

# Land, Ceramics and Seigniorial Rents in the Late Middle Ages: the Manor of Manises in the Kingdom of Valencia, c. 1400-1575

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**KEYWORDS:** manor, rents, land, ceramics.

**JEL CODES:** N53, N63, L61, Q15.

*During the last two centuries of the Late Middle Ages lords experienced a substantial fall in rents, which was exacerbated in the case of Valencia due to the small size of local manors. The will to keep their levels of incomes brought lords to demand higher burdens from their vassals, especially Muslims, while some nobles, in addition, invested in the productive structures of their estates. Such was the case in the manor of Manises, where since the early fourteenth century an important ceramic manufacturing had developed, which attracted the interest of buyers from all over Europe. This production took place in a medium-sized manorial village, inhabited by a mixed population of Muslims and Christians, which maintained its engagement with agricultural labour. The aim of this article is to analyse the rents of the manor of Manises through two unpublished and exceptional manorial sources, namely, two registries datable from the early fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century respectively, although the latter continued to be used until the end of the century. These allow the exploration of the structure of seigniorial revenues, showing the incidence that agrarian rents and those coming from ceramic production represented over the total. The tendency followed by the manorial rents in the long run is addressed and compared to those of other contemporary locations of the Kingdom of Valencia. Finally, the involvement of vassals in agriculture and ceramic manufacturing is also explored.*

## Tierra, cerámica y rentas señoriales: el señorío de Manises en el reino de Valencia, c. 1400-1575

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** señorío, rentas, tierra, cerámica.

**CÓDIGOS JEL:** N53, N63, L61, Q15.

***E**n los dos últimos siglos de la Baja Edad Media los señores experimentaron una caída sustancial de sus rentas, acentuada en el caso valenciano por el pequeño tamaño de los señoríos. La voluntad de mantener su nivel de ingresos los llevó a exigir mayores prestaciones a sus vasallos, especialmente los musulmanes, mientras que algunos, además, invirtieron en las estructuras productivas de sus territorios. Este es el caso de Manises, donde desde principios del siglo XIV se fabricaron cerámicas que atrajeron el interés de compradores de toda la Europa del momento. Esta producción, constante y sostenida durante siglos, se desarrollaba así en una villa mediana de señorío, habitada por una población mixta de musulmanes y cristianos, que aun así mantenía su carácter rural y su vinculación con el trabajo agrícola. El propósito de este trabajo es analizar las rentas del señorío de Manises a través de dos fuentes nobiliarias inéditas y excepcionales, concretamente, dos registros (un capbreu y un cappatró), fechables a comienzos del siglo XV y comienzos del XVI, respectivamente, aunque este último continuó siendo usado hasta finales de la centuria. Ambos documentos permiten observar la estructura del beneficio señorial, mostrando el peso que las rentas agrarias y aquellas derivadas de la producción cerámica tenían sobre el total. Se aborda igualmente la trayectoria de las rentas del señorío en el largo plazo, comparándolas con las de otros lugares coetáneos del reino de Valencia. Finalmente, se explora la implicación de los vasallos en la agricultura y la producción cerámica.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The image we have of the late medieval rural world has undergone a profound transformation in recent decades. Far from the stagnation and autarky that were previously ascribed to its main social frameworks, whether manors or small peasant holdings, and limiting economic initiative to groups and companies in the cities, historians now speak in terms of processes of commercialisation (Britnell, 1993; Britnell & Campbell, 1995), seigniorial entrepreneurship (Blanchard, 1973; Campbell, 2000; Feller, 2009), and even peasant innovation (Viciano, 2003, Furió, 2019). Many sectors of society were in fact involved with, and benefitted from, the economic dynamism generated by the development of markets, and one of them was the nobility.

For the nobility, the fall in seigniorial rents between the early fourteenth and the mid-fifteenth century offered an encouraging context for the development of new economic activities (Bois, 1976). This was a phenomenon that to a large extent resulted from the limits of the economic growth that had begun around the year 1000 (Bois, 1992; Centro Italiano di Studi di Storia e d'Arte, 2017), and which affected most of the European nobility, and certainly that of the Crown of Aragon (Riera & Fernández Trabal, 2004: 133-39; Furió, 2004: 200-01). In the Kingdom of Valencia, moreover, seigniorial incomes were less substantial in economic terms than in other regions, given the paucity of their overall volume and the small size of most noble estates (Viciano, 1989; Garcia-Oliver, 1991: 77-80; Guinot, 1993: 513-25; Furió, 1997: 137-138).

Lords thus had to seek out new sources of income in order to maintain the standard of living and the rate of expenditure that befitted their status. Guy Bois argued in 1976 that this could essentially have been achieved through war and royal service, but other solutions should not be overlooked, such as investment in private and public debt (Furió, 1997), and even the introduction of changes to the productive structure of their estates (Pastor, 1992). In this case, lords could encourage the spread of new crops with a marked commercial orientation, such as sugar cane, mulberry trees and rice. For instance, the introduction of sugar cane to the Kingdom of Valencia, particularly in La Safor (the Gandia region), was an initiative of the local nobility, whose interests coincided with those of Italian merchants and local urban investors (Garcia-Oliver, 1999b). Mulberry trees and rice, however, expanded initially due to the interests of peasants opposed to the limitations imposed by lords and urban centres, who eventually agreed to introduce them after realising their economic profitability (Viciano, 2003). Lords were therefore not merely rent-seekers; they could also react to the challenges of economic adversity, investing in their sources of income and becoming true entrepreneurs. In this article we present the case of the manor of Manises, which clearly illustrates this phenomenon.

The manor of Manises was seven kilometres away from the city of Valencia, the capital of the Kingdom of Valencia (one of the realms making up the Crown of Aragon, in the eastern half of the Iberian Peninsula), and during the late Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period it was known for its ceramics. This artisanal production was mainly carried out by Muslim vassals, who in turn constituted the majority of the local population. The continuity of the Muslims in the new Kingdom of Valencia after the Christian conquest in the thirteenth century also raises the question of cultural transfer from one society to another (Glick, 1979), since pottery production had already reached a high level of development in al-Andalus (see Coll, 2009: 39-54). In a broader sense, continuity also existed in the fiscal sphere, insofar as old taxes from the Andalusian period continued to be collected by the new Christian lords in the form of charges that were added to the new feudal levies.

Ceramics and the overexploitation of Muslim vassals were, as we will see in this article, the main instruments that the lords of Manises used to offset not only the tendency towards a fall in their incomes but also the small size of their manor. Contrary to other territories in the Crown of Aragon, particularly the Kingdom of Aragon and the principality of Catalonia, and to the neighbouring Kingdom of Castile, the Kingdom of Valencia was not divided into large noble estates, but with small manors. This was a consequence of the way in which the thirteenth-century Christian conquest was carried out, with the king keeping the most important towns and villages for himself, and restricting grants to the knights and noblemen who had taken part in the conquest to a castle, a tower or a village. In this way, King James I wanted to prevent the establishment in the new kingdom of a powerful feudal aristocracy, like the ones in Catalonia and Aragon, which could compete with and challenge royal authority. The only truly important feudal estates were that of the military Order of Montesa, established on land previously owned by the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller, and the duchies of Gandia and Sogorb, which were appanages of members of the royal family. Later, during the second half of the fifteenth century, large manorial estates would emerge through the purchase and accumulation of smaller manors, profiting from the indebtedness of their lords. But this was a foretaste of the early modern period; in the late Middle Ages it was far from the norm, which was predominantly one of small manorial estates (Guinot, 1997; Furió, 1997). Among others, this was the case of the Borja family (the Borgias), which purchased the duchy of Gandia and took advantage of the indebtedness of other noble families to take possession of their manors. Another case was that of the Castilian Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza, who managed to purchase several small manors in the Kingdom of Valencia and concentrate them in his own hands (Pastor, 1992; Franco, 1982, 1992).

## 2. THE MANOR OF MANISES AND THE BOÏL FAMILY

Although many earthenware products were made in Manises, such as amphorae, flagons, casseroles and pots, the village was known in the kingdom and elsewhere for its golden lustreware pottery. This attracted buyers from all over Europe (Italy, England, the Low Countries, Germany and Russia, even the Palace of the Popes in Avignon) due to the exotic, oriental appearance of these items, which bore a resemblance to those made in Muslim Malaga. This is why they were called *obra de Màlica* (Malaga ware) in the Crown of Aragon. These items are first documented in the early decades of the fourteenth century, and historians have associated the boom in them with an initiative of the lords of Manises, the Boïl family, and particularly to Pere Boïl, steward (*majordom*), treasurer and auditor (*mes-tre racional*) of King James II (1291-1327) (Coll, 2009: 55-8; Cortés, 1988: 7-24).

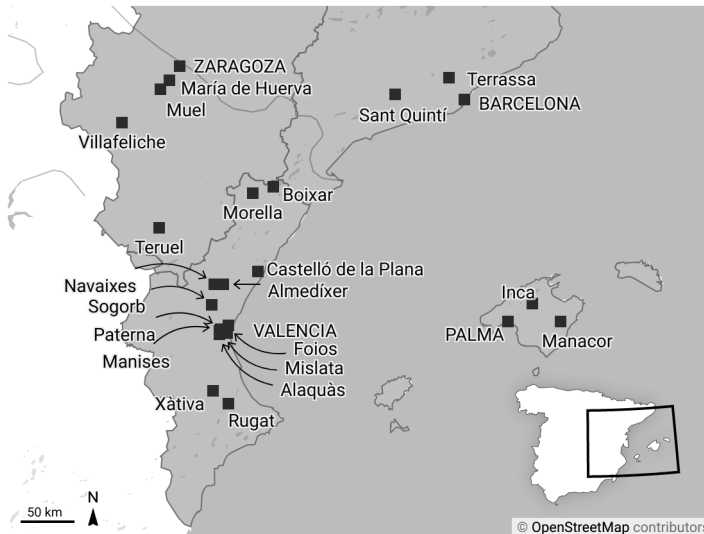
Pere Boïl was a powerful and intelligent man –a great deal of this latter quality was necessary to understand and look after accounts, and to survive in an unstable environment such as the royal finances. He was also a true businessman with entrepreneurial flair. He profited from his experience as the ambassador to the Kingdom of Granada and took advantage of his direct contact with Malaga ware in order to renew pottery production on his own manor by introducing the Muslim lustreware technique that would make the kilns of Manises famous. The spread of this new technique may have been made possible by the settlement of craftsmen from al-Andalus (Muslim Iberia) on his manor (Coll, 2009: 70-4; 2013: 314-15, 337-38). Pere Boïl moreover became an outstanding figure in the Crown of Aragon in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. As well as the aforementioned ambassadorship, he led other embassies, such as the one sent to Naples to negotiate the peace between Sicily and the Angevins, and others to the council of Vienna and to Venice. His son Felip succeeded him as lord of the manor and in most of the royal offices he had occupied, and he took part in the conquest of Sicily and Majorca, being named governor of the latter kingdom. The family's influence waned in the following centuries, but the Boïls would continue to be one of the most prestigious families of the Valencian nobility, possessing two palaces, one in Manises and the other in the city of Valencia (Cortés, 1988: 7-24).

The case of Manises, although the best-known one due to the reputation its ceramic production acquired, was certainly not unique. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a dense network of pottery production centres developed all over the Kingdom of Valencia. They were present in the north (Morella, Traiguera, El Boixar, Xivert, Castelló), the centre and the south (Carlet, Càrcer, Xàtiva, Bocairent), and also inland (Navaixes, Altura, Almedíxer, Sogorb). There were also many in the immediate hinterland of the capital of the kingdom (Manises and Paterna, and other lesser-known ones like Foios,

Quart, Mislata and Alaquàs) (Coll, 2009: 56-7) (Map 1). In total, there were more than twenty places that in many cases had something in common: Muslim craftsmen on seigniorial estates. However, contrary to what it might seem at first sight, there was no continuity between the pre-Conquest (before 1238) Muslim pottery-making network and the Christian one. According to some archaeologists, the conquerors dismantled the Muslim productive network and created a brand new one, so that while Muslim kilns were abandoned the technique and know-how was reoriented towards the needs of the feudal lords (Martí, Pascual & Roca, 2007: 79-158. See also García Porrás, 2008).

**MAP 1**

**Location of Manises in relation to other ceramic-producing centres in the Kingdom of Valencia and the Crown of Aragon (15<sup>th</sup> century)**



Map: Luis Almenar Fernández · Created with Datawrapper

Source: (Almenar Fernández & Furió, in press)

Exceptionally, the ceramic industry in Manises can be studied through the two documentary registers that we explore in this article. The male line of the Boil dynasty died out towards the end of the eighteenth century, absorbed by that of the Counts of Villagonzalo, and the family archives have been moved from place to place since then. In the nineteenth century, when the Counts of Villagonzalo sold the Boil Palace in Valencia, the family archives were taken to Sueca, 30 kilometres south of Valencia, where the family had land and property. In the 1980s Sueca City Council placed these papers in the Municipal Archive in order to avoid their destruction. The first inventories and catalogue were

made at this time (Cortés, 1988: 7-24; Cortés & Pons, 2000). The sources used in this article are the earliest ones in this collection: the register of the incomes of the manor of Manises, dated by its cataloguers to the fourteenth century –more likely the early fifteenth–, and a property register of 1524<sup>1</sup>. These documents are extraordinarily rare, in view of the scant survival of seigniorial sources in the Kingdom of Valencia, and they enable us to explore the economic activity of this manor with its remarkable manufacturing nature, assessing the involvement of its lords in the development and success of the ceramic industry.

For this purpose, the article is divided into four parts. Part one looks at the structure of the manorial revenues and the importance of the ceramic industry as part of them during the early fifteenth century. By way of comparison, part two addresses the structure of the revenues in other late medieval Valencian manors, while part three repeats this analysis with Manises in the sixteenth century. Finally, part four explores the productive activities of the local population of Manises, and particularly its involvement in ceramic production.

### **3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE MANOR'S REVENUES IN THE EARLY FIFTEENTH CENTURY**

The importance of the ceramic industry can be appreciated by its contribution to the manor's revenues in comparison with other incomes. The aforementioned early fifteenth-century register shows the sums collected from various sources: agrarian rents, monopolies, jurisdictional rights and ceramic production. It is important to stress that the document is a theoretical register that does not show the incomes of one particular year, but the expected sum from each revenue source that the lord would be due every year. This shows that by then the revenue structure of Manises was formed mostly of these four main sources, which were fairly similar in their relative proportion to the total. Agricultural levies, a variety of rents proportional to the harvest, and also of fixed cash charges,

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1. Arxiu Municipal de Sueca (AMS), Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV); AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 1 (1524). The first register can be situated chronologically between 1401 and 1417, since some of the people named in it –as creditors of the manor– are documented in this period. The notary Ramon Vidal was appointed in 1401 (PONS, 2015), while the merchant Antoni Garriga died in 1417, as shown by a document from a few years later ordered by the tutor of his children, which states that his will had been made public on 18 May 1417 (Arxiu de Protocols del Corpus Christi de València, Gerard de Ponte, 25.035, 5 May 1419). Other creditors named in the registry are also documented in years close to that, such as the silk-maker (*seder*) Joan Mercer, in 1386 (Arxiu del Regne de València, Protocols, 2.810), the notary Joan Trullols, appointed in 1397, and the notary Pere Llätzer, referenced in 1398 (PONS, 2015).



amounted to 5,966 *sous*, that is, 26% of the total income, a percentage very similar to that of the ceramic production (6,000 *sous*)<sup>2</sup>. Seigniorial monopolies, particularly mills, were not far behind, followed by jurisdictional rights, the two other mainstays of the manorial revenues (Table 1).

**TABLE 1**  
**Revenue structure of the manor of Manises in the early fifteenth century**

Concept	Quantity (in <i>sous</i> )	Proportion
Ceramic production ( <i>obra de terra</i> )	6,000	26.19%
Agricultural levies	5,966	26.06%
Monopolies	5,739.6	25.06%
Jurisdictional rights	5,196	22.69%
Total	22,901.6	100.00%

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

Agricultural levies were in turn divided into ten categories, of which taxes on cereals grown on irrigated land formed more than half of the total. This indicates that the agrarian production of Manises was essentially based on irrigated arable land, but also that this, despite its importance, represented only half of the revenue from ceramic production, and a seventh of the total income. Irrigated cereals were followed by irrigated vegetables (*horta*), fodder, irrigated vineyards<sup>3</sup>, the right to graze cattle (*herbatge*), dryland cereals (grown on unirrigated land), dryland vineyards, wine, the right to graze in the olive grove (*herbatge de l'olivar*), and turnips (Table 2). Not only were the peasants obliged to pay these charges, but they also had to take the grain to the lord's barn or to Valencia, where the lord had his residence.

In the estimation of the costs involved in leasing them, some of these products included the cost of making a rough valuation of the harvest by sight, without the need to weigh it (*alfarrassar* in Catalan). There were specialist peasants called *alfarrassadors* who, based on their experience, could estimate the volume of production. In the early fifteenth-century register the cost of *alfarrassament* is only included in the case of fodder (*ferratges*) and in that of cereals for animals to graze on (*adaçes roges*). From other levies, such

2. One *sou* (one shilling) was the twentieth part of a *lliura* (pound).

3. Irrigated vineyards, owned both by Christians and Muslims, are the only crop whose extent can be known. For each *tafulla* (a unit of measurement equivalent to 1,118 areas) 3 *sous* and 10 *diners* had to be paid to the lord, and since the total expected sum was 400 *sous*, that implies around 100 *tafulles* (11.18 ha).



as the grazing rights of strangers (*herbatge dels forasters*), and the harvest from two orchards on the manor, the lord or the lessee would obtain “what they could” (*arrenda’s segons pot lo senyor o lo arrendador*). Meanwhile, the tax on meat (*carnatge*) amounted to a third of the tithe for locals, and half of this for strangers. It is worth noting that there were as many as four different types of fodder (*ferratges, adaçes roges, alfals* [alfalfa], *herba* [grass]), and that 80 *tafulles* (some 9 ha) were set aside for growing alfalfa, paying 2.5 *sous* per *tafulla*.

As mentioned above, this early fifteenth-century register does not correspond to a particular year, as it is a list of the manor’s income and expenditure. The revenues were leased out each year, and the items included in this list and the amount of each one constituted a valuable reference for calculating the leasing rate. In this respect, it is a theoretical document, as opposed to the factual information a leasing contract would provide, but it is far more important for us because it shows the revenues as they were usually collected, regardless of any annual fluctuations due to weather conditions and bad harvests. By leasing them the lessee virtually became the lord of the manor. Not only did he collect all the revenues pertaining to him, but the manorial officers (*saig*) and even the community council (*jurats*) would be at his disposal, along with the manor house and the barn. Conversely, the lord would keep some revenues specifically detailed in the document, such as certain taxes (direct ones, like the *morabati*, and indirect ones, such as the *sisà*), some levies (“third-tithe” of wine, straw, chaffs) and some rights (judicial fines [*calònies*], inheritances, priority in the purchase of his vassals’ property [*fadiga*], and spinning [*filassa*]).

Manises and Paterna, as we shall see shortly, were two rural communities in which ceramic production represented a substantial part of their economy and their seigniorial revenues. Along with it, the other important source of revenue was agrarian production, as shown in Table 2. However, the village also possessed approximately 2,000 head of cattle, a sizable number. It was paid 2 *diners* as grazing right (*herbatge*) for each animal, and since 330 *sous* were collected for this, this amounts to 1,980 head of cattle.

The lord possessed a number of premises on the manor that, as they were leased out, also came to be exploited by the lessee. They included mills, bakeries, a butchery, a tavern, a shop, a bath, a barbershop, a barn and beehives, all of them owned by the lord (Table 3). They were called “monopolies” because vassals were obliged to use these premises and no one else could open another one. Of them the two most substantial sources of income were mills and bakeries, which together amounted to more than irrigated cereals.

**TABLE 2**  
**Agricultural levies on the manor of Manises in the early fifteenth century**

Crops	Quantity (in <i>sous</i> )
Irrigated cereals (one-fifth and "third-tithe" of barley, oats, wheat, millet, rye, beans and other legumes)	3,100
Irrigated vegetables ( <i>horta</i> ) owned by Christian and Muslim peasants	800
Fodder	650
Irrigated vineyards owned by Christian and Muslim peasants	400
<i>Herbatge</i> (grazing right, 2 <i>diners</i> per head of cattle)	330
Dryland cereals ("third-tithe")	300
Dryland vineyard owned by Christian and Muslim peasants	200
Wine (one-fifth and "third-tithe")	100
Olive grove grazing right ( <i>herbatge de l'olivar</i> )	66
Turnips	20
Total	5,966

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

**TABLE 3**  
**Monopolies on the manor of Manises in the early fifteenth century**

Premises	Quantity (in <i>sous</i> )
Mills (2)	2,600
Bakery	1,139.5
Butchery	880
Tavern	484
Shop	340
Bath	160
Barbershop	90
Barn	31
Beehives	15
Total	5,739.5

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

Finally, the fourth mainstay of Manises' seigniorial revenues were jurisdictional and other rights, whose total economic volume, nearly 5,200 *sous*, was similar to the other three (ceramic production, agricultural levies and monopolies). *Lluïsmes* were the most remarkable of these rights. A charge on property transactions, called *lods-et-ventes* in French and also sometimes in English in historical studies, they consisted of a percentage of the sale price that was received by the lord. This was usually 10% in the Kingdom of Valencia, but

in this case the document clearly states that the charge was 2 *sous* and 6 *diners* per *lliura* (pound), 12.5%. Since the total received was 1,300 *sous*, this implies that the land and property market moved an overall volume of 10,400 *sous*, an important sum that highlights the dynamism of this market.

A second category that in general terms was even more substantial (1,880 *sous*) than *lliüsmes* was a sort of poll tax, or capitation, charged as a fixed sum on every liable household<sup>4</sup>. However, this tax was not the same for Christian and Muslim families, for potters and peasants, and it even depended on whether houses were occupied or not. Each Muslim household had to pay 12 *sous* a year if its members were involved in ceramic production (*quascuna casa poblada dels qui són ollers*), 8 *sous* if the house was not occupied (*casa rònega*), or 10 *sous* if its members were peasants (*hòmens moros lauradors*). In total, this burden amounted to 1,250 *sous*. For its part, each Christian household, occupied or not (*quascuna casa poblada dels cristians... e despoblada*), paid 5 *sous*, less than half of what Muslims paid, amounting to 600 *sous*. And there were some vassals who possessed nothing, neither house nor land, in Manises (*vasalls qui no tenen cases ne possessions en Manizes*), who even so had to pay 5 *sous*; they could own property in other nearby manors, or nothing at all and live off the fruits of their labour. On the other hand, all households, Christian and Muslim, had to pay a charge called *lit e macipa*, literally meaning “bed and female servant”, whose particularity was the fact that it was only paid by inhabited houses (*Ítem, paguen totes les cases de cristians e moros lit e macipa per quascuna casa poblada*). Each house paid 2 *sous* and the total collected was 260 *sous*.

Next were a series of arbitrary payments and fees of various kinds, among which “presents” were prominent. The local community, through its representative institutions, the *consell* for Christians and the *aljama* for Muslims, had to offer their lord a generous gift twice a year, on two important feast days in the calendar (*Ítem, paguen e són tenguts donar lo consell e aljama de present quascun any*). At Easter, 30 pairs of chickens, 8 goat kids, 2 rams and 50 *sous* in cash (*ço és, en la festa de Paschua Florida, XXX parells de gallines, e VIII cabrits, e dos moltons e L sous en diners*) had to be handed over. A slightly higher contribution was expected at Christmas, consisting of 30 pairs of chickens, 8 pairs of capons, 8 goat kids, 2 rams and 60 *sous* in cash for firewood and palm hearts (*E per cas semblant, a la festa de Nadal, XXX parells de gallines, VIII parells de capons, VIII cabrits, dos moltons e LX sous en diners per a lenya e margallons*). Although both gifts –at Easter and Christmas– were paid primarily in kind, they were also estimated globally in cash, amounting to 600 *sous* each year.

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4. This quantity is the result of adding 1,250 *sous* (houses of Muslims), 600 *sous* (houses of Christians), and 30 *sous* (inhabitants without houses or other possessions).

All occupied Muslim houses (*les cases poblades dels moros*) had to pay one egg every Friday, the Islamic holy day, or its equivalent in cash, established at 2 *sous* per year (*per quascun divendres de totes setmanes tot any hun ou... o si no vol los dits ous paguen per quascuna casa dos sous*). Accordingly, the lord or his officers estimated this burden at 150 *sous*, which enables us to infer that there were 75 houses occupied by Muslims in Manises. The majority of the charges that we are examining were levied on the Muslim population, most of which worked in ceramic production. Those families that did not, the so-called *moros no ollers* (literally “non-potter Moors”), were subjected to additional levies, such as the *spalla o alfetra dels moros no ollers*, or the *alfetres dels moros que no són ollers*, each of them estimated at 50 *sous*. The *alfetra* (plural *alfetres*) was a tax of Islamic origin and etymology, linked initially to the *zakat al-fitr*, collected at the end of Ramadan (Gual, 1976). However, after the Christian conquest it seems to have become a generic tax on top of the many others to which Muslims were subjected, and whose meaning, amount and form of payment varied from one place to another (Císcar, 1997: 203; 1977: 90-113, 269-72). In Manises, the first one, *spalla o alfetra*, consisted of 1 chicken, 2 *sous* and 5 *diners* per household; we are not told what the second one consisted of, ambiguously called *alfetres*, but that it amounted to 50 *sous* for all households. If we divide this sum by the 2.5 *sous* paid by each household, the result is a total of 20 houses belonging to Muslims who did not work as potters.

Other more specific minor levies were added to these, the aim of which was humiliation rather than financial gain. In descending order, we first find a charge for using the lord’s weights and for making lime (*dret del pes e de la calç*), as well as the *melcutxa*, which was charged for making honey, both leased for 40 *sous* each. After these there were the *almaxita*, a tax paid by married Muslim women (35 *sous*), and *ciniers i alfatars* (25 *sous*), a levy difficult to identify that could be related to irrigation with water from the well (*sènia*), perhaps in the shape of a further charge (in Arabic *alfatar*, like *alfetra* and other variations, had the generic meaning of “tax”).

Finally, the array of taxes, charges and levies of varying sorts and economic importance culminated with rights associated with performing the functions of control and surveillance, such as the *alcaidia* (“wardenship”, the *alcaid* being the lord’s representative and the custodian of the castle)<sup>5</sup>, the *sagonia* (derived from *saig*, that is, the court servant, a seigniorial and municipal officer), and the *guardatge de l’horta* (the “wardenship of the irrigated land”), estimated at 450, 160 and 150 *sous* respectively.

5. This right consisted of the payment of two *barcelles* (66.8 litres) of wheat, one of barley, two of millet and one of *dacsa* (another species of millet).

TABLE 4

**Jurisdictional rights and other rights of Manises in the early fifteenth century**

<b>Rights</b>	<b>Quantity (in sous)</b>
<i>Lluïsmes</i> ( <i>lods-et-ventes</i> , fine on alienation)	1,300
Muslim households	1,250
Christian households	600
Christmas and Easter gifts	600
<i>Alcaidia</i> (wardenship)	450
<i>Llit e macipa</i> (bed and female servant)	260
<i>Saig</i> (manorial officer)	160
Guardian of the <i>horta</i>	150
Weekly egg (every Friday) or 2 sous per Muslim household	150
<i>Espalla o alfetra dels moros no ollers</i> (tax on Muslims not working as potters)	50
<i>Alfetes dels moros no ollers</i> (tax on Muslims not working as potters)	50
<i>Dret del pes e de la calç</i> (weights and lime)	40
<i>Melcutxa</i> (honey)	40
<i>Almaxita</i> (tax paid by married Muslim women)	35
Inhabitants without houses or other possessions	30
<i>Ciniers i alfatars</i> (see text)	25
<i>Dos fornés d'ollers</i>	6
Total	5,196

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

From this detailed register of the seigniorial revenues of early fifteenth-century Manises, some important conclusions can be drawn. The first is the huge number and variety of taxes, levies, charges and fees that the local vassals had to pay each year. The second is that Muslim vassals were subject to greater fiscal pressure than Christian ones, as was also the case on other manors in Valencia (Gozálbez Esteve & Constán, 2012; Gozálbez Esteve, 1990, 2006; Febrer, 1984, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1999; Císcar, 1977, 1997; Garcia-Oliver, 2011; Ardit, 2004). In effect, Muslims had to pay for everything, not only for the land (agricultural levies) and the use of monopolies, as Christians did, but also to make lime and produce honey, for being married, as well as for the fact of being vassals and Muslims, the reason why they were obliged to offer various gifts during the year, including an egg every Friday. As we have said, some of these obligations, especially this latter one, were not economically important, but they were symbolic, inasmuch as they reflected the Muslim vassals' situation of subordination and dependence.

Some of these charges levied on the Muslim population were Andalusian in origin and nature, that is, demanded since before the thirteenth-century Christian conquest. That

was the case of the *alfetres*, related to the *zakat al-fitr*; the *almaxita*, the *spalla o alfetra*, and even of the *ciniers e alfatars*, all of which are explained above. Some scholars, such as Enric Guinot (1992: 41-2), Manuel González Jiménez (1998: 139, n42), Elia Gozálbez Esteve (1998-99: 206) and José Hinojosa (2008-10: 42), cite them in their studies on the Kingdom of Valencia and al-Andalus, but in general they only give their names, without any further explanation. Only Gozálbez Esteve and González Jiménez venture an interpretation concerning the *almaxita*, which they both associate with the right of married women to have a midwife at their disposal. These payments, Islamic and Andalusian in nature, were privatised by the Christian lords to whom the villages and their inhabitants were granted, and they added them to the new feudal levies they imposed on their vassals. What is important, however, is not the origin or the significance they may have had in the Andalusian period, but their inclusion in the varied array of feudal exactions. In other words, these were taxes that were denaturalised (stripped of their original significance) and “feudalised”, incorporated into the series of manorial rents, but only imposed on Muslim vassals, not their Christian neighbours.

From the data given above regarding the levies to which the dwellers of Manises, both Muslim and Christian were subjected, some demographic estimates can be ventured. If each Christian house, occupied or not, paid 5 *sous* as a poll tax, and the total amounted to 600 *sous*, it can be inferred that the total number of Christian households was 120. Meanwhile, since each house inhabited by Muslims paid 2 *sous* a year in the form of an egg a week, and the total collected was 150 *sous*, it can be deduced that there were 75 houses occupied by Muslims. As well as that, all houses inhabited by Muslims and Christians paid 2 *sous* each as *lit e macipa*, amounting to 260 *sous*, and hence it can be stated that there were 130 inhabited houses in Manises. With these data it is also possible to infer that, since 75 houses were inhabited by Muslims, the other 55 inhabited houses must have belonged to Christians. Since we know that there were 20 houses occupied by Muslims not working in ceramic production, and that the total number of houses occupied by Muslims was 75, it can be deduced that 55 Muslim houses were lived in by potters. If each house occupied by Muslim potters paid 12 *sous*, as expressed in the document, the total would amount to 660 *sous*, 200 *sous* in the case of Muslims who did not work as potters, who paid 10 *sous* per house. The sum obtained by adding both figures together would be 860 *sous*. Since the total amount paid by Muslims was 1,250 *sous*, the difference between that and 860 (390) would be what was paid by unoccupied Muslim houses. Since these paid eight *sous* per house, it can be deduced that there must have been about 49 unoccupied Muslim houses. Altogether, as shown in Table 5, this allows us to state that in Manises there were 244 houses, 130 of which were occupied and 114 were not; 124 were Muslim houses and 120 were Christian. The total population, applying a coefficient of five people per house, would be 650, of which three-fifths were Muslims and the rest Christians.

**TABLE 5**  
**Number of houses in Manises in the early fifteenth century**

	Muslims	Christians	Total
Occupied	75	55	130
Unoccupied	49	65	114
Total	124	120	244

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

All these seigniorial revenues were leased out every year by the lord to the highest bidder. However, vassals paid other taxes and charges that were not included in the leasing contract, since they were kept by the lord. As stated above, this is the case of taxes such as the *morabati* and the *sisà*, rents such as the “third-tithe” on wine and for spinning, and rights like those on inheritances and judicial fines. Furthermore, the leasing contract did not include other extraordinary revenues that the lord could obtain by resorting to credit, such as the sale of annuities<sup>6</sup>. The contract in fact contains the payments that the lessee had to make on behalf of the lord, most of which were interest on credit (pensions of *censals* and *violaris*). These *pensions* or annuities were the interest on the loans obtained by the lord, life (*violari*) or perpetual (*censal mort*) in nature. In total, the lessee had to make 28 payments every year, of which only three did not correspond to interest on credit: the *alcaid*'s salary, the notary's fees, and the maintenance of a *benifet* (ecclesiastical benefice served by a priest) established by the Boil family, lords of Manises.

In total then, as shown by Table 6, every year the lord of Manises had to pay, as interest or annuities for the credit he obtained, 12,772 *sous* and 8 *diners*. The immense majority of these annuities (24 out of 25) were perpetual, for which the regular rate of interest was 8.33%, whereby it can be inferred that the capital borrowed amounted to 151,685 *sous*. Only one of them was a life annuity (*violari*), which, at a regular rate of interest of 14.29%, represented borrowed capital of 961 *sous*. The global sum would therefore amount to 152,646 *sous*.

Among the creditors to whom annuities had to be serviced, there were noblemen and women, ecclesiastics and middle-class citizens of the nearby city of Valencia. The most important of them was a noblewoman, the mother of Jaume Escrivà, who received 3,657 *sous* and 3 *diners* for two annuities in four instalments (6 March and 6 September, 25 April and 25 October). She was followed by a nobleman, Pere Sabata, who obtained 2,285 *sous* for three annuities in five instalments (4 January and 4 July, 28 January and 28 July, 27

6. See FURIÓ (1993, 1998, 2021a, 2021b).



August), and others who received smaller amounts, like Joan Vives de Canyamars, Joan Roís de Corella and Arnau Serra. Religious creditors included two convents in the city of Valencia, that of the Dominicans and the Cistercian nunnery of Saidia, and the parish priest (*rector*) of Paterna. Finally, most creditors were wealthy city dwellers, such as merchants and notaries, and there was at least one craftsman (a silk-maker).

**TABLE 6**  
**Annuities to be serviced by the lessee of the manor of Manises**

<b>Creditor</b>	<b>Dates of payment</b>	<b>Quantity (in sous)</b>
Pere Sabata	4 January and 4 July	785
Pere Sabata	28 January and 28 July	1,000
Dominican friars	2 February, 25 March, 16 August and 8 September	550
Joan Mercer, silk-maker ( <i>seder</i> )	6 February and 6 August	500
Joan Trullols, notary	1 March and 1 September	200
Abbess of Monastery of Saidia	1 March and 1 September	100
Pere Llàcer, notary (life annuity, <i>violari</i> )	5 March and 5 September	137.3
Mother of Jaume Escrivà, noblewoman	6 March and 6 September	2,550.25
Justafreu	7 March and 7 September	1,500
Ramon Vidal, notary	12 March and 12 September	278.58
N'Arbúcies	15 March and 15 September	83.3
Joan Mercer, silk-maker ( <i>seder</i> )	26 March and 26 September	1,000
Andreu Guillem	29 March and 29 September	185
Joan Roís de Corella, nobleman	10 April and 10 October	250
Llorensa, wife of Pere Pujol	15 April and 15 October	467.7
Joan Vives de Canyamars	22 April and 22 October	500
Mother of Jaume Escrivà, noblewoman	25 April and 25 October	1,107
Esteve València	14 May and 14 November	150
Antoni Garriga, merchant	4 October	50
Arnau Serra, from Alzira	9 July	50
Joan Mercader, tutor of the daughter of Joan Jiménez	6 August	100
Pere Sabata	27 August	500
Miquel Arbúcies	31 August and 28 February	100
Parish priest ( <i>rector</i> ) of Paterna	24 December and 24 June	200
Arnau Ferràndez	25 December and 24 June	428.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,772.63</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV).

Unfortunately, the last page of the expenses is damaged and it is not possible to know the overall total. However, this amount could not have been much more than the 12,772 *sous* and 8 *diners* to which the payment of annuities amounted. Only for three items (the maintenance of an ecclesiastical benefice, a notary's fees and the *alcaid's* salary) are the amounts missing due to the deterioration of the document. Nevertheless, we have been able to estimate a total of 349 *sous* and 6 *diners* for these missing sums<sup>7</sup>, so total expenditure could have been about 13,122 *sous* and 2 *diners*, that is, just over half of all the revenues (22,901 *sous* and 6 *diners*). This meant that the lord of Manises obtained, net, at least 9,779 *sous* and 4 *diners* each year from leasing the manor, once the expenses paid by the lessee had been deducted. We say "at least" because as we have seen the lord received other incomes and rents that were not included in the leasing contract and which he kept for himself (*morabati*, judicial fines and others; see above).

#### 4. COMPARISON WITH PATERNA AND OTHER VALENCIAN MANORS

Along with Manises, the other major ceramics-producing centre in the Kingdom of Valencia was Paterna. It also had a mixed population of Muslims and Christians, and was only two kilometres from Manises. Moreover, from the conquest (1238) to the early fourteenth century (1304) both manors were owned by the same lord, of the House of Luna (López Elum, 1985). In the case of Paterna, and in the period we are dealing with, it is possible to turn to an "actual" document –unlike in Manises, where what we have is a *capbreu* (a "theoretical" document of what the lord expected to collect every year from his vassals, with an estimation of the revenues from various sources)– corresponding to a specific financial year, consisting of the leasing of the seigniorial revenues in the years 1390, 1391 and 1392<sup>8</sup>. Not long before Christmas, on 16 December 1389, Berenguer Martí, the revenue collector of Prince Martin, the Duke of Montblanc and future King Martin I, and lord of Paterna through his marriage to Maria de Luna, put the revenues of the manor up for auction for 40 days through brokers, and to the highest bidder. The period of the lease would last for three years, from 1 January 1390 to 1 January 1393, and besides logically including incomes, the document specifically detailed outgoings, which also had to be paid by the lessee. The cost of the leasing per year would be divided into three

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7. A careful examination of the damaged page of the document has enabled us to identify the total amount for the page as 1,120 *sous* and 4 *diners*. Since the legible figures of the expenses on this page amount to 770 *sous* and 8 *diners*, the sums "lost" –due to the deterioration of the document– add up to exactly 349 *sous* and 6 *diners*.

8. Biblioteca Valenciana, Notal of the notary Martí de Boil, 1389, MSS/281, fs. 36r-40r.

four-monthly instalments, and the difference between the income collected and the expenses paid out would constitute the lessee's profit.

Paterna's revenues included the tithe on all the ceramics produced in the village's kilns (amphorae, bowls, "and all other ceramics that would be made in the kilns" [*le tota altra obra que's farà en les dites ollerries*]), the incomes from two flour mills, one fulling mill, the inn, the butchery, two bakeries (one for Christians and one for Muslims), the shop, the public weights, the barbershop, the bath, the store where tiles were kept (*taulleria*), and one place that we have been unable to identify (*cerquana*). The revenues also include those from the performance of some public functions (guardian of the irrigated land, court officer, broker) and from a long list of taxes and levies: agrarian ones (*almagram* on irrigated land, estimated at 2,000 *sous* per annum; *sofra*, that is, the commutation of labour services in cash payments, for 2,000 *sous* per annum; on irrigated and dryland vineyards; on orchards; one-fifth of irrigated cereals and one-ninth of dryland cereals), on livestock (mainly lambs and goat kids) and others that may be considered poll taxes (*alfatra*, consisting of 5 *diners* paid by Muslim men or women aged over five; *espalles*, 5 *diners* per Muslim household; *almaxita*, paid by married Muslim women; one chicken per house or 10 *diners*; and the Christmas gift, estimated at 1,000 *sous*). To these, others were added: the *lliisme* on all transactions (2.5 *sous* per *lliura* on irrigated land, houses and kilns, and 2 *sous* per *lliura* on unirrigated land, that is, 12.5% and 10%, respectively, of the purchase prices), the license fee of the scribes' office (100 *sous*), fines of more than 60 *sous* (distributed equally between the lord and the lessee) and the inheritances of Muslims (split the same way). Finally, all rents had to be taken to the lessee's house in Valencia or within a one-league radius (about four kilometres); the lord had to provide the premises to store the cereals; the lessee had to leave the mills in the same conditions as he had found them. With regard to the expenses, the leasing document includes five annuities (for a total value of 4,858 *sous* and 4 *diners*) and the salaries of various members of the duke's entourage (two lawyers, 500 *sous* each; a notary, 400 *sous*; and a chambermaid of the duchess, 550 *sous*).

The lease was auctioned to the highest bidders, a company formed by Domingo Girbés, from Lliria, a medium-sized town 20 kilometres from Paterna, and three Jews from Valencia, Jucef Abenzunana, Jucef Faraig and his father Isaac Faraig, for 33,600 *sous* per year, that is, a total of 100,800 *sous* for the three-year period of the lease, a considerable sum. Paterna's revenues (33,600 *sous*) were 30% higher than those of Manises (22,900 *sous*), while the expenses (6,808 *sous* and 4 *diners*) represented half of those of Manises (13,122 *sous*). The profits from Paterna (26,792 *sous*) therefore almost tripled those of Manises (9,779 *sous*). How can these differences be explained, considering that the demographic composition (a mixed population of Muslims and Christians) and the local eco-

nomies (strongly industrial, specialising in ceramic production) of both manors were similar? A larger population and less fiscal pressure in Paterna could be the reason. Manises only had 130 households, while Paterna had at least 230, so the revenues of the latter were logically more substantial. Furthermore, Paterna was more profitable since there were fewer expenses, and fiscal pressure was more onerous in Manises, where total income divided by households amounted to 176 *sous* per hearth, as opposed to 146 *sous* in Paterna.

The comparison can be extended to the revenues of other Valencian manors. The rents of Sueca, a commandery of the Order of Montesa (an autochthonous military order created out of the merger of the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller, 30 kilometres south of Valencia), were leased out for 16,000 *sous* in 1320, for 18,000 *sous* in 1398, and for 21,000 in 1399. Meanwhile, those of Novelda, in the south of the kingdom, amounted to 18,500 and 19,500 between 1379 and 1413. The revenues of Manises and Paterna were thus greater than those of Sueca and Novelda, although we do not know how many people lived in the latter places for this precise period, only that Sueca's population was Christian, and Novelda's was Muslim<sup>9</sup>. In the fifteenth century, the price paid to lease the manor of Paterna fell to 16,000 *sous* (1425), half of that in 1390-92, while that of Sueca decreased to 15,000 *sous*, and that of Catarroja, in the hinterland of the city of Valencia, amounted to 10,000 *sous* (Furió, 1982; Ferrer i Mallol, 2002: 27-153; López Rodríguez, 2005: 117; Torró, 2008: 175-212; Viciano, 1989). Many other references to the price paid to lease other manors with Christian and Muslim populations are available to us, which can help us to better understand the value of the revenues collected in Manises and Paterna. The Knights Hospitallers' commandery of Torrent, a manor with a mixed population of about 173 households, was leased for 7,500 *sous* in the mid-fourteenth century, and for 10,000 in the fifteenth century. Around 1467 the manors of the Orders of Santiago and Calatrava did not exceed 9,000 *sous*, and some did not even reach 2,000 *sous*. These are far smaller amounts, even if they had large populations (Énguera, 97 households), than those collected on Muslim manors, such as Bunyol (25,200 *sous*) and Xiva (15,500) in the early fifteenth century, and Picassent (15,000, 50-60 households) and Vall de Xaló (10-12,000) in the middle of the fifteenth century. The revenues of Paterna, leased in 1425 for 16,000 *sous*, as we have seen, would therefore be similar to those of the manors with a Muslim or mixed population with a high leasing value due to the lord's greater fiscal pressure on his Muslim vassals (Furió, 1991, 1997; Febrer, 1995: 13).

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9. Paterna had, in the early fifteenth century (1409-10), between 260 and 300 households, and it appears with 230 households in 1510 (FERRER I MALLOL, 2002: 90). Sueca had between 200 and 250 hearths in the mid-fifteenth century, and 189 houses in 1510 (FURIÓ, 1982). Catarroja had 92 hearths in 1488 and 115 hearths in 1510 (VICIANO, 1989).

## 5. REVENUES IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MANISES

Seigniorial rents also fell in Manises during the fifteenth century. We can compare the information from the register examined above with another one begun a century later, called the *cappatró* (1524)<sup>10</sup>. Believing that he was being cheated by his vassals, the lord established a new agreement with them, reminding them of the services to which they had once been obliged. These included some that were more humiliating than onerous, such as forced labour in the castle, or in the demesne, being paid only 10 *diners* a day (16 *diners* if an animal was brought to work), working at home (every household had to spin one *lliura* [400 grams] of linen and two of tow, the thread being provided by the lord), and the sale of chickens and eggs for insignificant prices. The new agreement (*concordia*) is undated, yet it must be prior to 1525 as it affects both Christians and Muslims, and the latter were forced to convert to Christianity that year, when they became known as *moriscs*. It stipulates the labour services that vassals were obliged to perform (*la servitut que són hobligats ha fer los del loch de Manises al senyor..., axí cristians com moros..., a ses despeses*), for which the lord had to pay nothing (*lo senyor no és hobligat a dar-los res*). The agreement also included the agricultural levies that had to be paid by the peasants and which, compared to those paid on other manors, were fairly demanding. For the crops from both irrigated land and rice fields and, in general, all cereals, one-fifth of the harvest had to be paid (one out of every five *barcelles*, that is, 16.75 litres). But since the lord also received the tithe, this implied that he also collected three out of every ten *barcelles* (one from the tithe and two for the fifth), which amounted to 30% of the harvest. On top of this, there was also a long list of miscellaneous exactions. For instance, every field had to pay two *barcelles* for the right of “wardenship” (*alcaidia*), the tithe on wine and wool, one-fifth of linen, the *monnéage* (*morabati*), and so on. All this shows how little things had changed for lords between the early fifteenth and the early sixteenth century, and also their desire to continue receiving onerous payments, even though they were obsolete, from vassals (the Muslims) who would soon be required to renounce their faith and convert to Christianity.

The document begun in 1524 includes a property register (*Libre hi quappatró de totes les quases hi teres he vinyes he forns he obradors de la vila de Manises* [book and register of all houses and lands and vineyards and kilns and workshops in the village of Manises]), which details what every family, Christian or Muslim, paid for its house, movable assets, the labour services they were forced to perform commuted in cash) and the rents to be paid for their agrarian tenancies. A total of 101 hearths are registered, fewer than

10. The *cappatró* was established in 1524, but it was used in fiscal terms for the first time in 1525, and again in 1575, the reason why we mention these dates in the text.

in the early fifteenth century, when as we have seen there were 130, and quite a lot fewer than in 1510, when the hearth tax census for that year shows a total of 158 houses (Valldecabres, 2002). Of them, only four possessed neither house nor land, so they did not pay this tax, but they were included in the register (in the early fifteenth century we have seen that there were six inhabitants without a house or agrarian property). Sixty-three families paid five *sous* for the house, 26 paid 12 *sous*, seven paid 12.5 *sous*, and one paid 13 *sous*. The first were most likely Christians and the last Muslims. It is difficult to be sure of this because after forced conversion all vassals had Christian names, but if this was the reason for the differences in the payments for the houses it would mean that the number of Muslim families had decreased significantly, as they now accounted for only a third of the total. Instead, every household, both Christian and Muslim, paid the same (2 *sous*) for movables (*lit e macipa*), 97 families in total, apart from the four who had no house or movable property. Most families (84) also paid another fixed amount (12 *sous*) for the commutation of labour services owed to the lord.

**TABLE 7**  
**Structure of the revenues of the manor of Manises,**  
**according to the 1524 property register**

	Houses	Movable assets ( <i>lit e macipa</i> )	Redemption of wages and labour services	Agricultural levies	Total
Taxpayers	97	97	84	77	
Quantity (in <i>sous</i> )	727.5	194	1,008	612.5	2,542

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 1 (1524)

Table 7 summarises the information described in the previous paragraph, but it suffers from significant distortion, especially when compared with the early fifteenth-century *capbreu*. It only reflects the fixed cash revenues collected annually by the lord, to which the taxes on the ceramic kilns, monopolies, jurisdictional rights and, above all, agrarian rents in kind (which, as has been shown, represented 30% of the harvest) should be added. The picture revealed by Table 7 in which agricultural levies come in third place, after the commutation in cash of labour services and of what was paid per house, is now corrected. Either way, 2,542 *sous*, everything the lord of Manises obtained annually from the goods and categories registered in the *cappatró*, was not a large sum. Hence the greed with which he attempted to revive old exactions and also the fact that he turned to the pottery kilns to guarantee more substantial revenue. In 1525 the latter provided 2,090 *sous* in rents, an amount significantly lower than nearly two centuries before (6,000 *sous*), but which now accounted for a third of the manor's revenues (as opposed to a quarter in the early fifteenth century).

Comparatively speaking, the seigniorial pressure in Manises, as in other manors with Muslim vassals, was higher than in those with a Christian population (Císcar, 1977: 90-113, 269-72). This would explain why the rents in Manises were, as has been shown, far more substantial than those in other places with a higher population. This greater fiscal pressure, especially with regard to agrarian rents and other personal taxes, could however not prevent the manor's revenues from decreasing, seemingly falling in the first quarter of the sixteenth century to a fifth of what they had been in the early fifteenth century. The fall in incomes also affected those arising from ceramic production, in a long process that would continue for the whole of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the document begun in 1524, or *cappatró*, includes the tithe on *obra de terra* (ceramics) at three different moments: prior to 1525, ambiguously defined as "the past" (*temps passats*), a period when the lord felt that he was obtaining less income for what was being produced; 1525, when the *cappatró* was used for the first time; and 1575, the year when the register was used again, and the tithe was updated. Table 8 shows these moments together with the one in the early fifteenth century and another in the middle of that century, arising from another leasing of rents that took place in 1454 (Coll, 2009: 82).

**TABLE 8**  
**Evolution of the tithe on the obra de terra in Manises (in sous)**

	c. 1400	1454	Before 1525	1525	1575
Production	6,000	6,000	1,454	2,090	1,735

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 2 (segle XIV), AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 1 (1524), Coll, 2009: 82.

Ceramic production would therefore have fallen to a third of what it was before, remaining relatively stable during the rest of the sixteenth century. Moreover, the revenues from the kilns were collected directly by the lord and not by a lessee, due perhaps to the difficulty of finding someone interested in leasing them at a time of productive decline. In any case, even when yielding a smaller sum, ceramics came to account for a more substantial proportion of the range of seigniorial revenues, rising from 26 to 38%. Perhaps by then the economic activity of Manises was already relying essentially on the ceramic industry far more than on agriculture.

## 6. LAND, KILNS AND THE INDUSTRIAL INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

After examining the structure of manorial revenues, let us turn to the productive activities of the vassals, on which the former relied. The 1524 *cappatró* also allows us to see the



internal stratification of patrimonies (Table 9). Manises was not a homogeneous community, and there was little internal equality. On the one hand, almost the entire population had some sort of property: houses, land or kilns. Only six inhabitants paid 5 *sous* a year for not possessing any property (in the early fifteenth century there were also six). Table 9 reveals the payments in cash (*sous*) each family made for land ownership, not the size of each peasant holding expressed in units of surface area. However, this information allows us to deduce the amount of property (houses and arable land) that each family owned. Fourteen per cent possessed no assets of any kind; roughly half of the families possessed just a third of the land, while a more affluent sector that accounted for a quarter of the population owned more than half of the arable land; and at the very top, three families possessed more than 10% of the area under cultivation.

**TABLE 9**  
**Hierarchy of peasant patrimonies in Manises according to the 1524 *cappatró***

	Families		Owned land (in <i>sous</i> )	
No possessions	14	13.9%	0	0%
Less than 10 <i>sous</i>	49	48.5%	203	33%
Between 10 and 20 <i>sous</i>	25	24.7%	343.7	56%
More than 20 <i>sous</i>	3	2.9%	66.9	11%

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 1 (1524).

Table 9 clearly shows the profound internal differences that existed in the community; something that, moreover, was common in other locations (Furió, 1982). For many families in Manises, however, the fact that they did not possess much land was offset by their involvement in ceramic production. In the 1524 *cappatró* a clear division can be perceived between potters (*ollers*) and peasants (*llauradors*). Both of them were subjected to many common tax burdens, from monopolies to jurisdictional rights; they also paid agricultural levies for the land they possessed; and added to all of that, in the case of potters, were taxes on ceramic manufacture (*obra de terra*).

All *obra de terra* had to pay the tithe (*delme*) and also a tax on grinding called the *moltura*, if they used the glaze (*vernís*) mill. In 1525 the amount of both in cash was estimated at nearly 2,500 *sous*, that is, 100 *sous* on average for each of the 24 kilns registered in the *cappatró*, most of which paid between 90 and 130 *sous*. All kilns paid something for *moltura*, implying that they all produced some type of glazed pottery; in other words none of them produced exclusively unglazed pottery (*obra aspra*, such as amphorae, flagons, mortars, bricks, tiles). The kilns that paid the highest tithes were also those that paid the most onerous *moltures*, meaning that the largest profits were made with glazed ceramics, the most expensive type (Table 10).

**TABLE 10**  
**Taxes provided for the 24 kilns of Manises in 1525 (in sous)**

Kilns ( <i>forns</i> )	Tithe on ceramics ( <i>delme de l'obra de terra</i> )	Tax on grinding at the glaze mill ( <i>moltura del molí de vernís</i> )	Total (in sous)
1. Kiln of Tangí	135	25	160
2. Kiln of the <i>alamí</i>	123	22.8	145.8
3. Kiln of Benafir	120	24	144
4. Kiln of Coltellades	120	18.5	138.5
5. Kiln of the lord	110	20.7	130.7
6. Kiln of Marranet	110	18.5	128.5
7. Kiln of Nadal Requení	107	19	126
8. Kiln of Loxó 'lo gran'	105	20	125
9. Kiln of Mequef	110	11.9	121.9
10. Kiln of Loxó 'lo gich'	105	15.5	120.5
11. Kiln of Vicent	95	17.1	112.1
12. Kiln of Modés	86	17.1	103.1
13. Kiln of Egam	80	16.9	96.9
14. Kiln of Çasquarut	80	16.7	96.7
15. Kiln of Malaquí	80	16.7	96.7
16. Kiln of Gubudi	80	16.7	96.7
17. Kiln of Fesí	80	16	96
18. Kiln of Pere Morsí	75	15.5	90.5
19. Kiln of Ubaidal	80	9.9	89.9
20. Kiln of Lluís Torrentí	80	9.1	89.1
21. Kiln of Jaume Morsí	60	9.1	69.1
22. Kiln of Isquen	69	—	69
23. Kiln of Nexeme	—	22.3	22.3
24. Kiln of Alasrach	—	14.3	14.3
Total	2,090	393.3	2,483.3

Source: Prepared by the authors based on AMS, Fons Boil de l'Escala, 1 (1524).

As can be seen in Table 10 there were 24 kilns, but the number of owners was higher, since each kiln could have several owners. In fact, ownership of each one was divided into *recons*, or shares, generally quarters of a particular kiln. “A quarter of the kiln of Egam belongs to Jaume Requení, another quarter to Nadal Requení, another quarter to Pere Requení, and another quarter to Jaume Roís”; in this case ownership of the kiln was split four ways. In all, the *cappatró* registers 61 owners, most of them (44) having only one *recó* or share, while in other cases the ownership of a given *recó* was shared between two people or partners. Nearly 10% possessed two quarters of a kiln, and another 10%, who ow-

ned the most, accumulated several *recons* of different kilns, including entire ones. Since they paid the highest taxes, the ceramic production of these owners must have been the most valuable for the lord. Sancho Marco, the man who appears at the top of the list of owners, owned the Forn de Marranet outright. Lluís Torrentí, whose production was similarly valued, possessed a kiln that bore his name (Forn de Lohís Torrentí), besides a quarter of the Forn de Benafir. Furthermore, 61 kiln owners implied that the overwhelming majority of the 101 hearths of Manises possessed at least one *recó* or share in 1525.

This large number of kiln owners provides a perfect picture of the local society's highly industrialised nature. This however does not mean that all kiln owners were potters, just as not all potters owned part of a kiln. Nor were kiln owners and potters the only people involved in ceramic production; although the *cappatró* cannot show it, a huge number of people contributed to an activity that required the intensive use of manpower at multiple stages, something that suggests different levels of specialisation (Librer, 2014). Finally, it is worth noting that of the 61 owners in the *cappatró*, five were women (three of them being widows) and four others were "children" (*fills*) or minors (*pobills*). As in the case of agrarian holdings owned by women and children, these profiles suggest "passive" ownership of shares in kilns and not active productive involvement in the management, which was probably leased out.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Contrary to other territories in the Crown of Aragon, particularly the Kingdom of Aragon and the principality of Catalonia, and to the neighbouring Kingdom of Castile, the Kingdom of Valencia was not provided with large noble estates, but with small manors. With the aim of offsetting the small sizes of their territories, the relative paucity of their revenues and the downward trend in seigniorial rents, lords tried to put as much pressure as possible on their vassals, particularly the Muslim ones, who were subjected to many more taxes and charges than the Christian ones (Císcar, 1977; Ardit, 2004; Gozábez Esteve, 2006; Torró, 2008). Such a deplorable situation was of course very profitable for landowners, and led to the traditional perception of Muslim vassals as an easy way of obtaining income that developed in the Iberian Peninsula in the early modern period. This is in fact the origin of sayings that still exist in the Spanish language, such as *quien tiene un moro tiene un tesoro* ("he who has a Moor has a treasure") or *prometer el oro y el moro* ("to promise the gold and the Moor", meaning to promise too much) (Amahjour, 2012). In the difference between the two communities of vassals, Christians and Muslims, two fundamental factors came into play. On the one hand, the fact that the Muslims were a defeated population that was subjected to a great deal of control that limited their mo-

vement. On the other, the demand for payments inherited from Andalusian taxation, along with the other feudal levies and rents that Christian peasants paid as well. Although these payments were originally Islamic, dating from before the conquest, they had been appropriated by the new lords and added to the bulk of feudal exactions.

Along with the greater pressure of taxation, some lords tried to increase their revenues by turning to productive investments. Some of them did so in agriculture, like the well-known case of sugar cane (Garcia-Oliver, 1999a), and others in the development of industrial activities, particularly ceramics. Both are good examples of seigniorial entrepreneurship. These investments allowed landlords to diversify risks and provided them with an additional source of income besides agrarian rents, as we have seen in Paterna and especially in Manises. In the latter place, the observatory used in this article, the revenues from ceramics accounted for between a quarter and a third of the manor's overall incomes, depending on the period. Their proportional importance increased as agrarian rents gradually diminished during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This fall affected not only Manises and other small manors but seigniorial estates in general, regardless of their size.

The involvement of the manor of Manises in industry may have been a genuine idea and an initiative of its lord, but it was the commitment of the vassals, convinced of its profitability, that made it sustainable over time. Some Manises vassals lived entirely off ceramic production (*moros ollers*), others off the land (*moros no ollers*), and others combined both activities. The products were not actually distributed by the lords of Manises; after initially being responsible for the boom in the industry, they subsequently restricted themselves to receiving the profits from this activity. The part they played in the production and commercialisation of ceramics was thus tiny. It was the Muslim potters who made and sold pottery as an everyday activity, establishing direct trading relationships with merchants from outside the manor, who would be responsible for Manises ware reaching a number of European locations (López Elum, 1985).

Vassals, whether peasants or craftsmen, were thus not passive but very active agents, who engaged closely with the local ceramic industry in Manises and made it possible, far more than their lords did. The case of the ceramic industry of Manises demonstrates the convergence of interests between lords, peasants, craftsmen and merchants, all of them profiting from the production and commercialisation of ceramics, suggesting that an economic context of opportunity motivated very different social sectors to act as entrepreneurs. And above all, the case shows that vassals, Muslims included, were not mere passive elements subject to seigniorial demands. Even if it had been an initiative of the lords, the peasants knew how to make it their own, using their expertise and making significant profits.

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