

SOCIAL AND SPATIAL ADJUSTMENTS IN DOMANJŠEVCI

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The article describes the transformation of the smallholders' community of Domanjševci (Hung. Domonkosfa) on the Slovenian-Hungarian border during the last two centuries. On the basis of ethnographic and archival sources, the author compares the village's socio-political contexts resulting from the building of the Iron Curtain and its removal. Both periods are analyzed as modernization or rationalization paradigms (communist and capitalist) which, in addition to biophysical conditions and feudal legacies, aid in explaining existing power relations and the emergence of the landscape and cultural heritage of contemporary Domanjševci.

Keywords: peasants, smallholders, agriculture, industry, Slovenia, Hungary, borders, landscape parks, protected areas, cultural ecology, political economy, environmental history

Članek opisuje preoblikovanje skupnosti malih zemljiških lastnikov v vasi Domanjševci (madž. Domonkosfa) ob slovensko-madžarski meji v zadnjih dveh stoletjih. Avtor na podlagi etnografskih in arhivskih virov podrobneje primerja družbenopolitični kontekst vasi po postavitvi in odstranitvi železne zaves. Obe obdobji analizira kot paradigmi modernizacije ali racionalizacije (socialistične in kapitalistične), ki lahko, poleg ekoloških razmer te doline na Goričkem in njene fevdalne zapuščine, razložita sodobna razmerja moči ter nastajanje krajine in kulturne dediščine Domanjševcev. Ključne besede: kmetje, mali zemljiški lastniki, kmetijstvo, industrija, Slovenija, Madžarska, meje, krajinski parki, varovana območja, kulturna ekologija, politična ekonomija, okoljska zgodovina

ETHNIC HISTORY AND IDENTITY

Domanjševci (Hung. *Domonkosfa*) is a roadside settlement 2.5 km long in a shallow valley next to the Slovenian border with Hungary.¹ As a bilingual and mostly ethnically Hungarian and religiously Lutheran area, the place has experienced changes to its ethnic, religious, and political character. According to Zelko (1996), in the Middle Ages the village (attested as *Domonkusolz*; Germ. *Thomakosfa*) did not belong to either the Upper Lendava estate nor to the Batthyány family, which also controlled the Hungarian defense zone known as Örség.² The farms belonged to freedmen (ministerials), a special civil-military group, also known as “the third economic stratum” in feudal parishes and administration, who were paid for their work by the hereditary and profitable lands. Domonko (the source of the

¹ The official name of the village today is Domanjševci (Hung. *Domonkosfa*). The Slovenian version of the name is plural.

² According to the legislation of 1681, the owner of the Örség estate was the Batthyány family, one of the most powerful in Hungary, close to the Hungarian crown and science, including members such as Ferenc Batthyány (1497–1566), Boldizsár Batthyány (1537/42–1590; Bobory 2009), and Lajos Batthyány (1807–1849). The location of their possessions in the border area compelled them to devote considerable attention to military skills and border guards (*speculatores*) and to political affairs toward the (Habsburg) Catholics and (Ottoman) Muslims (Zelko 1996; Göncz and Nagy 1998; Lendvai 2003).

village's name) was the name of a landowner (Zelko 1996: 44–46; Figure 1). According to another interpretation, Domanjševci belonged to Őrség and, consequently, to Hungarian counts (Göncz and Nagy 1998).

Until the sixteenth century, a Dominican fraternity resided above today's village (next to Saint Martin's Church), which could also be linked to its name. The Dominicans maintained a monastery, a church, and a well-known Latin high school. The Ottomans are said to have burned all these structures in the sixteenth or seventeenth century (Lipot 1938: 83).³

The Reformation, Protestantism, and the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also played a political role, with Catholics mostly siding with the Habsburgs and Protestants with the Hungarians (Bobory 2009).

Lipot (1938) wrote that the Augsburg Lutherans in Domanjševci suffered the confiscation of their church, and that worshipers and preachers were persecuted. In 1700, twenty-six Catholics and 210 Lutherans were counted in the villages (Kercsmar 1990: 53). With the Josephinian reforms of the late eighteenth century, the Lutheran community began to institutionalize (Baš 1930: 87; Lipot 1938). In 1870, Domanjševci's Lutheran congregation was established. Soon after, the villages of Bükalja (Hung. *Bükallya*), Somor[ov]ci (Hung. *Szomoróc*), Krčica (Hung. *Kerca*), Središče (Hung. *Szerdahely*), Gödörháza, and Velemér were welcomed into this religious community.

Between 1889 and 1898, Bükalja, the neighboring village to the east, at the intersection with the road to Krplivnik (Hung. *Kapornak*), merged administratively with the village of Domanjševci, which stood at the intersection with the road to Šalovci (Hung. *Sal*; Zelko 1996: 240).⁴ The unification of the two villages is an important component of local memory. In documents from the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, Bükalja was listed among the eighteen settlements of Őrség (Zelko 1996: 241–242; Göncz and Nagy 1998: 20–21, 28).

By the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, Domanjševci (together with Bükalja) was awarded to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Slovenian researchers and politicians named this land *Slovenska krajina* 'Slovenian borderland' (see Baš 1930; Kyovsky 1961).

Most historical researchers emphasized the ancient partition of this territory. In the ninth century, it was the border zone between the Avars (Slavs) and Franks, and after the tenth century between the Germans and Hungarians. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, it also marked the Ottoman frontiers (Grafenauer 1961; Olas and Kert 1993; Zelko 1996; Kerman 1996). Hence, the Slovenian–Hungarian border and the later the Iron Curtain (1945/48–1989) were only the last episodes in a historical row of separations, but with similar consequences: economic disadvantage, disputes, defense taxes, prohibition

³ When the Turks burned the settlement, the peasants resettled in the valley (Lipot 1938: 83). Another story of the origin of the village is connected with water, and I discuss it below.

⁴ Similarly, in 1871, Mali Krplivnik (Hung. *Kiskapornak*, *Domafield*) joined Veliki Krplivnik (Hung. *Nagykapornak*) to create Krplivnik (Göncz and Nagy 1998: 26), and Szomoróc joined Kerca in 1942 to create Kercaszomor (Ispán et al. 2018: 42).

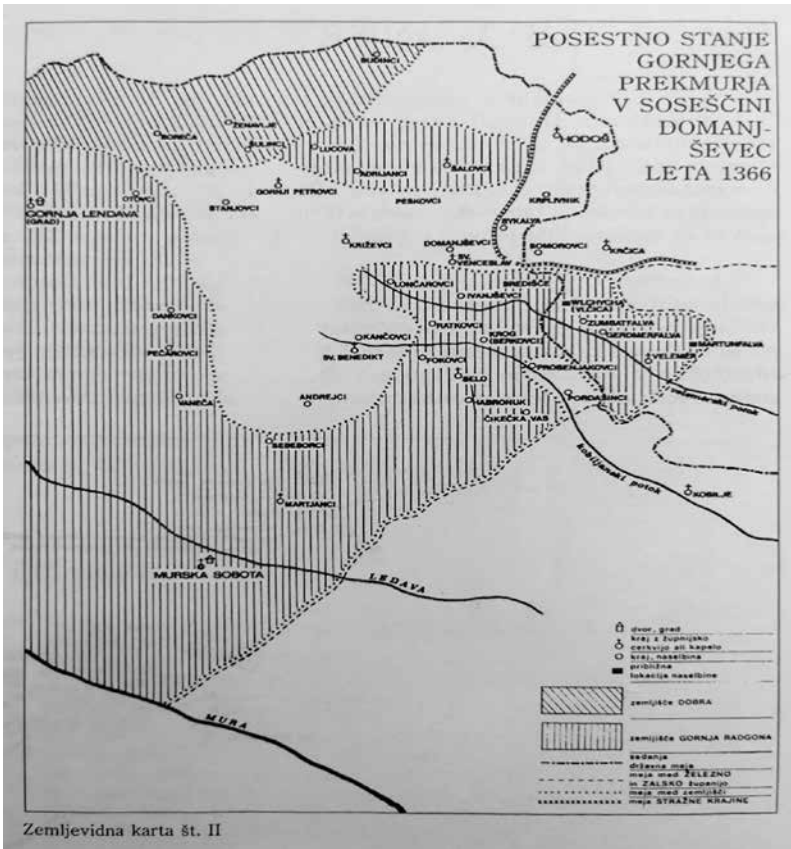


Figure 1: Borders around Domanjševci in the fourteenth century (Zelko 1996: 234). The border of Örség extends east of the village.



Figure 2: Domanjševci (Hung. *Domokosfa*) and Bükalja (Hung. *Bükallya*) in the mid-nineteenth century, Second Military Survey, Hungary, 1819–1869 (Mapire).

of movement and trade, depopulation, emphasis on ideologies and consequent belonging (church, nation, and state), and permanent reforms of “natural and human resources.”

Few authors of such historical meta-narratives have provided concrete data on life and change in Domanjševci. After 1920, Yugoslav authorities and researchers neglected Domanjševci due to other priorities; for example, building nationalist science and avoiding the study of ethnic groups of former oppressors (reinforced by Hungarian fascism and the Second World War in the village). The local community dropped out of virtually all research programs in Slovenian historiography, ethnology and agronomy. The village is therefore still “hanging in that valley,” as one local ethnographic observer vividly put it. The only volume on Domanjševci (*Domonkosfa Krónikája*) was written in Hungarian by the erudite and feminist local teacher Rózsa Kericsmar (1990).

I was able to talk to the locals in Slovenian. With their personal experiences and memories, I was able to investigate as far as the decade after the Second World War.⁵ Some archival data from before the Second World War were extracted from Rózsa Kericsmar’s book (1990).⁶ I also collected material at the Maribor Regional Archives, the Murska Sobota Administrative Unit, the Murska Sobota Agricultural and Forestry Institute, and other institutions.

METHODOLOGY

Dealing with contemporary social and spatial conditions of the village demands a change in the research focus from pure ethnogenesis to cultural ecology, ethno-ecology, or environmental history of the place and globe (Steward 1990 [1955]; Guille-Escuret 1998; Lekan and Zeller 2005; Simmons 2008). The research looks at adjustments of smallholder peasants to state redistribution and the market economy, industrialization, and urbanization (cf. Halpern 1963; Netting 1993). By definition, “smallholders are rural cultivators practicing intensive, permanent, diversified agriculture on relatively small farms in areas of dense population” (Netting 1993: 2).

I discuss and compare two historical periods, two sets of social and spatial organization. These periods roughly correspond to the establishment and removal of the Iron Curtain. To me, they are interesting because of usually less discussed processes in Domanjševci, actions that seem(ed) theoretically and ideologically meaningful to their activists (cf. Godelier 1972). Due to “efficiency” and “economizing,” village social conditions, and definition of

⁵ I did not look extensively for other material available in Hungary because I do not speak the language and my funds were limited. The time span of my research (after the Second World War) is probably the most reasonable way to fill the gap in knowledge about and research on Domanjševci.

⁶ This was accomplished with the assistance of her daughter Gyöngy Kericsmar in Murska Sobota, for which I thank Tina Lah Kučan and Anuša Babuder, who participated in the 2018 student ethnographic survey. I would also like to thank dr. László Mód for some translations and for advice regarding Kericsmar’s book and Domanjševci.

reproduction, the human relations of smallholders toward the environment have changed (Thin 2003: 185–188; Ispán et al. 2018). During the first period analyzed, Slovenia implemented Soviet-type agrarian reforms and a five-year plan, but not in exactly the same way and with the same results (Prinčič 1997). Local people's committees (Sln. Krajevni ljudski odbori, KLO) were set up in villages to plan and submit yields. The agricultural people's committee in Domanjševci had to write plans, break them down into parts and shares, and keep records on all the villagers, the number of households and members, their assets, the number of cattle and hogs, dogs, the size of the property and quantities of grain, and so on. In the second period, after 1990, land consolidation, melioration (drainage), and changes in the law on succession were the most important modern interventions in agricultural Domanjševci. The logic behind these encroachments in society and the landscape of small farms was based on the agronomic modernist argument that large farms have higher yields per hectare and are cheaper to cultivate; in short, they are more efficient. Nonetheless, many plots were abandoned in the twentieth century.

The period immediately after the Second World War was reconstructed on the basis of quite extensive material found in the archives (KLO 1945–1952; PAM 2001; Šövegeš 2001),⁷ and conversations with older inhabitants of the village. The second period—post-communist transition or neoliberalism—was studied by observation and photography, conversations with locals and experts on households, agriculture, forestry, water, park, energy, and waste, and also by studying maps, laws, and other material.

Recently, environmentalism and protectionism have joined the dominant developmental strategies (Kottak 1999), which were spatially and legally marked by the establishment of Goričko Nature Park in 2003. The park is an additional institutional framework, and it has problematized or reversed some self-evident trends of the last century.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUBORDINATION OF SMALLHOLDERS

The insistence of the Hungarian state on the agrarian economy and feudal relations (Grafenauer 1961), commitment to Hungarian inheritance law on the division of property, and the increase in population throughout the nineteenth century (Korpič-Horvat 1992: 17–18) exacerbated the inability of small farmers in Domanjševci to compete with larger landowners and industrial agriculture, which has been increasingly established in the Prekmurje flatlands (Sln. Ravensko) and lowlands (Sln. Dolinsko), and of course elsewhere in Europe, competing with Canada and the United States, among other countries (Thu 2009; Tiltman 2005 [1934]).

⁷ Most of the material from the archive boxes in the Maribor Regional Archives (PAM) was copied and combined into various pdf documents. I have provided the documents with a table of contents and index. All the material collected and edited is available at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana.

The locals had their small farms dispersed across the valley because their parents shared their possessions with (almost) every child: a piece of fertile land here, a piece of less fertile land there, a piece of meadow, forest, and so on. “Even five-meter plots were split,” a man remembered. The hilly part of Prekmurje (Goričko) and Örség strengthened the character of a traditional rural area with poorly developed crafts, trade, and transport infrastructure. The number of artisans decreased after the Second World War. For the period after the Second World War, the informants remembered only one blacksmith, one (unregistered) cartwright, and a couple of shoemakers and tailors.⁸ The local people’s committee archive (KLO 1945–1952) contains several records of craft licenses being refused for a local cartwright and merchant, saying that there were enough in the area. The local wagon maker and repairer continued to carry on his activity unregistered. Today, the village does not have artisans, but there are several craftspeople. Businesses include one or two bars, road services and equipment, wholesale and retail services, car service, vehicle maintenance, software consulting and development, journalism, construction and agricultural machinery, building completion, and baking and confectionery.

Due to the absence of a provincial bourgeoisie or self-organized small-scale agriculturalists, large-scale and systematic economizing in Domanjševci mostly originated elsewhere, both in terms of organizing agricultural production as well as in the sense of training in distant industrial centers. The northern hills were particularly characterized by high population density. After the peasant liberalization in the middle of the nineteenth century, the need for earnings and manpower in the monetary economy increased: the population grew by 94% from 1850 to 1900, and by 10% from 1910 to 1920, mainly due to emigration and war (Korpič-Horvat 1992: 19). The population in Domanjševci also increased greatly in the second half of the nineteenth century and began to decline in the early twentieth century, which was actually true of many agricultural provinces in Austria and Hungary at that time (Tomasevich 1955; Simonič 2017).⁹

Emigration and high child mortality were another factor. According to the informants, families had four to seven children before the Second World War, and on average four may have died of jaundice or scarlet fever. After the Second World War, families became smaller, with one or two children. The healthcare system improved. In the period of greatest interest, a downward trend is also evident. Permanent emigration and aging are obvious.

Around 1900, farmers emigrated to America and to Somogy County (in Hungary), and some of them even worked in Cuban cigar factories. After the First World War, they also migrated to the Bačka and Banat regions (in Vojvodina) for exhausting agricultural labor

⁸ According to Kerčsmar (1990: 26–27), in 1910 the census recorded as many as thirty-four artisans and three merchants.

⁹ I compiled Table 1 on the basis of data provided by Kerčsmar (1990), Göncz and Nagy (1998), Šövegeš (2001), Sobočan (2003), the KLO archive (1945–1952), the census (Statistični urad 2002), and the website of the Municipality of Šalovci (Občina Šalovci 2019). By 1900, Bükalja had merged with the Domanjševci, which must have influenced the statistics of the latter.

Year	Hungarians	Slovenians	Other	Households	Houses	Population
1784				40	35	230
1828					28	
1880	526	35	33			594
1895				170		
1900					148	688
1910	601	111			164	712
1921	595	86	3			684
1941	535	1				536
1948						587
1953				-149		588
1961						558
1981						440
1991	220	100	38			350
2002				98	107	301
2019						300

Table 1: Change in population and households in Domanjševci from the eighteenth to twenty-first centuries.

connected with the wheat harvest (Lipot 1938; Kericsmar 1990). I also found a passport and a bill in the archives (PAM 2001) that confirm a villager's work and bank account in France. Starting in the 1960s, people migrated to Austria and Western Germany, and also to Switzerland. Those that stayed in the village found jobs in Murska Sobota, Križevci, and Prosenjakovci (Kericsmar 1990: 19–37), and also in Maribor, Ljubljana, and other locations.

Until the 1960s, the population of Domanjševci still reproduced through marriages with partners from surrounding or remote villages. The Iron Curtain prevented the search for partners on the Hungarian side.¹⁰ However, for this part of Prekmurje there is an interesting mechanism for measuring village reproduction: the “pine-tree wedding” carnival ritual (Sln. *borovo gostüvanje*). It was held in Domanjševci in 1960 and in neighboring Šalovci in 1964 (Kuhar 1964: 136).

I believe that the subordinate position of Domanjševci is also evident in administration. Locals jokingly say that they are “special” because their post office has always been in Križevci, the seat of their municipality in Murska Sobota (and later Šalovci), and the location

¹⁰ The most common surnames after the Second World War were Adamič (Hung. *Ádámics*), Breskoč (*Breszkocs/Breskocs*), Bedöke, Časar (*Császár*), Čahuk (*Csahuk*), Domonci, Kalamár, Kerčmar (*Kericsmar*), Osvald, Pocak (*Poczak*), Sep (*Szép*), Šanca (*Sanca*), Šebök (*Sebök*), Škerlak, and Toth (KLO 1945–1952). At three village cemeteries (one Catholic and two Lutheran, one of them belonging to Bükk-alja), I also recorded the surnames Beznec, Farkas, Hari, Horvath, Jakoša (*Jakosa*), Kranjec (*Krányec*), Könye, Kovacs, Nemeč, Pörs, Ropoš, Ružič (*Ruzsics*), Schek, Unger, Zakoch, Žlebič (*Zslebits*), and others.

of the elementary school since the mid-1970s in Prosenjakovci.¹¹ The Catholic community in Domanjševci belongs to Kančevci (Hun. Felsőszentbenedek), and the Capuchins hold masses at Saint Martin's Church.

Subordination after the Second World War must not be taken unconditionally (Scott 2009). I found many indications from the state administration that the local people's committee was required to submit ordered lists and goods. It was obviously unusual for the local community to reinvent itself as a kind of self-managed productive unit of the state. After 1990, the fragmentation of Slovenian municipalities should be mentioned in terms of resisting subordination. First, this applies to the division of the municipality of Murska Sobota in 1994, when the municipality of Šalovci–Hodoš was formed, and then again in 1998, when Hodoš and Krplivnik formed a separate municipality, and Domanjševci remained with Šalovci. In fact, this was only a symbolic empowerment because the Municipality of Šalovci does not possess any major economic activity that would support its political independence; it is still dependent on national redistribution. Another local way to overcome submission to the state and the surrounding ethnic majority is expressed through language, symbols, and heritage, an essential part of identity in all cross-border ethnic relations.¹²

LAND

From the point of view of land management, there were three important state reforms of agriculture in the twentieth century. They all sought to overcome feudal property and succession rules.

Yugoslavian agrarian reforms did not eliminate the fragmentation of (privately owned) farms. Kovács (2002) wrote that after 1921 the Prekmurje Hungarians were excluded from the first agricultural reform in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Without checking the facts, one may therefore conclude that the 1920s reform had no influence in Domanjševci because the majority of the population was Hungarian.

After the Second World War, communist agrarian reform resolved some urgent social problems in the village. However, the main focus was on the construction of the village's production and cooperative community operating within centrally managed agricultural production (see Prinčič 1997). According to the local narrative, membership in the local people's committee also led to the subordination and servitude of other villagers; for example, they had to engage in "volunteer fieldwork" for "local representatives" or otherwise they risked being "pushed into the mud" (i.e., presented badly to higher authorities).

¹¹ Losing an elementary school is perceived as a loss of intellectual strength for a village (Göncz and Nagy 1998: 17–18). Rószs Kerscmar taught in Domanjševci from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s.

¹² Some locals still have contact with relatives on the Hungarian side, others still have farms on the Hungarian side, and some continue to associate with Hungarian schoolchildren and people involved in the arts, researchers, craftsmen, and so on.

Agrarian administration after 1946 divided farms and owners into six categories (KLO 1945–1952: 107). Almost thirty households (30%) were exempted from all contributions in 1949 due to the insufficient size of their farm (KLO 1945–1952: 530). Several years later, the secretary of the local people's committee recorded forty-two such farms. Only Franciška Pocak fell into the fifth category of taxation (List of Households for Compulsory Submission in 1950; KLO 1945–1952: 886).

Category	Property size (ha)	Households
0	0–2	42
1	2–3	30
2	3–5	48
3	5–8	25
4	8–10	3
5	10–15	1
6	15–20	–
TOTAL		149

Table 2: Categorization of households by property size, 1951 (KLO 1945–1952: 920).

A statement by one of the oldest residents of the village, who would be listed among the most numerous with regard to property size (Category 2), tells about the way of life. For lunch, they would mainly eat buckwheat porridge or polenta, cabbage with potatoes, and always only baked potatoes for dinner. The installation of electrical wiring in 1959 was a heavy financial burden and stressful, and the people agreed only because they had the welfare of their children in mind. To those in Category 0 (0–2 ha), agrarian reform offered some help, according to one interviewee:

They were poor souls . . . Do you remember that man? He cleared the forest and got no money, but land in return. These poor people came so far that they had their own grain, their wheat, but they did not have it before because they had to walk and work in different places, they collected so much grain in Hungary so they could grind it at home during the winter.

The 1951 *Report on the Compulsory Purchase of Cereals* (KLO 1945–1952: 977) shows that ninety-seven of 149 households were included in the census, which means that agriculture was dominant and allowed major taxation (planned contributions of market surpluses). Most of the former feudal farms were nationalized by the communist state.

In the early 1990s, many residents thought that agriculture would be their future, and so with the support of the Slovenian authorities they invested in the construction of farm buildings. There was also considerable interest in land consolidation, which seemed to be

the next logical step. Land consolidation in 1993 concerned the size of the property and its aggregation. The process was initiated by an interested group of locals, and consequently addressed all the villagers because their fields were scattered throughout the valley. A special local coordinating committee was formed.¹³ Redistribution was intended to make possible more efficient use of agricultural land by the locals.¹⁴ In 1990, consolidation was approved by the Municipal Assembly of Murska Sobota (land consolidation procedure no. 464-13/90-1) and included the cadastral municipalities of Domajševci and Križevci. The inventory and the maps were created by the Geodetic Institute (Geodetski zavod RS) in Ljubljana.

A total of 2,900 plots with an area of 430 hectares were included (Geodetski zavod RS 1993a: 97). The list of properties mentions fields, meadows, pastures, orchards, vineyards, roads, and paths.¹⁵ The statistical average of each plot was under fifteen acres. Following the formal decision, villagers had to immediately transfer the land to the new owners. A new network of paths was built, and several windbreaks were planted (Občina Murska Sobota 1993).

Some village areas were excluded. In the *Cadastral Plan of the Domanjševci Land Consolidation Area* (Geodetski zavod RS 1992; see Figure 3), I marked the outer limits of the agricultural properties involved (black line), which end with the forests. Several microtoponyms on the southern slope (listed from west to east), such as *Markov vodnjak* (Hung. *Markó-kút*), *Stari breg* (*Öreg-hegy*), and part of *Krojaški breg* (*Szabó-hegytája*) were excluded. On the northern slope of the valley, *Kamenek* (*Kő-hegy*), part of *Mali vodnjak* (*Kis-kút*), *Salaška graba* (*Szállási-árok*), *Bukov breg* (*Bükk-hegy*), and *Brezje* (*Söprös*) were also not subject to consolidation. These are mostly forests, which remain fragmented into long narrow parcels.

The settlement itself also exempted. The red line indicates the edge of an urbanized area. A special feature on the map is Old Peak (Sln. *Stari vrh*, Hung. *Öreg-hegy*) at Saint Martin's Church (marked purple), which is not urbanized, yet is also not subject to land consolidation. The locals are aware of this exception. They do not associate it with the Dominican mythology and first settlement, but with the structure of the farm: there is too much mixing of fields, vineyards, and forests. I was unable to determine why the blue checkbox was excluded. Other orange islets on the northern slope indicate exceptions due to existing forest strips, roads, objections, and so on.

In 1992 and 1993, the committee members were mostly unwanted guests, and so the painstaking and time-consuming role of mediator was played by an individual with a long

¹³ Land consolidation requires the consent of owners holding more than 67% of the agricultural land (Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Food 2019).

¹⁴ For the same reason, land consolidation was also carried out elsewhere in central, eastern, and southern Europe. The collective farms (kolkhozes) were a special type of local consolidation and corporatism (Tiltman 2005: 74).

¹⁵ Due to the protection of personal and official data, it is impossible to fully reconstruct all features of the process.

family tradition in the village and with a great deal of personal integrity, always also very active in social and cultural life. One of the villagers stated:

From the human side, there is always a problem of greed. Those people who were on that committee, of course, looked to find a better piece of land in a nicer place for themselves, their neighbor, their friend. This is why some people have been arguing a lot about it.

Others are convinced that there were only a few exceptions, and that it will never be possible to completely satisfy everyone. One man felt that land consolidation was of greatest benefit to those that already owned a large amount of land and wished for better agricultural future.

Thus, the average size of properties is now larger than in the surrounding villages. Today, the largest piece of single agricultural land covers about seven hectares, and the largest farmer holds altogether somewhere from thirty to fifty hectares of land, and this is still expanding. Considering the agronomic economizing of production and transport costs, land consolidation made sense, but its social costs were not considered. In addition, its effects were greatly reduced by the opening of the Hungarian border and the import of cheaper agricultural products.

In 2019, Domanjševci had 321 hectares of agricultural land (about 28% of the village's cadastral area), which is about fifty hectares less than after the Second World War (and at the end of the nineteenth century). Some old fields around abandoned farms in the valley and on the wooded edge of the northern and southern slopes are overgrown. Thirty-four farms are registered in the village (in comparison to 120 to 140 farms after the Second World War). Only two of them are pure farms, meaning that no one is employed elsewhere and that the owner is farm-insured. The other thirty-two farms or *25 to 30% of all households*, according to a village representative, are mixed, with at least one household member employed in elsewhere, thus contributing wages to the household. As many as half of all households in the village live exclusively from salaried wages, many times involving both partners. These are mostly skilled workers, quite unlike those after the Second World War. Currently, there are nine or ten university students in the village.

Over the past twenty years, agricultural land has been concentrated into the hands of three or four farmers, who are renting or buying land. Some powerful farmers also came "from outside." This group of large farmers mainly plant hybrid crops. There are only two small organic farms (up to 10 ha in size).

According to the Agricultural Inheritance Act (Državni zbor RS 1995), it is now allowed to divide property, but it is not allowed to fragment agricultural land. Someone must inherit the entire plot. Agricultural properties can be combined and enlarged through purchase, but they cannot be split by succession.

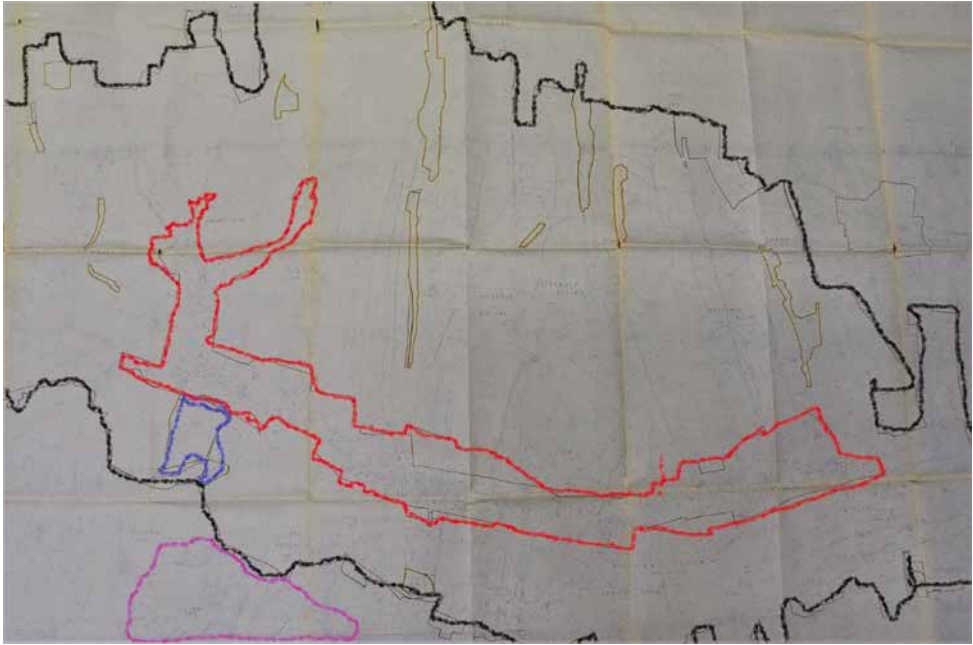


Figure 3: *Cadastral Plan of the Domanjševci Land Consolidation Area, 1992* (Geodetski zavod RS 1992).



Figure 4: Approximately the same area on the northern slope before and after land consolidation (Left map: Geodetski zavod RS 1992. The yellow strip in the middle is a fold on the archive file in the Murska Sobota Administrative Unit. Right map: Geodetski zavod RS 1993b).



Figure 5: Example of untilled land on the southern slope separating two plots. Some of these also contain bits of forest. Photo: Peter Simonič, July 2019.



Figure 6: Agricultural landscape after land consolidation on the northern slope, view from Old Peak. The trees at the bottom grow along the Little Krka River. Photo: Peter Simonič, October 2018.

According to an expert from Goričko Nature Park, agriculture in the past increased the diversity of the cultural landscape (i.e., the small farms created through parcelization in Prekmurje), but it had a poor impact on biodiversity. Enlargement (and consolidation), which is a general trend in EU agricultural policies, similarly has had a negative impact on the variety of plant and animal species. Farmers have often plowed the grasslands and converted them into fields, destroying green belts between them: consequently, the population of Eurasian scops owls has decreased. Goričko Nature Park also acts as the decision-maker for state permits for building additions to houses, concrete barriers, and platforms. The park also requires municipalities to define replacement for land lost to construction. The park has a preemptive right to fields, meadows, and forests. So far, about forty hectares of meadows have been purchased by Goričko Nature Park in the entire park area.

WATER

As already mentioned, the first settlement of Domanjševci was at Old Peak, close to Saint Martin's Church.¹⁶ After the Ottoman destruction of the original Dominican and village settlement, the villagers moved to the valley in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Lipot 1938). However, there is also another story of origin related to water and Hungary.¹⁷ According to one local, the village was said to have moved to the valley after the regulation of the Zala River, the most important tributary of Lake Balaton in Hungary. The drainage of the Zala Basin drew the water from the valley, thus allowing it to be built up.¹⁸ Some fields and meadows on the slopes must have existed before.

The soil in the lowermost part of the valley is very damp. Old houses did not have a basement; crops and cured meat were stored in attics. An elderly villager described her residence at the beginning of the 1950s:

This house was different then. There were black beams, soot, there was a large ceramic stove here, over there was a big bread oven. A little old room was there . . . Then we rearranged everything . . . They went up to the attic, where they spread out seeds to dry . . . The produce was arranged in quarters: a few oats, a little rye . . . just a little of everything.

¹⁶ *Stari vrh* (literally, 'old peak') is a common toponym for vineyards in the area, which originated between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries (Šiftar 1986: 89).

¹⁷ In Mód's research, in addition to old Domanjševci and its relocation, some locals also mention a location called *Kamenek* (toward Šalovci) as their place of origin.

¹⁸ This story is rather unlikely because, as far as I know, the Zala River was not regulated until the mid-nineteenth century. It is also quite distant.

The houses, outbuildings, and fields on the south side of the road are particularly exposed, and they have been flooded twice by the Little Krka River (Sln. *Mala Krka*, Hung. *Kis-Kerka*) in the last ten years. This could not have been avoided through the regulation of the stream in the 1980s nor by the melioration that accompanied consolidation in the 1990s. One interviewee stated: *From a firefighting perspective, we are increasingly afraid of water, not of fire. There's nothing you can do about water, only wait. Even the groundwater is still catastrophic here; you can't have a basement.*

It is therefore understandable that most houses are located north of the road and that most of the agricultural land is on the larger northern and sunny slope. Since the establishment of Goričko Nature Park, it has been impossible to obtain a building permit for parcels between the Little Krka River and the road.

Back in the 1950s, each farm had its own well. Water had to be carried for all household and livestock needs. One interviewee said: *We washed laundry in warm water inside and rinsed it in the cold water outside because we couldn't bring everything inside. We washed every Monday.*

The fields were never irrigated. Prekmurje's northern hill area (Goričko) has the highest number of sunny days (in Slovenia) and is susceptible to drought. Clay or loam soil and sand make agriculture in Domanjševci less attractive than in the plains of Slovenia or Hungary (Kercsma 1990: 9). Natural resources are said to be most favorable for viticulture, growing fruit, and raising livestock (Vratuša 2008: 20). However, these are the activities that have actually declined the most because villagers have directed energy and resources to cereals and industrial crops.

In the 1960s, three village water supplies were constructed, filled by the surrounding springs. In the 1980s, the village set up a large catchwater in the forest above the northern slope at *Mali vodnjak* (literally, 'little spring'). The village also owns a partially built water supply system piped from Murska Sobota. Interviewees feel that the projections for the future are uncertain, and that additional water could be beneficial.

The Little Krka River originates at the village of Kuštanovci and flows eastward through Križevci and along the entire length of Domanjševci. There it crosses the border and shortly after flows into the Big Krka River (Sln. *Velika Krka*, Hung. [*Nagy-]Kerka*). The Little Krka had a multifaceted significance in the twentieth century. After the war, linen yarn was washed, combed, and dried there for tablecloths, which are a profitable souvenir today. Young people hunted for crustaceans and fish. Fifteen years ago, the stream still filled a pond that was a popular social spot for the villagers.

In addition to possible drought, Domanjševci is characterized by heavy summer and autumn rains. In the mid-1980s, the riverbed was regulated to prevent flooding. However, one of the interviewees was not happy with the result: *Experts shouldn't always be listened to; it was better before. The floods were not so bad because it was not so overgrown.*

Melioration (drainage) accompanied the consolidation process. Ten to fifteen open channels were built between the newly divided fields, one every 500 to 1,000 meters.

Channels from both slopes lead into the Little Krka River. In heavy rain, a large amount of water gathers in the valley and raises the water level. According to one of the natives, the old narrow plots were plowed in a north–south direction (Figure 4, left map), and the fields were separated from the village by low stone barriers, which were removed during land redistribution. Now the wind and the sun first drain the loamy soil, and then the rain sweeps this down the canals into the valley. This causes additional clogging of the canals and the Little Krka.

Consolidation and melioration were positive from the point of view of agrarian economics, but they caused social and environmental problems. Interestingly, people know much more about land consolidation than the drainage system. This may be because consolidation affected individual property immediately, whereas drainage targeted the public good and came with some delay in evaluation.

Today, fertilizer bags can be found along the riverbed, sewage is dumped into the river, and *everything is dead*, as one local said. Runoff (detergents, fertilizers, and other chemicals) was previously discharged into the Little Krka, but not in such quantities and so aggressively. One interviewee stated: *The Little Krka is not even fit for animals today. It is important, but unfortunately only as a sewer.*

PLANTS

I do not deal with the general characteristics of vegetation here, but limit the discussion to agriculture, cultivated plants, and the forested edge of the village area.

In 1950 and 1951, when the local people's committee started to respond more promptly to the administrative requirements, a total of 1,151 hectares of various land categories were recorded in Domanjševci. The largest group within this area was arable land and gardens, with a total of 379 hectares.¹⁹ Of this, 244 hectares was sown with cereals (winter wheat 104 ha, winter rye 102 ha, oats 18 ha, millet 4 ha; KLO 1945–1952: 997–998). Altogether, twenty-one tons of wheat, almost thirty-nine tons of rye, and just under 700 kg of oats were delivered to the state in 1951 (KLO 1945–1952: 874). Industrial crops occupied twenty-six hectares (sunflowers 15 ha, rapeseed 11 ha). Vegetables covered a total of forty-six hectares (early potatoes 1 ha, late potatoes 38 ha, beans and clean grain 2 ha, cabbage 3 ha, and

¹⁹ Statistics from 1895 list 366 hectares of arable land and seven hectares of gardens (a total of 373 ha), which means that by 1951 the size of cultivated land increased only by six hectares (cf. Kericsmar 1990: 19–20). Comparing the maps from the nineteenth century (Figure 2) and today (Figure 7), one can note a disappearance of forest on the northern slope (between Domanjševci and Bükk-alja). On the recent map, this forest would be located somewhere around the microtoponyms *Stranska dolina* (Hung. *Oldal-völgy*) and *Notranje njive* (Hung. *Belső-mező*). This means that quite extensive clearing of woods occurred somewhere between the 1860s (the second military survey) and 1895 (Kericsmar 1990). This would certainly fit well with the fusion of both villages, the disappearance of the forest borders between communities, and the increase in the local population and cultivated lands.



Figure 7: Domanjševci today (Source: Mapire). The red line is the border, and the blue line the flow of the Little Krka. The dots indicate today's shared water source at *Mali vodnjak* (dark blue), shared with Šalovci; the location of nineteenth-century Domanjševci (yellow) and Bükalja (orange); the border crossing with Hungary (dark green), and the nineteenth-century village of Szomoróc (violet); the new Hungarian Self-Governing Ethnic Community Center (light blue); the Lutheran church (light green), and Saint Martin's Church (gray).



Figure 8: A tractor powering a thresher with a belt pulley. Harvest, Dance, and Song Festival in Domanjševci (Sln. *Praznik žetje, plesa in petja*), 29 July 2019. Older people stage traditions, and younger people tend the bar. Photo: Peter Simonič.

other 2 ha; KLO 1945–1952: 997–998). In 1951, the village delivered over sixty-four tons of potatoes (KLO 1945–1952: 874). The next category in the field of arable land and gardens was fodder plants at sixty-three hectares (mostly black clover 41 ha, and an additional 5 ha of all other clover, plus peas, corn for green fodder, fodder beets, and other plants).

Nurseries and orchards were not recorded on the 1951 list.²⁰ In short, data indicate the high importance of cereal farming for domestic use and cooperative production (as cash crops), and the importance of fodder plants for domestic animals, whereas industrial plants represented only about 7%. Pumpkins and pumpkin-seed oil are not recorded in official postwar records, yet locals recall making, using, and selling them, and some still do.

Today, agricultural land covers 321 hectares (about 50 to 80 ha less than in 1951). Wheat, corn, barley, triticale, rye, pumpkins, potatoes, clover, rapeseed, soybeans, buckwheat, and millet are included in the agricultural crop rotation (listed by coverage). The crops of the local farmers are not bought by the cooperatives, but by the Mlinopek and Panvita companies of Murska Sobota as well as RWA Slovenija, which is based in Hodoš. Crop prices are not determined by the central administration, but by the stock on the European and global markets. Prices are constantly fluctuating. Local farmers' long-term decision-making is difficult, and so they adjust from season to season, usually through mixed or parallel sowing of mostly wheat and corn.

The 1951 report mentions twenty-three hectares of vineyards, planted with grapes grown directly from rootstock (Sln. *šmarnica*; classified in reports as “hybrid”). It became well known after the phylloxera plague at the end of the nineteenth century.²¹ I did not find any records of grape or wine deliveries. Yugoslavia banned the use of this variety because it was rumored to cause mental disorders and blindness. Purchasing was therefore not an option, and the villagers processed and consumed the grapes themselves (similar to pumpkins). Today, the Pocak family and some others are trying to revive the cultivation of this variety on the northern slope because it is highly resistant to disease, and it does not require sprays and fertilizers; in short, it is much more “efficient.”²² According to one

²⁰ This is clearly an error because another 1951 report reads that the villagers delivered a total of 4,900 kg of apples, just over 11,600 kg of other fruit, and 141 liters of brandy (KLO 1945–1952: 874). For 1895, Rozsa Kercsmar cited statistics listing 708 apple trees, 557 pears, 527 cherry trees, fourteen sour cherries, 2,870 plums, eighty-six chestnuts, and 124 walnuts, totaling as many as 4,900 fruit trees (Kercsmar 1990: 19). The frequent use of fruit in the household (for jams, syrups, and compotes) and the formerly well-established tradition of commercial fruit brandy also speak in favor of a large number of fruit trees in the past. They are still to be found in the village, but as a rule there are only a few trees in the vicinity of the dwellings and there are no plantations.

²¹ Šiftar (1986) writes that the Prekmurje peasant vineyards were linked to the market economy (mercantilism) of their landlords, and that they spread in the rural landscape from the seventeenth century onward. According to Kercsmar (1990: 9), the quality of the wine from Domanjševci was poor in the early nineteenth century. She cited a traveler that advised against consuming local wine.

²² The sale of this grapevine has been allowed again in Slovenia since 2018. The landowners are following the trends in Austria, where they have declared wine produced from the variety “the most organic drink” (Mašelj 2014).

interviewee: *If you want to really screw someone, give him a vineyard. It's so much work from spring to fall, digging, pruning, removing pests, removing leaves, spraying . . . It's painstaking. One mistake can cost you the whole harvest.*

Meadows covered 163 hectares in 1951, lowland pastures sixty-three hectares, and forests 464 hectares (KLO 1945–1952: 998). Slowly, the meadows were transformed into arable land by farmers during the communist and EU green revolutions. Goričko Nature Park is focused on the purchase and restoration of grasslands because they are important breeding places for insects and butterflies (JZKPG 2010). There are two small-scale organic farms in the village, which would like more Landscape Park Goričko assistance. However, their legal framework is currently at odds with park policy: organic farmers can plow the meadows without special permits, whereas conventional farmers cannot because they risk the loss of subsidies.

Woods have expanded by fifty to seventy hectares in the last sixty years. Currently, there are 537 hectares of woods in the cadastral municipality of Domanjševci, divided into 3,552 parcels. One forest property usually consists of twelve parcels with an average size of twenty-seven hectares. The largest forest owners in Domanjševci are the state and the municipality, which own fifty hectares. State property is likewise fragmented into 345 plots. According to the story, state forests increased after the financial crisis of 2012, when people pledged them to cover costs at retirement homes (Državni zbor 2012). More than 90% of forests are still privately owned.

The composition of the woods is dominated by red pine, beech, oak, white hornbeam, black locust, black alder, birch, chestnut, pruce, linden, poplar, and willow. The management of these forests was based on *rural picking and cleaning*, as a wood expert explained. Regarding the period after the Second World War, in 1949, the locals had to deliver 270 cubic meters of different types of wood (for construction, heating, and mines; KLO 1945–1952: 522–525). In 1950, they were ordered to deliver seven tons of pine and spruce wood for oils to the Gornji Petrovci distillery (KLO 1945–1952: 673), and an additional forty tons for the Lendava essential oil plant (KLO 1945–1952: 704). With the rise in mineral oil prices in recent decades, wood has again become a major village energy source during the heating season. People cut less than allowed by the Forest Management Plan. There is a small sawmill in the village and a larger one in Motvarjevci.

In the past, mushroom picking was very popular in the forests around Domanjševci. One of the interviewees explained her working day in the 1950s. Every morning she would get up at two in the morning, milk the cows, feed the hogs, and then go with her husband to the woods to pick porcini and chanterelles. The money earned seasonally was spent for household needs. According to another woman, her father was a local mushroom buyer, and during the harvest season they were expected to have up to 1,500 kg in the yard. There were three mushroom merchants in the village. A third interlocutor used to transport mushrooms to restaurants in Maribor in the 1990s because there was a strong demand for prime-quality mushrooms, but now it has declined. Since the 1960s, there have also been

many recreational gatherers from cities (Murska Sobota and Maribor). All of this should contribute to the fact that mushrooms have been scarce for several years, yet *the climate may also be to blame*. Chestnut harvesting has never been so widespread.

From the Second World War to 1989 and beyond, the forest also marked the state border. Hungarian side was intentionally left to overgrow. The Informbiro partition line (after 1948) included plowed minefields, special administration, and deportation of residents. After 1965, the minefields were replaced by electrified fences. It was not until 1977 that the residents of the border area were allowed to visit their relatives across the border, up to twelve times per year (Schubert 2011: 55–80; based on a local narrative).²³ Although Yugoslavia initially also installed mines and strict border control, the agricultural and forestry regime was different. In the register of agricultural land in Domanjševci from 1951, one finds the category “clear-cut” (KLO 1945–1952: 945). Landowners in the hundred-meter border belt were expected to clear the bushes and cut the trees. It was even forbidden to plant crops growing more than 30 cm high (KLO 1945–1952: 965).

ANIMALS

Immediately after the Second World War, the state agricultural sector introduced a hierarchy of agricultural labor. The greatest emphasis was placed on bread cereals (rye and wheat), followed by poultry and eggs, hogs, and finally cattle as the largest herbivores (consumers of field crops). The instructions of the district people’s committee from March 1946 read: “It will take some years before we raise enough livestock to cover the need for meat. For this reason, it is necessary to summarize all measures for the maximum production of those species that multiply rapidly. Poultry should be an industry that receives special attention” (KLO 1945–1952: 84).

The village record of February 1948 (KLO 1945–1952: 397–402) lists over 750 hens, and in 1949 and 1950 farmers contributed a total of about 120,000 eggs to the cooperative (KLO 1945–1952: 543, 608, 632). In 1949, for example, eight hundred kg had to be delivered, and in 1950 more than 1,300 kg of poultry in live weight (KLO 1945–1952: 453, 632). The veterinary service took care of regular vaccination of hens against chicken pox.

The 1946 guidelines for raising livestock (KLO 1945–1952: 84) also stated the need to establish an adequate ratio of sows and boars (80:1). Tenders for licensing boars were subsequently set up. The registration of hogs was mandatory for those that owned more than four hectares of land (KLO 1945–1952: 280). According to records from the end of 1947, there were 130 hogs in the village (KLO 1945–1952: 382), and in 1948 there were

²³ Crossing the Iron Curtain was possible and took place in various ways: legally (in cases of agricultural property on the other side, and later with monthly visits by relatives) and illegally (escapes mostly from the Hungarian side and regular departures of Hungarian-speaking “spectators” to the Hungarian side for spying).

already about 265 fat and lean hogs (KLO 1945–1952: 397–402). The documentation frequently presents warnings about the spread of infectious swine fever and veterinary measures. Attention was paid to the diseases transmitted by dogs, which were also carefully counted for taxation in 1946 and 1951 (KLO 1945–1952: 227, 974).

A special chapter on sows is the contribution of lard, for which the authorities never attained the quantities desired, and they therefore sent regular warnings to the local committee. However, the demands of central planning (e.g., 5,386 kg of lard in 1951; KLO 1945–1952: 838) and local capabilities and interests were clearly at odds here. One interviewee stated: *People did not deliver lard because they did not have it. The ones who were a little better off, put a little lard on their potatoes. . . . As long as our mother was still alive, there was no such thing. Only after our mother died did we use some.*

Until the 1970s, yearly hog slaughtering (Sln. *koline*; Hung. *disznóvágás*) was an important component of family and local companionship, worth remembering (cf. Minnich 1979). I found many photographs of such events in the archives (PAM 2001).²⁴ Because the locals smoked (or “burned”) the hogs, their skin was not suitable for industrial use. One interviewee said: *We cut the pork skins, hung them on long sticks, and dried them in the attic. Then the skin was cleaned, soaked, sliced, and boiled. We used the skins a lot and made aspic from them. It was wonderful!*

Until the 1990s, some locals bred hogs for their own use or sold them to customers directly from the stables. Then, with European Union regulations (there was a ban on simultaneous breeding of different livestock) and the aging of breeders, the number of hogs fell. The cooperatives, an important stimulus and buyer of agricultural products after the Second World War, have been in ruins throughout Prekmurje since the 1990s. Today, sixteen breeders are registered in the village, but only two are practicing it on a major scale. One of them produces sausages. Meat from the remaining hog farmers is being bought by various companies today: Hanžekovič in Veržej, Panvita in Murska Sobota, the Sloga Agricultural and Forestry Cooperative headquartered in Kranj with branch offices in Grad and Bodonci, and until recently also the 13 M VENDA trade and cooperation from Murska Sobota (now bankrupt).

From the archived list, it can be concluded that in 1948 there were 325 cows in the village, or an average of two to three cows per household (KLO 1945–1952: 397–402), and two years later only 263 cows, of which forty-one were heifers (KLO 1945–1952: 834–835). The cows were important for their meat and labor, and especially for the milk, which was

²⁴ Most of these photos were from Krplivnik, where photographers were clearly more active in the past (cf. Krenn 2014; Szabó 2005). However, because Krplivnik is geographically and culturally very close to Domanjševci, I conclude that I can assume this tradition existed in Domanjševci as well. In her chapter on traditional Christmas caroling, Kericsmar (1990: 104–105) quotes: “Lucy, Lucy, three / Give me schnapps / If we don’t get schnapps / We’ll take away your pig / If we don’t get bacon / We’ll cut your attic beam / May you have more chickens / But may they all be blind” (Hung. *Luca, Luca három / a pálinkát várom. / Ha nem adnak palinkát / elhajtom a hizóját. / Ha nem adnak szalonnát, / levágom a gerendát. / Legyen több csibéjük, / de azok is vakok legyenek.*)

handed over daily at the cooperative house in the village. There were very strict rules for waiting in that line, one of the interviewees recalled.

For 1950 and 1951, the Murska Sobota County Board planned for Domanjševci to deliver about 100,000 liters of milk (KLO 1945–1952: 801, 842), but at least for 1951 only 30,000 liters were later delivered (KLO 1945–1952: 874). The delayers were allowed to compensate with lard. For 1948, the villagers announced the submission of a “market surplus” of seventy-nine head of various calves, bullocks, cows, and bulls. According to the administration, a total of 12,100 kg of live weight was to be delivered (KLO 1945–1952: 414). For the livestock delivery to be possible, the villagers had to agree among themselves on the shares and rotation: every year one farmer on behalf of several.

Today, there are five or six cattle breeders. One of them told me that he will quit soon because he no longer has the necessary strength. In modern times, the number of diseases and pests has increased due to the longer transport routes for import and export. New diseases have emerged, such as bluetongue, brucellosis, and mad cow disease in cattle, swine flu, bird flu, and so on.

Since the opening of the Slovenian–Hungarian border, there has been a significant increase in the number of wildlife that forage in Slovenian fields and find shelter in the extensive forests on Hungarian side. The situation is not yet as dramatic as in Dolenci, I heard; however, despite the growing fear of losing crops, people support the management of the Kompas Peskovci Special Hunting Resort in carrying out protective hunting. The threatening overpopulation of deer and wild boar is mentioned on the introductory page of the Municipality of Šalovci website (Občina Šalovci 2019). Beavers have recently appeared at the former pond near the Little Krka River.

ENERGY, TECHNOLOGY, AND HERITAGE

One interviewee stated

It's easier to farm today because people used to work manually,” and “We acquired three cows, then four, so we could use two pairs for plowing, two pairs for hauling manure. Everything went faster . . . I don't know which year we bought the little tractor . . . Then we bought a bigger tractor.

These statements illustrate the inclination of postwar farmers to facilitate their work, and simultaneously their increased dependency on machinery and petroleum or electricity (Fisher-Kowalski et al. 1997). In the mid-twentieth century, two or three cows were a real treasure. Whereas about three hundred cows were recorded in 1947, there were only twenty horses (KLO 1945–1952: 382). Horses have never been regarded as food, and they were used only as a means of transportation and for military purposes. For modernized Domanjševci

farmers in the 1990s, horse-drawn carriages became a symbol of the backwardness of the Hungarian farmers on the other side of the border.

In addition to the use of draft animals, hydropower should be mentioned. After the Second World War, two mills were in operation:²⁵ the Čahuk mill (on the western edge of the village, in the direction of Križevci) and the Žlebič mill (below the part of the village called *Pusta*, Hung. *Pusztá*). The first presumably used to belong to Domanjševci, and the second to Bükalja. The first survived until the 1980s. From the archival tax documents from 1947, one can see that the owner set up a dynamo for electricity (KLO 1945–1952: 377). Electricity was only common in the village from 1960 onward. The Čahuk Mill is on the register of Slovenian immovable cultural heritage.

A special topos in the collective memory of the village is various forms of threshers, which are strongly connected with grain production in the village in the twentieth century. Mostly men are interested in this technology, which belongs to the sphere of power and efficiency. The technological history of threshing progresses from flails, to manual threshers, then to horse-drawn machines, and finally to large tractor-driven threshers. Their social value lies not just in their power, but also in their organization of labor. Old-style threshers required teamwork. Combines, in use since 1970, are a machine that made the community redundant. They are too efficient to become part of the local agricultural heritage.

Agriculture, technology, and heritage as a means of social reproduction are subjects of grants offered by the Hungarian government (Juhász 2019), yet the ethnic criteria have evoked some resentment among non-Hungarians for being an unfair competition. There is a tender every year, and my interviewee will apply again: *Anyone can apply. Why not? It's simple, it's enough if you went to a Hungarian school. Those who aren't involved in agriculture are also applying, just to buy a tractor for hauling firewood. I got a little, I bought a tractor for €10,000. Some got up to €25,000.*

The most important associations in Domanjševci today are the firemen's association, the Petőfi Sándor Cultural Society with several chapters, and the soccer club. More or less the same group of (young) people are involved in these three associations. Currently, a new cultural center was built on the former site of the Kalamar farm (Figure 7, light blue dot), with the premises for various sections of the Sándor Petőfi Cultural Society, the seat of the Hungarian Self-Governing National Community, an ethnological exhibition, a wedding and concert hall, apartments, an outdoor and indoor stage, and other structures.

The Village Mutual Aid Society (Sln. *Društvo vaše samopomoči Domanjševci*, Hung. *Önszegélyező Egyesület Domankosfa – Falusi*) used to be far more important: if a member had lost a house in fire, he could recover the loss from mutual funds. Now insurance companies have taken over, said one of the interviewees.

²⁵ There are said to have been as many as five mills at one time along the Little Krka River on the Slovenian side of the border.

CONCLUSION

This article has followed the case of historical transformation in the social perception and management of farmland in Domanjševci. It addresses the importance of a shift from ethnogenesis to ethnoecology and environmental history. This change is necessary for a possible anthropological contribution to contemporary discussions on the state of the physical and social environment.

Small farming society and its shift from work-intensive to technology-intensive agriculture has been discussed (Chayanov 1986 [1925]; Netting 1993). First, this involved the organization of agriculture immediately after the Second World War, based on communist ideology, and second in relation to post-communist organization based on capitalist ideology (Hann and Hart 2011; Hann et al. 2002). Both episodes were transitional and modernist in their essence. This political context was evaluated at the level of human relations to land, water, plants, and animals.

Several administrative measures for economizing and agricultural production and making it more efficient directly influenced the society and landscape of Domanjševci: the communist management reform from 1945 to 1952, the regulation of the Little Krka River in the 1980s, land consolidation and melioration in 1993, the law on inheritance from 1995, and various Slovenian, Hungarian, and EU grants. Yugoslav reform after 1945 focused on the collective management of individual and state assets, but it did not significantly redistribute the land. Land consolidation reshaped the landscape to better meet the requirements of industrial agriculture. However, this was not enough to ensure development. Investments and technologies were required. Slovenian subsidies at the beginning of the 1990s for the construction of agricultural outbuildings (barns and garages) soon decreased with the disappearance of the border and the influx of cheaper Hungarian agricultural products. Hungarian grants to Hungarian residents since 2016 have addressed the technological side of agricultural development (granting tractors, combines, etc.).

Domanjševci has experienced the decline of the pastoral economy and the rise of a cereal economy, reorientation toward industrial farming, and the redefinition of relations among neighbors and their attitude toward the outside world (cf. Tomasevich 1955). Land was redistributed and cleared and partly overgrown; animal husbandry became much less important and uniform; waters were polluted or clogged; agriculture became less diversified and self-sustaining, as well as increasingly market oriented (with cash crops); and forests were badly managed and partly exhausted. At the same time, the village social organization has moved from institutionalized (post-feudal) households and village reciprocity, through national (communist and capitalist) experience with state redistribution, to the dominance of modern market relations (cf. Polanyi 1957).

The notion of agricultural economic “backwardness” of the smallholders in the northern Prekmurje hills was based on a developmental paradigm that evolved from the need to increase agricultural yields for the urbanized population in the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries. The designation of backwardness is still relational, coming from urban centers (Budapest, Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Vienna) and modernized self-awareness, which celebrates technological advances and economies of scale, surplus, and reinvestment on account of its peripheries. One should also not forget that smallholder's (inheritance) model was not sustainable after tremendous demographic growth in the nineteenth century. Because almost half of the population today earns wages outside the village and agriculture, future research will need to devote more interest to their role in the local community and landscape. Material well-being of the remaining residents is much higher, notably due to daily jobs in Austria and development of infrastructure.

The locals and the rest of the region still cannot compete with areas that generate much higher and cheaper yields (including the lowland areas of Prekmurje). Some people in Domanjševci now wish to sell a "pristine agricultural landscape," which is such exactly due to its long-lasting smallholders. Eco-tourism is offered to depopulated Domanjševci as a rescue strategy, which is again integrated into the networks of the Slovenian and Hungarian state (through the market and regulations). Visionaries are gathering around the newly established Cultural and Heritage Center, and they would like to turn the village into a green and unoccupied refuge for city dwellers (weekenders, new residents, permaculturists, mushroom pickers, herbalists, hikers, and cyclists) from both sides of the open border and protected areas (Goričko Nature Park and Órség National Park). Visitors and new residents might see the pristine environment of a small and sleepy Hungarian village, whereas others can recall struggle and permanent adjustment.

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DRUŽBENA IN PROSTORSKA PRILAGAJANJA V DOMANJŠEVCIH

Domanjševci (madž. Domonkosfa) so obcestna vas na meji z Madžarsko. V slovenski etnologiji o njej skoraj ni zapisov. Drugi avtorji so Domanjševce obravnavali glede na prenaseljenost, odse-ljevanje in revščino ter z ozirom na njihovo etnično ter versko zgodovino in pripadnost. Avtor v članku obravnava kulturno ekologijo in okoljsko zgodovino naselja, opisuje transformacijo skupnosti in pokrajine majhnih zemljiških lastnikov v 20. stoletju s posebnim poudarkom na obdobju po 2. svetovni vojni. Na temelju etnografskih in arhivskih virov avtor rekonstruira spremembe v Domanjševcih po postavitvi in odstranitvi železne zavese. V središču zanimanja je modernizacija lokalne družbene organizacije, lastništva in dedovanja, ki je spreminjala dediščino fevdalnih oblik v drugačno sistemsko subordinacijo. Meja med obema državama je bile le eden od dejavnikov, ki je določal življenje v Domanjševcih.

V prvem obdobju po 2. svetovni vojni je Slovenija izvajala agrarne reforme sovjetskega tipa; po vaseh je ustanovljala Krajevne ljudske odbore (KLO), ki so načrtovali pridelavo in oddajo kmetijskih pridelkov. KLO v Domanjševcih je določal deleže vaških gospodarstev in ob tem izdelal natančen popis vaščanov, gospodinjev, njihovih posesti, števila govedi in svinj, psov, velikosti posesti in količin pridelanega žita itn. Po letu 1990 so na organizacijo kmetijstva najbolj vplivale komasacija, melioracija, spremembe zakona o dedovanju ter zakonodaja Evropske unije. Poseben vpliv na odločanje v lokalni skupnosti pa ima od leta 2003 tudi Krajinski park Goričko, ki je ob ekonomskem poudaril še ekološki vidik.

Oba družbeno-ekonomska konteksta avtor primerja na ravni odnosov vaške družbe do zemlje, vode, rastlin, živali, tehnologije in dediščine. Primerjava pokaže, da so Domanjševci v zadnjem stoletju doživeli velik upad pašniške, vinogradniške in sadjarske ekonomije; prevladujoča je postala produkcija žita, ki ga uravnavajo borze in državne politike. Zaradi preteklih migracij in mezdnih zaposlitev zunaj kraja je danes standard življenja veliko boljši kot pred petdesetimi leti. Nekoč značilno in nikakor ne trajnostno »prekmursko parcelizacijo« (biološka raznovrstnost mikrofundij) so v zadnjih dveh desetletjih zamenjale velike posesti, kmetijska krajina je manj raznovrstna in prebivalstvo manj samooskrbno, robovi vasi in gozdovi se zaraščajo, reka Mala Krka pa se je spremenila v kanal.

Vas je v 20. stoletju preživela hiter prehod od postfevdalnih gospodarstev in vaške vzajemnosti, prek nacionalnih (komunističnih in kapitalističnih) izkušenj z državno prerazporeditvijo, do prevlade tržnih odnosov in koncentracije zemliške posesti. Meja med Slovenijo in Madžarsko je kot fizični in kulturni dejavnik vplivala na gibanje in demografsko podobo lokalnega prebivalstva, na gibanje divjadi in drugih vrst, na trgovanje ter na upravljanje in seveda videz kmetijske in gozdne pokrajine.

Predstavniki novega domanjševskega javnega življenja promovirajo neokrnjeno kmetijsko pokrajino in dediščino, ki sta v veliki meri rezultata izginulega agrikulturnega modela malih zemljiških lastnikov. Ekoturizem v Krajinskem parku Goričko se tako Domanjševcem kaže kot ena od možnih strategij, ki je tako kot kmetijstvo vključena v mreže slovenske in madžarske države, trga in evropskih predpisov.

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