

Narcís Feliu de la Peña's economic recovery plan
An interpretation proposal within the diverse growth model

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Abstract: This thesis presents Narcís Feliu de la Peña's economic proposals in Catalonia's late 17th century and puts them into context with the *diverse growth* model and the *urban network of early modern Catalonia*, embedding them in the frame of the *second recuperation*. The thesis defends that the origins of Catalonia's industrial revolution during the 19th century are in the changes that unfolded in the period between 1660 and 1700, rather than in the late 18th century and that textile production was not central to this process as attested by Narcís Feliu de la Peña's works.

Keywords: Narcís Feliu de la Peña, Fénix de Catalunya, Político discurso, second recuperation, diverse growth, urban network.

Table of contents

Introduction – The long origins of Catalonia’s industrial revolution	3
Chapter 1: Catalonia’s economy during the 17 th century	10
1.1. Contextualisation	10
1.2. Diverse growth	14
1.3. Recuperation and/or stabilisation: where and when.....	18
Chapter 2: Feliu de la Penya’s political economy	23
2.1. Contextualization	23
2.2. People.....	27
2.3. Markets	31
2.4. Taxation	37
Chapter 3: Sectors of the Economy	41
3.1. Agricultural production.....	41
3.2. Manufactures	43
3.3. Services	54
Chapter 4: Catalonia compared with other Spanish regions	62
4.1. Galicia.....	62
4.2. Cantabria.....	65
4.3. Castile.....	65
4.4. Andalusia	68
4.5. The Basque lands	69
Conclusion	71
Sources	75
Bibliography	75

Introduction – The long origins of Catalonia's industrial revolution

In the 19th century historiography developed the concept of *The Decadence*, according to which Catalonia would have endured three centuries of economic, political and cultural crisis between 1500 and 1800.¹ The causes behind it would have been the devastating consequences of the Catalanian Civil War (1462-1472) and the following stagnation of Catalonia in comparison with Castile, which was by then building an Atlantic Empire and a composite or polycentric state in which Catalonia would have been little more than a peripheral, underdeveloped and marginalised region. The same historiography proposes that the *Decadence* ended with the advent of industrialisation in the early 19th century and the romantic literary revival of Catalanian, known as the *Renaixença*. For Gaspar Feliu, between 1500 and 1800 Catalonia was “an exhausted country in a world's corner”.²

The rapid industrialisation underwent by Catalonia in the first half of the 19th century, precocious by Spanish standards, has traditionally been attributed to the opening of the colonial markets to the powerful Catalanian textile industry. Before 1716 trading with the Spanish colonies was only possible through the monopoly-privileged port of Seville. In 1717, Cadis took over this role as privileged port for the American trade, although after 1778 other ports than Cadis were opened to the colonial trade, including Barcelona.

Internal customs existed between the different crowns and territories within the Hispanic Monarchy. The dismantlement of the self-government institutions of Valencia, Aragon, Catalonia and Majorca after the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713) also meant that the internal customs were abolished, therefore fully opening the Spanish Peninsular market to non-Castilian traders. Regina Grafe has studied the relation between political integration and market formation and the possible effects political polycentrism had in Spain's economic underdevelopment.³ After the War of the Spanish Succession only Navarra and the Basque country would keep their self-government institutions, including their own customs, as shown in map 1. These two events –elimination of peninsular customs in 1716 and the opening to

¹ SOLDEVILA I ZUBIBURU, Ferran; VALLS I TABERNER, Ferran; *Història de Catalunya*. ROVIRA I VIRGILI, Antoni; *Història nacional de Catalunya*; BALAGUER I CIRERA, Víctor; *Historia de Cataluña y de la corona de Aragón*; *Historia de Cataluña*. BOFARULL, Antoni de; *Historia crítica (civil y eclesiástica) de Cataluña*.

² FELIU, Gaspar; *Història econòmica de Catalunya*, pg. 69.

³ GRAFE, Regina; *Distant tyranny*.

colonial trade in 1778- are traditionally used as explanatory causes for the Catalan industrial revolution.⁴

Map 1: The three different categories of territories within the Spanish state⁵



Source: Wikipedia Commons

These claims were first criticised by Pierre Vilar in 1962 in his research into the economic and demographic changes that happened in Catalonia during the Early Modern era, particularly during the 18th century. Vilar argued that the conquest of the peninsular market and, after 1778, colonial markets by the Catalan textile industry were not that important to explain the origins of the industrial revolution in Catalonia. An

⁴ COMÍN, Francisco; LLOPIS, Enrique; HERNÁNDEZ, Mauro; *Historia económica de España, siglos X-XX*. TORTELLA, Gabriel and NÚÑEZ, Clara Eugenia; *El desarrollo de la España contemporánea, historia económica de los siglos XIX-XX*. CARRERAS, Albert; TAFUNELL, Xavier; *Historia económica de la España contemporánea 1789-2009*.

⁵ Translation: *Political map of Spain in which the current territorial division and the political classification of all the provinces of the monarchy is presented, according to the special regime in each dominating*. (Top-right title, included in the black-framed text box). *Uniform Spain or purely constitutional that comprehends these thirty-four provinces of the crowns of Castile and Leon, equal in every branch of economic, judiciary, military and civil affairs*. (Explanation of the provinces included within the reddish/brownish frame). *Incorporated or assimilated Spain, which comprehends the eleven provinces of the crown of Aragon still different in taxation and in some points of private law*. (Explanation of the provinces included within the green frame). *Foral Spain, which includes these four provinces, which are known as Foral and that keep their special regime different from the others*. (Explanation of the provinces included within the blue frame). The yellow provinces are overseas colonies, excepting the Canary Islands (bottom-left) which are incorporated into Castile. This map was printed in 1850 and shows that the differences between the territories endured long beyond the War of the Spanish Succession. Source: Wikipedia Commons.

export industry based on wine and brandy as major export goods appeared thanks to a massive agricultural expansion; and such industry was not so dependent on the Spanish colonial market, but relied on the Atlantic trade with other territories. Vilar pointed that this expansion was the continuation of a trend already existing in the late 17th century, but the conditions of such recovery were relatively unknown to him, who stated that “the crisis which started in 1640 would endure for over twenty years”⁶, after which recovery ensued.⁷

Traditional Spanish scholarship has argued that it was the advent of the Bourbon dynasty, with its suppression of Catalan self-government and internal customs, what fuelled this economic expansion. A relation of cause-effect was developed to explain Catalonia’s economic success during the 18th century with an increased centralisation of the Spanish state, the latter being the cause of the former.⁸ This vision was disproven by Ernest Lluch, who argued that if custom suppression, opening of the colonial markets and centralisation were the causes of Catalonian industrialisation, why did Valencia, Majorca and Aragon undergo no similar development? Yet again, the economic changes already in motion by the 1670s known as the second recuperation (*segon redreçament*) appeared as the most likely cause.⁹

This *second recuperation* has long remained one of the darkest corners of Catalan Economic History, one of the most unknown topics but that, as research advances, seems to have been quite important for latter developments during the 18th and, especially, the 19th centuries. One of the reference compilations of Early Modern Catalan history, that of Ricardo García Cárcel, intends to cover the 16th and 17th centuries but effectively ignores the second half of the latter, which follows the pattern of neglecting –out of lack of knowledge, in many cases- this era.¹⁰

⁶ VILAR, Pierre; “la crisi oberta el 1640 hauria de durar més de vint anys”. *Catalunya dins l'Espanya moderna*, vol. II, pg. 370.

⁷ KAMEN, Henry; *A Catalan merchant of the mid-17th century: Narcís Feliu (?-1665)*, pgs. 35-36.

⁸ Although not a Spanish nationalist, Regina Grafe’s works point towards the same direction, that political fragmentation as a source of legitimacy between different territories and crowns should be held responsible for the relative underdevelopment of Spain in the Early Modern Time. See GRAFE; *Distant Tyranny*.

⁹ LLUCH, Ernest; *L’alternativa catalana (1700-1714-1740) – Ramon de Vilana Perlas i Juan Amor de Soria: teoria i acció austriacistes*. Much of Valencia’s underdevelopment can be attributed to a process of re-feudalisation underwent in the 16th century, much in line with what Fernand Braudel defended in his work *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the age of Philipp II*. The Valencian manorial regime was one of the toughest in Spain and would ultimately spark an anti-seigneurial rebellion, known as the *Second Brotherhood* (Segona Germania) in 1693. About the *Segona Germania* see PÉREZ APARICIO, Carmen; *Reivindicaciones antiseñoriales en el país Valenciano – de la Segunda Germanía a la Guerra de Sucesión*.

¹⁰ GARCÍA CÁRCCEL, Ricardo; *Historia de Cataluña, siglos XVI-XVII* (Barcelona, 1985). Quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan Merchant of the 17th century*, pg. 35, footnote 25.

Albert Garcia Espuche would deepen the scope into Early Modern Catalan economic history by studying the economic, demographic and social changes in motion in Catalonia between 1550 and 1640. His conclusion was that the Civil War (1462-1472) was certainly devastating, but from 1550 onwards no mere recuperation of the previous medieval prosperity happened. In fact, Catalonia articulated itself in a completely different way, with a network of cities and villages increasingly specialised and connected; a topic that has come to be known as *the urban network of early modern Catalonia*. By 1640 Catalonia was a whole different economy, not quantitatively but surely qualitatively. The War of Separation (1640-1652), in which Catalonia attempted secession from the Hispanic Monarchy, brought important upheaval to the economy but after some post-war years, roughly around 1665 the so-called *second recuperation* began. Its causes should be found in the changes that unfolded during the period Garcia Espuche studied (1550-1640) and named “*a decisive century*”.¹¹

In the last thirty years research has unearthed relevant data that demonstrates that, during the 17th century, Catalonia was by no means economically decadent and stagnant and that the textile industry was not that important for what would eventually become an industrial revolution in the 19th century.¹² To an increasingly vast literature on the textile itself, brandy and wine, research on the importance of glass, salted and dried fish, rice, dried fruits and nuts, paper and several other goods, not so directly involved with the Spanish colonial markets, has been attesting to this point.¹³

The conclusion of these partial investigations is that Catalonia was not economically decadent, as historiography has long proposed. It was not decadent due to the loss of independence as a separate crown, nor did it stop being decadent thanks to the loss of the self-government within the highly de-centralised Habsburg state after the advent of the Bourbons and the suppression of the internal customs. Its economic evolution during the Early Modern period seems to have been comparable to that of the

¹¹ GARCIA ESPUCHE, Albert; *Un siglo decisivo – Barcelona y Cataluña 1550-1640*.

¹² FERRER I ALÒS, Llorenç; *The diverse growth of 18th century Catalonia: Proto-industrialisation?*. DANTÍ I RIU, Jaume; *Catalunya entre el redreç i la revolta*. DANTÍ I RIU, Jaume; et al.; *L'articulació del territori a la Catalunya moderna; Ciutats, viles i pobles a la xarxa urbana de la Catalunya Moderna; Les xarxes urbanes a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII; Relacions Mediterrànies a la Catalunya moderna*. GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*.

¹³ GUTIÉRREZ I POCH, Miquel; *La manufactura paperera catalana a la segona meitat del segle XVIII, una introducció; Trabajo y materias primas en una manufactura preindustrial: el papel*. NADAL, Jordi; et al., *La industria en vísperas de la industrialización, 1750-1813, Atlas de la Industrialización de España*. VALLS JUNYENT, Francesc; *El paper de les exportacions vitícoles en la configuració de les relacions exteriors de l'economia catalana, 1672-1869*. VIDAL BONAVILA, Judit; *La problemàtica de l'aiguarent a Reus en els segles XVII-XVIII, la contaminació de les aigües i els fraus*. GIFRÉ RIBAS, Pere; *La pràctica del conreu de l'arròs a l'Empordà, segle XVIII (abans de la reglamentació de 1767)*. CAPDEVILA MUNTADAS, M. Alexandra; *Pagesos, mariners i comerciants a la Catalunya litoral; el Maresme a l'època moderna*.

rest of Europe rather than a particular Catalanian disaster derived from political changes.

The debate on this long decadence, especially during the second half of the 17th century, is still ongoing but consensus arises that *Decadence* was indeed a myth constructed in the 19th century and mostly based on the (almost) disappearance of Catalanian as a written language in literary works.¹⁴ After the concept of an urban network had been proposed by Espuche, this urban network has been thoroughly researched by Jaume Dantí and his team and other concepts have been added.¹⁵ Llorenç Ferrer has argued for a possible proto-industrialisation already unfolding by the late-17th century, with a much diversified production and a domestic market of growing importance.¹⁶ This domestic market has tended to be neglected, possibly because of the well-established reputation of Catalonia as an exporting country.

Henry Kamen argued in his paper about Narcís Feliu de la Penya's entourage and familiar connections that, "if there was any recuperation in the economy it was not to be seen in commercial channels", this is, in the grand export business. The books of the customs office of the port of Barcelona (periatge), showed an overwhelming dependence on imports, amounting to three quarters of the total commercial volume, by the year 1660.¹⁷ The decade of the 1660s would be the bridge between the crisis and the start of the *second recuperation*.

The peace with the king of Spain, after the War of Separation, was signed in 1652. According to Pierre Vilar, the crisis started in 1640 and endured "for over twenty years". The period between 1660 and 1665 is most likely to have been "the beginning of the end" of the economic downturn. If the issue of Catalanian economic decadence is still central to discussions in the economic history of greater Spain, this concept was already in the minds of early modern Catalonians.

¹⁴ Although largely neglected for years, the early modern period did produce Catalan literature of high quality, such as Cristòfor Despuig's *Col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* or Joan Ramis' *Lucrecia*. Recent scholarship has also unearthed that many Catalan writers in the 15th century became Italianised rather than Castilianised; the most recent case being the discovery of the true author of *Curial e Güelfa*, one of the classical Catalan late medieval novels, long thought anonymous, who was a Castilian-born nobleman, Enyego de Àvalos (Íñigo de Ávalos), raised in Valencia and very influenced by the Italian Renaissance, who became Catalanised out of his Castilian brethren when he moved with king Alphonse V to Naples. See SOLER MOLINA, Abel; *La cort napolitana d'Alfons el Magnànim: el context del Curial e Güelfa*; PhD Thesis.

¹⁵ DANTÍ; *Catalunya entre el redreç i la revolta*. DANTÍ et al.; *L'articulació del territori a la Catalunya moderna; Ciutats, viles i pobles a la Catalunya Moderna; Relacions Mediterrànies a la Catalunya moderna, La xarxa urbana a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII*.

¹⁶ FERRER; *The diverse growth....*

¹⁷ KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant....*, pg. 36.

In the late 17th century Narcís Feliu de la Peña, a prominent cloth trader from Barcelona, well connected to the patrician circles of Mataró and Vic,¹⁸ wrote a famous book, *Fénix de Catalunya*. In this work he defended the economic potential of Catalonia and proposed ways in which its economic capacity could be boosted after the lengthy war. Although part of the book was about the textile industry, other manufactures were contemplated in his vision and proposed reforms. Historiography, however, has mostly privileged Feliu de la Peña's attention to the textile business and his proposed chartered company, inspired in the Dutch East India Company (VOC), as well as his personal, social and familial entourage and background.

My research question is how does Narcís Feliu de la Peña's economic recovery proposal fit within the model of *diverse growth* proposed by Llorenç Ferrer and within the *urban network of early modern Catalonia* researched by Dantí and others? My objective is to analyse the relative importance of the textile related industries, to individualise each proposal made by Feliu de la Peña, to categorise it by economic sectors and contextualise his work in view of current research. I hope to provide in-depth context of the economic diversity that brought about the *second recuperation* and to prove that Feliu de la Peña himself was aware of the diversification of Catalonia's economy.

In order to answer my research question I will use the works by Narcís Feliu de la Peña written for the general public, and thus works that were printed and published. Three of his works fall within this category: *Político discurso* (1681); *Fénix de Catalunya* (1683) and *Anales de Catalunya* (1709). *Anales de Catalunya* falls outside the scope of my enquiry because it is a book about Catalan history and does not show evidence of his economic thought and proposed projects.¹⁹ *Fénix de Catalunya* and *Político discurso* will thus stand central to my research as they deal with the economic potential of Catalonia in the last third of the 17th century. I will highlight and contextualise the economic proposals included in each book to demonstrate that Feliu de la Peña's attention was not exclusively focused on the textile manufactures and the creation of a chartered company, but underlined other economic opportunities as well.

The first chapter will be a contextualisation of Catalonia's economy during the 17th century, with a special focus on its last forty years. The second chapter will analyse Feliu de la Peña's political economy dividing it into three subchapters: people,

¹⁸ KAMEN; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el Fènix de Catalunya*, introductory study to FELIU DE LA PENYA I FARELL, Narcís; *Fénix de Catalunya, compendio de sus antiguas grandezas y medio para renovarlas; A Catalan merchant of the mid-seventeenth century*. DURAN, Eulàlia; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña, historiador i polític*. RICCI, Andrea; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña (1646-1712) i el seu temps*, PhD thesis.

¹⁹ The *Anales de Catalunya* has been interpreted as the first step towards modern historiography in Catalonia. See SOBREQÜÉS I CALLICÓ, Jaume; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña, cap a la història moderna*.

markets and taxation. The third chapter will analyse his economic recovery proposals by sectors: agricultural production, manufactures and services. The fourth chapter will compare Catalonia's development with Galicia's, Cantabria's, Andalusia's, Castile's and the Basque Provinces' and show similarities and differences between the six cases.

Chapter 1: Catalonia's economy during the 17th century

1.1. Contextualisation

It has been commonly understood that the defeat at Rocroi in 1643 against the French army marks the beginning of the onset of Spanish Habsburg power. Although the decadence of the empire might have been overestimated or its causes misunderstood²⁰, the second half of the 17th century would be one of retreat or defence rather than expansion. The threat presented by Louis XIV in France was to be added to the pitiful state of the treasury and the rebellions in various territories of the state, some of which had been finally successful. The Dutch Republic had achieved full independence under the treaties of Westphalia in 1648, as had Portugal in 1668 with the Treaty of Lisbon. Other rebellions, such as the War of Separation in Catalonia or Masaniello's revolt in Naples had finally been crushed, but with great effort and high costs.

The monarchy had acknowledged earlier already that the empire had become too large to be maintained. In 1600 the duke of Sessa, the Spanish ambassador in Rome, sent a letter to *don* Baltasar de Zúñiga, the Spanish ambassador in Brussels, stating:

“Your Excellency knows that no Empire, no matter how great might have been, has been able to sustain for a long time many wars in different places [...]. I may be mistaken, but I doubt that only by defending ourselves might be maintained an Empire so stretched as ours”.²¹

His words would prove prophetic in the long run. By the time Charles II ascended to the Spanish throne in 1665, the Dutch Republic was already independent, Portugal would become so in three years and the general feeling was that the country was in pitiful condition, with less population and territories than a few decades earlier. According to Henry Kamen, “no other event in the early modern history of Castile, excepting epidemics, did more to destroy the country than twenty-eight years of war

²⁰ KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico de historia moderna*; pg. 61-69, “Decadencia” and “Dependencia”. See also KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715, a society of conflict*, pg. 274-275. KAMEN; *The war of Succession in Spain 1700-1715*, pg. 25-41. See also KAMEN; *The decline of Spain: a historical myth?*

²¹ PARKER, Geoffrey; *El siglo maldito – Clima, guerras y catástrofes en el siglo XVII*; pg 443. KAGAN, Richard and PARKER, Geoffrey; *España, Europa y el mundo atlántico, homenaje a John H. Elliott*, pg. 345. “Vuestra señoría sabe que ningún Imperio, por grande que aya sido, a podido sustentar largo tiempo muchas guerras juntas en diferentes partes [...]. Yo me puedo engañar, pero dudo de que con solo tratar de defendernos se pueda sustentar Imperio tan derramado como el nuestro”.

with Portugal”.²² The War of Separation in Catalonia was as devastating, for to the scars of military operations one needs to add the thousands who perished in the bubonic plague epidemic of 1651-1653. The frontier towns and villages of the western counties of Catalonia were depopulated, some to recover only by the late 18th century.²³

After Portugal and the Republic seceded, the monarchy kept its territories without further loss until the War of the Spanish succession (1701-1713), facing with relative success the Nine Years’ War (1688-1697).²⁴ The last third of the 17th century was thus characterised by stabilisation or even recuperation for the whole of Spain including Catalonia, with a quicker improvement in the peripheries than in the centre. This has led scholars like Geoffrey Parker to suggest a “Spanish Phoenix” that was reborn from the ashes during the second half of the 17th century.²⁵

Charles II stayed away from most duties of government and his officials pursued a policy of prudence in diplomacy and economic reconstruction. His three *validos*²⁶, Fernando de Valenzuela, Juan Francisco de la Cerda (duke of Medinaceli) and Manuel Joaquín Álvarez de Toledo-Portugal y Pimentel (count of Oropesa) succeeded in ending the permanent state deficits and curtailing the massive inflation, issues of concern for most of the 17th century. The idea that the monarchy was decadent, impoverished and threatened was felt by the government, the elite and also some travellers and scholars.²⁷ When Catalonia is concerned, we find the following report:

“All the commodities, whether natural or manufactured that might be found in abundance in Catalonia and that might be traded with other provinces are but of three kinds: almonds, pine-nuts and hazelnuts; iron; and cloth”.²⁸

²² Quoted by PARKER; *El siglo maldito*, pg. 497.

²³ The most extreme case of repopulation was that of Almacelles, considered the emblematic project of the Catalan Enlightenment and also known as “Urbs Illustrati”, but other villages surrounding the city of Lleida, such as Raïmat, were also deserted. There is recent criticism, though, to whether the depopulation was due to the war or the war dealt the *coup de grace* to a region already under severe stress due to its manorial regime and the natural climatologic conditions under the Little Ice Age. See about Almacelles’ case BONALES CORTÉS, Jacinto; and BOLÒS I MASCLANS, Jordi; *Atles històric d’Almacelles, el paisatge històric d’un municipi de la comarca del segrià des de la prehistòria fins a l’actualitat*. About the criticism on the conditions of depopulation in Western Catalonia see BONALES CORTÉS, Jacinto; *La despoblació del Sas de Llitera i el mite de la Guerra dels Segadors: el cas d’Almacelles*.

²⁴ STORRS, Christopher; *La pervivencia de la monarquía española bajo el reinado de Carlos II (1665-1700)*.

²⁵ PARKER; *El siglo maldito*, pg. 493.

²⁶ A *valido* was an unrecognized yet tolerated office during the 17th century, comparable to a Prime Minister. It is commonly translated into English as a favourite or a minister-favourite.

²⁷ MARTÍN, Alberto Marcos; *¿Por qué negarlo? Crisis y decadencia en la Castilla del siglo XVII*. DOMÍNGUEZ ORTIZ, Antonio; *Crisis y decadencia en la España de los Austrias*.

²⁸ CARRERA I PUJAL, Jaume; *Historia política y económica de Cataluña (siglos XVI al XVIII)*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36. “todas las mercaderías naturales o artificiosas que hay y sobran en Cataluña para poderlas pasar a otras provincias, se reducen a solos tres especies que son: frutas secas de almendras, piñones y avellanas; hierro; y paños.”

The only surplus commodities to be found by the mid-1660s were cloth, different varieties of nuts and iron. These were the only goods that could be traded in exchange for much needed imports of various kinds. The goods lacking in Catalonia included:

“On the other side, we see that many things needed for the sustainment of life are lacking in Catalonia, such as all medicinal drugs; all sorts of spices and aromatic stuffs; sugar; all goods necessary for dyes and cloth-dyers; and metals, copper, lead, tin, brass; books on all subjects; linens, silks and light cloths for dressing; wax; salted fish and most of the meat that is there consumed.”²⁹

So, as we might see through these reports, what Catalonia needed was to boost its production to overcome a massive trade imbalance in non-substitutable goods (dyes, spices, sugar) and in some substitutable ones (linen, books, salted fish). Some of the goods in demand in Catalonia can be tracked by analysing Feliu de la Peña's account books. In the years of 1652-1653 Feliu de la Peña's father, also Narcís, traded regularly with Majorca. His main export good was cloth and sometimes silk, with some quantities of iron, honey, figs and cheese, among others.³⁰ His imports consisted of cheese, saffron, silk, olive oil, almonds, shawls and soap. He would gradually shift his exports into cloth and by 1659 the company was exporting *only* cloth to Majorca, in exchange for shawls, olive oil and raw silk. In 1655 and 1656 the Felius were already exporting almost exclusively cloth, but got in return cheese as well as shawls, olive oil and raw silk. Their liaison with the elite of Mataró meant that they also traded some quantities of glassware until the said 1659, when cloth became the sole export commodity.³¹

²⁹ CARRERA PUJAL, Jaume; *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36-37. “Por otra parte, vemos que en Cataluña hay falta de muchísimas cosas necesarias para el sustento de la vida, como son de todas las drogas medicinales; de toda suerte de especiera y cosas aromáticas; de azúcares; de todos los aparejos necesarios para los tintes y tintoreros; y de metales, cobre, plomo, estaño, latón; de libros en todas facultades; de lienzos, de seda y telillas para vestirse; de cera; de pesca salada, y de la mayor parte de la carne que en ella se come.”

³⁰ While the figs, the honey and especially the iron and the cloth are most likely Catalanian, it is highly doubtful that the silk was produced in the Principality of Catalonia. What seems more likely is that it was Valencian silk; imported into Catalonia by Feliu de la Peña, distributed there and then some remnants of the cargo were re-exported into Majorca. Catalonia's production of silk was and would remain minuscule. Only during the 18th century some domestic production would appear in the western shires, namely in the Noguera, the Garrigues and the Segrià. About the silk see FERRER; *The diverse growth*.

³¹ Barcelona had developed a glass-making industry by the late Middle Age but, due to high labour costs and rents, paired with expensive harbour fees, almost the totality of the glass-makers moved to Mataró, a rather small village that blossomed during the Early Modern period.

This domination of the textile business can also be acknowledged in the *periatge*, this is, the Barcelona harbour customs book. In the years 1664-1665, when the *second recuperation* is said to have begun to unfold, the *periatge* shows that Barcelona was exporting a little over 100.000 *lliures* (Catalan pounds) in textiles, while the exports in foodstuffs were under 30.000 and other categories rounded 40.000. More than half of the exported value through the port of Barcelona consisted of textiles. Imports of textiles, on the other hand, surpassed the 200.000 *lliures*, imports of raw fibres were around 50.000, spices amounted to roughly 75.000, foodstuffs rounded the 80.000 and other imports were a little over 50.000 *lliures*.³²

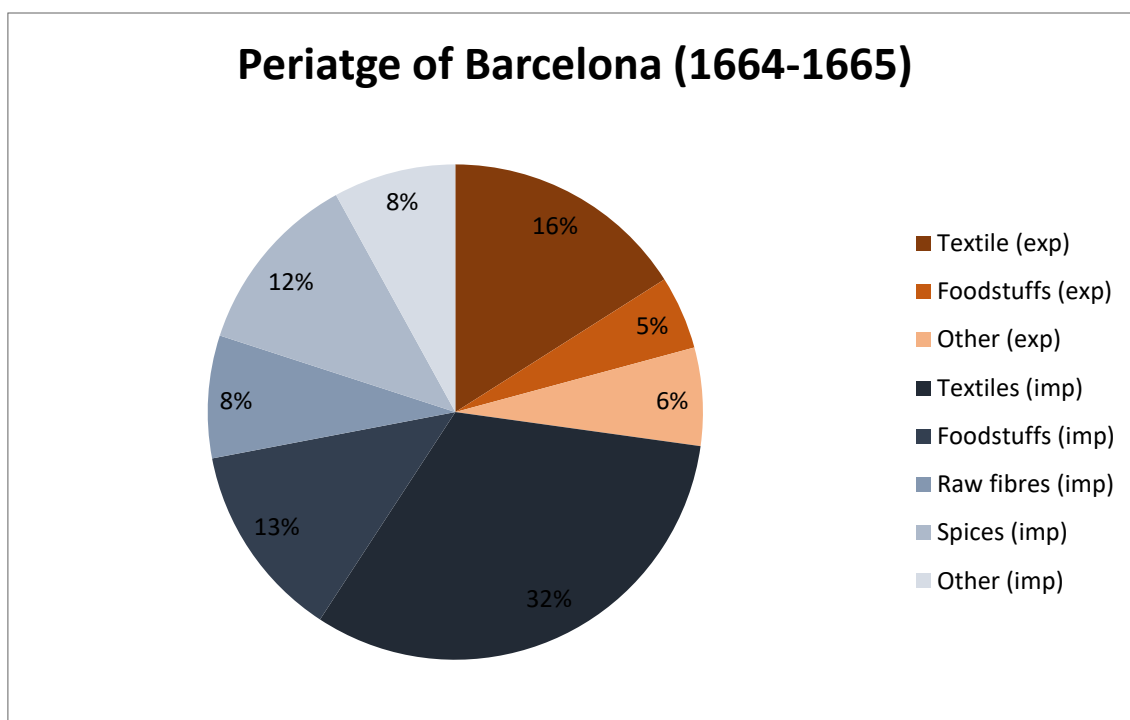
These figures are difficult to believe in a depopulated country, but recent scholarship has reduced the magnitude of depopulation to a mere lack of significant growth during the 17th century.³³ The substitution of domestic production for imports happened in a country that was not depopulated as compared to the previous century. Although the export business was heavily dependent on textiles the domestic market presented a more diversified structure: this is what the *diverse growth* model stands for.

Figure 1: Pie chart of the *periatge* of Barcelona (1664-1665)

The concentration of glass-makers in Mataró was total, since almost all of the glass produced in Catalonia came from that town. Its transformation can be acknowledged by the fact that it was one of the very few towns that built defensive walls *after* the Middle Ages, while most fortified places in Catalonia had built them during the Middle Age. Kamen quotes Feliu buying some quantities of glass to his cousin, Francesc Feliu from Mataró, although he was mainly a supplier of iron hoops (for binding casks). KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 34.

³² FONTANA I LÁZARO, Josep; *Comercio exterior*, Estudios de Historia Moderna V, pgs. 199-219 (1955); quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36.

³³ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes a Catalunya (1687-1689)*; *Catalunya entre el redreç i la revolta*. Dantí says that the demographic tendency of Catalonia was of strong growth until 1640 and then of stagnation due to war and several and recurrent epidemics (1629-1631, 1651-1653), but not of depopulation, this is, net reduction of the total population. This agrees with Josep Iglésies' studies on the censuses (*fogatges*). IGLÉSIES, Josep; *El fogatge de 1497*; *El fogatge de 1553*. FELIU, Gaspar and IGLÉSIES, Josep; *El fogatge de 1515*.



Source: Author's accounts based on FONTANA I LÁZARO, Josep; *Comercio exterior*, Estudios de Historia Moderna V, pgs. 199-219 (1955); quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36. Exports are shown in warm colours, imports in cold colours.

1.2. Diverse growth

The model of *diverse growth* proposed by Llorenç Ferrer argues that the domestic market of Catalonia, already articulated in an urban network, was undergoing a major transformation in the variety of goods it produced and consumed, whose main strength was diversification into many activities rather than focus on the textile sector. Many of these goods were intended for the domestic market, not for export, but were nonetheless profitable in a country that was, as we have seen previously, lacking many goods due to the effects of the war of 1640-1652 and other causes.³⁴ This model argues for a different interpretation regarding the (long) origins of Catalonia's industrial revolution. It offers a new thesis that differs from the classical explanation of the conquest of the peninsular and later colonial markets by the Catalan textile, and from the explanation of an export-driven economy centred on the wine and brandy sectors with minor contributions from other sectors.

The main thesis of the *diverse growth* model is that economic growth was achieved during the *second recuperation* (1665-1700) and beyond with a combination of micro-regional specialisation and national diversification aimed at the domestic market; this is, some villages or counties (*comarques*) of Catalonia specialised in producing one or some goods and manufactures but the whole country followed a path

³⁴ FERRER; *The diverse growth*.

of increasing, not reducing, the range of produced items, leading thus to an economy based on geographical niches.³⁵ This increasingly specialised yet diversified economy, which was also increasingly internally connected through an *urban network*, stood at the core of economic development of Catalonia in the last third of the 17th century and its effects, although severely affected by fifteen years of turmoil during the War of the Spanish Succession (1700-1715), endured well into the 18th century.

The traditional economic history of Catalonia points to 1832 as the beginning of the industrial revolution, when the first steam-powered textile factory was founded by Mr. Bonaplata in Barcelona; the period between 1770 and the early 1830s is a formative one, while from the 1830s onwards we speak of industrial revolution. The foundation of Bonaplata's factory in 1832 is followed by the beginning of the liberal monarchy in Spain (1833) and the burning of Bonaplata's factory in the *bullanga* (uprising) of 1835, considered the first industrial worker's mutiny in Spain, inspired by luddism.³⁶

Research looked into the 18th century origins of the industrial spur and pointed at 1736 when the first calico factory was founded in Barcelona. Calicoes, known in Catalan as *indianes*, were Indian fabrics made with cotton, a rather new fibre in 18th-century Europe, which were imported woven but dyed in Catalonia with an innovative system, also imported from India, that printed the pattern onto the fabric using cylinders, rollers or woodblocks.³⁷ More recent research however has shown that, apart from importing the fabric already woven from India, most of the output of this first factory and the ones that followed were in reality printed linen, not calicoes, and linen that was produced in Catalonia or abroad. These factories were limited to Barcelona, although there were attempts to establish in other cities, all of them unsuccessfully.³⁸

This industry was quantitatively very limited, involving only a few factories and not a very large output. It was aimed at a premium consumer who was by definition scarce, perhaps for that reason never took root outside of Barcelona. Garcia Espuche points that, during the *decisive century*, Barcelona specialised in final processes or luxury production, both requiring highly skilled labour and having a comparatively small output. He quotes the examples of passemanterie and velvet, both having only one producer in 1516; by 1716, in Barcelona there were 34 velvet makers and 72

³⁵ By *national* I mean the Principality of Catalonia as a delimited and acknowledged polity; it is by no means a statement of existence of a Catalan *nation* or of any *nationalism* in the 17th century. During that time the official name of it was *Principality* of Catalonia.

³⁶ CARRERAS and TAFUNELL, *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*, pg. 170-177.

³⁷ SÀNCHEZ, Àlex; *La indústria de les indianes, una presentació*.

³⁸ FERRER, *The diverse growth*, pg. 69. PALMADA, Guerau; *El manual de tenyir teles de cotó de Josep Colomer (1807)*, pg. 279-281.

passemannerie makers.³⁹ Taylors were also on the rise while spinners and weavers were declining abruptly.⁴⁰

For example, an important textile printing industry developed in the city of Banyoles in the 18th century, but its main products were hemp and linen from local production; the first cotton factory in Banyoles only opened in the last quarter of the 18th century.⁴¹ So, the innovative textile production could not be the driving force of Catalonia's economy in the 18th century and even less in the last third of the 17th. As Delgado Ribas puts it:

“It would be incorrect to extend the example of Catalonia's cotton fabrics to the rest of the industrial output there. Naval construction; canvas painting; the paper, hosiery, hat, silk and tannery industries; the manufacture of lace and knit fabrics; metal; and agroindustry generated a significant added value thanks to their exports to the American market [...]. Even though these industrial sectors lacked the capacity to transform and pull the others along with them [...], they did favour the development of dense, diversified industry that was capable of bringing revenues from transformation, work and business initiative to the new opportunities that arose in the following century and was prepared to withstand the impact of economic slumps.”⁴²

Additional criticism was added when the role of the colonial market was re-examined. Calico was thought to be directed to the colonial market, because the domestic Spanish market was unable to pay for such luxuries; therefore, when most of the colonies were lost between 1805 and 1833, the Catalan calico industry would have vanished without its thought-to-be natural market. In reality, calico manufacturers were present in the peninsular market and their importance to the formative period of Catalonia's industrial revolution has been overestimated; the country had a diversified economy that relied on various goods and manufactures both for domestic and overseas trade, this is, depended on *diverse growth*.⁴³ The reasons behind the resilience of the

³⁹ Although the Oxford dictionary does not include it, *passamaneria* is translated by the English Wikipedia as *passemannerie*. “Passemannerie (/pæsˈmentri/, French pronunciation: [pasmatri]) or passementarie is the art of making elaborate trimmings or edgings (in French, *passements*) of applied braid, gold or silver cord, embroidery, coloured silk, or beads for clothing or furnishings.” See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passemannerie>.

⁴⁰ GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*, pg. 81.

⁴¹ PALMADA; *El manual de tenyir*, pg. 279-281.

⁴² DELGADO RIBAS, Josep Maria; *Mercado interno versus mercado colonial en la primera industrialización española*. Quoted by FERRER, *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

⁴³ The traditional interpretation of textile as the driving force can be found in any book about Catalan or Spanish economic history, such as COMÍN; LLOPIS and HERNÁNDEZ; *Historia económica de España*. TORTELLA and NÚÑEZ; *El desarrollo de la España contemporánea*. CARRERAS and TAFUNELL; *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*. The role played by Indian imports can be found there too, as the research into the importance of the 18th

Catalan economy lay in a combination of micro specialisation and macro diversification. Some examples of this pattern can be provided concerning a wide variety of sectors, but I use here the case of dried fruit and nuts.

Pine-nuts were produced in the Vallès Oriental and Selva counties and exported through the port of Mataró. Chestnuts and hazelnuts were produced in the north-east, in the areas surrounding Girona, and exported through the ports of Palamós, Sant Feliu de Guíxols and Blanes, although hazelnuts were gradually expanding into the south, around Reus. Carobs were also produced around Reus and in the counties of Penedès and Garraf, while the shores of the Ebre River produced raisins and figs. Almonds were grown in the western plain, in Segrià and Urgell, as well as in the southern mountains of El Priorat. The town of Salou, the natural port of the landlocked city of Reus, received the visit of the English consul Joseph Shalett in 1699 with the purpose of buying fifty Catalan *quintars* (each *quintar* weighing 41.5-42kg) of pine-nuts to send to England.⁴⁴

Map 2: Current division of Catalonia in *comarques*



century became acknowledged early in the 20th century. The criticism about the role of calico factories can be found in FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

⁴⁴ DANTÍ *et al.*; *Les xarxes urbanes a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII.*, pg. 43.

Source: Generalitat de Catalunya

All these zones produced other crops and some manufactured goods besides the traditional subsistence Mediterranean crops (wheat, vineyard and olive tree) that were marketed, partially in the domestic market, partially abroad. For example, Garraf paired its production of carob with an important trade in wine and a prolific broom and basket manufacturing centred on St. Pere de Ribes. The Vallès Oriental, alongside pine-nuts, produced ice in its cold hills, charcoal in its forests, hemp in the central flatland around Granollers and woollen textiles in different towns.⁴⁵ Although this tendency to diversification unfolded during the 18th century, it can be traced back to the last quarter of the 17th century and to the *second recuperation*.

1.3. Recuperation and/or stabilisation: where and when

There is a debate concerning whether Catalonia underwent a recuperation or a stabilisation during this period. Although the meanings of both words may lead to confusion, *stabilisation* stands for reaching a plateau in the downwards tendency of Catalonia's economy in the 17th century, while *recuperation* is a sustained increase in economic and/or demographic figures. Recent scholarship demonstrates that stabilization and recuperation took place simultaneously, although with different intensities and in different areas.

The causes behind recuperation or stabilisation depended on different factors such as geographical location, proximity to the sea, rural or urban condition of a settlement, involvement in the most dynamic sectors (such as wine, brandy or nuts), amount of public debt of the settlement or presence of quartered troops in relation to the population of a certain zone. The *second recuperation* unfolded unevenly and amongst important difficulties: between 1685 and 1687 a locust plague fell upon the country, leading to a loss of 70% of the harvest in 1687.⁴⁶ In 1680 Francesc Potau's bank declared bankruptcy and so did the *Taula de canvi*, the municipal bank of Barcelona, in 1699.⁴⁷

This fragile environment was put under more stress with the quartering of troops in the 1680s in central Catalonia (in a seventy kilometre radius North and North-east of Barcelona), when the *second recuperation* was fully unfolding, causing

⁴⁵ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pgs. 71-74.

⁴⁶ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 87. The term "barretines" or "gorretes" relates to the traditional Catalan cap, the *barretina*, usually worn by working class people. *Gorra* is the Catalan word for cap, *gorreta* being a diminutive form ("little cap").

⁴⁷ MOLAS I RIBALTA, Pere; *A tres-cents anys del Fènix de Catalunya, recuperació i reformisme econòmic sota Carles II*, pg. 150, footnote 14.

the *Gorretes* or *Barretines revolt* (1687-1689). A geographical and sociological study of the revolt gives insight into the economic state of this area.⁴⁸ Although analogous rebellions happened in Andalusia (the Andalusian Troubles or *Alteraciones andaluzas*)⁴⁹, in Valencia (the Second Brotherhood or *Segona Germania*)⁵⁰, and in the island of Eivissa, none reached the magnitudes of the *Gorretes*. While the army of the Second Brotherhood in Valencia counted 1.500 men, the *Gorretes* were able to mobilise up to 18.000, almost equalling the 19.000 men that generals Philippe de La Mothe-Houdancourt and Josep Margarit i de Biure commanded in the last campaign of the War of Separation (1640-1652).⁵¹

The *Gorretes* or *Barretines revolt* was not a simple subsistence riot. It was caused by the obligation of quartering Castilian troops, their abuse on the local population and the increase in municipal expenditure to provide for the said troops. The revolt spread very quickly and involved up to 18.000 armed peasants whose leaders were relatively well-off small and medium size landowners, known as “fat peasants” (*pagesos grassos*). The *Gorretes* have been interpreted as the protest of those who were already experiencing the stabilisation or recuperation of the economy and whose prospects were being hampered by the presence of quartered troops.⁵²

The *Gorretes* revolt helps us to determine which areas were already recuperating and why: areas in central Catalonia relatively well connected to the coast and to the *urban network*, with a traditional agriculture already in transformation – more or less quickly- to the new model based on *diverse growth* and with a strong presence of viticulture and dried fruit and nuts. The fact that the leaders of the revolt were well-off “fat peasants” from these areas is very telling.⁵³ Some dynamic agricultural areas, which stabilised before the cities and were already expanding, became the nucleus of the *Gorretes* revolt, which demonstrates that it was not a subsistence riot but rather a protest of the beneficiaries of the *second recuperation* who saw their prospects hampered, chiefly by the quartering of troops. This also signals that the driving force behind the recuperation was not textile manufacture, but agriculture in general and not necessarily viticulture; while the Maresme county was leading the expansion in viticulture, the Vallès Oriental still had a more traditional structure with

⁴⁸ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*.

⁴⁹ DOMÍNGUEZ ORTIZ; *Las alteraciones andaluzas*.

⁵⁰ KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant*, pgs. 35-36.

⁵¹ For the Second Brotherhood FURIÓ I DIEGO, Antoni; *Història del País Valencià*, pg. 395. For the *Gorretes*, DANTÍ, *La revolta dels Gorretes*. For La Mothe-Houdancourt's and Margarit's army, LAFUENTE, Modesto; *Historia general de España*, v. XVI, pg. 438.

⁵² DANTÍ; *Catalunya, entre el redreç i la revolta*, pg. 65.

⁵³ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pgs. 95 onwards, section *Sociologia de la revolta* (Sociology of the uprising)

some innovative areas (pine-nuts and cherries in Caldes de Montbui, hemp around Granollers, charcoal in the Montseny mountains or ice in Castellterçol).⁵⁴

After the War of Separation (1640-1652) the monarchy had given significant concessions to the Catalan ruling class, including an exemption of quartering troops to various social groups and places, mostly cities. This meant that the troops were quartered by “fat peasants”. In a context of slowly recovering agricultural yield, with a stagnant population stock and municipal treasuries heavily indebted since the War of Separation, with an urban elite and the nobility spared from the military burden, the *Gorretes* became a revolt of the rural middle class, thus confirming the link between recuperation and agricultural expansion in a context of *diverse growth* not dependent on textile and an *urban network* where Barcelona had a complementary, not dominant role.⁵⁵

This series of adverse events (locust plagues, bad harvests, the *Gorretes* revolt and bank failures) has led scholars to argue that the period between 1665 and 1700 was characterised by *stabilisation* rather than *recuperation*. Furthermore, the commercial circles of wine and brandy that are characteristics of the 18th century were only incipient at the time and confined to a few coastal areas, yet another indication of general *stabilisation* rather than *recuperation*. The only areas that could have already been following a path of *recuperation* or expansion were coastal towns like Mataró or Sitges, more connected to foreign markets and overseas trade carrying wine, brandy and/or nuts, and their hinterlands.⁵⁶

The domestic market in Catalonia followed an uneven path when it came to manufactures and agriculture. Manufactures were already declining by the 1620s if not before, following the general crisis of the Spanish economy due to inflation, lack of investment and outdated production methods, as well as the development in the Spanish consumer of a taste for imported goods even at equal price and quality with Spanish manufactures. The tendency aggravated during the war in the 1640s when French manufactures came to dominate the Catalan economy, side-lining Catalan manufacturers from their own market. Speculation in public debt (*juros* and *censos/censals*) and monetary debasements made this trend yet more acute. French manufactures, mostly cloth and silk, were cheaper than those produced in Catalonia, had more appealing looks and were often smuggled in, although they were deceptive

⁵⁴ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 71-74. Castellterçol belonged to the Vallès Oriental county until May 1st 2015, when the Moianès was officially acknowledged as a county and Castellterçol was included in it.

⁵⁵ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 84.

⁵⁶ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 82-83. “Aquesta descripció geogràfica ens obliga a matisar l’anomenada “recuperació” de la perifèria peninsular a l’últim terç del segle XVII.” (This geographical description obliges us to introduce some distinctions in the so-called “recuperation” of the peninsular periphery in the last third of the 17th century).

and adulterated.⁵⁷ There is no evidence of a *consumer revolution* in Spain in the 17th century as the topic is presented by Maxine Berg for England or by Jan de Vries in the Netherlands.⁵⁸ The earliest evidences of a consumer revolution in Spain are from the mid-18th century.⁵⁹

The monetary system stabilised by 1660s once the minting of *billons* (copper currency) stopped, while the manufacturing sector witnessed improvements by the 1680s. All in all, the full stabilisation or recuperation would be acknowledgeable only by the 1680s. Agriculture started to stabilise in the early 1670s.⁶⁰ By 1680 the turmoil had come to an end and the stabilisation was noticeable, leading to a certain degree of recuperation or expansion in the following two decades, more or less intense depending on the zones. For example, the western plain of Catalonia, around the cities of Lleida, Tàrraga, Cervera, Balaguer... was not very touched by this expansion, while the coastal plains –amongst which stand out Mataró, Salou or Sitges- benefited more. It is in this context of *diverse growth* in an *urban network*, with manufactures still lagging behind a new agricultural model and struggling against French producers, that Narcís Feliu de la Peña presented his plan for economic recovery. It dealt with various issues related to the textile manufacture but embedded them in the broader frame of the *second recuperation*.

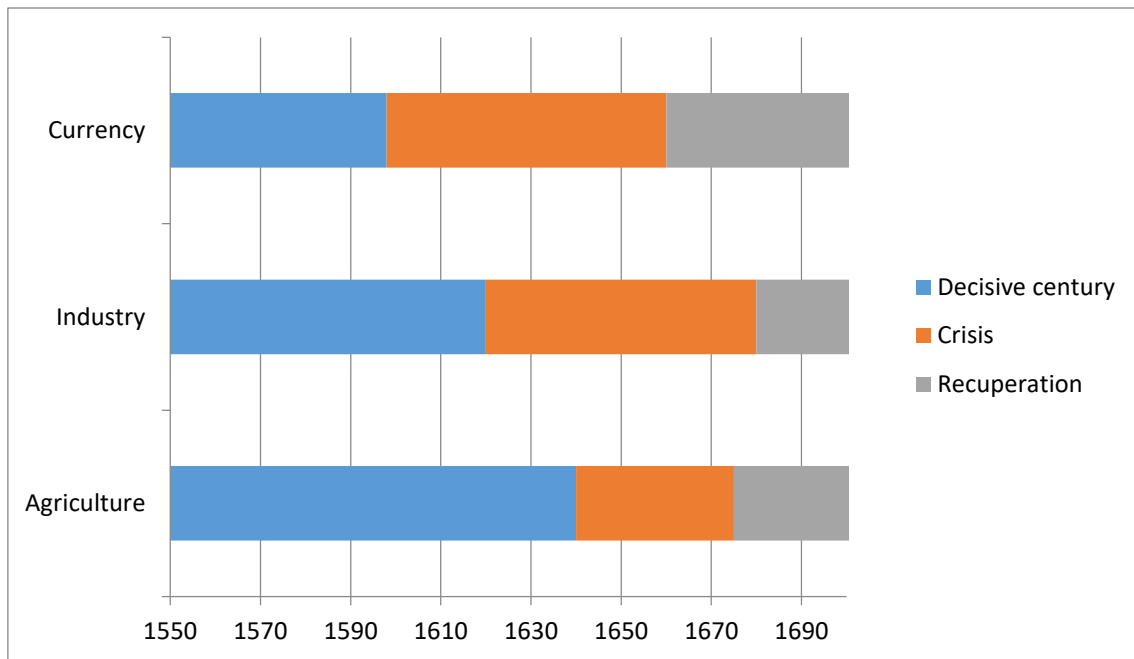
Figure 2: Temporal span of the Decisive Century, the 17th century crisis and the second recuperation, divided between currency, industry and agriculture.

⁵⁷ KAMEN, Henry; *Spain in the later 17th century 1665-1700*, pg. 70-72.

⁵⁸ BERG, Maxine; *Consumers and luxury: Consumer culture in Europe 1650-1850*. DE VRIES, Jan; *Industrious revolution, consumer behaviour and the household economy 1650 to the present*.

⁵⁹ TORRAS ELIAS, Jaume; YUN CASALILLA, Bartolomé; *Historia del consumo e historia del crecimiento – el consumo de tejidos en España 1700-1850*.

⁶⁰ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 83-84.



Source: Accounts by the author based on DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 83-84; and JUNQUERAS I VIES, Oriol; *Economia i pensament a la Catalunya de l'Alta Edat Moderna 1520-1630*, PhD Thesis, pg. 221-225.

Chapter 2: Feliu de la Peña's political economy

2.1. Contextualization

Narcís Feliu de la Peña i Farell (1646-1712) was born in Barcelona. The family came from Mataró but his grand-father Narcís Feliu de la Peña i Carcassés, being the second son, was not entitled to landed property, so he moved to Barcelona and became a rope-maker. He died young and his widow, Esperança, married Pere Anton Marcer, a prominent merchant, who introduced the family to the patrician elite of Barcelona. The first son, Narcís Feliu de la Peña (whose second surname is unknown, 1603-1665) followed his step-father into becoming a merchant and married Maria Farell i Blai in 1642. Her grandfather was Pere Blai, one of the most renowned Catalan architects who built, among others, the current Palace of Government.⁶¹ He was Fourth Councilman of Barcelona during the War of Separation (1640-1652) and was not heavily repressed afterwards.

His son, Narcís Feliu de la Peña i Farell, “our” Narcís, was born into a privileged family of rich merchants, an elite that was closely linked through commercial partnerships and marriages and that was at the summit of Catalan society, exception made of the few titled nobility still existent. His father died when “our” Narcís was only twenty-six, becoming the only heir of one of Barcelona’s richest and most prominent families. He was forced to become a lawyer by his father but, upon receiving his inheritance, he never practiced as such, becoming exclusively a merchant. His father belonged to what Albert Garcia Espuche termed “the parents’ generation”, those who rebuilt Catalonia after the War of Separation (1640-1652) while, according to Andrea Ricci, “our” Narcís was “an educated young man who lived off his properties”.⁶² Instead of living a peaceful life, his ambition drove him to become part of the Board of trade (*Junta de comercio*, 1679-1707) called by Charles II’s ministers in Madrid. He spent the rest of his life as a politician, and advisor, a public intellectual and a merchant, managing his properties. When the War of the Spanish Succession began, he sided – like most of Catalonia- with the Habsburgs, who favoured the traditional self-government institutions, and died in Barcelona in 1712, without children.⁶³

The *Político discurso* was a speech delivered and later printed by Narcís Feliu de la Peña in response to a petition sent to the municipal government of Barcelona, the Council of the One Hundred (*Consell de cent*). In this petition several merchants and craftsmen complained about their helplessness against the introduction of French products, mostly woollen cloth, of inferior and adulterated quality and lower prices.

⁶¹ Currently known as *Palau de la Generalitat* it was known back then as *Casa dels Diputats* or *Casa de la Diputació*.

⁶² RICCI, Andrea; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el seu temps*, pg. 230.

⁶³ RICCI, Andrea; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el seu temps*, pg. 197-401.

The book, whose full title is *Político Discurso. Conteniendo un memorial a la Ciudad de Barcelona, suplicando mande y procure impedir el sobrado trato y uso de algunas ropas estrangeras que acaban el comercio y pierden las artes en Cataluña*,⁶⁴ was published in 1681, a year when the recuperation/stabilisation was already fully noticeable and only six years before the *Gorretes revolt*. The previous year, 1680, Francesc Potau's bank had declared bankruptcy amidst a series of good harvests (1678-1684). The great locust plague (1685-1687) was four years away.

He used several examples from Biblical sources and Medieval Catalan history to back his arguments, as well as from contemporary authors, amongst whom the Leiden intellectual Josephus Justus Scaliger (quoted as *Escaligero*); but his speech also included detailed information about the state of the economy in Catalonia and several possible improvements. Contrarily to what is commonly said, he did not focus solely on the textile industry and the creation of a chartered company but also on other topics concerning foreign trade or fiscal policy.

The *Fénix de Catalunya* was published in 1683; two years after the *Político discurso* came out and was an extended version of the former in which Feliu de la Peña, with his friend and partner Martí Piles, further developed the concepts from the first book. The *Fénix* was not only longer but also covered more topics, relied on more sources, deepened the diagnosis of Catalonia's economy and proposed a whole array of possible improvements. For example, the plan to create a chartered company based in Barcelona was not featured in the *Político discurso*, but in the *Fénix* appeared a full plan to create, fund and administer such a company. This second book often quoted his first title and followed the same lines but with deeper analysis. Although written by Feliu de la Peña, the book was dedicated to the king Charles II by Martí Piles, cloth merchant from the city of Vic.⁶⁵ Piles was Feliu de la Peña's closest associate, his partner in the company and member of the urban elite of Vic –where his father had been a prominent gunsmith– and Barcelona –where he settled and married the daughter of a goldsmith. His main activity was trading in textiles but was also involved in other economic activities. It is interesting that he was incarcerated several times during his life because of quarrels with other business partners or for protesting against excessive fiscal pressure.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ In English would be *Political discourse. Containing a petition to the City of Barcelona, begging to be avoided and forbidden the large trade and use of some foreign cloths that bring to an end the trade and spoil the crafts in Catalonia*.

⁶⁵ “conságrale Martín Piles, mercader de lienços [...] natural de la ciudad de Vique”. *Fénix de Catalunya*, front page.

⁶⁶ For Martí Piles, his biography and entourage, see RICCI; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el seu temps*; pg. 254-257.

The *Fénix*, contrarily to the *Político discurso*, also featured a brief history of Catalonia presented as a Catholic and hard-working country of adventurers and merchants, historically known for being honest and trustworthy, never practising usury or being deceptive and shady. This chapter paved the way for Feliu de la Peña's most celebrated and longest work, *Anales de Cataluña*, an attempt to write a complete history of the country published in 1709 during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713). This work, considered by scholars such as Jaume Sobrequés as a major milestone towards modern history-writing in Catalonia, falls beyond our analysis because it is not a plan for economic recovery.⁶⁷ The *Fénix* is considered the most important economy-related work written by Feliu de la Peña and the only early modern book, written by any author, quoted by Gaspar Feliu in his *Economic history of Catalonia*, a non-specialised book of modest length, aimed at the general public, which reveals the quality and relevance it had at the time.⁶⁸

Both books can be tracked to the *arbitrista* tradition. *Arbitristas* were a group of thinkers that proposed *arbitrios* (measures) to remedy the state of economic decadence of the Spanish empire between 1550 and 1700. Feliu de la Peña is not considered to be one of them by historiography, possibly because he was not Castilian. Another important difference is that most arbitristas were scholars or university professors while Feliu de la Peña was a merchant and he came from a family of merchants. He was respected in his trade and his ideas, as proven by his membership in May 13th 1684 of the Board of trade, currency and mines (*Junta de comercio, moneda y minas*, 1679-1707) established by king Charles II in 1679,⁶⁹ while most arbitristas were mocked as proposers of impossible and unrealistic measures and were not invited to participate in governmental institutions.⁷⁰

The most prominent arbitristas were Martín González de Cellorigo (1559-1633), lawyer at the Royal Chancellery of Valladolid; Sancho de Moncada (1580-1638), university professor at Toledo; Pedro Fernández de Navarrete (1564-1632), canon to the Santiago de Compostela cathedral; Miguel Caxa (or Caja) de Leruela (1562/1570-1631), lawyer and judge; Francisco Martínez de (la) Mata (unknown-1670), Franciscan monk. Other earlier names include Tomás de Mercado (1523-1575), monk; and Luís Ortiz (unknown, late 16th century), treasury official (*Contador de la Real Hacienda*). All of them were Castilians, which meant that their proposals were based on Castile's

⁶⁷ SOBREQÜÉS; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña, cap a la història moderna*.

⁶⁸ FELIU; *Història econòmica de Catalunya*, chapter VII.

⁶⁹ RICCI; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el seu temps*, pg. 238.

⁷⁰ The name *arbitristas* was developed by writers to mock the people proposing unrealistic *arbitrios* and was never assumed by the *arbitristas* themselves. The two first appearances of the word are in Miguel de Cervantes' *El coloquio de los perros* and in Francisco de Quevedo's various works, where they are portrayed as crazy scholars detached from reality. See GARCÍA CÁRCEL, Ricardo; *Las culturas del Siglo de Oro*, pg. 45-47.

conditions (dependence on wheat and wool, absence of manufactures or economic diversification, massive depopulation...); none of them were merchants, which implied that their proposals seldom had anything to do with the economic reality.⁷¹ Some *arbitristas* came from other kingdoms of the monarchy like Naples, such as José Arnolfini, but based their analysis on the Castilian case. He explicitly attacked the self-sufficient, isolationist mentality of the “Spaniards”, as well as defending the traditional array of mercantilist proposals. Friar Juan de Castro in his report to the Council of the Treasury (*Consejo de Hacienda*, 1668), apart from the traditional mercantilist ideas, argued for creating a Spanish banking system to get rid of the dependency of Genoese finances. Juan Cano, a Burgundian, also argued for the same mercantilist measures in his 1675 book.⁷²

In the later seventeenth century some *arbitrista*-like thinkers appeared in the old Crown of Aragon; in the Kingdom of Aragon José Marcelo de Sotomayor published in 1675 a “Foral, juridical and political discourse in defence of the freedom of trade in the Kingdom of Aragon” (*Discurso foral, jurídico y político en defensa de la libertad del comercio en el Reino de Aragón*) that featured various mercantilist proposals, especially those regarding the ban on French cloth imports. Pedro Borruel published in 1678 his “Causes for the advancement of trade, factories and other arts in the kingdom of Aragon” (*Motivos para adelantar el comercio, fábricas y otras artes en el reino de Aragón*), where the principal concern was the flooding of Aragon’s market by French cloth, the ruin of domestic industry and the transformation of the kingdom into a wool exporter for French manufacture. The idea that *formalism* (this is, Hispanic regional constitutionalism) was an impediment for the creation of strong, viable, unified mercantilist policies was already in some minds. Borruel said that “without a union between the Crown of Aragon and that of Castile, so that what one Crown agrees and decides upon is accepted by the other, and both are governed as if they were one state” the measures were unlikely to succeed.⁷³

The core proposals of the *arbitristas* were the fight against depopulation – which was a real problem in Castile, but not in Catalonia-, the promotion of domestic manufactures and a ban on foreign imports, a ban on raw materials –especially wool- exports, the creation of trading companies and a fiscal reform to simplify tax collection and reduce its burden, leading to a single universal tax based on flour. They were also almost universally hostile to the statutes of *limpieza de sangre* against Jews and Moors and most of them complained about the extreme inequality in wealth distribution.

⁷¹ KAMEN; *Spain, 1469-1714, a society of conflict*, pg. 253-256.

⁷² FERNÁNDEZ ALBALADEJO, Pablo; *Comercio redentor: arbitristismo peninsular y proyectismo atlántico en la Monarquía de España (1668-1675)*.

⁷³ FERNÁNDEZ ALBALADEJO, Pablo; *La crisis de la Monarquía*, pg. 461-463.

Although most of these proposals were shared by Feliu de la Penya half a century later, the insight on the economy's real situation was much more accurate in Feliu de la Penya than in the *arbitristas*, as proven by his accurate report of Catalonia's economic diversification and the detailed plan to organise a merchant company that eventually came into being (the *Companyia de la Santa Creu* and, especially, the *Companyia Nova de Gibraltar*). Feliu de la Penya did not attack the statues of *limpieza*, possibly because the Jew and Moorish population in Catalonia was non-existent; nor the inequality in wealth distribution, because the great problem of Spain –gigantic estates (*latifundios*) worked by landless peasants and a crushing seigneurial regime- had been solved in Catalonia by the Treaty of Guadalupe (*Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*, 1486) after the end of the Catalan Civil war (1462-1472).⁷⁴

One fundamental difference between Feliu de la Penya and the *arbitristas* is that they, being Castilians (including the heavily Castilianised Aragon), argued for a unification of all the kingdoms in the monarchy to come to Castile's aid, something that would be discussed in the *Junta de Reformación* called by the minister-favourite the Duke of Lerma and, later on, by Olivares.⁷⁵ Feliu de la Penya was Catalan and he was always a strong defender of the self-government institutions in a polycentric state, something that frontally opposed him to the *arbitristas* who were unanimously Castilian. His proposals, although resembled those of the *arbitristas*, came not from an arbitrista mind, but from the personal experience of a merchant who had travelled into different European countries and who was at the centre of an expanding and well-connected bourgeoisie, unparalleled in the rest of Spain.

2.2. People

⁷⁴ The *Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe* was issued by King Ferdinand II in the monastery of Guadalupe (Extremadura) on April 21st 1486 and put an end to the Peasant War, one of the three chapters of the Catalan Civil War (the other two were the social conflict in Barcelona between the *Biga* (patricians) and the *Busca* (lower and middle classes), and the war between the king and the nobility that controlled the *Generalitat*). It provided that, in exchange for a single payment of 60 sous per cottage, most of the seigneurial rights would be abolished, the peasants would retain their farms, both the traditional family farm and those occupied after the Black Death had left them deserted (*masos ròncs* or rotten cottages), in exchange for a symbolic vassalage homage to the local lord and the payment of a very low yearly rent. This marked the beginning of Catalonia's agrarian revolution and the formation of a powerful and entrepreneurial rural middle class, known as fat peasants (*pagesos grassos*). GIFRÉ RIBAS, Pere; *L'ombra allargada de la Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*. Although the effects of the *Sentència* on the peasants' condition are subject to recent criticism, the general improvement of their legal status and economic possibilities is still widely accepted. See about the criticism CORTÉS MEDINA, Mireia; *Les interpretacions de la Sentència arbitral de Guadalupe: de Jaume Vicens i Vives a l'actualitat*, BA Thesis. As opposed to that, in New Castile 70% of peasants was landless; more than 75% was in Andalusia. See KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715, a society of conflict*, pg. 245.

⁷⁵ ELLIOTT; *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, pg. 318-319.

Feliu de la Penya argued that Catalonia was depopulated. Although he excused the expulsion of Jews and Moors because “they are not needed in such a Catholic province”, he blamed emigration to the Americas and to other territories of the monarchy like Flanders or Italy for this depopulation.⁷⁶ We now know that Catalonia was not depopulated, but rather stagnant, during the 17th century, as opposed to big population increases during the 16th and 18th centuries. The expulsions of Jews (1492) and Moors (1605) were traditionally understood as major blows but recent scholarship argues that the Jewish expulsion had minor effects and the Moorish expulsion only had serious consequences in Valencia and Granada. Epidemics had much worse effects than expulsions.⁷⁷ Although many *arbitristas* complained about the prevailing anti-Jewish and anti-Moorish laws (*estatutos de limpieza de sangre*) all of them were Castilians and their analysis did not suit the Catalan case. Castile depopulated, while Catalonia only stagnated. Even amidst this stagnation the population stock was big enough to allow for specialisation and for a thriving transport sector to develop.

The *fogatge* (census) of 1553 counted 59750 households and the census of 1717 counted 402531 people. Although the ratio people per household is still subject of scholarly debate and a consensual figure has not yet been reached, the likelihood is that there were between 6 and 8 people per household. Even if it is nowadays regarded as a low magnitude, using 7 as average, Catalonia might have had the following evolution:

Table 1: Population of Catalonia (1497-1717)

Population	Year	Inter-census	Accumulated
367318	1497	0,00%	100,00%

⁷⁶ “Otra tambien entendido fue la causa, y origen cierto del infeliz estado, no solo de Cataluña; (i de toda España, que fue la falta de gente (olvido los que salieron en las expulciones de iudios, y Moros, que no hacen falta en tan Catholica Provincia,)”. FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 67.

⁷⁷ KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715, A society of conflict*, pg. 242-244, 251-256. A partial explanation could be that in the old Crown of Aragon the (re)conquest against Muslims in the Middle Age was particularly brutal, often involving massive enslavement and genocide, while in Castile they were allowed to remain in segregated communities. The 1391 *pogrom* in Barcelona was particularly vicious and the conquest of Majorca (1229-1231) implied the annihilation or enslavement of the entire Muslim population, excesses that were never perpetrated by the Castilians during their expansion. In the late 15th century the Jewish and Muslim population of Catalonia was very small and converted Muslims (*moriscos*) were only relevant in the Valencian countryside. The constituted 16% of the Crown of Aragon’s population, but were heavily concentrated in the Aragonese Ebro valley and Valencia where they practiced a very intensive irrigated agriculture; in Catalonia they were very few and were very integrated, which meant that the expulsion caused the loss of 1-2% of Catalonia’s population and no serious economic downturn, while the economic consequences in Aragon (18.8% of population) and Valencia (26.7% of population) were devastating. Contrarily to that of Catalonia, Valencia’s economy already manifested a tendency towards investment in debt and rents, a process that continued throughout the whole 17th century and resulted in Valencia developing one of the toughest manorial regimes in Spain, which sparked the *Second Brotherhood* (*Segona Germania*) revolt. See FERNÁNDEZ ALBALADEJO; *La crisis de la monarquía*, pg. 297. See also PÉREZ APARICIO, Carmen; *Reivindicaciones antiseñoriales en el país Valenciano – de la Segunda Germanía a la Guerra de Sucesión*.

373100	1515	1,57%	101,57%
418250	1553	12,10%	113,87%
402531	1717	-3,76%	109,59%
814412	1787	102,32%	221,72%

Source: Author's own accounts based on Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics (Catalan Institute for Demography). Censuses in 1497, 1515 and 1553 counted *focs* (households), while people were counted in 1717 and 1787. The households have been multiplied by 7 in each case.

Although there seems to be a minor depopulation between 1553 and 1717 (-3.76%), there are almost two centuries between both censuses and no data collection in the 17th century. The last one was done immediately after the War of the Spanish Succession, which was very costly in terms of human lives for Catalonia. One must also mind that only tax-payers and indigent poor were counted, leaving a fair share of the population outside official statistics. The *fogatges* were done for military-fiscal motives, meaning there was a significant rate of evasion. With corrections applied, the likelihood is that Catalonia stagnated at around 500.000 people between 1553 and 1700.⁷⁸ It is also likely that a Malthusian trap, paired with the general cooling of climate, wars, bubonic plague and locust plagues are accountable for the demographic stagnation.

Some studies reduce the population in 1717 –after the War of the Spanish succession- to 400.000 inhabitants. In 1787, when the count of Floridablanca published the considered best census of pre-modern Spain, Catalonia counted 814.412 inhabitants. Further research has applied corrections to Floridablanca's figures and stated that in the late 18th century Catalonia had c. 900.000 inhabitants. It had more than doubled since the end of the War of the Spanish succession.⁷⁹ This demographic expansion led to the reclamation of new land, often planted with vineyards which benefited from a specifically Catalan contract, the *rabassa morta*, relatively profitable for the tenant farmer.⁸⁰ It also allowed for the resettlement of the western counties which had suffered a great loss in population during the 17th century, the most spectacular case being Almacelles, where wheat expanded, turning the west into

⁷⁸ IGLÉSIES; *Els fogatges de 1497, 1515, 1553*. FELIU I MONTFORT, Gaspar; *La demografia baixmedieval catalana: estat de la qüestió i propostes de futur*. GRAU, Ramon and LÓPEZ, Marina; *El creixement demogràfic català del segle XVIII: la polèmica Vilar-Nadal*.

⁷⁹ GRAU and LÓPEZ; *El creixement demogràfic català del segle XVIII*.

⁸⁰ The *rabassa morta* contract provided that the tenant would receive a field in lease in which he would plant a vineyard. Upon the death of 2/3 of the original vines –with a maximum lifespan of fifty years- the tenant could be evicted and the land was free to be leased to another tenant. This contract allowed the Catalan farmer to have stability for various decades and to keep a substantial part of the harvest, which would be marketed at good prices. The *rabassa morta* applied exclusively to vineyard, not to other types of crops, and was a known legal concept since the Middle age, but greatly expanded during the 18th century thanks to the thriving wine business.

Catalonia's granary.⁸¹ Another important contribution was the creation of a group of professional carriers (*traginers*) for an expanding transport sector. The most iconic cases were the villages of Copons and Calaf, with Tortellà as a third node; in Copons almost the entire adult male population worked as carriers during the 18th century, while Calaf had a more diversified structure thanks to its cattle market, possibly the biggest in the whole country.⁸²

The population expansion also drove the unemployed and landless of the country into medium-sized cities that were expanding thanks to manufactures, such as Olot, Manresa, Vic, Granollers or the shores of river Francolí in central Catalonia, where a powerful papermaking industry was created, among others. It also helped to repopulate the deserted western and southern shires. Many, of course, settled in Barcelona, which by 1787 had already become the second largest city in Spain and the densest one, home to a vast pre-industrial proletariat and very focused on maritime trade.⁸³

Feliu de la Peña did not quote as causes for depopulation the War of Separation (1640-1652) and the effects it had on the country. Two armies, a Catalan-French one and a Spanish one, had been fighting over the territory for twelve years, living off it and extorting manpower and supplies from the local population. There were important battles and sieges with over 30.000 combatants in each case. In the last phases of the war Barcelona was besieged from 4th August 1651 to 13th October 1652 and suffered an epidemic from 1647 until 1652 that killed 30.000 people, 30% of Barcelona's population at the time, and an estimated total of 60.000 in the whole country, making it the second worst epidemic in history after that of 1348.⁸⁴ If we accept 500.000 inhabitants for Catalonia during the 17th century, the epidemic alone killed around 12% of the population, without considering the losses due to war or hunger. None of this was mentioned by Feliu de la Peña as having led to a loss of

⁸¹ See about Almacelles' case BONALES and BOLÒS; *Atles històric d'Almacelles*. About the criticism on the conditions of depopulation in Western Catalonia see BONALES; *La despoblació del Sas de Llitera i el mite de la Guerra dels Segadors: el cas d'Almacelles*. For the general repopulation situation in the 18th century, see VILAR, *Catalunya dins l'Espanya moderna*.

⁸² The word *traginer* comes from the verb *traginar* ("to carry"). For the cases of Copons and Calaf see MUSET I PONS, Assumpta; *Catalunya i el mercat espanyol al segle XVIII: els traginers i els negociants de Calaf i Copons*. The importance of Calaf as a cattle market got into the popular jargon; still today the phrase "this looks like the market in Calaf" (*això sembla el mercat de Calaf*) stands for a very noisy and messy place. See also OCAMPO SUÁREZ-VALDÉS, Joaquín; *Los catalanes en España y la economía política de la Ilustración; "conquista pacífica" o Españas vencidas?*

⁸³ NADAL, Jordi *et al.*, *Atlas de la industrialización de España 1750-2000*. For specific studies on paper see works by GUTIÉRREZ I POCH; *La manufactura paperera catalana a la segona meitat del segle XVIII* or *Trabajo y materias primas en una manufactura preindustrial: el papel*.

⁸⁴ HERNÁNDEZ CARDONA, Francesc Xavier; *Història militar de Catalunya*, vol. III *La defensa de la terra*. For the epidemic see MARIMON I LLUCIÀ, M. Rita; *L'incidència de la pesta sobre la revolta catalana de 1640-1652*.

population; he put the blame on emigration to the colonies. Even if we now know that Catalonia did not suffer depopulation, Jordi Nadal held the war responsible for at least fifty years of demographic stagnation.⁸⁵

2.3. Markets

Feliu de la Peña started both books with a moral defence of trade, something that was not easily accepted in Catholic countries where traders were often accused of greed and usury. The traditional Castilian *hidalgo* mentality, which despised manual or productive activities as unworthy, has traditionally been held accountable for Spain's economic underdevelopment and even if its effects have been overestimated, it favoured very traditional views on economic matters that proved harmful.⁸⁶ Feliu de la Peña also accused the mentality that emerged when the Americas were colonised, that led many to believe that mining gold and silver was enough to make the country prosperous and that no manufactures or investments were needed if everything could be imported and paid for with bullion. He literally said that "everything was altered by the possession of such abundant wealth".⁸⁷

He also attacked those who preferred imported goods even when domestic production was of equal quality and price. For example, domestic plain and flowered silks (*listonería lisa y floreada*) were sold only if disguised as imports. The Spanish consumer, both in the peninsula and in the colonies, developed during the 17th century a taste for imported manufactures even if their objective economic value was inferior to their Spanish counterparts. This proved very difficult to overcome because it was related to taste, not to rational calculations of price or quality. Kamen quotes the relation between Charles II's laws restricting mourning and the decline in imports from England of black Colchester baize cloth as an example of the penetration foreign manufactures had in Spain at the time.⁸⁸ There is, however, no evidence of a consumer revolution in Spain before 1750.⁸⁹ What seems more consistent with the Spanish case is a model of *dependency* as proposed for Latin American countries in the second half of the 20th century, instead of the traditionally considered *decadence*.⁹⁰

Although textiles were Feliu de la Peña's main trading good, to the point that by 1659 his company was exporting exclusively cloth, they were not his only object of

⁸⁵ NADAL, Jordi; *La población española (siglos XVI-XVII)*. pg. 37-47.

⁸⁶ KAMEN; Spain in the later 17th century, pg.67.

⁸⁷ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Fénix*, pg. 68. "Todo lo adulteró la posesión y abundancia de aquellas riquezas".

⁸⁸ KAMEN; Spain in the later 17th century, pg. 73.

⁸⁹ TORRAS and YUN; *Historia del consumo de tejidos*.

⁹⁰ KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico de historia moderna*, pg. 61-69, "Decadencia" and "Dependencia". See also KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715, a society of conflict*, pg. 274-275. See also KAMEN; *The decline of Spain: a historical myth?*

attention. Feliu de la Peña's proposals covered a broad range of topics to promote domestic manufactures and, in many senses, foretold what would unfold during the 18th century: a diversified economy, bound to overseas trade with a diversified production, closely articulated in an urban network, with an increasing output of new and old goods and a vast merchant fleet.

A classical approach to Catalonia's industrialisation favours a *Barcelocentric* interpretation; Barcelona was a dynamic nucleus of production and trade, mostly dependent on the textile sector, while the rest of the country benefited from the capital's vitality. The *diverse growth* model has shown that Catalonia did not depend on the textile sector; it was not even based on it. The *urban network of early modern Catalonia* has given evidence that the country did not depend on Barcelona either, but on an articulated network with a high degree of regional specialisation and exchange.

Catalonia suffered the effects of the general crisis of the 17th century, paired with the overall situation of the Spanish empire (for example when currency is concerned) and being a frontier region between two rival powers, the country often became a battlefield. Even though war was not constant during the century, the presence of the frontier and the animosity of Catalans against an Empire controlled by the Castilians meant that military presence was continued and led to various uprisings and turmoil (the *Gorretes* revolt) or economic difficulties (the effects the quartering of troops had in several villages). It is interesting to quote that the *Gorretes* revolt began when a Spanish soldier tried to take a chicken from a woman in the village of Centelles.⁹¹ But the main problem in the late 17th century was a lack of domestic production: many goods and manufactures had to be imported and paid for in bullion, contributing to the inflationary pressure.

This lack of domestic production was experienced by other countries which resorted to mercantilist proposals to overcome the problem. The domestic market had to be reserved for domestic producers and reconquered from foreign traders to avoid the drain of bullion used to pay for imports. Two basic political lines had to be followed: erecting protectionist tariffs to foreign imports (and promoting exports whenever possible) and substituting these foreign imports by domestic manufactures to supply the national market. These policies were favoured by Jean-Baptiste Colbert in France (1665-1683), Oliver Cromwell and the Restoration monarchs in England (the *Navigation Acts* of 1651, 1660, 1663, 1673, 1696), Portugal under the ministry of the 3rd count of Ericeira (1675-1690) and almost every European country excepting the Dutch Republic and featured the same two policies: erection of protectionist tariffs and promotion of domestic manufactures. Another example prior to the 18th century is the

⁹¹ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 89.

chancellor of Sweden, Axel Oxenstierna's (1583-1654) policies to develop Stockholm as a major centre of trade and to promote metallic manufactures.⁹²

Mercantilism failed at promoting economic growth, but its goal was not that; it was rather a means to an end: the strengthening of the state and its army that needed to be paid for in bullion; fomenting manufactures and trade was a political tool, not an economic objective *per se*. Despite the relative failure of mercantilism at promoting growth, Catalonia grew during the 18th century due to the changes experienced during the *second recuperation*: the redistribution of economic zones throughout the country, the articulated urban network, the specialisation of some places in some concrete trades or processes, which dated from the *decisive century* (1550-1640), had not disappeared; new changes unfolded during the last quarter of the 17th century that paved the way for a new economic model. The main difference between Catalonia and other parts of the monarchy was that in Catalonia there was a foundation for economic growth independent from top-down mercantilist policies.

Feliu de la Peña argued for protecting the domestic market from foreign traders –not specifically cloth traders–, who enriched themselves and their countries at the expense of Spain. According to him, domestic production could only be increased through the introduction of protectionist tariffs as a rampart to successfully implement an import-substitution policy. The problem was not exclusively that the market was open to French imports, but that most of these were smuggled in by corrupt customs officials. Feliu de la Peña argued that a possible solution was to publish the quality regulations included in the Constitutions of Catalonia and to have public officials enforce them.

The pitiful state of Spanish manufactures, including Catalan, was partly due to the prevalent inflation throughout the 17th century, caused by regular debasements of currency and over-minting of low value copper coins (*billons*). The production costs were comparatively high; the purchase power was reduced by the inflationary pressures, any kind of innovation was stopped by guilds that favoured quality standards with outdated and economically unviable production methods. While quality standards could be good by themselves, guild supervision to enforce them meant sticking to old-fashioned production methods. Kamen argues that “Spanish manufacturers required two primary things: a reorganisation of production methods, which in most cases

⁹² For France see MEYER, Jean; *Colbert*, pg. 217-259. For Portugal see FREIRE COSTA, Leonor; LAINS, Pedro; MÜNCH MIRANDA, Susana; *An economic history of Portugal 1143-2010*, pg. 136-143. For Sweden see DAHLBÄCK, Göran; SANDBERG, Robert; NILSSON, Lars; *Staden på vattnet*, pg. 84-100. For England see PINCUS, Steven; *Rethinking mercantilism: Political economy, The British Empire and the Atlantic world in the 17th and 18th centuries*.

meant circumventing guild regulations; and heavy investment to overcome high costs and low profit margins”.⁹³

Regina Grafe has researched the so-called “tyranny of distance”, which stands for the relatively high transport costs in Spain, a country with almost no navigable rivers, a low population density and a very rugged geography. This was supposed to have made Spain’s economy less competitive than others, but her research using the prices of cod in different places in Spain showed that the tyranny of distance did not exist.⁹⁴ Sheilagh Ogilvie pointed that guilds were instruments of political and social rather than economic control and that the *Ancien regime* state depended on municipal and commercial authorities such as guilds to properly exert authority over the population, therefore making their economic role irrelevant and counter-productive. According to her research in Württemberg, most pre-industrial production methods could be easily learnt and performed outside of the guilds’ formation and quality control processes, turning guilds into barriers to economic growth.⁹⁵ The cities in Northern Italy decided to stick to their traditional production methods controlled by guilds, which led them to become uncompetitive during the 17th century and to undergo a process of relative deindustrialisation, while the Dutch Republic and England, where guilds had very little power, became kernels of innovation and expansion of manufactures.⁹⁶

During the 18th century Spain gradually liberated its internal restrictions and erected protectionist external tariffs, creating thus a national market. Examples of this are the suppression of the internal customs after the War of the Spanish succession – with the exception of the four foral provinces; the opening of several ports to the colonial trade and the suppression of the monopoly in Seville or Cadis (1778); the suppression of price controls for wheat (1765) or the construction of several royal factories.⁹⁷ The Spanish policy was to integrate all its territories to create a solid block, from which foreign agents ought to be excluded. The fight against British commerce and smuggling in the Americas was the chief preoccupation during the century. By 1815, after the Napoleonic wars, this protectionist policy became rather prohibitionist.⁹⁸

⁹³ KAMEN; *Spain in the later 17th century*, pg. 73

⁹⁴ GRAFE; *Distant tyranny*.

⁹⁵ OGILVIE, Sheilagh; *A bitter living - Women, Markets, and Social Capital in Early Modern Germany*.

⁹⁶ DE VRIES, Jan; *The economy of Europe in an age of crisis 1600-1750*, pg. 250. DE VRIES; *Industrious revolution*.

⁹⁷ For a general view on the economic reforms during the 18th century see GONZÁLEZ ENCISO, Agustín; *El “Estado económico” en la España del siglo XVIII*.

⁹⁸ CARRERAS, Albert and TAFUNELL, Xavier; *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*, first chapter.

Feliu de la Penya also argued for a ban on raw materials exports, praising England for its famous prohibition of raw wool exports.⁹⁹ He did not limit it to wool, though, arguing for a ban on wool, silk and iron. We know that the lack of raw materials was not the cause of Spain's economic decadence and an increase in input would not have been sufficient either.¹⁰⁰ Although Feliu de la Penya and the *arbitristas* - a group of Spanish advisers from the late 16th century such as Sancho de Moncada or Tomás de Mercado-¹⁰¹ before him favoured a total prohibition on exporting raw materials from Spain, this never happened and it is unlikely that it was a solution. The reason was, as Henry Kamen says, that Spain would gain nothing from forbidding the exportation of wool, because the problem was not a lack of inputs, but a lack of throughput.

“Since the early sixteen century, if not earlier, the question of wool exports had aroused bitter controversy. Manufacturers, and towns that relied on textiles for employment, blamed industrial decline on the export of raw materials. In practice, though the finer wools were preferred to export, manufacturers never lacked adequate supplies. The profits made from trade were indeed responsible for the new investments that helped industry in Segovia survive in the late sixteenth century.”¹⁰²

The prohibition of exports was not a solution to the problems of the country; during the 18th century Spain –and Catalonia with it- became more involved in foreign trade and wool exports did not disappear. The lack of industry was overcome with the protection of domestic producers, entrepreneurs and customs; with the expansion of the urban population and the formation of more educated workforce. The Royal Factories in different parts of Spain, the involvement of wine-related tenant farmers in small-scale investment in manufactures (Mataró being a perfect example of it) or the creation of professional schools and a board of trade (*Junta de Comercio*) made up for the real problem.¹⁰³ The financial policy undertaken by the first Bourbon kings, most remarkably Ferdinand VI and Charles III greatly reduced the public debt and the inflationary pressures that had so much troubled the country during the 17th century, although the overall state of it was disappointing if compared with Catalonia,

⁹⁹ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Político discurso*, sixth chapter. “Sino de atentos, de escarmentados tomemos exemplo de otras Naciones, admitamosle de Ingalaterra, que con todo rigor impide la saca de la lana de su Reyno; no le despreciamos de Francia, que con tener pocas lanas, y malas, tiene impedida la entrada de nuestros paños en sus Reynos.”

¹⁰⁰ KAMEN; Spain in the later 17th century, pg. 73.

¹⁰¹ For Orry, see DUBET, Anne; *Jean Orry et la réforme du gouvernement en Espagne*. For Jerónimo de Uztáriz, see FERNÁNDEZ DURÁN, Reyes; *Gerónimo de Uztáriz (1670-1732). Una política económica para Felipe V*. For the *arbitristas* see KAMEN; Spain in the later seventeenth century, pg. 68-70 and KAMEN; Spain 1469-1715, pg. 251-256.

¹⁰² KAMEN; Spain in the later 17th century, pg. 71.

¹⁰³ RUIZ Y PABLO, Ángel; *Historia de la Real Junta de Comercio de Barcelona (1758-1847)*.

something some British travellers did.¹⁰⁴ Although Spain had a trade deficit throughout the whole 18th century, Catalonia became a nucleus of industry and a net exporting region. The export of traditional and new products, such as cereals, fruit, nuts, brandy, cloth or paper greatly expanded thanks to various factors: increased domestic production, geopolitical “contraction” of the Empire and increased trade with its overseas colonies, opened access for new ports and end of the monopoly in Seville/Cadis, expansion of the merchant fleet and strategic redeployment of the navy to protect the Spanish coasts from piracy.

According to Feliu de la Peña, a solution to this trade imbalance, paired with the general lack of capital in post-war Catalonia, was the creation of a chartered company that could bring together several modest investors. A company would give safety to investors, very reluctant to invest after forty years of turmoil. This company should be formed by sixty members, divided into fifteen noblemen, merchants, artisans and labourers; each individual would invest 200 *doblonos*. This money would be open for sale and transfer, but not withdrawal. New members could be accepted until a maximum capital of 60.000 *doblonos* was reached. He specifically stated that this company could export cloth, iron, fruits (unspecified of which kind) and copperware. The company should operate from Barcelona, turned into duty-free port, and centralise tax collection there; it should manage to send two loaded ships every year to the Americas. Another idea to promote trade was to create a public insurance bureau in Barcelona, funded by the municipal or the Catalan government, because freights were ridiculously expensive.¹⁰⁵ The chartered company should also have a reserve deposit to issue loans at low interest for bankrupted merchants to restart their operations. After the creation of the chartered company Barcelona should host four yearly fairs, named Fairs of the Holy Cross (*Fires de la Santa Creu*), that would bring together all of Catalonia’s trade with the new chartered company and the duty-free port of Barcelona. These fairs would have a fifteen days margin to liquidate operations.¹⁰⁶

Feliu de la Peña managed to create a company, named *Companyia de la Santa Creu*, in 1690 with private capital from himself and several friends and relatives; the administrator was Martí Piles. Its goal was the renovation of textile technology with the help of Flemish workers; it also reprinted a 1574 handbook on dye-making (*Ramallet de tintures*) and set up a dye factory in the cities of Valls and Manresa. The initial capital was 12.000 *doblonos* and managed to export over 160.000 *vares* of cloth. In

¹⁰⁴ LLOMBART, Vicent; *La política económica de Carlos III, ¿fiscalismo, cosmética o estímulo al crecimiento?*. RAMOS GOROSTIZA, José Luís; *La imagen económica de la España de Carlos III: Joseph Townsend, Alexander Jardine y los economistas españoles*.

¹⁰⁵ “cambios marítimos a riesgo del común”, in English “maritime exchanges at public expense”.

¹⁰⁶ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Fénix*, chapters XI-XVII.

1693 he partnered with Jaume Teixidor, Arnold de Jäger and Joan Maimó to create the *Companyia de Sant Benet i Sant Julià* to introduce the technique of “gothic fabric” in Catalonia.¹⁰⁷ During the War of the Spanish succession (July 1st, 1709) several of them founded the Gibraltar New Company (*Companyia Nova de Gibraltar*) as a response to Cadis’ monopoly, then controlled by the pro-Bourbon faction. The company had Salvador Feliu de la Peña (who had Narcís Feliu de la Peña as a tutor during his minority of age) as administrator and aimed at trading with the recently conquered enclave as an entrepot between Catalonia and Portugal, England and the Netherlands; their main export goods were wine, brandy and hazelnuts and imported Brazilian sugar, American and Moroccan leather, Dutch salted fish and wheat from Sicily and Sardinia. It was dissolved at the end of the war.¹⁰⁸

A chartered company was not founded in Catalonia until 1755 when the *Royal Barcelona Trading Company to the Indies* was chartered by King Ferdinand VI. It was offered the monopoly with the islands of Puerto Rico, Margarita and Santo Domingo and ten annual voyages to Guatemala and Honduras, as well as some trading rights with Cumaná and Havana. The company exported wine, brandy and calico and imported cotton, indigo, cocoa, tobacco and sugar and was liquidated in 1785, when it joined the Royal Guipuscoa-Caracas Company to form the Royal Philippines Company. By 1785 merchants were strong enough to trade with the Americas relying solely on private capital.¹⁰⁹

2.4. Taxation

Feliu de la Peña argued for a fiscal reform that taxed only imports and maybe luxury consumption. He argued that taxes were fundamental to every country but that excessive taxation could lead to poverty, depopulation and unrest. In the 17th century most basic products such as wheat, meat, salt, olive oil and wine were taxed, something

¹⁰⁷ OLIVA I RICÓS, Benet; *La generació de Feliu de la Peña, burgesia mercantil i Guerra de Successió*, pg. 131. Each vara was around 88cm. ALSINA I CATALÀ, Claudi; FELIU i MONTFORT, Gaspar; MARQUET i FERIGLE, Lluís. *Pesos, mides i mesures dels Països Catalans*.

¹⁰⁸ One of the least known episodes in Catalan history is that in the combined Anglo-Dutch army that conquered Gibraltar to the Spanish included a company of 250-300 Catalan marines. The deployment place of their unit in the siege is still known as Catalan Bay and Catalan Beach. For the Catalan marines see ROMAGUERA, Jordi; *Gibraltar i els catalans*. The alliance treaty between Catalonia and England was signed, on England’s behalf, by Mittford Crowe, who was a very prominent merchant during the *second recuperation*, England’s consul in Catalonia and usual partner of Joseph Shallett (the English consul who bought pine-nuts in Sitges and invested in a distillery in Reus), the Feliu de la Peña, Arnold de Jäger and others. For the Gibraltar New Company see GRAN ENCICLOPÈDIA CATALANA; entries *Salvador Feliu de la Peña* and *Companyia Nova de Gibraltar*. See also ROMAGUERA; *Gibraltar i els catalans* and VILAR, Pierre; *El manual de la “Companyia Nova de Gibraltar”*.

¹⁰⁹ OLIVA MELGAR, José María; *La Real Compañía de Comercio de Barcelona a Indias. El Comercio privilegiado de Cataluña con América en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII*.

resented by the lower class and a major source of social unrest. In Catalonia a special tax based on textiles (*impost de la bolla*) existed since the 1363, although hemp and linen were exempted from the 16th century on.¹¹⁰ Direct taxation based on wealth also existed since the late Middle age.¹¹¹ Feliu de la Penya argued for a reduction on basic goods taxation if not for total suppression, paired with taxation on luxuries such as tobacco or brandy.

Tariffs on imports and exports were not, according to him, the source of Catalonia's economic underdevelopment. He argued for eliminating export duties and keeping only import duties, as well as for fiscal unification. Most taxes were collected by municipal authorities but various kinds existed, which led merchants to be harassed by greedy collectors and to suffer constant inspections of cargo or to be double-taxed. There had been various attempts at introducing new taxes controlled by the monarch (Olivares' reforms, the *impuesto de millones* in Castile...), many of them unsuccessful. The fiscal reform came into Catalonia only after the military defeat of 1715 in the War of the Spanish succession. Before it, fiscal reform proved almost impossible.¹¹²

The War of the Spanish succession (1701-1713) is dated differently in Catalonia. It starts in 1700, when Charles II died childless, and ends with the Battle of Barcelona (September 11th 1714), with a later scenario in the Balearic Islands, not fully conquered until 1715. After the war a new fiscal administration, known as the *Catastro* (in Castilian) or the *Cadaastre* (in Catalan) was implemented in Catalonia, paired with a new bureaucratic administration contained in the *Decret de Nova Planta* of 1716. Their goals were to effectively suppress the traditional Catalan self-government institutions and to increase the efficiency of the fiscal system, with the prime goal of extracting from Catalonia the revenue needed to pay for the army there stationed. The rapacity of this new fiscal system and the post-war situation left Catalonia in a state of economic decline until the 1730s. The traditional end of the post-war crisis is 1733, when the first calico factory opened in Barcelona.¹¹³

The imposition of the *Cadaastre* after 1716 multiplied sevenfold the fiscal pressure in Catalonia, leading to impoverishment and social unrest. Its effects were softened by the economic expansion of the country after 1730, rooted in the pre-war *second recuperation*. The initial calculation of 1.500.000 *pesos* for the whole of

¹¹⁰ DURAN I PUJOL, Montserrat; *Els arrendaments dels drets de bolla: un indicador vàlid per mesurar la producció i el consum de teixits*.

¹¹¹ MORELLÓ BAIGET, Jordi; ORTÍ GOST, Pere; REIXACH SALA, Alba; VERDÉS PIJUAN, Pere; *A study of economic inequality in the light of fiscal sources: the case of Catalonia (14th-18th centuries)*.

¹¹² ALCOBERRO I PERICAY, Agustí; *El cadaastre de Catalunya (1713-1845): de la imposició a la fossilització*.

¹¹³ CARRERAS, TAFUNELL; *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*. ALCOBERRO; *El cadaastre a Catalunya*.

Catalonia was so extreme that it was reduced to 1.200.000 *pesos* in 1717 and to 900.000 in 1718, but added to other existing taxes for quartering troops (300.000 *pesos*), the *bolla* on textiles (100.000 *pesos*) and other various taxes (700.000 *pesos*). According to Uztáriz's *Teoría y práctica de comercio y marina* (1724) Catalonia paid yearly c.13 *pesos* per person, while Valencia paid 9 and Aragon, 5. Although the *cadastre* led to fiscal simplification it did not reduce the fiscal burden.¹¹⁴ There was also a project of centralisation dating back to Olivares (*Unión de Armas*) that had been impossible to implement due to the Constitutions of Catalonia¹¹⁵; with Catalonia defeated and annexed by right of conquest, those impediments were no longer present and a more centralised system, thought to bring economic growth, could be imposed based on a mixture of French and Castilian models.¹¹⁶

The Bourbon administration also tried to impose new monopolies, known as *estancos*. Remarkably, *estancos* on tobacco and brandy, as proposed by Feliu de la Peña, were introduced in 1714, although the tobacco was a monopoly in Castile since 1636-38.¹¹⁷ The *estanco* on tobacco ended the lucrative trade that many Catalan merchants did in Lisbon, where they sold their brandy, wine and nuts (mostly hazelnuts) to Dutch agents in exchange for Brazilian sugar and tobacco and Dutch cocoa. The *estanco* on brandy and the prohibition to buy Brazilian sugar and tobacco issued shortly after were answered by the Portuguese in 1717 with a total ban on Spanish wine and brandy imports. After heavy protests by Catalan producers and considering the Portuguese embargo, the *estanco* on brandy was repealed in 1720, which attests the growing importance this product had for Catalonia's economy, while tobacco would remain a royal monopoly until the 19th century. A perfect example of this trade is the Rabassa family from Reus: brandy distillers, they sent to their agents Martín & Piquer & Cia. in Lisbon several ships loaded with brandy produced by them,

¹¹⁴ ALBAREDA SALVADÓ, Joaquim; *La Guerra de Successió d'Espanya (1700-1714)*, pg. 438-440. ALCOBERRO; *El cadastre de Catalunya*, pg. 231-257. DE UZTÁRIZ, Jerónimo; *Teoría y práctica de comercio y marina*, pg. 355.

¹¹⁵ The Constitutions of Catalonia were the main source of trouble for Olivares and his planned reforms, to the point that he said "I am nearly at my wits' end but I say and shall still be saying on my deathbed, that if the constitutions do not allow this, then the devil take the constitutions! No king in the world has a province like Catalonia, it has a king and a lord, but it renders him no service. This king and lord can do nothing that he wants in it. We always have to look and see if a constitution says this or that." See KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715*, pg. 237-238.

¹¹⁶ The effects of political fragmentation in the (lack of) economic growth have been researched by GRAFE; *Distant tyranny*. For the new Bourbon administration see ALCOBERRO; *El cadastre de Catalunya*. TORRAS I RIBÉ; *Misèria, poder i corrupció a la Catalunya borbònica (1714-1808)*. DUBET; *Jean Orry et la réforme du gouvernement en Espagne*.

¹¹⁷ SANZ ROZALÉN, Vicent; *La Ciudad de la Habana y el tabaco a comienzos del siglo XIX*. See also *El contrabando de tabaco*, Alma Mater Hispalense, Universidad de Sevilla history divulgation website. <https://personal.us.es/alporu/fabricatabaco/contrabando.htm>

wine and hazelnuts sent by other merchants and some iron wares and tools, in exchange for Brazilian tobacco and sugar and some musk.¹¹⁸

Chocolate (made with cocoa and sugar) and tobacco were the two major vices in 17th and 18th centuries Catalonia and the apothecaries' guild (*adroguers*) played a major role in supplying them, thus being craftsmen and merchants at the same time. It was produced in Venezuela but most of it was exported to New Spain (Mexico); was more expensive than that produced by the Dutch and traded in Lisbon for Catalan wines, brandies and nuts.¹¹⁹ The first "chocolate mill", owned by the apothecaries' guild, opened in Barcelona in 1664 and by the late 17th century Catalonia consumed chocolate compulsively, as did the whole of Spain.¹²⁰ This lucrative trade led to an attempted *estanco* on cocoa in 1691, repealed after heavy protests by Andalusian merchants.¹²¹ With the end of the War of the Spanish succession sugar and cocoa were not turned into monopolies but strong efforts were made by the monarchy to substitute Dutch and Brazilian imports for Spanish colonial imports. The embargo against the Portuguese and the discouragement of intercolonial trade –redirecting Venezuelan cocoa from Mexico to Cadis- are two examples of it which fit into the mercantilist ideas.¹²²

Our current knowledge of Catalonia's economy in the late 17th century differs a little from Feliu de la Peña's proposals and interpretations: we now know that quality controls and guilds were not an asset, but rather a liability to economic growth. Depopulation was not real and demographic stagnation was not such a big problem, although the War of Separation and epidemics were major blows to demographic growth, much worse than migration to the colonies or to other territories. The lack and/or export of raw materials were not accountable for it and a ban on wool exports is not likely to have been a solution. Technological backwardness, lack of credit in a depressed financial market, inflation, fiscal pressure and complexity and war between Spain and France, with Catalonia switching sides trying to defend its self-government, were responsible for the economic crisis. The promotion of domestic production, the protection of the domestic market, a more rational exploitation of the colonies and the increase of the merchant fleet were real solutions to the problems, while proposing monopolies (*estancos*) proved to be harmful.

¹¹⁸ MARTÍNEZ SHAW, Carlos; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 73-77, 85-86.

¹¹⁹ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 60-61, 73-77.

¹²⁰ Quoted by MARTÍ ESCAYOL, Maria Antònia; *El plaer de la xocolata: la història i la cultura de la xocolata a Catalunya*, pg. 50.

¹²¹ CÀRCELES DE GEA, Beatriz; *Libertad de comercio y monopolio de Indias: el estanco del cacao de 1691*, in QUINTERO GONZÁLEZ, José; ALFONSO MOLA, Marina; MARTÍNEZ SHAW, Carlos; *La economía marítima de España y sus Indias*, pg. 39-68.

¹²² GARCÍA-BAQUERO GONZÁLEZ, Antonio; *Comercio colonial y reformismo borbónico: de la reactivación a la quiebra del sistema comercial imperial*.

Chapter 3: Sectors of the Economy

3.1. Agricultural production

Catalonia had, since the Catalan Civil war (1462-1472) and the Treaty of Guadalupe (*Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*, 1486) abolished most of feudal obligations. Farmers were allowed to become free and to keep their farms, both the traditional family farm and the ones that were deserted after the Black Death and irregularly occupied (“rotten cottages”, in Catalan *masos rònecs*), against a payment of 60 sous per farm. This created a big layer of middle-class farmers who were owners or tenants under very lenient contracts with a seigneurial regime that was more symbolic than real.¹²³ The king had been “missing” since the Catalan conquest of Naples (1435-1442), when Alphonse V settled there; the nobility at first Italianised and then, when the court of Spain was settled in Madrid, Castilianised.¹²⁴

By the 17th century Catalonia was a society used to not seeing his prince and without important nobility: most of it was untitled and did not control massive estates (*latifundis*) such as in Andalusia or Castile.¹²⁵ When the Estates (*Corts generals del Principat*) were convened in 1626, only nine Catalan titled nobles out of 254 attended, seven of which had been created by the king in 1599. The lower nobility was gentry (*cavallers*) and some fifty “honourable burghers” (*ciutadans honrats*) of Barcelona, but the economic difference between titled and untitled nobility was non-existent: both groups lived modestly, controlled small estates and most of the new nobility created in the 16th and 17th centuries came from rich farmers and upper bourgeoisie. The backbone of Catalonia was a relatively prosperous middle class of farmers and craftsmen who was behind the economic development of the country, issued from the effects of the *Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*.¹²⁶ They were also spared the burden of serving in the Spanish army unless Catalonia was invaded and paid almost no taxes to the crown. This contributed to the recuperation after the civil war and during the *decisive century*.

Agriculture underwent a period of expansion until 1640 that made up for the difficulties experienced in the manufacturing sector and the urban trade from the 1620s

¹²³ GIFRÉ; *L'ombra allargada de la Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*. CORTÉS; *Les interpretacions de la Sentència arbitral de Guadalupe*.

¹²⁴ For Italianisation see SOLER; *La cort napolitana d'Alfons el Magnànim*. For Castilianisation ELLIOTT, John; *A provincial aristocracy: the Catalan ruling class*, pg. 75.

¹²⁵ Catalonia, properly speaking, has never had a king. The country articulated as a union of counties during the fight against the Muslims, ruled by the Count of Barcelona. When the count secured the throne of Aragon and conquered Valencia and Majorca to the Arabs and turned them into kingdoms he became king of Aragon, Valencia and Majorca, but never of Catalonia. The country was referred to as *Principality of Catalonia* and the ruling lord was always referred to as Count of Barcelona. The creation of Catalonia as a polity resembles in many aspects that of the union of provinces to create the Dutch Republic or the federation of cantons to create the Swiss Confederacy but, to my knowledge, no comparative work on political history exists along these lines.

¹²⁶ ELLIOTT; *A provincial aristocracy*, pg. 74-77.

on. The centre of this relatively thriving agricultural sector was North-east Catalonia, the so-called Old Catalonia.¹²⁷ The cause behind this success was the exports of cereals, fruit, olive oil and wine into the Mediterranean, a characteristic of the medieval model which in the 18th century was to undergo a shift into wine, brandy and nuts. The profits of these operations compensated the declining margin of chiefly cloth exports; Girona, one of the biggest cities in the country and a textile nucleus in medieval times, lost most of its textile output during the 17th century but reconverted into producing chestnuts, hazelnuts and centralising the cork production in the North-east.¹²⁸

This relative agrarian prosperity suffered setbacks with bad harvests in 1604-1606 and 1627-1631 although the overall situation was prosperous. This prosperity started faltering after 1640, with several bad harvests between 1640 and 1680. Nevertheless the records show that the harvests between 1678 and 1684 were rather good, confirming the tendency towards a relative recuperation or stabilisation of the agrarian yield during the last quarter of the century.¹²⁹ Although severely affected, this traditional agro-export model was still profitable in the 1680s; Feliu de la Peña said that there was surplus of wheat, olive oil or fruits during some years that could be exported.

The great expansion of viticulture that characterised the 18th century and that was already noticeable in the 17th or even late 16th was a different model¹³⁰; in it, wine was the main export business together with brandy. In the medieval model wheat and olive oil were more important, while fruit and wine were complementary and brandy was non-existent. In the Catalan Parliament of 1599 the exports of these four products were considered fundamental for the country, but they depended more on speculation by big landowners than on a specialised sector driven by middle-sized estates.¹³¹ Feliu de la Peña wrote when this model was slowly decaying and the new, mostly wine-driven model was starting to unfold in the most dynamic counties such as Maresme or

¹²⁷ The terms Old Catalonia and New Catalonia come from the Middle Age and refer to the territories conquered to the Arabs by the Catalonian counts, lieges to the Frankish Emperor (Old Catalonia) and the territories conquered by them after they declared independence, this is, refused to renew the vassalage oath to the emperor after he failed to defend Barcelona in 985 against the forces of Andalusian caliph Al-Mansur (New Catalonia). The juridical, political, mode of settlement and even linguistic differences between the two halves of the country were and still are quite strong, such as the disperse farm mode of settlement in Old Catalonia vs. the compact villages, usually atop a hill, in New Catalonia; or the existence of the vowel shift in Old Catalonia's dialects of Catalan and the nonexistence of the vowel shift in New Catalonia.

¹²⁸ MARQUÈS I SUREDA, Salomó; *L'ensenyament a Girona al segle XVIII*, pg. 43-57. DANTÍ *et al.*, *Les xarxes urbanes a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII*, pg. 20-40.

¹²⁹ DANTÍ; *La revolta dels Gorretes*, pg. 83.

¹³⁰ According to Fdz. Albaladejo, Catalonia was a net wine exporter already in the late sixteenth century. See FERNÁNDEZ ALBALADEJO; *La crisis de la monarquía*, pg. 296.

¹³¹ GIRALT, Emili; *Història agrària dels Països Catalans*, pg. 266.

Garraf.¹³² The full unfolding of the wine-driven model came later into the 18th century although the foundation can be already acknowledged during the *second recuperation*¹³³.

While some wines like *malvasia* from Sitges or very refined reds from Priorat county were exportable, the wines produced around Reus in the southern coast were too weak. This combined with an increased demand for strong alcoholic beverages both in the Americas and in Northern Europe and led some coastal counties of Catalonia, chiefly the Baix Camp and the Maresme, to specialise in distillation.¹³⁴ In 1685 Joseph Shalett, English consul in Barcelona, founded a brandy distillery in Reus in a place later known as “The English consul’s pots”. Reus became the distillation centre of the country, with some companies specialised in supplying the American market via their Andalusian agents in Cadis, others supplying the Northern European market via Lisbon and Dutch agents.¹³⁵

3.2. Manufactures

Woollen cloth was the most important manufacture in the country and the most important French import. It had been crucial to Catalonia’s economy since the Middle Age, it kept being important during all periods until cotton took its place around 1840. During the *second recuperation* woollen fabrics did not disappear from Catalonia’s economic structure, but rather gave way to a more diversified economy where they were still important.

The cloth manufacture had experienced some difficulties since 1620 but was not in full crisis until the 1640s, when the market was conquered by French producers. The First Catalan Republic (1640-1652) was under French protection so, during the war, the French had a freer way into the country than the Spanish.¹³⁶ The prevalent inflation, paired with the economic disruption brought by the war, helped the French traders to gain a foot into the market. The causes behind the domination of French cloth were multiple: there was a preference for imports even at equal price and quality, French products were cheaper to produce and often smuggled in without paying customs

¹³² DANTÍ; *Catalunya entre el redreç i la revolta*.

¹³³ BERNAT, Pasqual; *La vinya a la Catalunya del segle XVIII – les propostes de renovació de Josep Navarro Mas i Marquet*. FERNÁNDEZ ALBALADEJO; *La crisis de la monarquía*, pg. 296.

¹³⁴ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 202.

¹³⁵ In Catalan “*les olles del cònsol anglès*”. MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 50.

¹³⁶ There have been two independent Catalan republics, the First (1640-1652) and the Second (1809-1812). The Second one is almost completely overlooked since it was Napoleon’s doing, something that attests to the phobia of anything French that developed in Catalonia after the War of the Spanish Succession and that stills dominates both the collective intellectual and academic research in Catalonia. Research on it is almost non-existent and the vast majority of the population even ignore that there was a Second Republic.

duties and they had deceptive looks that made them attractive to the sight although their quality was deplorable. This last cause was central to Feliu de la Peña's worries: he argued that Catalans were being defrauded because even if cheaper than domestic product, French cloth was of such low quality that it became a losing deal. The presence of adulterated French and -to a lesser extent- Dutch cloth led to unemployment amongst Catalan producers who could not compete and to fiscal imbalances because of smuggling.

Even if the *second recuperation* was not a textile-driven economy cloth manufactures were an important sector and their decadence meant economic and fiscal problems as well as social unrest. The petition presented to Barcelona's municipal government which inspired Feliu de la Peña's *Político discurso* asked for a ban on French cloth distribution. Feliu de la Peña himself praised the English policy of forbidding raw wool exports as a way to boost domestic cloth production, although it is unlikely that this was a real solution.¹³⁷ Wool manufactures were hampered by inflation, outdated production methods, ineffective customs control and excessive guild regulations, although not by a geographical curse that rose transport costs.¹³⁸

He also complained that many types of cloth produced in Catalonia were not anymore, such as *trentens*, *reals de cinc* or *cencillos*, and that production should be re-encouraged. Some, such as *vint-i-quatrens*, *dotzens* or *setzens*, were still produced but with less output than before.¹³⁹ White etamines were produced in Tarragona with competitive prices and good quality, while taffeta, damask, satin, plain cloth (*lisos*), flowered cloth (*floreados*), velvet, *llamas*, gold and silver embroidery, brocades, brocatelles and various kinds of stockings were still produced and could compete against French products. Other cloth still produced in Catalonia could compete against Flemish imports: scarlet cloth, (*h*)*erbajes*, chamelots, *anascotes* (the Castilian word for Hondschoote cloth), *borats*, *groguets*, embroideries of gold, silver, silk, linen and *pita*.¹⁴⁰

Some of these were luxury products (embroideries, scarlets, taffetas, damasks) while others were rough fabrics ((*h*)*erbajes* or some varieties of chamelot). Apart from those quoted by Feliu de la Peña there were several examples of successful wool manufactures: during the *decisive century* (1550-1640) various production phases were delocalised into cities and towns that were expanding in Old Catalonia (Vic, Olot, Moià,

¹³⁷ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Político discurso*, sixth chapter.

¹³⁸ KAMEN; *Spain in the later seventeenth century*, pg.73. GRAFE; *Distant tyranny*. DE VRIES; *The economy of Europe in an age of crisis*.

¹³⁹ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Fénix*, pg. 72-73. The names of the fabrics describe how many yarns were used as basis for the weaving, *vint-i-quatrens* coming from *vint-i-quatre* (twenty-four), *vint-i-dosens* from twenty-two, *setzens* from sixteen, etc.

¹⁴⁰ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Fénix*, pg. 72-76.

Granollers...), while the traditional big manufacturing centres reconverted into finishing operations (Barcelona) or underwent de-industrialisation (Girona). Passemanterie expanded in Barcelona from one producer to seventy-two,¹⁴¹ while hemp was produced in the central flatland of the Vallès Oriental county.¹⁴²

Dyes are fundamental to textiles; they required very skilled labour and were expensive and difficult to produce. They were produced mostly in Barcelona, following the dynamic of concentrating luxury or highly specialised manufactures in the capital.¹⁴³ The wool dyers' guild had been established in Barcelona relatively lately, with full masters' examination in 1497. During the 16th and 17th centuries their statutes were reformed several times. The silk dyers' guild was established in Barcelona in 1619-1624, in the last years of the *decisive century*, following the pattern of concentrating highly skilled trades in the capital city.¹⁴⁴ The connection between these different centres was made by investors and travelling merchants and carriers, creating a separation between investor and producer in an increasingly market-depending economy, defined by Vilar as "Catalans became used to produce for selling and not for consuming".¹⁴⁵

One of Feliu de la Penya's chief preoccupations was to introduce new production techniques already used in Europe. Scarlett dye production, according to him, had recently been re-discovered by Barcelonan artisans but there was a risk of quality reduction lest controls be enforced. He argued for a toughening of quality standards and for public officials to control the production method.¹⁴⁶ Dyes, apart from pricy and difficult to produce, were in dear lack in Catalonia, as the envoys from the monarchy specifically mentioned.¹⁴⁷

This is consistent with the model of *industrious revolution* as presented by de Vries, arguing for an increase in output through the decentralisation and outsourcing of basic processes of manufacture to relatively unemployed rural workers. These rural workers in new production centres needed to be connected by merchants working on an urban network and tended to focus on one concrete process or product.¹⁴⁸ The description fits within the models of the *urban network of early modern Catalonia*, and the *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification* unfolding from the 16th century onwards.

¹⁴¹ GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*, pg. 80-81.

¹⁴² FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

¹⁴³ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 76.

¹⁴⁴ Enciclopèdia catalana, entry "tintorers" (dyers).

¹⁴⁵ VILAR; *Catalunya dins l'Espanya moderna*, pg.21.

¹⁴⁶ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 76.

¹⁴⁷ CARRERA PUJAL; *Historia política y económica*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36-37.

¹⁴⁸ DE VRIES; *Industrious revolution*.

Silk was the second most important manufacture in 17th-century Spain, although not in Catalonia; its production was concentrated in the south and south-east (Valencia, Granada, Toledo, Seville).¹⁴⁹ Silk weaving and silkworm raising only developed during the 18th century; manufactures were created in Reus, Mataró and Manresa while silkworms were raised in the Baix Penedès county and in the western plain (Garrigues, Noguera and Segrià counties).¹⁵⁰

Feliu de la Peña's complaints were addressed against Italian silks which were *only for the eyes*, weaved with thick yarn and paired with gum; they would not last two months, contrarily to those weaved in Catalonia that could resist for years.¹⁵¹ Although there is still insufficient research Catalonia did not produce much silk during the 17th century, so it is likely that Feliu de la Peña referred to Spanish silks in general, mostly Valencian or Granadan. Aragon produced in 1680 around 40.000 pounds of silk a year, 80% of which was manufactured in Saragossa. Granada –with 100.000 inhabitants, the centre of silk production and the biggest industrial city in Spain- had an output of 130.000 pounds in 1678. It is thus very likely that Catalonia produced some silk during the 17th century if we take Aragon as a mirror. Kamen quotes that in 1699 3,000 silk weavers were unemployed in Toledo because Valencian silk yarn had become unaffordable due to French merchants buying it.¹⁵² According to Feliu de la Peña, the trade imbalance in silk was even higher than with cloth: 301.12 *lliures* for a pound of weaved silk while a pound of raw silk sold for 2.18 *lliures*.¹⁵³

Apart from silk and woollen cloth, Feliu de la Peña quoted other textiles. Cotton was not featured because it didn't appear in Catalonia until the mid-18th century at earliest but white cloth (hemp or linen) could easily be produced in Catalonia because of the climatological and geological conditions.¹⁵⁴ Feliu de la Peña argued for its promotion, although it was already produced in the central flatland of the Vallès Oriental county.¹⁵⁵ Ribbons were very important although they had to be imported with a yearly imbalance of 40.000 *escuts*; Feliu de la Peña quoted the case of a ribbon-maker that asked him for a loan to expand his workshop; he declined because he lacked the capital, something that was a major problem in the late 17th century and that much troubled Feliu de la Peña.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁹ KAMEN; *Spain in the later 17th century*, pg. 73.

¹⁵⁰ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg.70 and 72.

¹⁵¹ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Político discurso*, pg. 16.

¹⁵² KAMEN; *Spain in the later seventeenth century*, pg. 73-74.

¹⁵³ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Político discurso*, pg. 34.

¹⁵⁴ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 76.

¹⁵⁵ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

¹⁵⁶ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 75.

Iron was one of the few goods still abundant after the years of crisis, as public officials acknowledged.¹⁵⁷ According to Feliu de la Peña Catalonia produced fire weapons, knives, daggers, jack-knives and knife-cases, as well as pig-iron.¹⁵⁸ Even if information is scarce, iron was one of the most profitable trades and helped various merchants to amass capital. Catalonia has iron seams in the Pyrenees, which led to micro specialisation and also to technological advances. The Catalan foundry (*Farga catalana*) spread throughout the mountains along the rivers to produce pig-iron.¹⁵⁹ This iron was later transformed, following the model of micro specialisation and macro diversification. Daggers and swords were produced in Vic in the Middle age and exported to Italy; when exports decayed in the 15th and 16th centuries, firearms started to be produced. Martí Piles was the son of a Vic gunsmith.¹⁶⁰ By the late 17th century all sorts of weapons were produced in Ripoll (firearms and nails), Solsona (daggers and tools), Manresa (nails), Vic (firearms and daggers), Cardona (nails), Girona, Tortosa, Igualada and Barcelona.¹⁶¹ Other manufactures developed during the 18th century related with iron: buttons in Gironella or forks in Alentorn.¹⁶² Vilafranca del Penedès produced daggers and cutting tools like scissors, various minor iron objects were manufactured in Cervera and iron hoops around the expanding viticulture areas.¹⁶³ Mataró had developed a thriving metallurgic industry during the 16th and 17th centuries which counted fourteen independent craftsmen by 1682; some of them formed companies to get involved in overseas trade and by 1720 an envoy to the governor reported the existence of several tool factories. A big part of their output was iron hoops and other supplies for coopers.¹⁶⁴

Feliu de la Peña also noted the existence of silversmiths and goldsmiths, two luxury manufactures grouped under the name *argenteres*.¹⁶⁵ Martí Piles' father in law was an *argenter*. They had been present in the country since the Middle age, as the medieval *Carrer de l'Argenteria* (Silversmith's Street) in Barcelona demonstrates, but

¹⁵⁷ CARRERA PUJAL; *Historia política y económica*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36-37.

¹⁵⁸ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 76-77.

¹⁵⁹ Although it is uncertain whether it really originated in Catalonia or in Italy, the name "Catalan foundry" and "Catalan process" remained. The likelihood was that it took root Catalonia more than in other territories because the ore found in Catalonia suited the process more than other ores. See SIMON I ARIAS, Júlia; *La farga catalana*.

¹⁶⁰ RICCI; *Narcís Feliu de la Peña i el seu temps*; pg. 254-257.

¹⁶¹ ORTEGA, Pere; *Indústria d'armes a Catalunya, dels trabucs a l'aeronàutica*, pg. 6-7. For the medieval Vic daggers see GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*. For Ripoll's firearms VILALTA, Jaume; *Les armes de foc de Ripoll* and *Armes antigues de Ripoll*. For other products FERRER; *The diverse growth*,

¹⁶² FERRER, *The diverse growth*.

¹⁶³ DANTÍ et al.; *Les xarxes urbanes a la Catalunya dels segles XVI i XVII.*, pg. 22. FERRER; *The diverse growth*.

¹⁶⁴ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 52.

¹⁶⁵ From *argent* ("silver" in Catalan, from Latin *argentum*).

during the 16th and 17th centuries the trade spread throughout the country. Some expanding towns and cities such as Mataró and Igualada commissioned silverworks and new buildings for their churches, which up to that point had been very modest.¹⁶⁶ Salvador Arroyo has studied the case for el Vendrell, an expanding coastal town in central-southern Catalonia, and shown how the first recorded silversmith in town was Pere Oliver, who died a bachelor in 1622, this is, full *decisive century*.¹⁶⁷

Copperware was mentioned when Feliu de la Peña said which manufactures could be exported by the proposed chartered company. Coppersmiths, known in Catalonia as potters (*calderers*) were first gilded in Barcelona in 1395 and worked under a statute dating from 1437. They were considered a division of ironsmiths and the foundries in the Pyrenees processed copper as well as iron, but there are very few studies on them, usually embedded within broader researches on early modern Catalan economy.¹⁶⁸ The report on the economic state of Catalonia after the war mentioned a lack of copper, although Feliu de la Peña said there was a surplus to be exported.¹⁶⁹

Glassworks are often included within metallurgy. Feliu de la Peña quoted the importance and good quality of Catalan glass, produced almost exclusively in Mataró, where he had contacts, relatives and partners.¹⁷⁰ Glass had been produced in Barcelona until the late Middle age, when producers decided to move to nearby Mataró because it offered lower rents and port duties. During the early modern period, Mataró was the most important glassmaking city in Catalonia, being perhaps the best example of micro specialisation, macro diversification, diverse growth and industrial decentralisation in Catalonia.¹⁷¹

Soap was an expanding business in Europe in the 17th century. The French official regulation for Marseille dates from 1688 and was issued by Louis XIV and signed by Jean-Baptiste Colbert's son, secretary to the King. During the Charles I personal rule in England (1629-1640) the soap monopoly was one of the king's most important sources of income, as well as one of England's fastest expanding manufactures.¹⁷² Soap was also required to prepare wools for spinning and combing,

¹⁶⁶ GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*, pg. 30-40.

¹⁶⁷ ARROYO I JULIVERT, Salvador; *Argenters i orfebreria religiosa a l'església del Vendrell (segles XVII-XIX)*.

¹⁶⁸ BAJET, Montserrat; *Aspectes del comerç a Catalunya en el segle XVI segons els llibres dels mostassàs*, pg. 137

¹⁶⁹ CARRERA PUJAL; *Historia política y económica*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36-37.

¹⁷⁰ FELIU DE LA PEÑA; *Fénix*, pg. 77, 93.

¹⁷¹ JUNCOSA I CASTELLÓ, Ramon and CLARIANA I ROIG, Joan Francesc; *El vidre a Mataró II – de l'alta edat mitjana al segle XVIII*.

¹⁷² MARTZ, Dorilyn Ellen; *Charles I and "Popish Soap": An Exercise in Factional Court Politics*. NEF, John U.; *A comparison of industrial growth in France and England from 1540 to 1640*, chapter IX *The "new" manufactures*. Jean-Baptiste Colbert's son was also named Jean-Baptiste Colbert.

making it a complementary input of textile manufacture as well as consumption good. Feliu de la Peña argued for establishing soap manufactures in southern Catalonia: an unspecified place close to the sea could have a manufactory, the area around Tarragona could supply olive oil and the aromatic herbs could be grown around Tortosa.¹⁷³ We know that during the *second recuperation* the Camp de Tarragona produced olive oil and that the areas around Tortosa would produce barilla for soap-making in the 18th century.¹⁷⁴

Leather was briefly quoted as being abundant in Catalonia.¹⁷⁵ Although the reports of the Spanish officials after the war did not mention a surplus in leather, they didn't mention a lack of it either. Leather was a traditional manufacture in Catalonia since the Middle Age and underwent a process of industrial decentralisation during the 16th century, following the pattern of micro specialisation and macro diversification typical of the *decisive century*. Igualada, a rather small village in the 15th century, became the nucleus of this process and rose to a very prominent position in the early modern period.¹⁷⁶ Several places developed leather manufactures as a consequence of this decentralisation, while Barcelona became a major centre for investments that connected cattle drovers in various fairs across the country with tanners in Vilafranca and Igualada. Igualada, Vic and Manresa specialised in leather tanning, while Vilafranca del Penedès and Reus did so in shoemaking, although they had some tanners. Later on Olot and Lleida also developed tanneries and leatherworks. Redoul (*coriara myrtifolia*), a vegetal tanning agent, was produced around Sitges; while *aiguacuit* (animal collagen used as sticker) was supplied by merchants based in Barcelona.¹⁷⁷

The relative backwardness of Catalan or Spanish textile technology was acknowledged by Feliu de la Peña as a cause of the state of decline of its manufactures and consistent with the anti-economic role played by guilds as depicted by Ogilvie and the lack of investment as shown by Kamen, although Feliu de la Peña did not consider guilds to be the cause thereof.¹⁷⁸ He quoted the invention of an unspecified new kind of cloth by the Germans and how English, French, Flemish and Dutch producers tried to introduce the technique in their own manufactures, while Spain only imported the

¹⁷³ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 76.

¹⁷⁴ *Camp de Tarragona* (Tarragona's country) is a general denomination of the counties surrounding this city. For the barilla see FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 71

¹⁷⁵ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Político discurso*, pg. 34.

¹⁷⁶ CARRERA PUJAL; *Historia política y económica*, v. I, pg. 365; quoted by KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 36-37.

¹⁷⁷ DANTÍ *et al.*; *Les xarxes urbanes*, pg. 34, 35, 41, 48, 49. FERRER; *Diverse growth*, pg. 199. Although the Oxford dictionary does not include it, Wikipedia says "***Coriaria myrtifolia***, called in English **redoul** [...]". See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coriaria_myrtifolia.

¹⁷⁸ OGILVIE; *A bitter living*. KAMEN; *Spain in the later seventeenth century*.

finished cloth.¹⁷⁹ This led to a trade imbalance that Feliu de la Penya quantified: 2'5 *quintales* of raw wool were sold to a foreign merchant for 30 *lliures*; these 2'5q allowed the production of cloth valued in 100 *lliures*, which was then purchased to the same foreign merchant, “*paying one hundred for what was sold for thirty*”.¹⁸⁰

The almost total absence of industry in most of the country troubled the 18th century ministers as much as it had troubled the *arbitristas* in the 16th century. Woollen cloth and silk were the only manufactures that existed. Spain's industrial backwardness became of primal importance for the new dynasty ascended to the throne in 1715, the Bourbons.¹⁸¹ The new rulers followed Colbert's example even bringing French economists to work for them such as Jean Orry, King Philip V's first Superintendent of finances. The new dynasty tried to overcome this shortage by promoting the *Reales fábricas* (royal factories), such as the Royal Factory of Tapestries, the Royal Glass Factory or Martínez Silverworks, among others. These policies were common in 17th- and 18th-century Europe, in France under Jean-Baptiste Colbert, in Prussia by Frederick the Great or in Portugal by the marquis of Pombal or by Ericeira.¹⁸²

Map 3: Royal factories and places in Spain, 18th century¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Político discurso*, pg. 24.

¹⁸⁰ “...lo peor es aun a nuestra España, pagando ciento, de lo que nos han comprado con treynta (que esta es la cuenta de los paños que se texen con dos quintales, y medio de lana, que vale treynta libras, y fabricados los paños vale cien libras) con q[ue] con treynta libras nuestras se llevan cie[n]to.”

¹⁸¹ For us Catalans, the Bourbons were not our kings until at least September 12th 1714.

¹⁸² For France see MEYER, Jean; *Colbert*. For Portugal see FREIRE COSTA *et al*; *An economic history of Portugal*. For Prussia see PIERENKEMPER, Toni; *Mercantilism in the Reign of Frederick II and Prussian Industrial Politics in Upper Silesia 1740-1786*.

¹⁸³ “Royal factories, Royal places and new urbanism 18th century” (title, top-right). Orange squares are royal factories; black dots are newly founded places. “Royal places and hunting reserves”, with royal hunting reserves in dark green and royal gardens in light green (bottom-right squared mini-map).



Source: Instituto Geográfico Nacional. Atlas Nacional de España.

Some earlier attempts at promoting domestic manufactures were undertaken during the 17th century: in 1694 Charles II decided to dress only in woollen cloth produced in the factory of Segovia, the most important in Spain, thus obliging the rest of the nobility to follow the example. This gesture added to the recuperation of the factory, that was increasing its output since the 1680s. Segovia was one of the few industrial centres that fared relatively well during the general crisis of the 1600s or, at least, one of the few that actually survived.

Table 2: Active looms in the Royal Factory of Segovia

Year	Active looms
1640	300
1680	100
1682	50
1691	170
1697	252

Source: KAMEN; *Spain in the late seventeenth century*, pg. 71.

Spanish economists such as Jerónimo de Uztáriz also became prominent mercantilists. Many of their measures can be traced back to the 16th-century *arbitristas*. All of them agreed on the source of the economic malaise of Spain: its

dependence on imported manufactures. Despite being an imperial power, its economy was based on the exportation of raw materials, chiefly wool; and the bullion from the rich mines in the Americas did not go to a capital market for domestic investment, but rather to pay public debt and foreign manufactures.¹⁸⁴ The new dynasty reformed the public administration to increase tax revenue and to fight against corruption, which had been an endemic problem during the 17th century. While the fiscal reform was certainly successful in many senses, the fight against corruption was not so much.

Catalonia was very corrupt during the 18th century, as the rest of Spain was. There is evidence that the system prevailing before 1715 in Catalonia led to *less* corruption, for example with municipal offices being chosen by yearly sortition (*insaculament*) rather than by for-life royal appointment. The expansion of manufactures and exchanges also helped to regain the domestic market for the domestic producers. Some recent research has questioned the role of the new administration in promoting economic growth, arguing that the corruption, authoritarianism and social inequality it created in reality hampered development: Catalonia was already a bourgeois society in the 17th century and after 1716, the seigneurial regime and the political control by the big nobility toughened, and corruption and fiscal harassment escalated, thus making Catalonia thrive not thanks to the conquest, but rather *despite* it.¹⁸⁵

During the 18th century royal woollen manufactures were founded throughout Spain (Segovia, Ezcaray, Brihuega...) while they remained private in Catalonia. Some

¹⁸⁴ KAMEN; *Spain in the later 17th century*, pg. 68-70. Francisco de Quevedo, one of Castile's most important writers, said in his poem about money *Poderoso caballero es don Dinero* that "[Money] Is in the Indies honourably born, where the world accompanies him; he comes to die in Spain and is in Genoa buried." The poem attests for Spain's dependence on Genoese bankers to finance its gigantic military expense. Before the Genoese Spain depended on Antwerp and Augsburg bankers, something that attests to the very early foreign *dependence* of the Spanish empire, as proposed by Kamen. KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico de historia moderna*, pg. 61-69, "*Decadencia*" and "*Dependencia*". See also KAMEN; *Spain 1469-1715, a society of conflict*, pg. 274-275. See also KAMEN; *The decline of Spain: a historical myth?*

¹⁸⁵ The word "*insaculament*" comes from *sac* (a rather big bag), where pieces with the name of the eligible people were introduced and then one was drawn, making the drawn name appointee to the office for one year. After the War of Separation the monarchy extorted the right to control the *llistes d'insaculació* ("bagdrawing lists"), where the eligible people were recorded before every sortition, and to exclude potential enemies of the royal rule. With the 1716 Decree the system was fully abolished and new municipal governments, based on an *alcalde* (mayor) assisted by *regidores* (councilmen), all of them nominated by the king and for life unless removed by the king, were implemented. This system, the classical Castilian municipal government since the Middle Age, led to an unprecedented increase in corruption, as Torras i Ribé's very recent research has proven. See TORRAS I RIBÉ; *Misèria, poder i corrupció a la Catalunya borbònica (1714-1808)*. Many remnants, although purely symbolic, still exist in Andorra, a culturally Catalan country that managed to defend its independence against the Castilians and the French. The Andorran mayors are still *cònsols*, the old Catalan word, while in Catalonia they are *alcaldes*, the Castilian word; sergeants in the army are *deseners* (literally, someone who commands ten men) in Andorra, but *sergents* in Catalonia; the heads of the state's lieutenants in Andorra are *veguers* (the old Catalan word), while they are "the government's delegates" in Catalonia.

factories were founded in Barcelona such as the Royal cotton spinning factory (*Real manufactura de hilados de algodón de Barcelona*), but not in the rest of Catalonia, and their importance was relative since they were centred on cotton, a luxury manufacture still in its infancy. An exception is the Royal dockyard in Sant Feliu de Guíxols (*Real fábrica de navíos*), operative only between 1716 and 1724.¹⁸⁶ In Catalonia the expansion of manufacture was made with private capitals, mostly from the expanding wine, brandy and dried fruit and nuts trade. Many farmers invested some of their revenue in various manufacturing or trading enterprises like Feliu de la Peña's cousin, Francesc Feliu from Mataró, who was his contact in the glass-making industry despite being a farmer.¹⁸⁷

Following the trend of *diverse growth* based on the *urban network* other industries appeared: anchovies and salted fish became prominent in different zones in the country; paper manufactures developed on the shores of river Francolí; alcoholic distillation became important in the centre-south... one important case of innovation face to the decadence of the textile sector happened in the counties around Girona, a prominent manufacturing centre during the Middle Age. The decadence of Girona's textile in the 16th and 17th centuries was paired with the development of the dried fruit and nuts sector; the north-east of Catalonia became an important chestnut and hazelnut producing zone, exported through Sant Feliu de Guíxols. Other goods such as cork bottle-stoppers became important in this area.¹⁸⁸

Iron and foundries continued to expand in the northern fringe of the country during the 18th century until the industrialisation in northern Europe made the Catalan foundry uncompetitive.¹⁸⁹ During the first half of the century the paper-making industry developed in Central Catalonia and the glass-making industry expanded in Mataró and Barcelona. Traditional products such as wheat and olive oil were produced everywhere but especially in the north-eastern, western and south-western counties. The higher counties in the Pyrenees introduced potatoes during the 18th century, Osona and La Garrotxa counties grew corn and the Vallès Oriental county produced hemp. The western counties also produced almonds, while the Maresme county started to produce oranges and lemons, peas and strawberries. Some north-western counties started to produce apples and pears as well as mushrooms, while the shore of the Ebre

¹⁸⁶ For the Spanish Royal factories see HELGUERA, Juan; *Las reales fábricas*, in COMÍN, Francisco and MARTÍN ACEÑA, Pablo; *Historia de la empresa pública en España*, pg. 79.

¹⁸⁷ KAMEN; *A Catalan merchant...*, pg. 34.

¹⁸⁸ DANTÍ *et al*; *Les xarxes urbanes*, pg. 20-40.

¹⁸⁹ FUSES NAVARRA, Víctor; *L'aixecament d'una frontera: entre La farga catalana del segle XVII i La mineria a Escaró (Conflent) del segle XX*, pg.253. GUILLAMET ANTON, Jordi; *Nova aproximació a la història d'Andorra*.

delta produced barilla for soap-making, this last example having been proposed by Feliu de la Penya.¹⁹⁰

Woollen textiles were produced in a very decentralised putting-out system; leather was produced in various mid-sized towns (Igualada, Manresa, Vic, Vilafranca) and an upstart silk industry appeared in Reus, Manresa and Mataró, with some mulberry and silkworm growers in the western counties. Lace became an important activity for women all along the northern coast; hosiery and hat-making were important in the Garrotxa and Maresme counties with two smaller nodes in La Seu d'Urgell and Puigcerdà. Coral was gathered again in the north-east, in counties where cork and salted fish were expanding.¹⁹¹ Other goods, such as ironworks, weaponry, olive oil, salted fish, paper, rice... developed, some recuperating from the 17th century (ironworks, olive oil), some starting anew as innovative sectors (paper, rice).¹⁹² By the mid-18th century it was clear to all observers that Catalonia was the most dynamic region in the whole of Spain and its importance was not necessarily linked to the textile.¹⁹³ As a counter-example it is interesting to quote that the major silk producing centres in the crown were Valencia and Granada.¹⁹⁴

3.3. Services

Catalonia suffered a lack of capital after the war and the crisis. This situation led, among other things, to very expensive freights. Feliu de la Penya exemplified it by the case of an English or French ship that came to Catalonia to buy (salted) fish, bought a cargo of 4000 *reales* and demanded 2000 *reales* as freight, 50% cargo value. According to him rates were at 25-30% of cargo value and sometimes even higher, as this example demonstrated. The lack of credit combined with an insufficient merchant marine to hamper overseas trade.¹⁹⁵ Another example is that Feliu de la Penya himself had to decline an investment in a profitable ribbon-maker's workshop because he lacked capital.¹⁹⁶

Traditionally the Catalan merchants had relied on the *comanda*, a society where investment was divided amongst various partners and different roles existed; the investors could borrow money from a lender, the pilot could be an investor himself or

¹⁹⁰ FERRER; *Diverse growth*.

¹⁹¹ FERRER; *Diverse growth*.

¹⁹² For the expansion of weaponry, especially in the town of Ripoll, see VILLALTA; *Armes antigues de Ripoll*. For rice in the North-east see GIFRÉ; *La pràctica del conreu de l'arròs a l'Empordà, segle XVIII (abans de la reglamentació de 1767)*.

¹⁹³ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

¹⁹⁴ FERRER; *The diverse growth*.

¹⁹⁵ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 79.

¹⁹⁶ FERRER; *The diverse growth*, pg. 70.

work against a commission on sales or a fixed salary and a freight payment (*noli*)¹⁹⁷. The pilot, in charge of the voyage and the commercial operations, was usually allowed to wear a parcel (*pacotilla*) with his own goods to sell at his profit. Following the trends of *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification*, Barcelona evolved into a financial centre that provided capital for small merchants, artisans or farmers to invest in overseas trade, complemented by Reus and by Cadis, either Andalusian merchants or Catalan agents established there. Capital was divided in sixteen parts and every partner subscribed one sixteenth (*setzè*) and sometimes one thirty-second (*trenta-dosè*) or one sixty-fourth (*seixanta-quatrè*). Catalan trade in the 17th century, during the whole *second recuperation* and up until the 1740s was a very cautious one, where investment was heavily fragmented to avoid risks and as a response to the very limited amount of available capital that Feliu de la Peña complained about.¹⁹⁸ In Genoa or Marseilles it was common for a ship or company to be owned by a single investor, but not in Catalonia up until the 1740s.¹⁹⁹ The heavy fragmentation of operations is characteristic of the first phase of Catalan merchant expansion (1680-1715) as proposed by Martínez Shaw, that overlaps with the *second recuperation* and the War of the Spanish succession.²⁰⁰

Financial concepts also evolved from the simple medieval *comanda*, based on a loan against expected final profits (*part de diners*), into a fixed-rate loan agreed upon signing the contract (*canvi marítim*); other concepts such as investment on the ship and transportation (*buch i nòlits*) or in the goods (*mercaderies*), and investment from shipbuilding was separated from investment in merchant trips; an important insurance market was already developed by the late 17th century.²⁰¹ During the *second recuperation* rates were so exorbitant due to the lack of capital that Feliu de la Peña proposed that the government issued public loans (*“cambios marítimos a riesgo del*

¹⁹⁷ Catalan grammar dates from the early 20th century, which means that most words were misspelled in the 17th or 18th centuries according to our current rules. *Noli* is the modern, “correct” word for freight, but was written *nòlit* before the reform.

¹⁹⁸ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 19-41.

¹⁹⁹ MAIXÉ ALTÉS, Joan Carles; *La marina catalana a la conquista de los mercados hispanos en el siglo XVIII*, pg. 118.

²⁰⁰ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 72-198. Shaw proposes a first phase that includes the *second recuperation* and the War of the Spanish succession, characterised by recuperation, fragility, extreme cautiousness, heavy fragmentation of investment, single-operation companies... a second one (1715-1735) characterised by an increased presence in the Spanish peninsular market, more involvement with agents in Cadis, relative withdrawal from the Atlantic market (as exemplified by the anti-Portuguese embargo), the preparation of a strong merchant fleet and the creation of a network of agents throughout the peninsula, for example the settlement of Catalans in Cadis instead of working through Andalusian agents; and a third one from 1735 to 1755, where Catalan traders are directly present in the American colonial market *via* their usually Catalan agents in Cadis with solid companies that can send ships with full cargoes on a regular basis. These are called the “Phases of Catalan penetration”, which prepared the situation that unfolded after the Decree on Free trade of 1778.

²⁰¹ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 32-41.

común”) to boost trade and lower interests.²⁰² By the late 18th century the Spanish merchant fleet was still unable to compete in the international freight market, counting less than 150.000 tons against a million tons owned by the British; it has increased from roughly 100.000 tons at the beginning of the century, 33.000 of the new ones were Catalan-built.²⁰³

Feliu de la Penya proposed to build more poorhouses and orphanages with a difference between *exposed* children (*expòsits/expósitos*, abandoned by their living parents) and *orphaned* children (*orfes/huérfanos*, whose parents were dead). The centres for exposed children should teach them the Christian religion but also a craft. He proposed the following ones: working with fabrics, making ribbons, spinning hemp, weaving and garnishing stockings among others he did not specify. These new centres could be funded with the help from religious congregations and other Catholic orders. The orphanages for really *orphaned* children could choose every year thirty to forty children (most likely pre-teenagers) and instruct them in Latin, mathematics, navigation and artillery to turn them into good pilots, artillerymen and military engineers.²⁰⁴

The merchant marine and the navy were fundamental services for Catalonia, a country highly involved in overseas trade since the Middle Age. Feliu de la Penya mentioned the existence of dockyards and a shipbuilding industry, but not its importance. Apart from the big one in Barcelona, dating from the 13th century, smaller dockyards existed throughout the coast in Arenys de Mar, Mataró, Canet, and other places. They benefited from a process of decentralisation of shipbuilding during the 16th century that left Barcelona as a mostly military dockyard while merchant vessels were increasingly built in other places.²⁰⁵ Ship sails were produced in Catalonia; Feliu de la Penya mentioned their good quality.²⁰⁶

Overseas trade had been crucial to Catalonia since the Middle Age, when a strong commercial relation with Italy, the Levant and the North of Africa developed and the monarchy favoured the construction of a military navy and a network of trading consulates to promote and protect trade. This medieval splendour dwindled in the 14th century with the Black Death and in the 15th with the Catalan civil war and only

²⁰² FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 114.

²⁰³ MAIXÉ ALTÉS; *La marina catalana a la conquesta de los mercados hispanos en el siglo XVIII*, pg. 119.

²⁰⁴ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, chapter XVIII.

²⁰⁵ CAPDEVILA MUNTADAS, Assumpta; *Les bases de l'especialització econòmica al Maresme als segles XVI i XVII*.

²⁰⁶ FELIU DE LA PENYA; *Fénix*, pg. 77.

recovered during the 16th.²⁰⁷ Catalan dockyards adapted during these two centuries to a more modest production of small trading ships instead of the massive medieval galleys. The output of these dockyards was not enough since Catalonia lacked, by the late 17th century, a decent merchant marine, a cause of complaint by Feliu de la Peña who constantly advocated for “expanding navigation”.

Even though the dockyard in Mataró was relatively busy and consumed much of the nails produced by the smithies in Ripoll, the merchant marine was small for the requirements. Feliu de la Peña argued for creating a chartered company that could, issuing decrees, boost naval construction, as well as for a change in strategic deployment: the domestic coast was largely unprotected and open to Algerian privateers’ raids, a major source of troubles during the 16th and 17th centuries. Minorca is the best example: its two cities were raided and destroyed by Algerian pirates, Maó by Aruj Barbarossa in 1535 and Ciutadella by Piali in 1585; half of the island’s population was enslaved and Philip II even planned to evacuate it in 1570.²⁰⁸ Although the island recovered relatively during the last half of the 16th century it was poverty-stricken and underdeveloped by the time it was ceded to England (1713), although recent scholarship has reduced the difference between a disastrous 17th century and a golden 18th century.²⁰⁹

Catalonia also suffered raids: all the Northern coast in 1543 from Cadaqués to Palamós; Pineda de Mar in 1545 and the threat of an invasion by 15.000 privateers in 1585 that, confronted with massive resistance by Catalans, changed plans and raided Ciutadella in Minorca. During the 17th century Algerian privateers lost the official protection of the Sublime Porte but kept attacking the coasts relentlessly. The last attack was reported in 1730.²¹⁰ In 1732 the Spanish navy conquered Oran and Mers el-Kebir, two of the biggest privateer ports in Algeria.²¹¹ The end of the privateer threat along the coast paired with the demographic increase and the expansion of overseas trade led to the famous process of “village duplication”, meaning that the protected villages along the Coastal Mountains founded twin villages next to the sea.²¹²

²⁰⁷ GARCIA ESPUCHE; *Un siglo decisivo*, chapter IV. FERRER I MALLOL, Maria Teresa; *El Consolat de Mar i els consolats d’ultramar, instrument i manifestació de l’expansió del comerç català*.

²⁰⁸ SOLDEVILA; *Resum d’història dels Països Catalans*, pg. 222.

²⁰⁹ CASANOVAS CAMPS, Miquel Àngel; *La transformació d’una economia insular, el cas de Menorca (1600-1920)*. VIDAL I BENDITO, Tomàs; *La demografia històrica menorquina*.

²¹⁰ DEL CAMPO I JORDÀ, Ferran; LÓPEZ I FONTRODONA, Sílvia; *Contribució al coneixement dels sistemes defensius principalment contra la pirateria i la seva incidència en el repoblament de la costa de l’Alt Maresme*.

²¹¹ FE CANTÓ, Luís Fernando; *El desembarco de Orán en 1732: aproximación analítica a una operación compleja*.

²¹² The *Serralada Litoral* (Coastal Mountains) is a chain of hills that covers most of coastal Catalonia, leaving a thin layer of flatland c. 10km. between the hills and the sea. Raids had made the coast dangerous since the 15th century and people moved to villages atop the hills, especially

Overseas trade became very important for Catalonia during the 18th century. The lack of a sufficient merchant fleet was overcome in the 1700s. The fleet counted mostly small vessels for coastal trade until the 1750s, under 100 tons of ballast, and some ships over 100 tons of ballast which crossed the Atlantic via Cadis. In 1726 the majority of Catalan shipmen (95%) had never stepped out of the Mediterranean, the exception being some from the biggest ports of Mataró, Sitges, Tortosa and Canet. In 1765 the seamen's register (*Matrícula de mar*) showed that 53.99% of the ships were for fishing, 38.46% were for coastal trade and 7.55% were for overseas (Atlantic) trade, with 53% of the whole fleet distributed amongst ports north of Barcelona, 15.3% in Barcelona and 31.5% south of Barcelona, confirming the specialisation of Arenys, Mataró and Canet as major dockyards.²¹³ Catalonia had in 1765 114 ships fit for crossing the Atlantic and 558 for coastal trade. Cadis, by contrast, had 79 overseas trading ships and 439 coastal trading ships. By the mid-18th century, before the opening of Barcelona to direct trade with the colonies in 1778, Catalonia had already built a respectable merchant fleet. After 1778 the amount of ships slightly reduced as the merchant capital invested in bigger, more expensive vessels for the colonial trade and the coastal trade fleet became less important.²¹⁴

Although the recuperation of the domestic market was fundamental, the involvement of Catalonia in overseas trade during the 18th century was extremely important. The *second recuperation*, as a continuation of the *decisive century*, unfolded in a country separated from the rest of monarchy by customs and that was only allowed to trade with the colonies through an onerous monopoly port. During the 18th century this changed, fully opening the Peninsula to Catalan merchants and carriers with the 1716 decree that brought the suppression of internal customs; later on with the opening of the colonies to direct trade from Barcelona in 1778 with the *Reglamento de libre comercio* (Regulation on free trade) issued by Charles III. This was not the cause of Catalonia's economic development, but an opportunity that proved so profitable because of the changes that had taken place previously. The most profitable good shipped to the American colonies was not cloth, but brandy and

along the dynamic Maresme county. During the 18th century many of these villages created a twin village next to the sea, often with the same name: Arenys duplicated into Arenys *de munt* (Upper Arenys) and Arenys *de mar* (Arenys by the sea); Vilassar duplicated into Vilassar *de dalt* (Vilassar atop) and Vilassar *de mar* (Vilassar by the sea); Palafolls founded Vilanova de Palafolls ("Palafolls' Newtown", later known as Malgrat de mar); Premià duplicated into Premià *de mar* and *de dalt*, etc. See MARTÍNEZ SHAW, Carlos; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*, pg. 53.

²¹³ MAIXÉ; *La marina catalana a la conquista de los mercados hispánicos en el siglo XVIII*, pg. 114-115. The north had a relatively homogeneous distribution of its fleet, while in the south its smaller fleet was much more concentrated, 60% of it being in Tarragona and Tortosa. This is consistent with the different settlement patterns between Old Catalonia (North, denser and more decentralised) and New Catalonia (south, less dense and more concentrated).

²¹⁴ DELGADO, Josep Maria; *Auge y decadencia de la marina colonial catalana (1720-1821)*; *La industria de la construcción naval catalana (1750-1850)*.

Catalonia had a merchant fleet up to the challenge even before the Decree on free trade of 1778. Other profitable goods included iron and ironworks, paper and only well into the late 18th century, cotton manufactures. Before the opening of trade to the Americas, Catalan merchants had already spread throughout the peninsula, had built a network of partners and agents, traded with the Americas via delegates in Cadis and traded regularly with England or the Netherlands, chiefly in wine or nuts. Catalonia was heavily involved in colonial via Cadis trade long before the opening of other ports.²¹⁵

A study of a random ship sailing from Barcelona to the America in 1774 shows that its cargo were 300 pipes of wine and brandy, bound for Montevideo.²¹⁶ Another example, that of captains Joan Gener and Ramon Castelló under corvette *Trujillana* during March and April 1810, loaded in Cadis bound for Veracruz (Mexico) 250 pieces of *platilla*, 250 pieces of *bretaña*, 625 pieces of woollen cloth from Alcoi, 25 boxes of fine silk (*listonería de Granada*), 100 *balones* of paper, 456 iron bars (varieties *planchuda* and *bergajón*), 24 barrels of red wine, 502 barrels of brandy, 200 barrels of sherry, 2061 *botijas* of olive oil, 50 barrels of almonds and 600 boxes of raisins. Other goods loaded include two shotguns, a set of guitar strings, cotton stockings, some minor textile manufactures (stockings, handkerchiefs, buttons...) or white Canary wine.²¹⁷

The only products from Catalonia are red wine, brandy and paper. The woollen cloth comes from Alcoi, in southern Valencia, where a Royal cloth factory was established in 1800; silks come from Granada; *platilla* (a variety of linen or hemp cloth) comes from Germany; *bretaña* (another variety of linen) does not specify its origin but is most likely French or German; iron comes from Biscay in the Basque country; sherry comes obviously from Jerez in Andalusia; olive oil comes from Morón de la Frontera (Andalusia), almonds and raisins come from Valencia. The cotton stockings and other minor textile products seem to be from Catalonia and Canary wine is from the Canary Islands (most likely *malvasía* variety).

Various letters specify that the most profitable goods that could be sent to Veracruz are silk stockings and embroideries or, as the next best option, brandy. The market seems to be saturated with wine, which is expected to be sold at a loss, including sherry. Granada silks (*listonería*) and paper sell very well. Considering that this set of letters and registers is dated March-April 1810, this is, the last period of protoindustrialization in Catalonia, it is normal that the most profitable products are fine textiles such as cotton stockings and silks, but the second most profitable good is

²¹⁵ MARTÍNEZ SHAW; *Cataluña en la carrera de Indias*.

²¹⁶ *Diario de Cádiz a Montevideo*, paquebot *San Miguel*, captain Bartomeu Roig i Goday. 6-1,6-Col·leccions-01.01-Diaris de navegació. Museu Marítim de Barcelona. This data was collected during my work as a volunteer researcher in the Maritime Museum of Barcelona.

²¹⁷ Maritime Museum of Barcelona (MMB), document n. 56352.

still brandy. In 1774 the first ship quoted bound for Uruguay carried exclusively wine and brandy.

Other inventories of the 18th and early 19th centuries provide similar evidence: in 1811 captain Miquel Reus of xebec *Santo Cristo y Eulalia* shipped from Tarragona to Majorca 450 pieces of leather.²¹⁸ In 1797 captain Manuel Picón from brigantines *San Antonio de Padua* and *Las Almas* shipped 120 sets of white paper and 256 wood bars for making casks from Mataró to Alacant.²¹⁹ In 1806 captain P. Lloret shipped olive oil from Tortosa to Mataró.²²⁰ In 1826 captain Bonaventura Bertran of polacca *La Concepción* shipped a big cargo of sardines to Barcelona.²²¹ In 1798 an unknown captain sent to Veracruz (Mexico) a big cargo of olives.²²² In 1803 captain Miquel Martorell shipped a chest of cotton stockings to Veracruz, while in 1804 captain Bartomeu Roig sent there one box with silk ribbons.²²³ In 1805 captain Magí Coll transported 185 Catalan *quintars* (roughly 7700kg) of carobs from Tortosa to Mataró.²²⁴ In 1826 captain Bertomeu Ramon shipped to Barcelona 600 *quintars* of carobs and 5 *quintars* of cotton.²²⁵ In 1813 captain Joan Freixas shipped from Salou to Vilanova 100 casks of brandy and 20 barrels of almonds.²²⁶

We can see that even during the first years of the 19th century a great deal of the cargo shipped by Catalan merchants, produced in Catalonia, reunited the three characteristics identified during the *second recuperation*: relative (un)importance of the textile business as compared to others, existence of a variety of goods and geographical micro-specialisation; olive oil and carobs came from the south, almonds and brandy came from the areas around Tarragona and Reus, Mataró was heavily involved in paper and brandy (as shown by shipping wood *for making casks*)... with Barcelona already becoming a textile producing city, as shown by the cotton stockings, but not overwhelmingly dependent on it and the case not being extendable to the rest of the country. In the early 19th century the patterns of overseas trade could still show the effects of the forces and dynamics unleashed during the *second recuperation*, then more than a hundred years away.

The driving forces of Catalonia's 18th-century economy were not improvements in textile manufactures, although they played a complementary role in the unfolding of

²¹⁸ MMB, doc. 57136.

²¹⁹ MMB, doc. 57262

²²⁰ MMB, doc. 57325.

²²¹ MMB, doc. 55204.

²²² MMB, doc. 55264.

²²³ MMB, doc. 57159 and 57454.

²²⁴ MMB, doc. 57328. For the value of a Catalan *quintar* (41.5-42kg) see ALSINA I CATALÀ *et al.*, *Pesos, mides i mesures dels Països Catalans*.

²²⁵ MMB, doc. 55227.

²²⁶ MMB, doc. 56269.

a highly diversified and specialised economy. The foundations of economic growth were the expansion of vineyard-related industries (winemaking and distillation) paired with a major agrarian revolution and the creation of a decentralised, diversified putting-out system of manufactures. A consumer revolution started to unfold in some regions of Spain in the 1750s, but many of its trends were already noticeable in Catalonia in the late 17th century. “King Cotton” was not king until the 1840s and other textiles were important but complementary, not dominant, in a new economic mix. A system based on *microspecialisation*, *macrodiversification*, *diverse growth* in a country articulated in an *urban network* and protection and promotion of arts, crafts and navigation was responsible for it. Many of Feliu de la Peña’s proposals were correct and came to reality, some even existed already when he wrote: soap, hemp, shipyards, protection of the domestic coast, promotion of education, technological modernisation, defence of manual work as something intrinsically useful and worthy, credit union to overcome lack of capital. The colonies, the big calico factories in Barcelona or the integration *manu militari* of Catalonia into a unified Spanish state had little or no effect or, at best, provided new opportunities to a region that was able to grasp them, as opposed to, for example, Valencia or Galicia.

Chapter 4: Catalonia compared with other Spanish regions

4.1. Galicia

Although most of the Spanish periphery experienced an economic expansion in the last twenty years of the 17th century and during most of the 18th, only Catalonia and the Basque Country industrialised during the 19th century.²²⁷ Other expansive provinces like Galicia and Cantabria stagnated after the end of the Napoleonic wars. By the mid-20th century Galicia was Spain's most backward and depressed region. The Catalan case and, to a lesser extent the Basque one, remained qualitatively different from the Galician and Cantabrian ones.

Emigration was a problem in Galicia, contrarily to Catalonia. Galicia was already a major recruitment territory for the army in the 16th and 17th centuries due to the large amount of landless and unemployed population²²⁸; during the 19th and 20th centuries large amounts of Galicians emigrated to America or to Catalonia. While Catalonia increased its population by more than 100% in the 18th century, Galicia grew only by 33%. Catalonia continued to attract population in its expanding cities throughout the 19th and 20th centuries while Galicia sent wave after wave of emigrants. The causes of this divergence with the Catalan case are complex: agriculture did not modernise in Galicia and remained backward and unprofitable, with little crop diversification, outdated technology, extreme subdivision of land in minuscule farms which made impossible the utilisation of machinery or a rational exploitation. Galicia was also a demonetized economy where barter and payment in kind prevailed, with a heavy manorial regime and lack of industrial investment, ruled by a privileged rent-collecting elite that never evolved into an investing capitalist bourgeoisie.²²⁹ Galicians were migrants already in the 16th and 17th centuries to Northern Castile, where they worked as seasonal agricultural labourers to earn extra income. The army was the other escape valve of Galician poverty. 68.000 Galicians were recruited only between 1621 and 1659. With an average yearly draft of 9.000 soldiers for the whole crown, Galicia provided 1789 men each year, one in every five Spanish soldiers was Galician. Catalans were not obliged to serve in the royal army until 1716 unless they were called to defend

²²⁷ The lands inhabited by the Basque people have changed their name with the passage of time. Traditionally known as the *Provincias Vascongadas* (Basquish Provinces), they are currently known as *País Vasco* (Basque Country). In Basque the term *Euskal Herria* (The Basque Land) or *Euskadi* ("Basquia") are used. Three provinces are included within the Basque Land proper (Guipúzcoa/Gipuzkoa, Álava/Araba, Vizcaya/Bizkaia), while Navarre (Navarra/Nafarroa) is always counted apart due to its historical independence as Kingdom of Navarre.

²²⁸ KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico de la Historia Moderna*, pg. 75-79.

²²⁹ The migratory character of Galicians is acknowledged by the popular Argentinian jargon, a country with two major groups of immigrants, "Italians" and "Galicians", this is, Spaniards. In 1900 Buenos Aires had the biggest Galician community in the world, including any Galician city. It is today estimated that 65% of Buenos Aires' population descends of Galicians. CAMPOS ÁLVAREZ, Xosé/José Ramón; *La emigración gallega a América (1880-1930), integración y retorno*.

their native land or voluntarily enlisted. Catalonia was spared the burden of the empire's "blood tax" until 1716 but did not need the army as an escape for a mass of unemployed and landless peasants either.²³⁰ Furthermore, Galicia had no representation in the Estates of Castile; the deputies of Zamora, in southern León, represented the whole province, as opposed to the strong Catalan self-government institutions, the *Generalitat* and the *Corts generals del Principat*. According to Jan de Vries, self-government was as crucial to the development of Catalonia as the *urban network*.²³¹

The powerful Galician church and lower nobility (*fidalgos*, *fidalgúia*) owned most of the land that was leased to tenant farmers in *foros*, a contract of medieval origins.²³² The *foros* were usually very small plots, a situation worsened by Galicia's extremely sparse population, with only seven cities and numerous hamlets, cottages and villages spread throughout the province and connected by a myriad of small roads and paths.²³³ This geographical chaos contrasts with Catalonia's articulation in counties (*comarques*),²³⁴ communicated by a more rational network of roads, a perfect example being the Ribes road (*Carretera de Ribes*) that connected Barcelona with Ribes de Freser, the centre of the iron-smelting area, through the cities of Granollers, Vic and Ripoll, each within *max.* one day by foot from the closest one.²³⁵

²³⁰ KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico*, pg. 77. With 9.000 men of average draft and 68.000 Galicians drafted between 1621 and 1659 (38-39 years), 1789 men per year and c. 20% of the army consisted of Galicians. (=68.000/38 for the draft and =68.000/38/9.000*100 for the proportion).

²³¹ DE VRIES; *The economy of Europe in an age of crisis*, pg. 51. "Only in Catalonia did a permanent agricultural advance occur during this otherwise desperate era. The policies of Catalonia's powerful representative assembly plus the existence of an important urban market fostered the evolution of an agrarian structure of enclosed farms operated by tenants who enjoyed secure tenures and fixed rents."

²³² The word *foro* has evolved to be synonym of the land plot, although it was originally a legal concept.

²³³ Galicia's seven historical cities are Santiago, Corunna, Lugo, Ourense, Pontevedra, Ferrol and Vigo. The population is sparse to such an extent that around 50% of Spain's toponymics are in Galicia. See SÁNCHEZ PARDO, José Luís; *Bases para el análisis geohistórico del poblamiento rural tradicional en Galicia*.

²³⁴ The first reference to Catalonia's counties as the basic unit of the country, instead of using religious or seigneurial demarcations such as bishoprics or lordships, is found in Pere Gil's Geography (1600). GIL I ESTALELLA, Pere; *Llibre primer de la història catalana en lo qual se tracta d'història o descripció natural, ço és, de coses naturals de Catalunya*. See studies by IGLÉSIES, Josep; *Pere Gil, S. I., 1551-1622, i la seva Geografia de Catalunya, seguit de la transcripció del Llibre primer de la historia Cathalana* or by GALDEANO I CARRETERO, Rodolfo; *La Història moral de Cathalunya de Pere Gil (1550-1622) i la historiografia catalana de l'època moderna* (PhD Thesis).

²³⁵ Dr. Valentí Gual i Vilà told us in his Early modern history lessons this concept. Using Google Maps as a verification tool, the distance between Barcelona and Granollers is 30km (6h. at 5km/h, an average walking speed by an adult), between Granollers and Vic is around 50km (10h), between Vic and Ripoll is 40km (8h), between Ripoll and Ribes is 14km (3h). Barcelona, Granollers, Vic and Ripoll were fortified, thus providing safe shelter for the night to traders, travellers and by-passers. 42.5km more (c. 9-10h by foot) following Toses pass (*Collada de Toses*) along river Freser separate Ribes from Puigcerdà, the capital of the wide Cerdanya

Catalonia had, since the Catalan Civil War (1462-1472) and its final conclusion in the Treaty of Guadalupe (*Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*, 1486) allowed the rural middle class to free itself from the tough medieval manorial regime, including the right to become owners of their lands and the deserted farms they had occupied after the Black Death, the “rotten cottages” (*masos rònecs*).²³⁶ From 1486 onwards a rural middle class, the “fat peasants”, transformed Catalan agriculture along capitalist lines, increasing investment and diversification. The Galician *foro* system was not abolished until 1926, 440 years later, condemning the country to a state of backwardness and underdevelopment and mass emigration.

Furthermore, the expansion of some Galician ports during the late 17th and the 18th centuries is not comparable to Catalonia’s. The main difference is that the expansion of Catalan coastal cities was based on exporting Catalan production gathered throughout the whole country thanks to *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification* and the use of an *urban network* that relied on a professional transport sector (the *traginers*) in order for this *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification* to be feasible, with a coordination and investment centre in Barcelona. Overseas trade and the size of the merchant fleet grew alongside domestic production, with brandy, wine and nuts being the staple goods and a wide array of other products (iron wares, glass, textiles, naval construction, strawberries, pulses, salted fish, paper...) complementing the mix, following the *diverse growth* model. Even though the Galician merchant fleet expanded, Galicia was never a major *production* centre due to its medieval agricultural system and heavy seigneurial regime that led its population to mass poverty and emigration, to enrol in the army or to become seasonal labourers in Castile. The Galician fleet counted 14.2% of the total Spanish tonnage in 1750 and 17.1% in 1800,

plateau, also fortified. This is a primary example of the *urban network* researched by Dantí, Espuche and many others, including dr. Gual, although his focus is demography. See DANTÍ *et al.*, *L’articulació del territori; Ciutats, viles i llocs; La xarxa urbana*. Although the walls were demolished during the 19th century, there are faithful historical reconstructions by artists such as Guillem Pongiluppi. See for Granollers Pongiluppi’s reconstruction at Granollers’ municipality website https://granollers.cat/sites/default/files/importades_d6/pagina/2013/05/Viure%20a%20la%20ciutat%20medieval.jpg.

²³⁶ The *Sentència* was issued by King Ferdinand II in the monastery of Guadalupe (Extremadura) on April 21st 1486 and put an end to the Peasant War, one of the three chapters of the Catalan Civil War. It provided that, in exchange for a single payment of 60 sous per cottage, most of the seigneurial rights would be abolished, the peasants would retain their farms, both the traditional family farm and the occupied ones (*masos rònecs* or rotten cottages), in exchange for a symbolic vassalage homage and the payment of a very low yearly rent. This marked the beginning of Catalonia’s agrarian revolution and the formation of a powerful and entrepreneurial rural middle class, known as fat peasants (*pagesos grassos*). GIFRÉ; *L’ombra allargada de la Sentència Arbitral de Guadalupe*. Although the effects of the *Sentència* on the peasants’ condition are subject to recent criticism, the general improvement of their legal status and economic possibilities is still widely accepted. See about the criticism CORTÉS; *Les interpretacions de la Sentència arbitral de Guadalupe: de Jaume Vicens i Vives a l’actualitat*.

while the Catalan one counted 18.4% in 1750 and 34.1% in 1800. In Galicia the agrarian surplus was scarce even after the introduction of corn or maize in the 16th century and there were no exportable manufactures. Galicia lived off the exportation of Castilian wool, later of Spanish textiles to the colonies, and the importation of European manufactures, being a simple entrepot. The reform of the port in Corunna contributed to this pattern, but not to boost domestic Galician production.²³⁷ Galicia was a feudal society while Catalonia was already bourgeois. Only during the 18th century, thanks to top-down mercantilist policies and to a renewed scepticism on Basque provincial privileges, some domestic manufactures developed in Galicia, such as linen or tanning, with heavy governmental investment (for example, favouring cheap flax imports from the Baltic) or with Catalan investment (most of the renewed Galician fishing industry was created by Catalan manpower and capital).²³⁸

4.2. Cantabria

Cantabria experienced a transformation during the 18th century different to that of Galicia or Asturias. Santander was an important port in the late Middle and early Early modern period, as one of the two staple ports for Castilian wool exports. Santander was favoured as a port during the 18th century by the Bourbons and the Cantabrian merchant fleet almost doubled during that period, largely at the expense of the Asturian one. In 1750 the Cantabrian fleet consisted of 19.5% of the Northern fleets (Basque provinces excluded) against 44.5% owned by Asturians. In 1800 Cantabria had 41.25% of the Northern fleet while Asturias had only 9.7%. This was paired with an increase in the exportation of domestic flour and wool, as opposed to the Galician case.²³⁹ Nevertheless, flour and wool were traditional products in the zone and in 1797 Santander had no more than 5.000 inhabitants, as opposed to the 100.160 that Barcelona had in 1787. Santander was little more than an entrepôt for Castilian and Cantabrian wools and flour, with a harbour that was expanded by the crown to boost wool and flour exports.²⁴⁰

4.3. Castile

Castile was the kernel of the Spanish crown since the late 15th century. When Charles V acceded to the throne, Castile counted c. six million inhabitants, while Catalonia lagged behind at less than 400.000. Castilians were the *conquistadores* of

²³⁷ MAIXÉ; *La marina catalana a la conquesta de los mercados hispanos en el siglo XVIII*, pg. 124-126.

²³⁸ RINGROSE; *Spain, Europe and the "Spanish miracle"*, pg. 226-227

²³⁹ MAIXÉ; *La marina catalana a la conquesta de los mercados hispanos en el siglo XVIII*, pg. 126, 127, 129.

²⁴⁰ RINGROSE; *Spain, Europe and the "Spanish miracle"*, 1700-1900, pg. 222, 230.

America and the only merchants authorised to trade with the colonies and, after the union of crowns, the most important offices in the other territories were almost always given to Castilians. But this idea is deceptive. Castile was never a strong country; in reality, the “Spanish” empire was a loose union of countries under a common king, with a theoretically leading crown that was weaker than some of its peripheral territories, as proven by the successful Dutch revolt.

Castile is a barren land, with the second average height in Europe only surpassed by Switzerland, with an extreme climate characterised by “three months of hell and nine of winter”²⁴¹, with a weak pluviometry and rivers that tend to dry during summer, almost none of which are navigable. Castile is divided between two plateaus, known as *Mesetas*; it is isolated from the northern Atlantic fringe by the Cantabrian Mountains; from the Ebro and Guadalquivir valleys by two other mountain systems. Rain is scarce, especially during summer, and tends to fall in short and heavy tempests. Clouds are rare, which add aridity to the land through heavy insolation and contribute to the extremity of temperatures.²⁴²

Since the Middle Age the backbone of its economy had been the export of the highly valuable *merino* wool to the textile centres in Northern Europe, chiefly through the ports of Bilbao and Santander. The importance of wool led to the creation of a powerful cattle owners association, the *Honrado Concejo de la Mesta*. The dependence on wool exports led several kings to grant privileges to the *Mesta* that often were in detriment of agriculture and that fuelled social unrest between croppers and shepherds and was a permanent cause of concern for *arbitristas* and government officials, although the contribution of wool to Spain’s economic decadence has historically been overestimated.

During the 16th century Castile developed something akin to an incipient urban network with middle-sized towns that traded with each other but this auspicious beginning was thwarted by the foundation of Madrid as a capital city. Castile had no permanent capital until 1561, when Philip II designated the sleepy town of Madrid (c. 5.000 inhabitants) as the new see of royal power. Philip envisioned a more centralised empire, ruled by a large professional bureaucracy. By 1620 Madrid surpassed 100.000 inhabitants but did not produce anything: its population consisted of bureaucrats, nobles and domestic service that consumed imported luxuries and paid for them in

²⁴¹ In Castilian “*nueve meses de invierno y tres de infierno*”. Several other popular quotes attest to the extremity of Castilian weather, such as “this year summer was on Wednesday” (“*este año el verano cayó en miércoles*”) or “in X place (Burgos or Soria are the most typical ones) there are two *estaciones*: winter and the railway”, *estación* meaning both *station* and *season*. As a personal anecdote, I remember that my Castilian grandfather always told me that, on Franco’s coup (July 18th 1936) this is, full summer, he was wearing sunglasses and a wool sweater.

²⁴² CARRERAS, TAFUNELL; *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*, pg. 2-7.

bullion from the Americas. In John Elliott's words, "an artificial city of courtiers and bureaucrats [...], a distorting element in the economic life of the Castilian *meseta*".²⁴³

Ringrose has thoroughly researched the role that Madrid played in the destruction of Castile's economy and his research proves that, apart from other factors such as isolation from the sea, high transport costs, precarious climate, disperse resources, poor soil or high average altitude, Castile was devastated by Madrid, it became a purely political-bureaucratic city that depredated resources from its hinterland and contributed to its impoverishment: one specific case quoted by Ringrose is that the import of foreign luxuries and the need to feed the unproductive capital led to the specialisation of Castile in wheat, wine and meat, discouraging any industry; while in Madrid only finished goods (i.e., bakeries, confectioneries) or luxury productions, sometimes endowed with royal monopolies (tailors, game cards), all of them aimed at Madrid itself, appeared. Extreme inequality on wealth distribution, far worse than that of Restoration England or Catalonia, added to the creation of a small urban market that was deprived of any easy access by river or sea, with a small high-income class of unproductive officials, courtiers and clergymen and a vast layer of (partially) unemployed, unskilled population and domestic servants that lived in overstaffed nobility mansions; in a word: a parasite.²⁴⁴

The creation of Madrid contributed to the desertification of the surrounding areas, already relatively depopulated due to Castile's harsh geographical conditions put under severe stress during the 17th century crisis. The military compromises of the Empire, with constant wars, also contributed to Castile's decadence. Since the foundation of the empire, allegedly with Ferdinand and Isabella's marriage in 1469, the empire had not been Spanish but rather Castilian: the ruling elite became increasingly Castilianised after the 16th century, the colonies were Castilian possessions and theoretically open only to Castilians, but the army was supposed to be also Castilian. The drain in manpower was extreme, as was the migration to the Americas. An estimated 240.000 men during the 16th century migrated to the colonies, with 450.000 more in the 17th century.²⁴⁵ From 1600 on, plagues and epidemics devastated Castile and the wars against the Dutch, Catalans and Portuguese contributed to the depopulation. By the mid-17th century most Castilian cities had dwarfed; Burgos, one of the traditional economic engines of the kingdom, had 7.000 inhabitants in 1530, 12.000 in 1594 and only 3.000 in 1646; Valladolid, possibly the biggest city in Castile, had 30.000 in 1530, 45.000 in 1594 and only 13.500 in 1646. Between 1530 and 1646

²⁴³ ELLIOTT; *Spain and its empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, pg. 18.

²⁴⁴ RINGROSE, David R.; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*.

²⁴⁵ ELLIOTT; *Spain and its empire*, pg. 11.

Madrid's population multiplied sevenfold and drained 4.000 men every year from Castile, the same amount that migrated to the Americas.²⁴⁶

Other problems were the inflation provoked by the arrival of American bullion, the alleged *hidalgo* mentality that favoured very traditional views on economy and the enormous costs of maintaining the empire. In 1600 the arrivals of bullion from the colonies had become the backbone of Castile's economy and started to falter, from 2 million ducats in 1598 to 800.000 in 1620.²⁴⁷ The colonies had already economically disengaged from the metropolis and were open to English and Dutch smuggling, with costly military frontiers in the south against the Araucan peoples in Chile and an increasing threat of foreign invasion that forced to allot huge sums of money for fortification. The Indies, thought to be Castile's source of wealth, were increasingly seen as a burden. Justus Lipsius wrote to a Spanish friend that "Conquered by you, the New World has conquered you in turn, and has weakened and exhausted your ancient vigour".²⁴⁸ By 1600 Castile, as the kernel of the Spanish empire, was a decadent country, decadence that by 1665 –upon Charles II accession to the throne- was universally acknowledged.

There was hardly any recuperation in Castile in the second half of the 17th century, exception made of some nucleuses like the textile factories in Segovia.²⁴⁹ Depopulation had reached alarming levels, as opposed to mere stagnation in Catalonia. The "Golden Century" of Spain, in reality of Castile, was also gone. According to Elliott, "The economic paralysis of Castile in the 1680s was accompanied by the paralysis of its cultural and intellectual life"²⁵⁰. By 1680 Castile held only political power, but not economic or cultural anymore.

4.4. Andalusia

Andalusia was an extended part of Castile. Since the early 16th century it had become the quintessential manorial area of Spain, where latifundia were most dominant. Although it featured some of Spain's most important cities, their importance was deceptive. Granada, the biggest silk production centre in the country, was surrounded by an impoverished countryside unable to consume its surplus. Seville and, later, Cadis, were the entrepôts of Atlantic trade but their importance relied on being monopoly-privileged ports where foreign goods met: brandy, wine and nuts from Catalonia were traded there for dyes, sugar and tobacco from the Americas. Excepting

²⁴⁶ RINGROSE; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*, pg. 168-170.

²⁴⁷ ELLIOTT; *Spain and its empire*, pg. 24.

²⁴⁸ ELLIOTT; *Spain and its empire*, pg. 25.

²⁴⁹ KAMEN; *Spain in the later seventeenth century*, pg. 71.

²⁵⁰ ELLIOTT; *Imperial Spain*, p. 361.

sherry wine, wool and olive oil, Andalusia did not produce anything marketable in the Atlantic circuits; its economy was reduced to subsistence agriculture and massive manors owned by absentee aristocrats.²⁵¹ By the mid-17th century the entrepôt was largely controlled by foreign merchants, as in Kamen's proposed "dependency" rather than "decadence" model.²⁵²

Andalusian Atlantic trade was separated from Spain's internal economy by the early 17th century, its only link being the credit provided to the government by the merchants in Cadis or Seville; by the end of the century even the immediate hinterland of Seville and Cadis was but lightly affected by this trade.²⁵³ Catalonia, on the other hand, became almost totally involved in the economic expansion of the late 17th century, as proven by the example of ironware, processed in coastal Mataró but mined and refined into pig-iron in the northern valleys. Seville and Cadis were anomalies amidst a territory of widespread backwardness and underdevelopment that owed their prosperity to a political decision (the monopoly on trade with the colonies) and that were largely controlled by foreign merchants. Málaga had an important wine and raisins export sector but, contrarily to Barcelona, with no urban network surrounding it with the partial exception of Granada. Despite Málaga's powerful wine and raisins exports, it was another isolated node like Jerez (with sherry wine). Granada, the biggest industrial centre in the country, was unaffected by Málaga's expansive trade, which attests to the lack of any articulation of the economy in Andalusia.²⁵⁴

4.5. The Basque lands

The Basque lands were the only other region of Spain to undergo an industrial revolution in the 19th century, based on its rich iron ore mines. Iron was an important export business already in the 16th century and Bilbao was one of the two staple markets for Castilian wool (the other being Burgos). Only one third of Biscay's iron production in the 16th century was exported, while another third was used in the domestic shipbuilding industry and another third was forged into wares and weapons. Fishing and whaling were extremely important industries, as proven by the "Basque colonisation of Newfoundland".²⁵⁵ Other products such as wheat, wine, cider or salt

²⁵¹ RINGROSE; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*, pg. 219.

²⁵² KAMEN; *Vocabulario básico*, pg. 61-69.

²⁵³ RINGROSE; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*, pg. 224-225.

²⁵⁴ RINGROSE; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*, pg. 238-245.

²⁵⁵ Although the legend says that Basques arrived in Newfoundland in 1375, research has recently unearthed that, during the 15th and 16th centuries, Basque whalers established some factories in Belle-Île and Newfoundland (Canada), had regular contact with the First Nations and traded with them in bread and cider in exchange for their help in fishing and whaling. The existence of a pidgin Language between Basque and Algonquin has also been proven. Several allegedly French toponymics are in reality Basque, such as Port-au-Choix (French for "Choice

complemented a highly diversified economy. The Basque lands were and still are settled with a patchwork model akin to that of Old Catalonia, with isolated farms (*caseríos*), several towns of middle size and various ports, with one big port city (Bilbao) articulating the territory.

In the 17th century its economy, especially the forges, became decadent but Bilbao was able to retain some importance as an entrepot between Castilian wool exports and luxury imports from Northern Europe to the court in Madrid. Despite this decadence, the Basque country did not experience depopulation, thanks to the introduction of corn/maize and to its powerful self-government institutions that, as in Catalonia, prevented the Basques to be drafted into the Spanish imperial army. Spared from the “blood tax”, the Basque population kept at a high level with increasing economic isolation.²⁵⁶ Agriculture also underwent important changes: vines and orchards were often sacrificed to plant cereal, fodder crops were adopted to feed cattle and more intensive techniques brought higher yields. The coastal provinces (Biscay and Gipuzkoa) did not lose population and introduced several innovations, especially in agriculture, while the southern, interior province of Araba underwent serious crisis. During the 17th century the Basque economy gradually detached itself from Castile and depended on a combination of overseas trade and self-sufficiency, with agricultural intensification and innovation and political self-government.²⁵⁷

During the 18th century the general improvement of the country and the increased expenditure capacity of the elite in Madrid increased the traffic in the Basque ports. The self-sufficiency achieved during the previous century, paired with the high level of population and the diversified economic structure, contributed to the Basque prosperity throughout the whole century. Basque dockyards provided a good deal of Spain’s new navy and its ironworks revitalised. The support that the Basque Parliament gave for the Bourbon dynasty during the War of the Spanish Succession ensured that the country received more privileges and maintained its self-government, as opposed to what happened in Catalonia. The creation of the *Real Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas* in 1728 was an example of this and a contributor to the Basque economic expansion in the 18th century.²⁵⁸

Harbour” but in reality a deformation of Basque *Portutxoa* (“Little Harbour”) or Ingonachoix, (from Basque *Anguna Txarra* (“Bad Anchorage”)). In his diary, French explorer Jacques Cartier reported that natives, when greeted in Basque (“*Zer moduz?*”), would answer “*Apezak hobeto!*” a common counter-greeting in Basque. See HUXLEY, Selma and BARKHAM, Michael; *The Basque whaling establishments in Labrador 1536-1632 – A summary*.

²⁵⁶ RINGROSE; *Spain, Europe and the “Spanish miracle”*, pg. 222.

²⁵⁷ RINGROSE; *Madrid and the Spanish economy*, pg. 245-251.

²⁵⁸ RINGROSE; *Spain, Europe and the “Spanish miracle”*, pg. 222-226.

Conclusion

This thesis has tried to demonstrate that Narcís Feliu de la Peña's economic plan contained various proposals and although many of them related to the textile business and were in line with the mercantilist or *arbitrista* frame of thought, his scope was wider and covered other existing sectors such as shipbuilding and ironworks, or potentially new manufactures like hemp or soap. His personal relation with the textile trade made him show a special interest in it, but not limit himself to just his main trading good. His work is embedded in the *second recuperation* (1680-1700), a period when Catalonia underwent important changes in its economic model that would lead, during the 18th century, to an unprecedented growth and, in the 19th, to industrialisation.

These changes had a formative phase during the *decisive century* (1550-1640), when the country articulated in an *urban network* based on some places specialising in one trade, one product or one process (*microspecialisation*) and the overall country diversifying its range of produced goods (*macrodiversification*). Barcelona became a centre of highly skilled and luxury manufactures, investment and redistribution; while new centres appeared that specialised in old manufactures (Igualada with leather) or in new ones (Mataró with glass).

This process was hampered by a crisis in the mid-17th century with a War of Separation (1640-1652), an industrial crisis, several bad harvests, locust plagues and bankruptcies that severely limited the country's demographic growth, although it did not lead to depopulation but to stagnation.

After this mid-century crisis (1620/1640-1665/1680) some regions in the country *stabilised* in their pre-crisis values while others *recuperated* and started growing. The main driving force behind growth was a change in agricultural production and organisation, mostly the expansion of vineyards with *rabassa morta* contracts and the marketing of wine and brandy. Other products became complements to this new economic model; some were traditional manufactures such as woollen cloth and leather, organised in a new putting-out, highly decentralised system akin to the *industrious revolution* of north-western Europe; others were innovative sectors like calico or soap. Manufactures were not alone in complementing viticulture in the late 17th century; dried fruits and nuts, cork, ice, charcoal, fruit, olive oil, salted fish or coral were also important in a new, diversified economy. Many peasants who benefited from the agricultural expansion invested in manufactures, a perfect example being the tenant farmers in Mataró, who used their profits in the vineyards to invest in glassworks.

This process, led by relatively well-off *fat peasants*, had its origins in the *decisive century* (1550-1640) was hampered by the quartering of troops ordered by the monarchy after the War of Separation (1640-1652) and due to the constant hostility with neighbouring France. The fact that most cities were exempted from quartering and the asynchrony between the recuperation of agriculture (earlier) and manufactures (later) fuelled the anger of the peasantry and sparked the *Gorretes'* revolt, this giving evidence of the rural character of the *second recuperation*.

When Feliu de la Penya published his works he was aware of the diversified condition of the economy. His textile-related proposals were not centred on Barcelona, but included proposals and information on other counties. Hemp and linen were not present in Barcelona but around other areas, such as the Vallès Oriental county or the south, around Tarragona. He also quoted ironworks and foundries, dockyards and shipbuilding, technological modernisation, leather, wheat, olive oil, fruit, wine, glassworks, copperware, dyes and soap. He also proposed measures regarding the state of the financial and insurance market, a chartered company that could help exports, a fiscal reform to simplify taxpaying and help merchants and social policy regarding both helping the poor and creating a new group of skilled workforce for the navy and the army.

Contrarily to what has traditionally been stated, the foundations of Catalonia's economic growth and industrialisation during the 19th century were not the conquest of the colonial market by the textile manufacturers thanks to protectionism, but the expansion of viticulture as the central sector during the 18th century, paired with many other goods and manufactures that firstly conquered the domestic Catalan market. Only later they conquered the Spanish peninsular market and not before the second half of the 18th century did so with the colonial markets. Calico was not the driving force, neither in the colonial nor in the peninsular market.

The foundations of this model were laid during the *decisive century* (1550-1640) and, especially, during the *second recuperation* (1660-1700) and depended on a combination of *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification* that led to *diverse growth*. Textiles were only a chapter of this diversification and Feliu de la Penya was well aware of it, even if his company traded only with cloth. Many of his proposals came into reality during the 18th century, such as the chartered company (the *Royal Barcelona trading company to the Indies*), the foundation of institutions to promote technological modernisation (the *Junta de Comerç* and its formative schools), the expansion of the merchant fleet and the promotion of overseas trade, the protection of the domestic market or the creation of new manufactures (hemp, linen or soap). Even in the long run textiles, with the innovative cotton fabrics, were only part of Catalonia's

economic structure. By the early 19th century a great deal of overseas and domestic trade did not depend on textiles but on a variety of other products, with wine and brandy being the most important.

Although the Spanish periphery in general underwent a major economic expansion during the 18th century, the Catalan (and to some extent, the Basque) cases were qualitatively different: both relied in a strong domestic manufacture in countries articulated by strong well-connected networks and had, during the formative phase of the 16th and 17th centuries, self-government institutions. While coastal Galicia, Santander, Málaga or Cádiz developed as major trading ports, they did not articulate an urban network with their hinterlands, nor foment the creation of domestic manufactures in a diversified economic structure; most of them remained isolated and unindustrialised entrepôts until heavy governmental intervention during the second half of the eighteenth century led to the creation of some domestic industries (linen and tanning in Galicia, shipbuilding in Santander).

Catalonia developed with almost no direct intervention from the Spanish government, neither to articulate the network, nor to boost manufacture or a capitalist agriculture. Narcís Feliu de la Peña's works, the only non-Castilian to be summoned to the Board of Trade in the late 17th century, give evidence of the process of *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification*; to answer the research question: yes, Feliu de la Peña was duly aware of the process of economic diversification. His writings bear witness of the process that unfolded in the last third of the 17th century and that became the foundation of the economic expansion during the 18th century, a model of *diverse growth* based on *microspecialisation* and *macrodiversification* over an articulated *urban network* that relied on private capital and without government intervention. *Diverse growth* is what Feliu de la Peña was advocating for in his writings, although historiography has tended to focus in his proposed company and the textile-related measures, a closer look at his proposals gives evidence of his awareness of the diversified economic structure of the country. Narcís Feliu de la Peña was, in many senses, a member of a pre-Enlightened Catalan bourgeoisie who even attempted at writing a History of Catalonia (*Anales de Cataluña*); a social group that would almost entirely stand for the Habsburgs during the War of the Spanish Succession in defence of a self-government model and pay dearly for it.

This field of research is still very recent (Garcia Espuche's chief work dates from 1998) and depends on blurry data when the 17th century is concerned. Many Spanish scholars still do not work with this theoretical approach and stick to the traditional model that relates Catalan economic growth with the centralisation policies in the 18th century and how they helped expand the textile manufactures in Barcelona, thus

indirectly defending that the political subjugation of Catalonia to Castile works in favour of the conquered people. This thesis shows that there is no such relation; the foundations of Catalonia's economic prosperity were laid much before and with no direct relation with Spanish or Castilian politics in a country that underwent something akin to an industrious revolution in a bourgeois society.

The role of the late-17th to early-18th pro-Habsburg Catalan bourgeoisie is still largely neglected in Spanish scholarship and is slowly being rehabilitated in Catalan academia. One example of this negligence is the story of New Barcelona, nowadays Zrenjanin (Voivodina, Serbia); a city founded by exiled Catalan pro-Habsburgs. Apart from Agustí Alcoberro's very recent book *La Nova Barcelona del Danubi* very few works exist on it, its ruins have not been excavated, and Barcelona has never twinned with Zrenjanin and not even during the *Renaixença* (the romantic "nationalist" revival) a single painting was dedicated to the Catalan exiles founding a new city.²⁵⁹ I hope that a new generation of 21st century nationalist historians will contribute to unearth this legacy.

²⁵⁹ ALCOBERRO, Agustí; *La Nova Barcelona del Danubi*.

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