frýdlant) c. 11, 8 May 1685, fol. 10v: "dies Selbieges Verkauffet vnnd Ein Völliger Wirth darauf Verschaffet werden solle".

41. SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 79, 15 Nov. 1650, fol. 9v-10r: "daß Sie daß Gutt Tzschirmhauß so viel möglich. erbauen Vndt anricht. dörfte"; "Vmb Verhüttung weiter völliger Vndergang des Lehns Vnd daß lehnhern dabey Restirender interesse".

42.Štefanová and Zeitlhofer, "Alter"; Štefanová, "Die Erbschaftspraxis", p. 231.

43.SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 79, 18 Oct. 1650, fol. 3v-4r: "das vberige Außgeding durchgehents auffgehoben"; "desto ehender einen Kauffman Zue dem Guett bekhommen".

44.SOA Děčín, HS, 2. část, pobátky (Frýdlant) č. 11, 8 May 1685, fol. 10v: "Eß hat obbemelte Wiettib Anna Einen Awen gartten Zue hermbsdorff bieshero Ingehabt, Vnndt wönig darvon verrichten wollen, worüber sich die Gerichten und Gemeine, beklaget haben"; "Selbieges Verkauffet vnnd Ein Völliger Wirth darauf Verschaffet werden solle".

45.SOA Děčín, HS, 2. část, pobátky (Frýdlant) č. 11, 26 Mar. 1685, fol. 39v: "In mittelß soll hanß Apelt mit seinem weibe Zu besagter Rosina, alß seiner Tochter, Zu ver hüttung weiterer hurerey in ihr haüßel Ziehen".

46.In Württemberg, for instance, communities could oppose settlement of non-citizen widows and order single women into service or out of the community, but could not prevent a citizen's widow from conducting her own household; see Ogilvie, State Corporatism, esp. chapter 3.

47.SOA Děčín, HS, Karton . č. 77, 6 Mar. 1604, fol. 4v-5r: "mit eim tüchtig. Wirtte besetzen"; "Schultessen Vndt Eltesten sollen gegen Außwerts Künftig das gutt besichtig."

48.SOA Děčín, HS, Karton č. 77, 18 Apr. 1606, fol. 45r: "So er aber befinden dz sie Vbel haußhaltten soll er solchs dem Ampt anzeig., als dan man solches durch Schulteß Vndt Eltesten wirdt besichtig. lassen".

49.On Bohemian inheritance customs, see Prochazka, Česká poddanská.

50.SOA Děčín, HS, 2. část, pobátky (Frýdlant) č. 11, 20 Jan. 1688, fol. 32v-33r: "welches zwar sonsten ein weit mehrers werth gewesen v. höher hette verkauffen werden Können".

51.Court records were sampled for portions of 1583-1601, 1604-6, 1609-16, 1627, 1629-30, 1645, 1649-50, 1655-6, 1661, 1667, and 1685-92 inclusive.

Table 1:
Female Headship Rates in Rural Settlements in Different Areas of Bohemia

Villages of the estate of:	Year									
	1381	1560	1585	1586	1591	1592	1651	1654	1677	1722
Frydlant	8,5	2,3	*	*	6,0	5,9	6,2	1,4	4,7	2,2
Liberec	*	4,0	*	*	2,9	2,9	5,2	2,5	3,1	4,4
Decin	*	*	*	*	*	*	7,6	*	*	*
Podebrady	*	*	*	*	*	*	5,4	*	*	*
Rychnov	*	*	*	*	*	*	3,3	*	*	*
Trebon ^a	*	*	*	6,2	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chynov ^a	*	*	*	*	*	*	5,5	*	*	*
Vyssi Brod ^a	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,0	*	*	*

Source:

^a From Grulich and Zeitlhofer, 'Lebensformen', Table 17.

Otherwise authors' own calculations from documents cited in text.

Table 2:
Female Headship Rates in Rural Settlements in Different Areas of Europe, 1400-1800

Country	Fifteenth Century		Sixteenth Century		Seventeenth Century		Eighteenth Century		Nineteenth Century	
	Number of Observations	Average % Female Heads	Number of Observations	Average % Female Heads	Number of Observations	Average % Female Heads	Number of Observations	Average % Female Heads	Number of Observations	Average % Female Heads
Austria	*	*	*	*	7	3,6	8	7,2	*	*
Corsica	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	17,0	*	*
Denmark	*	*	*	*	*	*	1 ^a	7,0	*	*
England	*	*	2	15,4	20	18,2	82	14,6	17	14,0
Flanders	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10	10,6
France	*	*	*	*	1	17,7	5	14,7	1	14,8
Germany	*	*	19	10,0	1	14,7	15	10,7	7	11,7
Hungary	*	*	3	4,3	3	15,9	*	*	*	*
Italy	1	10,6	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	5,8
Portugal	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	28,0
Russia	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	13 ^b	11,1
Scotland	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	13,6	*	*
Serbia	*	*	1	5,0	*	*	*	*	1	1,5
Spain	2	21,0	16 ^c	20,0	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wales	*	*	*	*	30	15,3	*	*	*	*
Total	3	17,5	41	13,5	62	15,0	113	13,5	54	13,1

Notes:

Unless otherwise noted, all observations are of individual rural settlements.

^a Aggregated across 26 rural parishes, 1787-1801.

^b Consists of 3 observations of Mishino estate (4 villages), 9 of Manuilovskoe estate (9 villages), and 1 of Pokrovskoe estate (unknown number of villages)

^c Each observation consists of a sample of between 7 and 14 villages

Sources:

Biraben, "Southern French Village", pp. 244-248; Bohac, "Widows", p. 109; Brettell, "Emigration", p. 49; Danhieux, "Evolving Household", p. 413; Ede Geschlechterproportion, p. 246 (Table 24); Hajnal, "Two Kinds", p. 75; Hammel, "Zadruga", pp. 356-7 (Table 14.1); Katalin, "Women", pp. 296, 298; Kertzer, "European Peasant Household Structure", p. 338; Klapisch, "Household", p. 273 (Table 10.1); Laslett, "Introduction", p. 78 (Table 1.8); Marchini, "Poverty", p. 229; Medi Weben, p. 603 (tax lists, "household heads" only); Sabean Property, pp. 456-7 (tax registers, excludes never-married taxpayers of both sexes); Schlumbohm Lebensläufe, p. 234 (Table 4.15); Vassberg, "Status", pp. 183-191; Wall, "Does Owning Real Property", p. 386; authors' own calculations from CAMPOP B(B) 1-29b, CAMPOP B(OC) 1-5, HSAS A54 St. 50 (Herdstättenverzeichnisse 1525, Amt Wildberg), HSAS A54 St. 166 (Turkensteuerlisten 1545, Amt Wildberg), HSAS A573 Bu. 6967 (Seeleentabelle 1736, Amt Wildberg) (non-solitary heads only)

Table 3:
Tobit Model of Determinants of Percentage of Female
Estates of Frydlant and Liberec (Bohemia), 1591, 1651, 16

Explanatory Variable	Coefficient (Standard Error)
INTERCEPT	1,000 (1.225)
PSUB	0,162 *** (0.044)
PSUB51	-0,101 ** (0.050)
PSUB54	-0,153 *** (0.049)
PSUB22	-0,123 *** (0.046)
ESTATE	2,020 (2.173)
ESTATE51	-1,232 (2.697)
ESTATE54	-6,212 ** (2.912)
ESTATE22	-4,848 * (2.633)
DISTANCE	-3,223 *** (1.043)
DISTANCE51	3,230 ** (1.316)
DISTANCE54	2,019 (1.570)
DISTANCE22	2,966 ** (1.337)

No. observations = 207.

Log-likelihood = -429.148.

Pseudo-R² = 0.0774.

Scale factor for marginal effects = 0.628.

* = significant at 0.10 level.

** = significant at 0.05 level.

*** = significant at 0.01 level.

PSUB = per cent sub-peasant holdings.

ESTATE = estate (Frydlant or Liberec).

DISTANCE = hours walk from town.

PSUB51 = interaction term between per cent

sub-peasant holdings and 1651 dummy;

other interaction terms follow same convention.

Table 4:
Tobit Model of Determinants of Percentage of Female Heads
with Fixed Village- and Time-Effects,
Estates of Frydlant and Liberec (Bohemia), 1591, 1651, 1654 and

Explanatory Variable	Coefficient (Standard Error)
NOHOLDINGS	0,049 (0.040)
PSUB	0,118 *** (0.207)
PWEBER	-0,015 (0.036)
MEIERHOF	-3,919 (608.120)
1651 (compared to 1591)	-0,087 (1.073)
1654 (compared to 1591)	-8,336 *** (1.404)
1722 (compared to 1591)	-5,862 *** (1.489)

Estimated fixed village-effects not reported.

No. observations = 207.

Log-likelihood = -390.879.

Pseudo-R² = 0.1597.

Scale factor for marginal effects = 0.593.

* = significant at 0.10 level.

** = significant at 0.05 level.

*** = significant at 0.01 level.

NOHOLDINGS = total holdings.

PSUB = per cent sub-peasant holdings.

PWEBER = per cent linen-weaving holdings.

MEIERHOF = presence or absence of demesne farm.

Table 5:
Ejections of Householders by Sex and Time-Period
Estate of Frydlant (Bohemia), 1583-1693

Time-Period	Females		Males		Children		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
1583-1615	3	11,1	23	85,2	1	3,7	27	100,0
1630-1688	5	50,0	5	50,0	0	0,0	10	100,0
Total	8	21,6	28	75,7	1	2,7	37	100,0

Note:

Based on partial sample of 48 years of manorial court minutes over the period 1583-1693.

Source:

Statni Oblastni Archiv Litomerice, Pobočka Decin, Historická sbírka, Amtsprotokolle Herrschaft Frydlant.

Table 6:
Justification Given for Ejection of Householders, by Sex
Estate of Frydlant (Bohemia), 1583-1693

Justification	Females		Males		Children		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Economic difficulties	4	50,0	7	25,0	1	100,0	12	32,4
Disobedience to lord, rebellion	0	0,0	11	39,3	0	0,0	11	29,7
Conflict with others	0	0,0	3	10,7	0	0,0	3	8,1
Other offences ^a	1	12,5	5	17,9	0	0,0	6	16,2
No grounds given	3	37,5	2	7,1	0	0,0	5	13,5
Total	8	100,0	28	100,0	1	100,0	37	100,0

Note:

Based on partial sample of 48 years of manorial court minutes over the period 1583-1693.

^a Other offences include fornication, imprisonment, marital conflict, religious deviance, and theft.

Source:

Statni Oblastni Archiv Litomerice, Pobočka Decin, Historická sbírka, Amtsprotokolle Herrschaft Frydlant.