

The rural land market in the duchy of Brabant

Fifteenth to sixteenth century

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Research context

Transition from the middle ages to the early modern time

- Redistribution of property
- Take-off of factor markets

Research question

- What compelled peasants to interact with the market?
- How did peasants' strategies change given:
 - A) More 'mature' market
 - B) Different macro-economic contexts

Sources

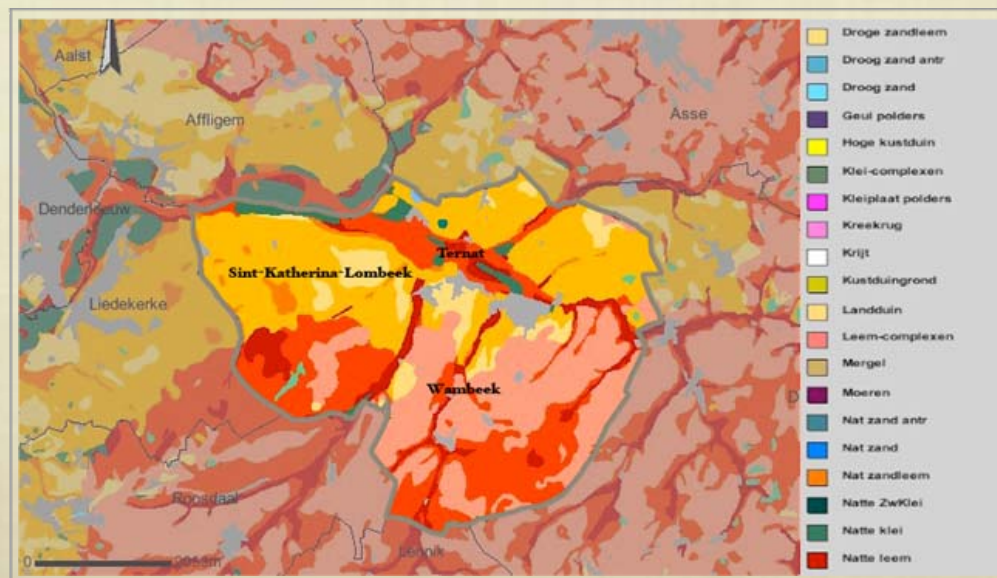
Manorial accounts

- › Available for rural communities from 15th century
- › Receipts conveyance tax (5%)
- › Overview of market activity and transmission between families

Research Case

Domain of Overzenne (1400-1550)

- › Ternat, Wambeek and St.-Katherina-Lombeek
- › No substantial reclamations
- › Modest population growth (1.265 to 1.370 inhabitants)



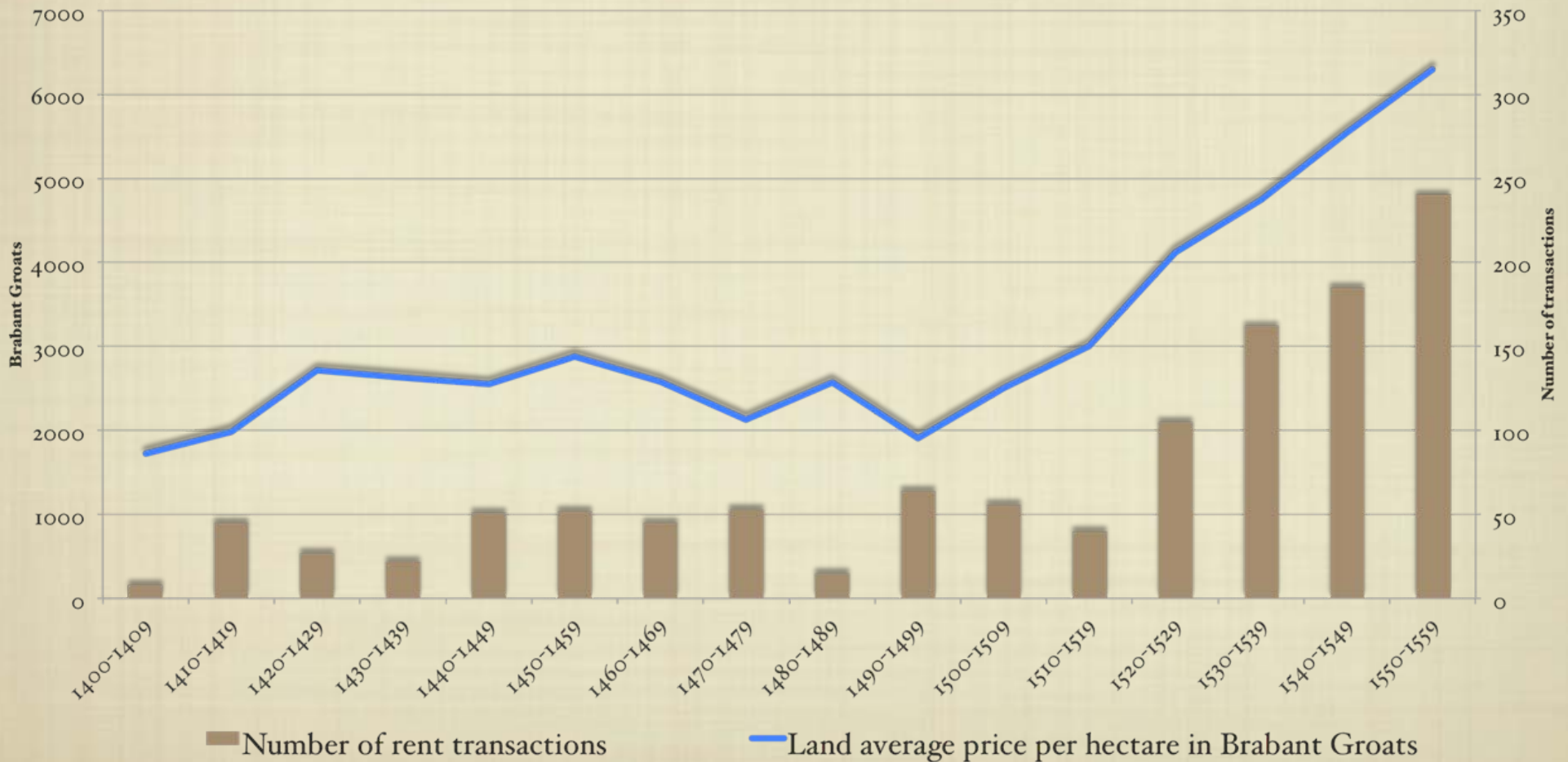
General market tendencies

Between 1404-1434 and 1523-1553

- › Rising number of land transactions
(+56,25%)
- › Rising number of rent transactions
(+600%)
- › Increased average price per hectare
(+400% in nominal terms, +50% in real terms)
- › Decreased average plot size (-50%)

General market tendencies

Average price per hectare and number of annuity sales per year



General market tendencies

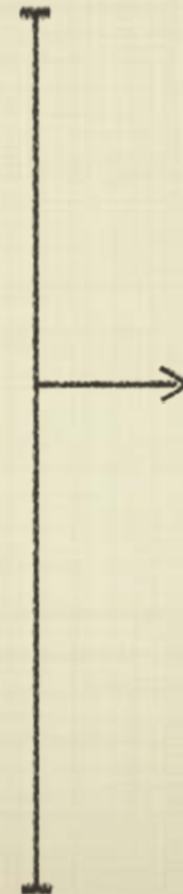
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a 'boom'
scenario?

Peasants and the land market

Defining social strata

- › Receipts of the conveyance tax (nobility, clergy, etc.)
- › Manorial accounts (aldermen etc.)
- › Number of times active as a creditor
(4/8 different years as single person or family respectively)

Peasants and the land market

Period	Social position of buyer	Buy / sell ratio
1404-1434 (p1)	Lower tier (group 1)	0,73
	Upper Tier (group 2)	1,92
1523-1553 (p2)	Lower tier (group 1)	0,74
	Upper Tier (group 2)	1,83

	Lower Tier Increase (p2 versus p1)	Upper Tier Increase (p2 versus p1)
Buyers	41%	78%
Sellers	39%	87%

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Peasants and the land market

Clear redistribution of property from lower to upper tier

- Caused by
 - Macro economic shocks
 - Changing relative price differences between buying and leasing land
 - Different attitudes toward landholding

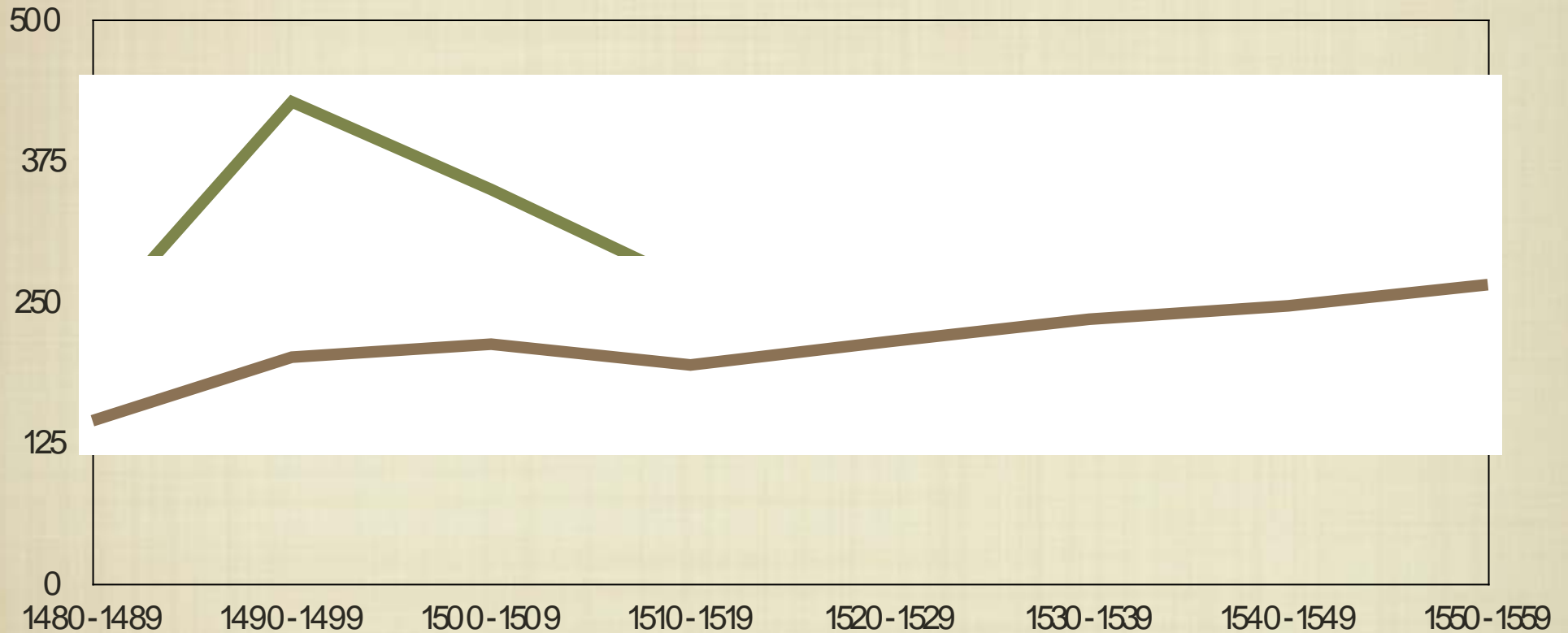
Peasants and the land market

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Buying or leasing?

Financing cost per hectare of land in litres wheat. 1490-1559.



- Annual cost per hectare land when bought with annuity (p.17)
- Lease price per hectare land

Different attitudes towards landholding

Period				Seller		Total
				Lower tier (group 1)	Upper tier (group 2)	
1404-1434	Reason for selling	Post-mortem	Count	8	3	11
			% within Seller	2,4%	3,8%	2,7%
		Inter-vivos	Count	329	75	404
			% within Seller	97,6%	96,2%	97,3%
1523-1553	Reason for selling	Post-mortem	Count	116	22	138
			% within Seller	24,7%	15,1%	22,4%
		Inter-vivos	Count	354	124	478
			% within Seller	75,3%	84,9%	77,6%

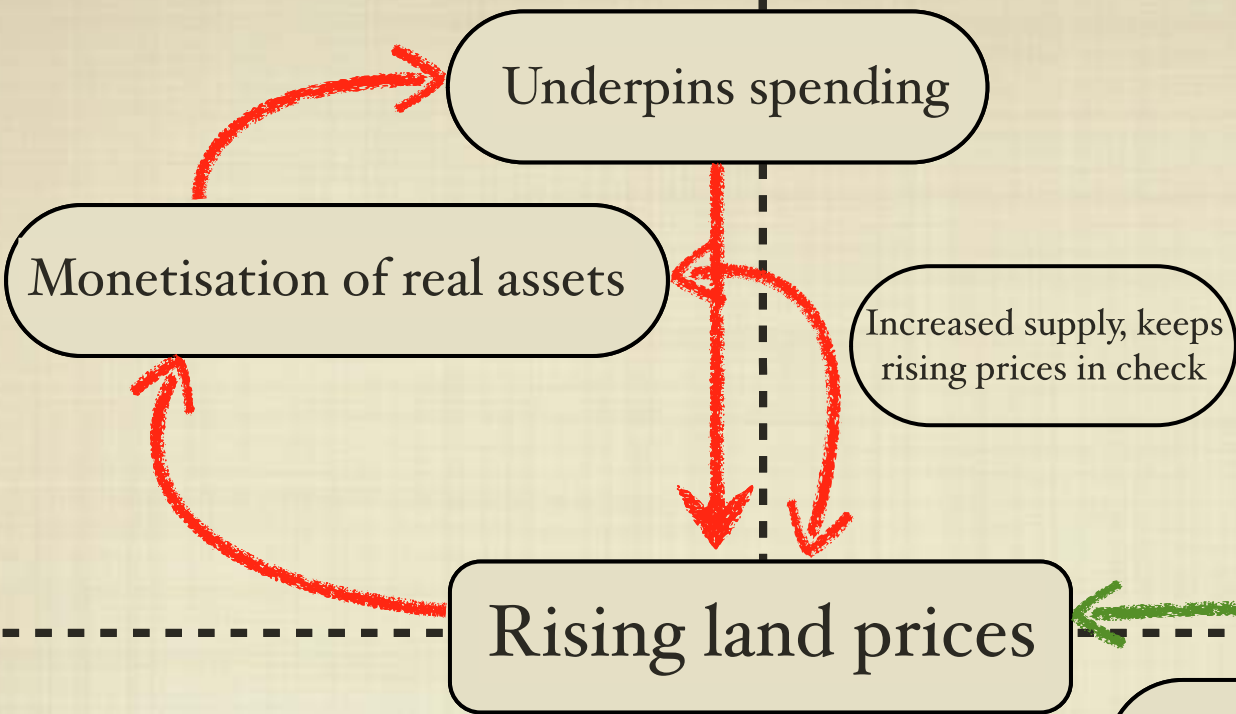
Different attitudes towards landholding

- Different strategies toward land market from upper and lower tier
- Different views towards landholding
 - Upper tier → Intergenerational perspective
 - Lower tier → Intragenerational perspective

Lower Tier - liquidity effect

Upper Tier - wealth effect

Income
Dynamics



Asset/
liabilities
Dynamics

