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978-0-521-39482-6 - A Distinctive Industrialization: Cotton in Barcelona, 1728–1832

J. K. J. Thomson

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This is a study of the development of Barcelona's cotton industry from its origins in calico-printing in 1728 to its introduction of steam-power in 1832. It thus describes the experiences of the leading industry of the city which provides the one Mediterranean exception to the tendency of early industrialization to be concentrated in northern Europe. Although it serves as an industrial history, a principal aim is to throw light on wider issues. It bridges the 'pre-industrial' and early 'industrial' periods, offering answers to such questions as: What caused 'merchant capital' to move into industrial investment? What were the links between 'pre-industrial' industrial activity and industrialization proper? Is it apt to refer to the economic changes of these years as an 'Industrial Revolution'? Should industrialization be studied on a regional or a national basis?

A further purpose is to provide an interpretation of the characteristics of the Catalan economy and of its relationship to that of Spain as a whole thereby contributing to the understanding of the 'Catalan question'. This it attempts by an analysis of Catalonia's industrial development over the very long term in which a dualism occasioned by the alternating dominance of 'commercial' and 'industrial' capital is demonstrated and by a focus on the links between the area's industrial growth and, on the one hand, the economic policies of the Spanish State and, on the other, developments in national and colonial markets.

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A DISTINCTIVE INDUSTRIALIZATION

Cotton in Barcelona, 1728–1832

J. K. J. THOMSON

University of Sussex



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Abbreviations, languages, measures and monetary exchanges

Abbreviations used in the notes

ACA	Arxiu de la Corona de Aragon
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
AHCB	Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional
AHPB	Arxiu Històric de Protocols de Barcelona
BC	Biblioteca de Catalunya
CSH	Consejo Supremo de Hacienda
DGR	Dirección General de Rentas
JC	Junta de Comercio
RA	Real Audiencia
SH	Superintendencia de Hacienda

Catalan, Castilian and English

Place-names

I have used Catalan versions of place-names in Catalonia (e.g. Banyoles rather than Bañolas) except when the Castilian version would be the more familiar to an English reader (e.g. Lérida rather than Lleida). In addition, I have used English versions of other Spanish place-names where they exist (e.g. Andalusia rather than Andalucía).

People's names

For the sake of consistency I have used Catalan versions of names throughout the text for Catalans even though usage in fact varies in different types of sources (e.g. Bernat rather than Bernardo).

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Abbreviations

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Quotations

I have translated French, Catalan and Castilian quotations into English.

Use of Catalan, Castilian words

Some key words used throughout the book I have left untranslated (e.g. *indiana* or printed calico). In the case of these I have used what seemed the most appropriate language – for example *fabricant* (Catalan) rather than *fabricante* (Castilian) but *fábrica(s)* (Castilian) rather than *fàbrica (-ques)* (Catalan).

Measures

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The Catalan *libra*, which was divided into 20 *sols* or 240 *denarios*, was worth approximately 2 shillings and 2 pence in contemporary sterling terms.

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