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978-0-521-49630-8 - Spanish Agriculture: The long Siesta, 1765–1965

James Simpson

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Spanish agriculture: the long Siesta, 1765–1965 is the first major study in English of Spanish agrarian history. James Simpson examines how traditional agriculture responded to population growth and the integration of commodity markets, emphasising both Spain's regional variations and its context in Europe. Simpson argues that decisive changes in farming techniques only occurred at the start of this century, leading to rising labour productivity and the start of the rural exodus. Development was interrupted in the 1930s and 1940s, only resuming in the 1950s. He rejects arguments that slow growth can be explained by poor resources or inefficient farmers. Indeed, farmers were quick to change when they had market opportunities (as was the case with olive oil, oranges and rice). By contrast, change was slower in those areas such as cereals where traditional technologies remained profitable. Simpson concludes that there were strict limits on absorbing labour in Spain's dry lands, and labour was retained in agriculture because of government policies.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521496308

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First published 1995
First paperback edition 2002

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

Simpson, James.

Spanish agriculture: the long Siesta, 1765–1965 / James Simpson.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in modern economic history 2)
ISBN 0 521 49630 6 (hardback)

I. Agriculture – Economic aspects – Spain – History. I. Title.

II. Series.

HD2002.S56 1995

338.1'0946–dc20 95-11418 CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-49630-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-52516-9 Paperback

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To my mother, and the memory of my father

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Acknowledgements

Over the years I have received help and encouragement from a large number of people – far too many to list individually, but some debts cannot easily be forgotten. First, Malcolm Falkus and Jack Fisher were the directors of my doctoral thesis, and awoke my interest in agricultural history. Jo Harrison has for many years helped and encouraged my research, and Jesus Sanz answered my elementary questions on Spanish ploughs, olive oil presses, etc., in the early days. Colleagues and students at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Alcalá de Henares, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid have shown considerable patience as I have struggled with the intricacies of the Spanish language and their country's economic history. The library staff of Carlos III have obtained books and articles at great speed, and Maribel Crespo kindly devoted significant amounts of her time in helping to prepare the manuscript. At Cambridge University Press, Anne Dunbar-Nobes made great efforts to make the text readable. Mort Rothstein, Alan Olmstead and Peter Lindert at Davis (University of California) and Dudley Baines and Alan Milward at the London School of Economics made possible two very welcome sabbaticals, where I benefited from being able to discuss many aspects of the book with foreign scholars. The Spanish Ministry of Education generously funded the visit to Davis (Grant number DGICYT 92–123). I was given helpful criticism on individual chapters by Salvador Calatayud, Enrique Llopis, Francesco Galassi, Jordi Palafox and Blanca Sánchez Alonso. Juan Carmona, Greg Clark, Alan Dye and Patrick O'Brien were kind enough to read the whole manuscript at various stages of its preparation, and provided many interesting comments. Gabriel Tortella actually took the trouble to read it twice, and for many years has encouraged my interest in Spain's agriculture. Leandro Prados de la Escosura deserves special thanks as it was only his persistence that made me decide to follow an academic career in Spain. We have been arguing over growth rates in agriculture ever since! The idea of the 'siesta' in the title I owe to Mary McComb; many colleagues and friends believe it especially apt given the time I have taken to write the book.

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I have also to thank Mary, Pepe, Gordon, Miles, Iona, Kate, Lindy, Ramón and Maribel for encouragement when the times got rough. My parents, to whom the book is dedicated, never failed in showing their own support for the project. They also showed me at first hand the realities of farm life. Finally I owe a special debt to María Jesús, whose patience and love made sure that the book was actually finished.

Note on the regional division of Spain

Geographers and historians have long struggled to divide Spain satisfactorily into regions which correspond to such diverse variables as rainfall, crop mix, land distribution or cultural and linguistic background. I have chosen four major regions, three of which are further subdivided into subregions, essentially on the basis of crop mix (Map 1). The provinces that make up those regions and subregions are shown in Map 2 and listed below.

1. NORTH: Coruña, Guipúzcoa, Lugo, Orense, Asturias, Pontevedra, Santander and Vizcaya

Subregions: Galicia (Coruña, Lugo, Orense and Pontevedra) and Biscay (Guipúzcoa, Asturias, Santander and Vizcaya).

2. INTERIOR: Alava, Albacete, Avila, Badajoz, Burgos, Cáceres, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Guadalajara, Huesca, León, Lleida, Madrid, Navarra, Palencia, Rioja, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Teruel, Toledo, Valladolid, Zamora and Zaragoza.

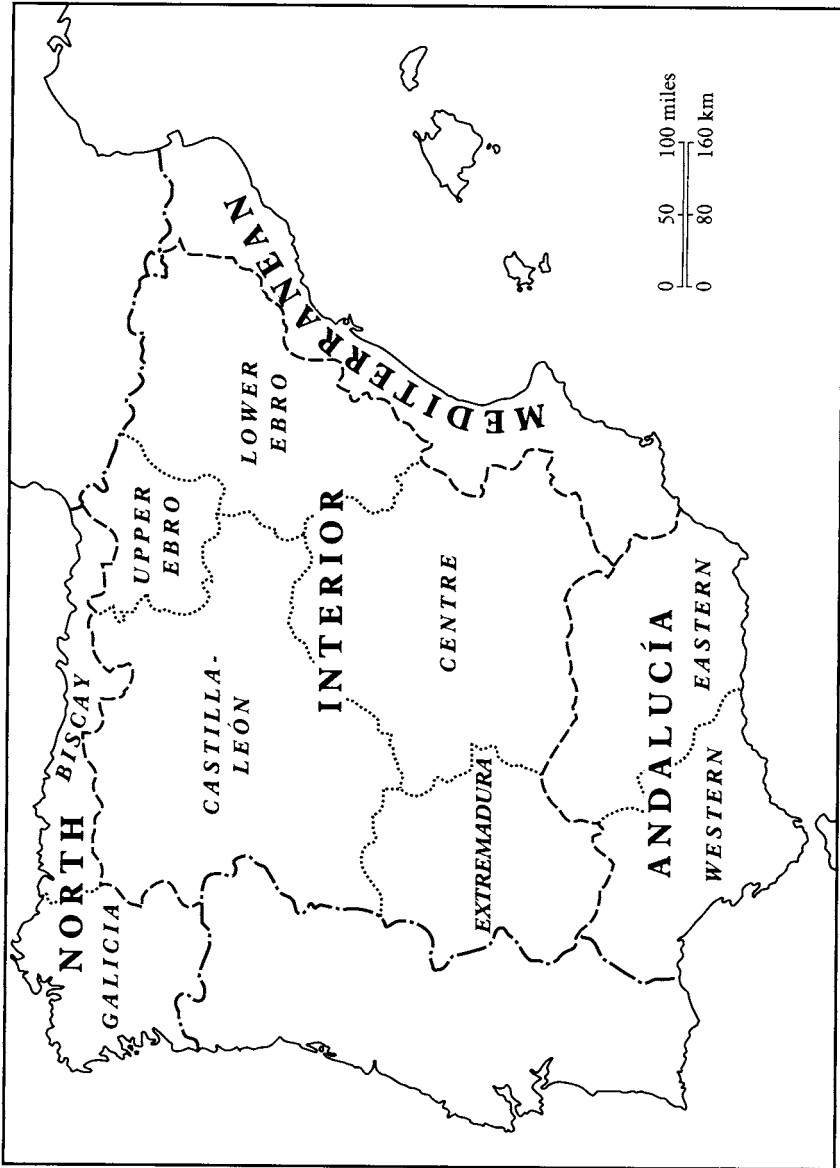
Subregions: Castilla-León (Avila, Burgos, León, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid and Zamora); Extremadura (Badajoz and Cáceres); Centre (Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Guadalajara, Madrid and Toledo); Upper Ebro (Alava, Burgos and Navarra) and Lower Ebro (Huesca, Lleida, Teruel and Zaragoza).

3. MEDITERRANEAN: Alicante, Barcelona, Baleares, Castellón, Girona, Murcia, Tarragona and Valencia.

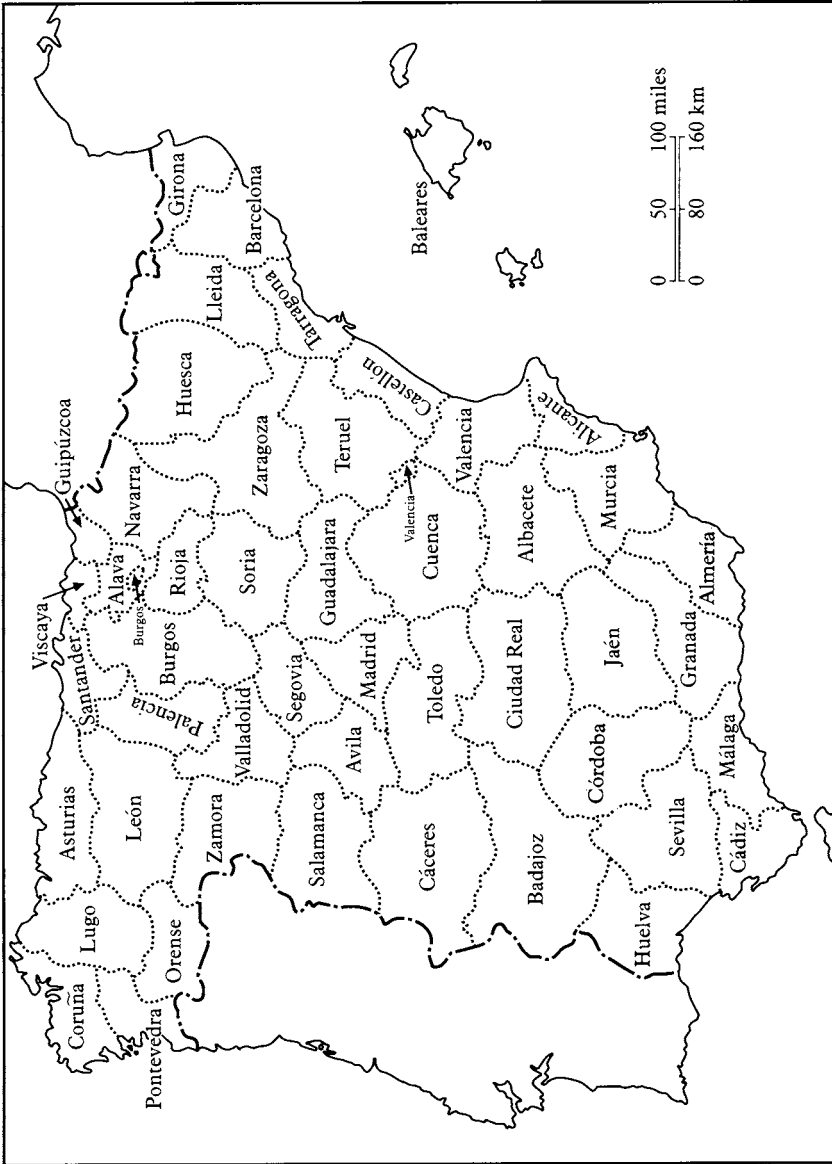
4. ANDALUCIA: Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga and Sevilla.

Subregions: Eastern Andalucía (Almería, Córdoba, Granada and Jaén); Western Andalucía (Cádiz, Huelva, Málaga and Sevilla).

Except in estimates of national output and productivity, the Canary Islands have been excluded from this book.



Map 1 Regions and subregions of Spain



Map 2 Provinces of Spain

Abbreviations and conventions

Abbreviations

AEA	Anuario de Estadística Agraria
AEPA	Anuario Estadístico de las Producciones Agrícolas
BATEM	Boletín de Agricultura Técnica y Económica
CNCA	Confederación Nacional Católico Agraria
DGAIC	Dirección General de Agricultura, Industria y Comercio
EPAPM	El Progreso Agrícola y Pecuario
GAMFM	Gaceta Agrícola del Ministerio de Fomento
GEHR	Grupo de Estudios de Historia Rural
IBRD/FAO	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ Food and Agricultural Organisation
IIA	International Institute of Agriculture
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
JCA	Junta Consultiva Agronómica
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OES	United Kingdom Overseas European Survey
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Symbols used in tables

n.d.	no data (not available)
n.a.	not applicable
..	negligible

Spans of years

Because of harvest fluctuations, it is often preferable to refer to an average of a number of years rather than to a single year. A solidus (/) indicates that an average of the years in the span has been used: for example, the 1850/4 wheat price. By contrast, a span marked with an en rule (–) simply refers to the period between the two dates.