

# The Bohemian Census of 1651 and the Position of Inmates

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*To re-Catholicize Bohemia after the Thirty Years' War, the Austrian Habsburgs commissioned, in 1651, a population list according to religious belief, which generated census-type lists for many communities. A research team is constructing and analyzing a database consisting of the 1651 census, the 1654 tax register, the 1680 tax revisitiation, and the 1711–1748 Theresian cadaster for five feudal domains of Bohemia. One phenomenon that has been observed in the 1651 census sample is the large population of inmates living in the households of others. The authors use the census itself, village land records, and feudal court minutes to explore alternative explanations for the existence of inmates, including inheritance customs, land scarcity, and feudal dues.*

*Pour reconvertir la Bohême à la foi catholique après la guerre de Trente Ans, les Habsbourg d'Autriche ordonnèrent en 1651 qu'on dresse une liste des habitants selon leur croyance religieuse, ce qui amena de nombreuses communautés à établir une liste nominative de recensement. Une équipe de recherche est à construire et à analyser une base de données du recensement de 1651, du registre de l'impôt de 1654, de la refonte fiscale de 1680 et du cadastre thérésien de 1711–1748 pour cinq domaines bohémiens sous régime féodal. L'échantillon du recensement de 1651 révèle notamment une forte proportion d'occupants dans les ménages d'autrui. Les auteurs utilisent le recensement lui-même, les registres des bien-fonds des villages et les procès-verbaux des tribunaux féodaux pour trouver d'autres explications à ce phénomène, y compris les modes de succession, la rareté des terres et l'impôt féodal.*

TO RE-CATHOLICIZE their Bohemian subjects after the Thirty Years' War, the Austrian Habsburgs commissioned, in 1651, a “population list according to religious belief”, the *Soupis poddaných podle víry*. Re-Catholicization had begun during the 1620s, but it was not until 1650, with

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all of Bohemia united under Habsburg rule, that systematic measures could be undertaken.<sup>1</sup> An imperial decree of February 4, 1651, commanded the captains of the circuits (national administrative units) to arrange the religious registration of the entire population.<sup>2</sup> The decree described precisely how the registration should be done, specifying the possible religious categories and providing four pages of examples.<sup>3</sup> The circuit captains conveyed these instructions to the feudal lords who ruled each domain, and they in turn ordered their own administrators (the domain captains) and sub-administrators (the city councils and village bailiffs) to carry out the survey, which they duly did during the months of April, May, and June 1651. Not all domains reacted in time, with the result that the survey was eventually written up for only about 40 per cent of the population (400,000 to 500,000 people). The quality of registration varied widely: some domains simply provided numerical totals of the non-Catholic population, others provided totals of each religious group, while still others followed the instructions closely and handed in true census-like listings. Confronted with these difficulties, the government apparently accepted the failure of the detailed survey, and on June 3, 1651, ordered registration to continue only for the non-Catholic population, particularly those unwilling to convert.<sup>4</sup> The only calculations the government ever made from the survey consisted of a set of aggregate figures for individual circuits.

Those domains in which registration was carried out according to instructions, however, generated detailed census-like listings. These recorded the population in each town or village by what appear to be residential units. Each individual was listed according to name, age, relationship to household

- 1 On Bohemian re-Catholicization, see Anton Gindely, *Geschichte der Gegenreformation in Böhmen* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1894), pp. 103–121, 203–213, 237–241, 260–262; Karl Richter, “Die böhmischen Länder von 1471–1740” in Karl Bosl, ed., *Handbuch der Geschichte der böhmischen Länder* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1974), vol. 2, pp. 99–412, here pp. 285–289; Karl Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens* (München: Beck, 1987), p. 227. On emigration from Bohemia (estimated at 100,000 during the Thirty Years’ War and the post-war re-Catholicization), see Eduard Winter, *Die tschechische und die slowakische Emigration in Deutschland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie, 1955); and Jean Berenger, “The Austrian Lands: Habsburg Absolutism under Leopold I” in John Miller, ed., *Absolutism in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 157–174, here 159–163.
- 2 Correspondence and decrees in Státní Ústřední Archiv Praha (henceforth SÚA), Stará manipulace, Reformace (henceforth SM R), 109/12, especially Karton č. 1982–1985; decree in Karton 1985, sv. 8, fol. 2–24, Imperial Decree, February 4, 1651. See also Anton Blaschka, “Das Trautenuer Untertanenverzeichnis v. J. 1651”, *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Riesengebirgsvereins*, vol. 14 (1925), pp. 110–146, here p. 111; Lenka Matušíková and Alena Pazderová, “Alterszusammensetzung der Kinder im ‘Verzeichnis der Untertanen nach dem Glauben vom Jahre 1651’”, *Historická demografie*, vol. 17 (1993), pp. 53–63, here pp. 53–55; Eduard Maur, “Problémy demografické struktury Čech v polovině 17. století”, *Československý časopis historický*, vol. 19 (1971), pp. 839–870, here pp. 840–844.
- 3 SÚA, SM R 109/12, Karton č. 1985, sv. 8, fol. 5–7, Imperial Decree, February 4, 1651.
- 4 SÚA, SM R 109/12, Karton č. 1983, sv. 4, fol. 383–384, letter of the Emperor, June 3, 1651.

head, occupation, legal status, social status, and religious status. Legal status was defined in terms of personal subjection: noble, free, non-subject, and subject (i.e. serf, comprising the vast majority of the population). Social status was defined in essentially economic terms: town burgher (*Bürger, měšťán*), peasant (*Bauer, sedlák*), gardener (*Gärtner, zahradník*), cottager (*Häusler, domkář*), “crofter” (*Chalupner, chalupník*), and “inmate” (*Hausgenosse, podruh*). Religious status was defined in four columns: “Catholic” or “non-Catholic” and, if non-Catholic, then whether there was “hope” or “no hope” of conversion.<sup>5</sup>

Three years later, in 1654, the government commissioned a second big survey, the *Berní rula* (tax register).<sup>6</sup> It recorded the name of each holder of taxable property, the type of holding (a social category assigned by the authorities), total seed sown, productive seed sown, number of livestock, and some craft occupations.<sup>7</sup> A “reinspection” of the *Berní rula* in 1680 and

5 On the 1651 census, see Blaschka, “Das Trautenuer Untertanenverzeichnis”; Anton Blaschka, “Die Bevölkerung Nordostböhmens nach dem Dreißigjährigen Kriege”, *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Riesengebirgsvereins*, vol. 19 (1930), pp. 215–229; Eliška Čáňová, “Složení domacostí v Čechách v roce 1651”, *Historická demografie*, vol. 16 (1992), pp. 63–66; Eliška Čáňová, “Soupis poddaných podle víry a studium historické rodiny”, *Archivní časopis*, vol. 42 (1992), pp. 28–34; Eliška Čáňová, Pavla Horská, and Eduard Maur, “Les listes nominatives de la Bohême, sources de données pour l’histoire sociale et la démographie historique”, *Annales de démographie historique*, vol. 24 (1987), pp. 295–312; Viktor Lug, “Das Einwohnerverzeichnis der Herrschaft Reichenberg aus dem Jahre 1651”, *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Heimatkunde des Jescken-Iser-Gaues*, vol. 26 (1932), pp. 7–12; Matusíková and Pazderová, “Alterszusammensetzung der Kinder”; Maur, “Problemy”; Eduard Maur, “Populační vývoj českých komorních panství po válce třicetileté”, *Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Philosophica et historica*, vol. 3 (1972), pp. 9–80; Ernst Schreiber, *Der Elbogner Kreis und seine Enklaven nach dem Dreißigjährigen Kriege* (Prague: Verlag der deutschen Gesellschaften der Wissenschaften und Künste, 1935); and the articles collected in *Historická demografie*, vols. 4 (1970) and 6 (1972). The sources are in SÚA, SM R 109/45 Bech. 22; SM R 109/45 B–H 40; SM R 109/45 Bol. 10, 17; and Státní oblastní archiv Litoměřice, pobočka Děčín (henceforth SOA Děčín), fond Thun-Hohenstein. A complete edition of the 1651 census is currently being prepared, and volumes 1 (Loket circuit), 2 (Boleslav circuit), and 3 (Beroun circuit) have already appeared: *Soupis poddaných podle víry. Loketského* (Prague: Státní Ústřední Archiv v Praze, 1993); *Soupis poddaných podle víry. Boleslavsko* (Prague: Státní Ústřední Archiv v Praze, 1994); *Soupis poddaných podle víry. Berounsko* (Prague: Státní Ústřední Archiv v Praze, 1995).

6 This is held in SÚA, *Berní rula* (henceforth BR), č. 1ff. A summary edition was published as *Berní rula. K edici Berní ruly* (Prague: Archiv Ministerstvo Vnitřní, 1950). On the structure of the 1654 tax register and its 1680 reinspection, see Josef Pekař, *České katastry* (Prague: Historický Klub, 1932), pp. 4–38; Anton Blaschka, “Die Grafschaft Glatz nach dem Dreißigjährigen Kriege”, *Jahrbücher des Vereins für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen*, vol. 1 (1926), pp. 43–146; Franz A. Slavík, “Böhmens Beschreibung nach dem 30jährigen Kriege”, *Mitteilungen aus dem Landesarchive des Königreiches Böhmen*, vol. 3 (1910), pp. 20–133; Schreiber, *Der Elbogner Kreis*; Milan Volf, “Hospodářský a sociální obraz Litoměřického kraje podle berní ruly”, *Sborník archivních prací*, vol. 18 (1968), pp. 142–236; *Archiv Český*, vol. 29 (1913), pp. 260ff.

7 The amount of seed is usually reported in *Strich* (covering ca. 0.285 hectares, or in cubic terms 93.587 litres), *Viertel* (ca. 0.07125 ha or 23.396 litres), and *Mass* (ca. 0.018 ha or 5.849 litres). For measures and calculations used in the tax cadaster, see Slavík, “Böhmens Beschreibung”, pp. 87–99; and generally Gustav Hofmann, *Metrologická příručka pro Čechy, Moravu a Slezsko* (Plzeň: Zapadočeské nakladatelství, 1984). On the categories of the *Berní rula* of 1654, see *Archiv Český*, vol. 29 (1913), pp. 300ff, 344ff.

the “Theresian cadaster” of 1711 to 1748 used the same categories.<sup>8</sup> These tax registers survive for most circuits of Bohemia. Although the 1654 register lists only those with taxable property, the “holding” in 1654 appears to correspond to the “household” in the 1651 census, enabling researchers to link these records.

The two great registers of the 1650s have long been central sources for Bohemian history. However, they are so detailed and colossal that, without computers, analysis has been limited to simple calculations and local studies. A Czech, Austrian, and British research team has therefore begun to create a database containing the 1651 census, the 1654 tax register, the 1680 “revisitation”, and the 1711–1748 Theresian cadaster, for five feudal domains.<sup>9</sup> Characteristics of this sample are shown in Table 1. Project members are using this database to investigate a variety of questions under the general rubric “Bohemian Social Structure, 1650–1800”: the determinants of family structure and demographic behaviour; the nature and causes of changing social structure; the “second serfdom” or growth in the institutional powers of the great feudal landlords; “proto-industrialization” or the rise of rural export-industries; the Catholic counter-reformation; and the local effects of the growth of the early modern state.

The data are also generating their own questions. One of them concerns a large group of people identified as *Hausgenossen* (literally, “house-fellows”) — inmates living in the households of others. As Table 2 shows, these inmates made up 18 per cent of all individuals listed in the sample domains, 27 per cent in the towns, and 16 per cent in rural areas. Many inmates lived in their own conjugal family units — that is, together with a spouse, offspring, or both. These “inmate sub-households” made up no fewer than one-fifth of all households in the sample. Inmates and inmate sub-households were therefore an important feature of Bohemian society in 1651.

Inmates are found in many pre-industrial European populations, but their numbers varied widely across communities and regions. Higher proportions of inmates are generally observed in towns, which is ascribed to urban housing structure and craft labour requirements. Proportions of inmates also varied considerably across different rural areas, however, and here theories diverge. Some emphasize the labour demands of different sorts of rural economy: it is argued that arable farming, vine-growing, and proto-industry generated more inmates, while pastoral agriculture and mixed farming gave

8 The 1680 revisitation is held with the *Berní rula* in SÚA BR; the Theresian cadaster, which includes a declaration of demesne land, is held in SÚA, Tereziánský katastr. See Pekař, *České katastry*, pp. 101–142.

9 This project, “Social Structures in Bohemia, 1650–1800”, has been funded since 1992 by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research. For further initial results, see Markus Cerman, “Bohemia after the Thirty Years’ War: Some Theses on Population Structure, Marriage and Family”, *Journal of Family History*, vol. 19 (1994), pp. 149–175.

**Table 1 Characteristics of Sample Domains of Bohemia, 1651–1654**

Domain	Circuit	No. communities		No. holdings		No. inhabitants	Economy
		Villages	Towns/ Markets	Total	Abandoned		
Chýnov	Bechyně	34	1	540	85	1,605	medium-scale agriculture
Děčín	Litoměřice	57	1	1,119	66	7,306	medium-scale agriculture
Frydlant	Boleslav	38	2	2,031	995	6,973	agriculture, proto-industry
Liberec	Boleslav	27	1	988	54	6,047	proto-industry
Poděbrady	Bydžov	48	1	866	288	2,441	large-scale agriculture

Source: *Soupis poddaných*, 1651; *Berní rula*, 1654.

**Table 2 Inmates and Inmate Sub-Households<sup>a</sup> in Sample Domains, 1651**

Locality	Total population	No. inmates	% inmates	No. main households	No. inmate sub-households	% inmate sub-households
Chýnov domain <sup>b</sup>	1,570	223	14.2	457	90	16.5
Děčín rural	7,061	1,398	19.8	1,164	332	22.2
Frýdlant town	939	170	18.1	189	38	16.7
Nové Město town	428	62	14.5	117	26	18.2
Frýdlant rural	5,808	697	12.0	1,461	209	12.5
Liberec town	1,698	455	26.8	249	93	27.2
Liberec rural	4,321	821	19.0	692	223	24.3
Poděbrady town	628	307	48.9	69	80	53.7
Poděbrady rural	1,774	323	18.2	342	92	21.2
Total urban	3,693	994	26.9	624	237	27.5
Total rural	11,903	1,841	15.5	3,659	856	19.0
Total sample	24,227	4,456	18.4	4,740	1,183	20.0

a) Inmate sub-households are defined as all inmate groups forming conjugal family units.

b) Children under 11–12 years not recorded.

Source: *Soupis poddaných*, 1651.

rise to fewer inmates but more servants.<sup>10</sup> Other theories emphasize inheritance, marriage, and retirement practices: single-heir inheritance, low marriage age, and *inter vivos* property transfers combined with retirement contracts are thought to have given rise to inmates in the form of retired parents and non-inheriting siblings.<sup>11</sup> Still other theories emphasize changes in social structure: where dividing peasant holdings or settling on village commons was prohibited, demographic pressure on the land is thought to have created a stratum of inmate sub-households (if landless people were allowed to marry) or unmarried inmates and servants (if marriage was more restricted).<sup>12</sup> How useful are these theories in explaining the Bohemian findings?

One hint as to the possible origins of some of the Bohemian inmates is provided by the almost complete absence of co-resident kin outside the nuclear family. In the domains of Liberec, Frýdlant, and Děčín, for instance, only 1.5 per cent of households contained non-nuclear kin in 1651. This is extraordinarily low, even by northwest European standards, and suggests that some “inmates” were in fact relatives.

Much literature on Bohemian family structure adopts this explanation, emphasizing the youngest-son Bohemian inheritance pattern, which encouraged two practices likely to lead kin to co-reside as inmates. The first was the “retirement contract”, whereby parents transferred headship to the heir (customarily the youngest son) in return for various considerations, including the right to dwell as inmates in the “old people’s part” of the family house. The second was the *vybití*, whereby an elder son married but remained in the parental household as an inmate, supplying labour on the holding until the youngest brother was old enough to inherit.<sup>13</sup>

Both practices assume inheritance in the male line. Thus their importance

10 See Lutz K. Berkner, “The Stem Family and the Development Cycle of the Peasant Household: An Eighteenth Century Austrian Example”, *American Historical Review*, vol. 77 (1972), pp. 398–417; Michael Mitterauer, “Auswirkungen von Urbanisierung und Frühindustrialisierung auf die Familienverfassung an Beispielen des österreichischen Raums” in Werner Conze, ed., *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas. Neue Forschungen* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1976), pp. 53–146. On how rural economy and “ecotype” could influence rural labour organization, see Michael Mitterauer, “Formen ländlicher Familienwirtschaft. Historische Ökotypen und familiäre Arbeitsorganisation im österreichischen Raum” in Josef Ehmer and Michael Mitterauer, eds., *Familienstruktur und Arbeitsorganisation in ländlichen Gesellschaften* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1986), pp. 185–323; and Michael Mitterauer, “Peasant and Non-Peasant Family Forms in Relation to the Physical Environment and the Local Economy”, *Journal of Family History*, vol. 17 (1992), pp. 139–159.

11 On Bohemian inheritance, see Vladimír Procházka, *Česka poddanská nemovitost v pozemkových knihách 16. a 17. století* (Prague: Academia, 1963); Pavla Horská, “Rodinná strategie ve vesnici Záblati na třeboňském panství (1661–1820)”, *Historická demografie*, vol. 17 (1993), pp. 131–152; Kamil Krofta, *Dějiny selského stavu* (Prague: Academia, 1949); Josef Tlapák, “K některým otázkám poddanské nezakupní držby v Čechách v 16.–18. století”, *Pravnehistorické studie*, vol. 19 (1975).

12 A. Kunze, “Vom Bauerndorf zum Weberdorf” in *Oberlausitzer Forschungen. Beiträge zur Landesgeschichte* (Leipzig: Reuter, 1961), pp. 165–192, here 166ff.

13 See Procházka, *Česka poddanská nemovitost*; Horská, “Rodinná strategie”; Krofta, *Dějiny selského stavu*; Tlapák, “K některým”.

in generating the inmate population can be explored through surname links between inmates and main households. As Table 3 shows, only 9 per cent of inmate sub-households in the Frýdlant countryside and only 20 per cent in the Liberec countryside can have involved retirement contracts in the male line. Only 11 per cent in Frýdlant and 17 per cent in Liberec can have involved *vybití* arrangements in the male line. By contrast, 80 per cent of inmate sub-households in the Frýdlant countryside and 63 per cent in the Liberec countryside showed no kin links in the male line with the main household. Clearly, only a small proportion of inmate sub-households can have been created by classic retirement contracts or *vybití* arrangements, whereby the youngest — or any — son inherited. A substantial proportion of individual inmates, as well, were unrelated in the male line to the main household, as shown by a study of the domain of Děčín by Markéta Seligová.<sup>14</sup> Inmates were present in 36 per cent of Děčín households in 1651, but only half of all individual inmates shared a surname with the main household. The other half were not, therefore, inmates as a result of inheritance by a son. Although inmates not sharing surnames with the main household may have been relatives in the female line, such arrangements must have resulted from lack of male heirs, discretion in inheritance practices, or forces other than inheritance.<sup>15</sup> It appears, then, that inheritance practices or other kinship ties in the male line were responsible for half of individual inmates in Děčín domain, 37 per cent of inmate sub-households in Liberec domain, and 20 per cent of inmate sub-households in Frýdlant domain. Clearly other factors were responsible for the remainder.

An alternative explanation for the origins of the Bohemian inmate population is advanced in literature on changes in social structure. Arno Kunze, for instance, regards Upper Lusatian and Bohemian inmates as comprising a separate “social stratum” inferior to the cottagers. After recolonization started around 1450, he argues, population growth and landlord engrossment reduced land availability, creating an inmate stratum renting dwellings on peasant holdings. This put pressure on communities to permit inmates to settle as cottagers on the commons. The need for labour led feudal lords and full peasants to permit opening the commons to settlement. Consequently, inmates settled as cottagers, and their numbers declined.<sup>16</sup>

The evidence for Frýdlant and Liberec domains supports this account only partially. First, land scarcity here was probably not caused by landlord engrossment. In Frýdlant domain, the number of full peasant holdings re-

14 Markéta Seligová, “Obyvatelstvo děčínského panství v polovině 17. Století podle věku a rodinného stavu” *Historická demografie*, vol. 19 (1995).

15 Similarly low proportions of traceable retirement arrangements are found for inmates in a large sample of early modern Austrian listings: see Thomas Held, “Rural Retirement Arrangements in Seventeenth- to Nineteenth-Century Austria: A Cross-community Analysis”, *Journal of Family History*, vol. 7 (1982), pp. 227–252, here p. 239.

16 Kunze, “Vom Bauerndorf”, pp. 166–169, 191.



**Table 3 Surname Links between Inmate Sub-Households and Main Households, Frýdlant and Liberec Rural Areas, 1651**

	Frýdlant rural	Liberec rural
No. main households	1,461	692
No. inmate sub-households	163	174
% inmate sub-households	11.2%	25.1%
Surname match, sub-household older	15	34
As % of main households	1.0%	4.9%
As % of inmate sub-households	9.2%	19.5%
Surname match, sub-household younger	18	30
As % of main households	1.2%	4.3%
As % of inmate sub-households	11.0%	17.2%
Surname different	130	110
As % of main households	8.9%	15.9%
As % of inmate sub-households	79.8%	63.2%

Source: *Soupis poddaných*, 1651.

mained stable throughout the sixteenth century, suggesting little engrossment, whether by the small knights or by the large feudal lords. Liberec domain had poor soils unprofitable for demesne farming, and only three new demesne farms were established in this period, one (Harcov, 1591) formed through purchase of a single peasant holding. Land scarcity must have had other causes here. Secondly, in these domains, the proportion of cottagers grew but that of inmates did not clearly decline. In Frýdlant domain, the years between 1564 and 1591 saw the greatest growth in the proportion of cottagers, but also an increase in the proportion of inmates. In Liberec domain, the rise in the proportion of cottagers (sometime after 1591) was accompanied by little apparent change in that of inmates for at least 60 years. Further doubt is cast on the view of inmates as a “social stratum”, whose size varied with land scarcity, by the substantial groups of inmates in Bohemia in 1651, despite enormous war mortality and emigration. On the other hand, Frýdlant domain had a lower proportion of inmates than other sample domains in 1651, which is consistent with its relatively early opening of village commons (1564 to 1591) and its large proportion of abandoned holdings in 1654. Findings on the level of the domain, therefore, do not clearly either support or refute the view of inmates as a “social stratum”.

Research on the level of individual villages may cast light on this question. Dana Štefanová investigated land transactions in the Frýdlant village of Mildenau (now Luh) to find out whether inmates ever obtained land-holdings.<sup>17</sup> Access to land would suggest that inmate status was a “life-

<sup>17</sup> Dana Štefanová, “Mobilita podružské vrstvy. Snaha o její definici”, *Časopis národního muzea, Ř.A.*, vol. 164 (1995).

cycle” phase rather than membership in a distinct “social stratum”. A total of 40 land transfers were recorded for Mildenau from 1656 to 1672, only half of which were between kin. Of the other 20, five involved people from outside Mildenau, mainly nearby villages. Land was clearly quite transferable between members of different families and even different communities, but did inmates participate in this transfer? Mildenau had 11 inmate sub-households in 1651. Four went into exile to escape re-Catholicization, and whether they ever obtained land is unknown. Of the seven remaining, two subsequently did own land. Indeed, both were involved in the same contract: in 1659, a cottage on the commons was sold by Nicol Nicht, listed in 1651 as an inmate aged 46, but now described as a *Chalupner* (the lowest house-owning social category) and “an old, weak, worn-out man”; the buyer was Christopher Bieberstein, an inmate aged 26 in 1651, by 1659 Nicht’s son-in-law. The other five inmate sub-households of 1651 did not obtain land in Mildenau between 1656 and 1672. An inmate in a neighbouring village later purchased a holding from a Mildenau widow, however, indicating that Mildenau inmates may in turn have obtained holdings in other villages.

These findings, although based on small numbers, show that inmate status was not exclusively either a life-cycle phase or a social stratum. That it had an important life-cycle component is suggested by the mean age of the Mildenau inmate household heads — 29.6 years — and the 48 per cent of all inmates in Frýdlant domain aged 20 to 34 years. However, this did not mean inmates were guaranteed accession to land during their twenties or thirties: of the three inmates recorded in Mildenau land transfers between 1656 and 1672, one was 21, one was 34, and one was between 46 and 54. Moreover, at least five of the eleven original inmate sub-households failed to obtain land in the village over the next 25 years. Inmate status did not indicate lifelong membership in a socio-economic stratum, however. Upward mobility was possible, both within the village and into neighbouring villages, although only for a minority of inmates and only into the next social stratum, the cottagers. Even the few inmates in this single village show considerable heterogeneity, casting doubt on mono-causal explanations.

Further evidence of the heterogeneity of forces creating the Bohemian inmate population is provided by three cases from the *Amtsprotokolle* (feudal court minutes) for Frýdlant domain in the 1650s.<sup>18</sup> In December 1655, Georg Walter from Hainersdorf (now Jindřichovice p. S.) accused his son-in-law of becoming enraged in drunkenness and firing a gun in the “parlour and chamber” he shared with his parents-in-law. The son-in-law presented two excuses. First, a “sickness of the head” made him uncontrolled in his cups. Secondly, his father-in-law “had bequeathed to his other

18 Sheilagh C. Ogilvie, “Alltagsleben und soziale Institutionen. Ein ethnologischer Blick auf die Mikrostrukturen”, paper presented to the Zweites Workshop des Projekts “Soziale Strukturen in Böhmen” (Prague, December 2–4, 1994).

children, but would not give anything to him, and the one annoyance created the other”. However, he “was after all a young person, and would improve his ways in future, and live with his father-in-law and mother-in-law peacefully”. The feudal authorities reconciled the household, fined both parties, and imposed an additional fine on the son-in-law because he had fired shots and thrown stones after soldiers quartered in the village.<sup>19</sup>

The 1655 court minute does not reveal whether the older or the younger couple constituted the “inmate sub-household”. The 1651 census lists Georg Walter, a “gardener” aged 66, heading a household consisting of his wife and 24-year-old son, also Georg. The 1654 tax register lists a “gardener” called Jiržy Walter, with one cow and no land. Either young Georg had taken over the family holding between 1651 and 1654 and his parents had gone to live with their married daughter (a deviation from the classic retirement contract), or old Georg was still in charge of the family holding in 1654 and 1655, but had taken in his married daughter and her husband, and young Georg had died or moved into another household (as dependent rather than head). The son-in-law’s statement that he had not yet received an inheritance suggests that he was the inmate, and old Georg the head of the main household.

Inheritance therefore generated inmate households, but not always in the classic pattern. Bohemian inheritance clearly involved sufficient discretion not only to cause resentment about parents’ choices, but also for parents to reside with a non-inheriting son-in-law even when they had “other children”, one of them possibly an adult son who had inherited the holding. Moreover, this inmate sub-household had been created not by inheritance itself, but by an unrealized inheritance claim. The relationship thereby established was close but resentful: no arm’s-length “lodging arrangement”, but one in which the two couples shared “parlour and chamber” and the son-in-law promised “to live with” his parents-in-law peacefully. Yet the very inheritance links which led to co-residence also created conflict.

Even inmate households apparently resulting from classic inheritance rules could conceal both discretion and conflict. In June 1650, for instance, Hans Keller from Haindorf (now Hejnice), was accused by his mother, brother, and brother-in-law of defaulting on payments due on his “inheritance-purchase”, violating the retirement contract with his mother, and failing to repay debts to her. Keller disputed the debts, but openly admitted defaulting on the inheritance payments because of “difficult times”. Declaring that “he had never greatly desired the holding, his mother and his siblings had talked him into it”, he proposed that he return the holding to his mother and

19 SOA Děčín, Historická Sbirka, Karton 79, Úřední protokol 1655–6, fol. 1v–2r, court minute, November 16, 1655: “d. stuben vnd kamer”; “haubt kranckheit”; “dz er seine anderer Kinder außgesezet, ihme aber nichts geben wolte, eine verdrießlichkeit gebe die ander”; “Wehre auch ein Junger mensch, wolte sich hinführo beßern, vnd mit seinem Schweher vatter vnd Mutter fridlichen leben”.

siblings. Both family and feudal authority insisted on his keeping the holding and fulfilling the retirement contract. Ultimately it was agreed that Keller was to pay only half of the original purchase price, but retain the holding and keep up payments strictly.<sup>20</sup>

On the face of it, Keller's mother was an inmate created by the classic Bohemian inheritance practice, the retirement contract, but behind the classic pattern lay discretion. Keller had to be "persuaded" by his family to accept the inheritance and retirement contract and was now compelled by family and feudal authority to retain them. In practice, inheritance followed neither clear social rules nor parental decree: it was a family decision, requiring persuasion and consent. Moreover, neither accession to a holding nor co-residence with a retired parent was unambiguously desired by potential heirs.

This case also illustrates another characteristic of the inmate population. Between June 1650 and the census of spring 1651, Keller's mother disappeared from both household and village. The only Keller in Haindorf in the 1651 census was Hans himself, a "peasant" aged 32, heading a household with his wife and four sons. Inmate arrangements — even those generated by inheritance — could clearly be ephemeral. Record linkage confirms this: not a single "inmate" mentioned in the Frýdlant feudal court minutes between 1649 and 1655 could be found as an inmate in the 1651 census. Inmates were geographically and socially mobile.

The costs and benefits of this mobility are illustrated in a third feudal court case. In July 1651, Christof Herbig, an inmate from Mildenau, accused a peasant, his son, and other young men from neighbouring Raspenau (now Raspenava) of defamation and assault. Herbig had bought a pound of "spindle-boards" from a board-cutter in Raspenau for five *Kreuzer*. He was supposed to take them to a customer in Görlitz (over the border in Lusatia), but "because of lack of transport could not pick them up so soon". Meanwhile Christof Walter, a peasant from Raspenau, had bought boards from the same board-cutter for only four-and-a-half *Kreuzer*. Informed by another villager, and meeting Walter on the road to Görlitz, Herbig accused him of "an act of villainy", and a fight ensued.<sup>21</sup>

The judgement by the feudal authority strikingly illustrates its attitude toward inmates. Although Herbig was the accuser and had been physically attacked, it was he and not the accused who was punished. The reason was

20 SOA Děčín, Historická Sběrka, Karton 79, Úřední protokol 1649–55, fol. 96r–96v, court minute, June 4, 1650: "schweren Zeiten"; "so hette er auch dz gutt niemalls gros begehret, seine Mutter Undt sein geschwister hätten ihm darzue beredet".

21 SOA Děčín, Historická Sběrka, Karton 79, Úřední protokol 1649–55, fol. 155r–155v, court minute, July 31, 1651: "Spindebretter"; "weil Er aber wegen Mangelung der fuhren selbe nit bald abholen Könen"; "ein schelmstück"; "Er aber der herbig nur ein hausgnos vnd mit allerhand Caupleni sich nehret, auch ein gantzes Jahr der Obrigkeit Keine dinste thut, sondern sich nur des Cauplens nehret, da Er sol ein heusel annehmen Könte."

stated explicitly: “Herbig is only an inmate, and earns a living from all sorts of dealing, and also has done no services for the feudal authority for a whole year, but rather earns his living only from dealing, when he should be able to take on a cottager holding.” That is, the man himself preferred to live from small-scale trading as an inmate, rather than take an available holding as a cottager. The feudal authority wanted him to take a holding, which would oblige him to do labour services. Given the pressure the authority could exert — as in this case — it is striking how many people remained inmates in Bohemia in 1651. Herbig’s reluctance to take a cottager holding, Keller’s reluctance to take an available peasant holding, and the pressure exerted by the feudal authority in both cases suggest that one force behind the large percentage of propertyless inmates in Bohemia in 1651 may have been the burden of taxes, rents, and labour services on those with land and houses. In Bohemia under the “second serfdom”, not all inmates sought the mixed blessing of holding property.

The pressures that created inmates also made them mobile. In the 1651 census, written up at least a month before this court case, the only individual in the entire domain of Frýdlant who could have been Christof Herbig was a Christof Herwig, a *Chalupner* (the lowest house-owning social stratum of 1651), heading a childless household in Mildenau with a 22-year-old wife. Of course, Herwig may have been a different individual, but, if so, where was the Christof Herbig of the court case living a month earlier? If he was the same man, it suggests that the boundary between *Chalupner* (very small cottager) and *Hausgenosse* (inmate, perhaps sometimes occupying a separate cottage on a peasant’s holding rather than separate rooms in a peasant’s house) was rather fluid — although clearly for the feudal authority the distinction between *Häusler* (cottager) and inmate was crucial. The 1654 tax list assigned yet a third designation — “gardener” — to the only Christof Herwig in Mildenau (and the entire domain). The three different socio-economic designations assigned to Christof Herbig/Herwig of Mildenau in the space of four years — “very small cottager” in April-June 1651, “inmate” (and small-scale dealer) in July 1651, and “gardener” (with two cows) in 1654 — reinforce the impression that inmates were highly mobile between occupations and social categories.

What conclusions can we draw about the significant inmate population in mid-seventeenth-century Bohemia? The higher proportion of inmates in towns is consistent with other European findings, but the research to date cannot yet identify precise causes. In the town of Liberec, several inmate sub-households headed by wool-spinners lived in main households headed by woollen-weavers, suggesting that craft labour requirements played a role. For rural areas, prevailing theories variously emphasize labour requirements of different rural activities, inheritance practices, and changing social structure. The analysis is not yet sufficiently advanced to test whether inmate proportions varied with rural economic activities. However, it can offer evidence that the origins of the inmate population were more complicated

than suggested by straightforward theories of inheritance or social structure. According to the inheritance theory, two elements of the youngest-son Bohemian inheritance rule — retirement contracts and *vybití* — generated inmates in certain life-cycle phases. According to the social structure theory, land scarcity produced a social stratum of inmates. Empirical findings indicate that the forces generating the inmate population were multiple and complex.

Only a minority of inmate households were created by inheritance by sons, as is shown by surname matching. Others were created by the expectation rather than the actuality of inheritance, and in the female rather than the male line. Even those inmate households arising from inheritance in the male line were the result of individual and familial decisions, not general social rules requiring particular residential responses.

Land scarcity probably did help create inmate households, as shown by the low proportion of inmates in severely depopulated Frýdlant, compared to other, somewhat less devastated domains. However, prevailing marriage rules (in particular those allowing landless and houseless people to marry) must have played a crucial role in deciding whether married inmates, rather than celibate servants or emigration, would be the response to land scarcity. Most of Bohemia was depopulated in 1651, yet all sample domains had significant inmate groups. Furthermore, the average youth of the inmate population, its mobility between households, communities, and social designations, and the fact that some inmates did obtain land all suggest that, at least for some, inmate status was a life-cycle phase or an individual strategy, rather than involuntary membership in a social stratum. Finally, the fact that it was possible to prefer existence as an inmate to an available position as a cottager, that family persuasion might be necessary to prevail on a man to take on a peasant holding, and that the feudal authority had to put pressure on men to accept both sorts of holding indicates that feudal taxes, dues, and services made inmate positions preferable to land-holding positions, at least in some respects and for some individuals.

Finally, the analysis of even a handful of village-level documents reveals enormous heterogeneity within the inmate population. Such evidence should prompt us to develop multi-causal explanations for the Bohemian inmate population, which take account of a wider variety of social and economic factors, and to test them thoroughly both within and between villages and domains.