

WOOL MANUFACTURES IN BÉJAR DURING THE EARLY
MODERN PERIOD.
THE SHAPING OF AN INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE: ITS
CHARACTER AND PROTECTION

*Manufacturas laneras en Béjar durante la Edad Moderna.
La formación de un paisaje industrial: Caracterización y
protección*

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ABSTRACT: While in the Castilian Meseta, several textile manufacturing hubs enjoyed their heyday during the Early Modern Period, only the town of Béjar still retains some textile activity. The reasons for the survival of this local industry must be sought in the circumstances that surrounded manufacturing in the ducal town in former days.

The present paper probes into the early stages and the later expansion of Béjar-based wool manufacturing and analyses the main factors that contributed to its location in this town.

Centuries of textile activity have left a valuable cultural heritage as well as an indelible mark in Béjar by shaping a unique industrial landscape whose main elements are characterised in this paper. Last but not least, the current state of this heritage is likewise described before examining several conservation proposals.

Keywords: Industrial landscape; textile manufacture; Béjar in the Early Modern Period; industrial heritage.

RESUMEN: En la meseta castellana destacaron unos cuantos centros manufactureros textiles que conocieron momentos brillantes durante la Edad

Moderna, pero a día de hoy solo Béjar mantiene alguna actividad textil. Las razones de esta pervivencia hay que buscarlas en las condiciones en las que se desarrollaron las manufacturas de la villa ducal en aquel período.

En este trabajo se consideran las etapas iniciales y de expansión de las manufacturas laneras y se analizan los principales factores que contribuyeron a la localización de éstas en la villa bejarana.

Siglos de actividad textil en Béjar han dejado un valioso patrimonio cultural y una huella indeleble en la ciudad, configurando un singular paisaje industrial, cuyos principales elementos se caracterizan. Finalmente, se describe el estado actual de ese patrimonio y se revisan algunas propuestas para su conservación.

Palabras clave: Paisaje industrial; manufactura textil; Béjar; Edad Moderna; patrimonio industrial.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Castilian Meseta, several textile manufacturing hubs enjoyed their heyday during the Early Modern Period: Burgos, Segovia, Guadalajara, Palencia, Zamora, and also Béjar. Only the town of Béjar still retains today some textile activity. The reasons for the survival of this local industry must be sought in the circumstances that surrounded manufacturing in the ducal town in those former days.

After a brief commentary on Béjar's landscape and history, this paper focuses on the confluence of a number of physical factors that encouraged manufacturing activities. This is followed by an analysis of some socioeconomic factors that both contributed to the implementation of those manufactures and to their expansion and consolidation in the town of Béjar, with a special emphasis on the role played by the Ducal House. Next follows a discussion of the influence on wool manufacturing of two natural resources, water and wood, which were vital to Bejar's industry due to their twofold role, as working materials and energy sources.

The long period of textile activity have left an indelible mark in Béjar and strongly shaped its unique industrial landscape. Apart from the material vestiges of the old textile mills and other industrial facilities, a valuable textile — related, intangible heritage survives as a result of the local population's significant contribution. The centuries — old involvement in industry that took place in Béjar necessarily shaped the place's lifeways, migratory movements, demographic, social and occupational structures, labor movement and even lifestyle and outlook on life, as well as shaping a whole set of specific ethnographic traits.

Finally, the paper concludes that despite a number of attempts to safeguard this legacy, Béjar's industrial heritage basically lacks protection, so that a comprehensive action plan by the several administrations involved is needed, as is pointed out in the conclusions of this study.

2. HISTORY AND LANDSCAPE

The convergence of several approaches to landscape — and not simply from the standpoint of geography, but from various other perspectives like those provided by architecture or urban and territorial planning — was already mirrored by the Council of Europe's 2000 Landscape Convention (ELC), also known as the Florence Charter¹. The ELC provides a definition of landscape that has been practically endorsed across the world in the following terms: «*Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*»². By considering landscape from the point of view of human perception, we not only include natural features, but also social and cultural ones, which in turn comprise historical aspects. Thence, landscape is understood as also resulting from interpersonal relations with the environment. It is the people's perception that turns territory into landscape.

In this paper we propose to adopt a comprehensive approach to the development of Béjar's industry during the Early Modern Period by analysing technical, economic, physical and historical data as framed by their geographic context. This is the kind of analysis encouraged by the development of the methodology known as Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)³. Within such an approach, a place's past events and historical background are inextricably linked with landscape, according to a holistic interpretation of the latter⁴. A good example of the validity of this approach can be seen in the historically driven study of Cornwall's landscape in the UK⁵.

1. *European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000)*: <https://rm.coe.int/1680080621> [28.02.2016].

2. *Instrumento de Ratificación del Convenio Europeo del Paisaje*, de 6 de nov de 2008. BOE 5.02.2008, p. 260. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/176>

3. SWANWICK, C. Coord.: *Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Scotland*. Scottish National Heritage and The Countryside Agency, 2002. www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/LCA/LCA.pdf. [28.02.2018].

4. TUDOR, C. Coord.: *Landscape Character Assessment*, 2014. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf. [28.02.2016].

5. CORNWALL COUNCIL: *Historic Landscape Character*, 2016. www.cornwall.gov.uk/environmental-and-planning/historic-environment. [20.10.2017].

When panoramically viewed from a high enough vantage point like, for example, the church on Monte Mario, the first thing that stands out is the town itself, which today spreads from the elevation where the old quarter lies down beyond the course of the Cuerpo de Hombre river. The latter is flanked by industrial mills whose graceful chimney stacks are the silent witnesses of bygone days.



Fig. 1. A view of Béjar from Monte Mario, c.1950. Picture by Juan Requena

If we now look away from the main settlement and glance around towards the west, our view of the horizon will meet the mountain range called Sierra de Francia and its outstanding peak by the same name (Peña de Francia), whose large southward slope leads into a dense chestnut forest: the *Castañar*. A hillock named Peña de la Cruz stands out from among this forest mass whose lowest stretch, towards the east, reaches as far as Navahonda, along the river course. Higher up towards the southeast, we find an area of meadows punctuated halfway up the hillside by pine groves. The elongated summit of Calvitero, the over 2,000-metre range which remains snow-capped for part of the year, towers over the area. Continuing farther north, we sight the bare hills of Valdesangil and the neighbouring fields festooned with holm oak trees. Finally, the surrounding area consists of repopulated pineland from the middle third of the 20th century: a landscape intervention prompted by Emilio Muñoz, an illustrious local figure from Béjar. The spot, already mentioned

in documents from the Early Modern Period, was called «El Tomillar» until the mid-20th century, even though its current name is Monte Mario or Los Pinos.

The above bird's eye view of the area that constitutes the subject of our study already features some of the classical factors typically surrounding an industrial location like this one. Such factors —the turbulent river, the mountain landscape and the steep terrain, the meadowlands and forests— gave rise in the Middle Ages to a wool manufacturing trade that has survived to the present time. These are the same natural conditions that have traditionally shaped the way in which the local population of Béjar interacted with the surrounding environment⁶. In the following pages we intend to analyse how these and other factors contributed to the creation and expansion of Béjar's wool manufacturing industry during the Early Modern Period.

3. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE LOCATION OF TEXTILE ACTIVITY IN BÉJAR

3.1. *The physical environment*

Through the several phases of Alpine orogeny, the tectonic stresses that acted upon the area's brittle rocks produced horizontal displacements of the Hercynian orogeny's fault lines as well as vertical displacements across blocks, all of which would produce an assembly of tectonic trenches and uplifted blocks.

The most outstanding feature of Béjar's landscape is the uplifted massif of the Sierra de Candelario, whose length reaches nearly ten kilometres and whose width is a little below one kilometre. Its rectilinear edges follow the NE-SW direction of the major faults originated as a result of the orogenic processes that took place over the several geological periods. The Sierra conforms a backdrop to the area's skyline and a visual boundary between the province of Salamanca and the neighbouring territories in Ávila and Cáceres. As geological shaping factors, we may mention glacial erosion and fluvial processes. The former influence is probably more visible as a result of peaks making up the area's tallest mountain range skyline, whereas the second, less noticeable factor shapes the rivers' boxed-in courses.

Formed by Paleozoic remnants of the old Hesperian Massif, the lithology of the area is fairly even, with granites aged between 300 and 280 million years. In the Sierra, anatectic granites that underwent a strong metamorphism during orogenic processes coexist with newer materials. In the higher altitudes, porphyric, coarse-grained granites prevail, whereas on the lower levels, fine-grained rocks are abundant.

6. DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U.: «Condicionantes geográficos de la historia de Béjar». In HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. and DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U. (Coords.): *Historia de Béjar. Vol. I*. Béjar, 2012, pp. 37-68.

Several factors affect the district's climate. First, the whole territory is exposed to the moist winds from the Atlantic that are responsible for heavy rainfall, both on mountain summits and on the exposed mountain slopes. If we accept a linear ratio between rainfall and altitude, the Sierra's summits would receive as much as 2,400 mm a year.

Regarding the thermometric regime, there is an influence of several elements, such as seasonality, altitude and orientation. Mean annual temperatures, on the other hand, are close to 15 ° C, there being a sharp contrast between the coldest month (January, with 4 ° C) and the hottest one (July, with 19 ° C). Winters are generally cold while summers tend to be pleasant, always allowing for a strong effect of elevation on climatic conditions —higher altitudes meaning a rise in rainfall levels and a negative temperature gradient which in turn mitigates climate differences due to orientation, which are clearly more marked in lower areas. The climate is temperate, class C in the Köppen climate classification, since the mean temperature for the coldest month slopes between 18 and 0 ° C; within that class, the area would further match subclass Csb, given its dry summers and the fact that the mean temperature for the warmest month is lower than 22 ° C.

Regarding soil composition, there is a great uniformity resulting from the homogeneity of parent materials. Soils have, therefore, an identical chemical composition, while their structure mainly varies as a result of altitude and slope. Other influential factors, albeit to a lesser extent, are orientation and land uses. These are very poor soils whose agricultural yield is quite low with only a few exceptions.

Another distinctive feature is that a large part of the area features grades higher than 50% —a characteristic that hampers soil formation and makes erosion and dragging prevail over sedimentation, which in turn accounts for the scarcity of fertile farmland in the district.

Glacial and periglacial processes have operated during the final phases of the Tertiary Period and well into the Quaternary Period, leaving their imprint on the Sierra's hillsides and upper valleys. Some mountain walls are virtually sheer drops, as happens for example in Hoya Mayor, thus illustrating the way in which mountainside glaciers carved steps on these slopes that are distinctly visible from Béjar and Candelario.

- The area's relief has been further shaped by river courses in two different ways:
- The boxed-in fluvial network mirrors the complex network of tectonic faults through which the main river courses flow as a result of the great erosive power of the steeper river stretches.
 - The downstream dragging of materials from the riverbed's upper sections involves sedimentation on mild-slope terrain, which in turn causes flood-prone areas creating the most fertile land in the region's woodlands and livestock-producing areas.

Meltwater flows down sandy soils produced by the decomposition of granitic crags, whose materials are practically insoluble, and reaches the town of Béjar in a condition very similar to distilled water, which makes it ideal for textile washing and dyeing and facilitates the manufacturing and finish of the best fabrics, particularly those with light colours and soft hues.

The Cuerpo de Hombre River originates at an altitude of nearly 2,300 m above sea level, from a number of natural pools named «charcas de Venero Frío» in the spot known as Hoya Moros. After flowing for about 53 kilometres and carving a basin of some 240 square kilometres, it merges into the Alagón river. From source to mouth, the river bridges an altitude gap of about 1,900 metres, with an average slope of 3,6%. The river's runoff regime is nival-pluvial, with an absolute maximum in winter and a relative maximum in late spring, the average discharge rate being about 2 m³/s in Béjar.

The river section between the Puente Nuevo and the gauging station near the old textile mill owned by Gómez-Rodulfo, flows from heights 920 to 720, with a formidable average slope of 6.7%. These gradients, together with the Sierra's abundant rainfall, determine the river's energy potential. At the beginning of the Early Modern Period the river stream began to power the early fulling devices (often converted watermills), and since the early 18th century it was used to activate other hydraulic engines⁷. The importance of water as a physical environmental factor of industry location have been considered by Ros Massana⁸, together with some other factors.

The above review of the area's physical environment is consistent with the soil's limited agricultural suitability and its capacity to house livestock farming and forestry activities characterized by low returns: all of which was determinant in driving a large part of the local population towards manufactures.

3.2. Socioeconomic factors

While not subscribing to his view, let us begin by mentioning a rather picturesque location factor described by Cristino Bueno as a «*concomitant circumstance... i.e. the concurrence of a high level of wine and alcoholic beverage consumption and production...*» in the Iberian textile locations — a claim later qualified by the suggestion that «*...this may well be an effect rather than a cause...*»⁹.

7. DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U. Dir.: *Estudio preliminar de prospección del potencial minihidráulico de la comarca de Béjar (Informe final)*. Vol. I Memoria. Béjar, 1991, p. 68. Unpublished.

8. ROS MASSANA, R.: *La industria lanera de Béjar a mediados del siglo XVII*. Salamanca, 1993, p. 18.

9. BUENO AGUADO, C.: *Del obrador a la fábrica*. Béjar 1973, p 33. For this and subsequent quotes from Spanish language primary and secondary sources, we provide our

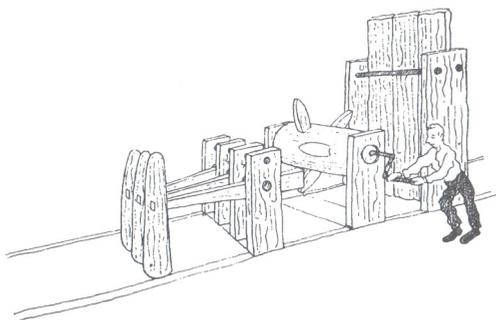


Fig. 2. Fulling Mill from Toledo. Source: Caro Baroja, 1966, p. 467

More significantly, the review of factors influencing industrial location in Béjar, outlined above, must take into account the unsuitability of its physical environment (and that of the surrounding district) for agricultural uses: a fact that may well have encouraged Béjar's penchant for the textile industry. An interesting study of Béjar's physical setting can be found in a contribution by Sánchez-Bayo¹⁰. The dense forests that surround this town are not natural woodlands, but rather the result of a sustainable human intervention. Their exploitation has continued since the Early Modern Period until the present time, the principal change being the land tenure system, which used to be communal in former times and now hinges on private property.

The abundance of chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*) in Béjar's municipal district explains why the town was named Béjar del Castañar at the start of the Early Modern Period, thus sharing the place name's appellative part with other nearby settlements like San Martín and Miranda del Castañar, which still preserve this phyto-toponym¹¹.

The secure supply of wood, on the other hand, guaranteed its availability for construction purposes as well as a stable source of heat needed for several textile manufacturing processes like washing or scalding, fulling and dyeing. Wood played also a main role in the making of machinery, since metal parts were not in widespread until the Industrial Revolution has already taken place.

On the other hand, Béjar's large walled enclosure protected a town that had its own Charter, also had weekly markets and held an annual fair. The local population

own translation both in the main text and in footnotes, to ease reading.

10. SÁNCHEZ-BAYO SÁNCHEZ, F.: «El marco ecológico de la sierra de Candelario en los albores del siglo XXI». *Estudios Bejaranos*, N° 7, 2003, pp. 11-40.

11. RODRÍGUEZ BRUNO, M.: «Béjar del Castañar en el siglo XVI». *Salamanca, Revista Provincial de Estudios*. 1986-1987, Nos 22-23, pp. 9-20. Qtd. in MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, J.: *La villa El Bosque de Béjar en su entorno*. Dpto. de Composición Arquitectónica. UPM, Madrid, 2012, p. 17. Unpublished.

included burghers and craftspeople engaged in a wide variety of trade and artisan activities. All of which proved very important in the development of Béjar's wool manufactures. Moreover, the guild system¹² encouraged specialization as well as the local concentration of certain stages in the textile manufacturing process, particularly those involved in the fabrics' washing and finishing, i.e. the beginning and end of the production chain, which could not be easily outsourced to other places in the district.

By the end of the Middle Ages there were already watermills in place along the Cuerpo de Hombre River, both upstream and downstream from the town. There is evidence that some of those watermills were converted into fulling mills during the Early Modern Period, and since the technology behind both contraptions was very similar¹³, we may conclude that the necessary know-how was already available in Béjar for the move towards textile manufacturing to take place.

The availability of wool is also a relevant factor for the location of these manufactures. While wool is a relatively easy- to- transport raw material (even by using rudimentary means), the truth is that both in Béjar and its surrounding district the supply of wool was secured. We must bear in mind that the nearby countryside was traversed by two major drovers' roads or *cañadas reales* respectively named La Vizana (or «La Plata Droveaway») and Soriana Occidental. Otherwise the whole region was crossed by a large number of minor livestock tracks or paths.

In this sense, there is no doubt the the large sheep flocks owned by the Dukes of Béjar since the Late Middle Ages were another encouraging factor for the location of textile mills¹⁴. However, Béjar- based manufactures resorted to both the Ducal House's wool, when available, and to stuff supplied by livestock farmers and dealers. It must be pointed out in this regard that the economic strength of the Zúñiga household fed on profits made from wool trading since the Middle Ages.

Indeed another driving force behind Béjar's textile activity was the fact that it was the head of a district ruled by the Zúñiga household since 1396, when the latter relinquished their title to the town of Frías in exchange for Béjar, then in the royal domain¹⁵. The establishment in the latter town of the ducal administration involved

12. IRADIEL MURUGARREN, P.: *Evolución de la industria textil castellana en los siglos XIII-XVI*. Salamanca, 1974, pp. 71-86.

13. Reynolds argues that hydropower, and more particularly watermills, are among the critical factors in the modernisation of medieval technology (REYNOLDS, T.S.: «Raíces medievales de revolución industrial». *Investigación y Ciencia*, nº 96, sep 1984, pp. 98-107). On the other hand CARO BAROJA, J.: *Tecnología Popular Española*. Barcelona, 1996, pp. 458-466, points at the mechanical analogies between water-and fulling mills.

14. ROS MASSANA: *La industria lanera...* 1993, pp. 18 and 37-39.

15. BARRIOS GARCÍA, A. and MARTÍN EXPÓSITO, A.: *Documentación Medieval de los Archivos Municipales de Béjar y Candelario*. Salamanca, 1986. Full document transcription:

the relocation of numerous courtiers and servants together with their families (in turn leading to Béjar's rise in demographic status), but moreover entailed a growing consumption of goods and services and, more particularly, an increase in the demand of cloth by the ducal court.

Capital investment —another factor for industrial location— was initially supplied by the Ducal House, either by contributing its own funds or by mediating in order to facilitate loans. Apart from the Zúñigas, there existed in Béjar a small oligarchy that brought together the council's main dignitaries and the holders of economic power, e.g. the Botello, Ramírez and Oviedo families who owned water-mills along the river course. Their position allowed them to both lend money to those who led Béjar- based industrial initiatives and promote their own projects.

4. THE GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION OF WOOL MANUFACTURING IN BÉJAR

4.1. *Textile manufactures before the 18th century*

Textile activity in Béjar prior to 1591 is still a topic pending study, probably as a result of the scarcity of earlier documentary sources. Very few studies on textile manufacturing, both in Castile and in other parts of the Iberian Peninsula, cover the end of the Middle Ages and the 16th century, and while those dealing with the 17th and 18th centuries are certainly more abundant, they only include some passing references to the previous period¹⁶. An exception to this state of things is the work by Iradiel Murugarren¹⁷.

Published research on the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Early Modern Period generally foregrounds the presence of textile craftsmen in public brotherhood processions under different religious advocations, characterising such brotherhoods in fact as real guilds¹⁸. A comparative approach to the early

45. *Enrique III permuta con Diego López de Estúñiga la villa de Béjar por la de Frías, concediendo a éste los derechos de señorío sobre aquélla y sus aldeas*, pp 101-106.

16. GARCÍA SANZ, A.: «Verlagssystem y concentración productiva en la industria pañera de Segovia durante el siglo XVIII». *Revista de Historia Industrial*, N° 10, 1996, p. 12. The paper mentions textile activity in Segovia in the 16th century and cites from other papers dealing the textile sector in Cuenca, Segovia, Toledo and Córdoba; HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA, R.: *La manufactura lanera castellana. Una herencia malbaratada (1750-1850)*. Palencia, 2010, pp. 5-14; RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, G.: *Manufacturas laneras de Castilla. Siglo XVIII. Segovia, Guadalajara, Béjar*. Madrid, 1948.

17. IRADIEL MURUGARREN: *Evolución de la industria...* 1974.

18. HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA, R.: *La industria textil en Castilla: Astudillo, 1750-1936*. Doctoral dissertation, Univ. de Valladolid, 2003; GARCÍA SANZ: «Verlagssystem y... 1996. p. 11; RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ: *Manufacturas laneras...* 1948, pp.15-16.

years of Castilian wool manufactures can be seen in some works by García Martín and Hernández García¹⁹.

The earliest references to textile manufacture survive in the Charters of some Peninsular towns as claimed, for instance, by Iradiel Murugarren²⁰ and Hernández García²¹. The latter author remarks that textile manufactures are mentioned in the Charters of Cuenca, Alcalá, Baeza, Brihuega or Zorita, among other towns. In the Béjar Charter (*Fuero de Béjar*) there is only one rubric that refers to *filandura y texeduría* («yarn spinning and weaving»), even though as many as 25 refer to watermills (not specifying, however, whether these are flour — grinding or cloth — fulling mills (*batanes*))²².

On the other hand, several references to *alcabalas* (taxes) in 1444, as well as the existence of several extant copies of the 1500 «pragmatic decree» regarding cloth manufactures (*Pragmática de los Paños*) at Béjar's municipal and Ducal House archives support the claim by local historians that textile manufacturing was firmly established in Béjar by the start of the Early Modern Period²³. It did not seem, however, to hold an outstanding position in Spain's textile markets, since local production was not even comparable to that in the nearby towns of Piedrahita and El Barco de Ávila²⁴. Hernández García mentions up to seven textile urban centres in the Peninsula in those years, and more than twenty «rural» centres, including Béjar in this group²⁵.

A number of notarial deeds dated between 1542 and 1597 mention the names and trades of a number of textile craftsmen²⁶. Other references linked to the sale of cloth can be found in several chapters of the 1577 Ordinances²⁷. Indeed textile

19. GARCÍA MARTÍN, J.J.: *El desarrollo de la industria textil lanera en Pradoluengo (1720-1939)*. Doctoral dissertation, Univ. de Burgos, 2005, pp.66-74; HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA: *La manufactura lanera...* 2010, pp. 11-80

20. IRADIEL MURUGÁRREN: *Evolución de la industria...* 1974, pp. 21-27.

21. HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA: *La manufactura lanera...* 2010, pp. 11-12.

22. GUTIÉRREZ CUADRADO, J.: *Fuero de Béjar*. Salamanca, 1975, rubrics 68 and 85 to 129.

23. See for example MUÑOZ GARCÍA, J.: «Los Reyes Católicos promulgaron una interesantísima Pragmática de los Paños», *Béjar en Madrid*, N° 215, 1962, p. 4.

24. ROS MASSANA, R.: *La industria textil lanera de Béjar (1680-1850)*. Salamanca, 1999, pp. 27-28.

25. HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA: *La manufactura lanera...* 2010, p. 14.

26. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, J. and SÁNCHEZ SANCHO, J.F.: «Los batanes ducales y el Patrimonio preindustrial de Béjar entre los siglos XVI y XVII (primera parte)». *Estudios Bejaranos*, N° 10, 2006, pp. 15-16.

27. MUÑOZ GARCÍA, J.: *Antiguas Ordenanzas para la conservación del Monte Castañar de la villa de Béjar y para el buen gobierno de ella y Comentario sobre las Mismas*. Béjar, 1940, pp. 16, 34-35, 58-59.

manufacturing must have been consolidated in the 1590s, when Duke Francisco III arranged for the construction of a fulling and a dyeing mill.

Unlike most of their peers in the Spanish nobility, the dukes of Béjar always remained involved in manufacturing and trade activities²⁸. Since the Late Middle Ages and throughout the Early Modern Period, the House of Zúñiga owned, as mentioned before, a large number of sheep:²⁹ 19,000 head in 1708, 18,000 in 1756 and 22,000 in 1780.

The dukes' interest over financial issues and wool manufactures is at odds with the traditional Catholic mindset of the Spanish nobility, whose disaffection with manufacturing and trade activities even grew following the Counter-Reformation until it became a sign of identity within Spain's noble estate by contrast with the general attitude of the Protestant nobility in this regard. It was not until the second half of the 17th century that a pragmatic decree by Charles II attempted to counter this state of things by stating that «...owning now or in the past mills for the making of silk, cloth, draperies or any other fabric is not and never was contrary to the quality of our nobility...»³⁰

The duchy's dedicated involvement in manufacturing activities did not have a purely philanthropic motivation, as pointed out by the traditional local historiography³¹. For Rodríguez López, «...the ownership of the seigniorial domain enabled the dukes of Béjar to exercise a fatherly tutelage over the local people: one pervaded by a profound religious feeling...»³². The latter claim agrees with Emilo Muñoz's

28. HERAS SANTOS, J.L. de las: «Historia social del Estado de Béjar en la Edad Moderna». En HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. y DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U. (Coords.): *Historia de Béjar Vol. I*. Béjar, 2012, p. 371; MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ y SÁNCHEZ SANCHO: «Los batanes ducales...», N° 10, 2006, pp. 11-34; MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ y SÁNCHEZ SANCHO: «Los batanes ducales y el Patrimonio preindustrial de Béjar entre los siglos XVI y XVII (segunda parte)». *Estudios Bejaranos*, N° 11, 2007, pp. 89-113.

29. GARCÍA MARTÍN, P., «Béjar según las Respuestas Generales del Catastro de Ensenada». In *Béjar 1753 Según las Respuestas Generales del Catastro de Ensenada*. Madrid, 1990, p. 22.

30. Pragmatic Decree by Charles II on 13 December 1762, qtd. by MUÑOZ GARCÍA, J.: *Béjar en Madrid*, N° 680, 1934, pp. 4-6.

31. MARTÍN LÁZARO, A.: «La fábrica de paños de Béjar. Documentos para la Historia», *Béjar en Madrid*, Nos. 200-241, 1925-1926; MUÑOZ GARCÍA, J.: «Los flamencos y la industria pañera de Béjar», *Béjar en Madrid*, 1918, No. 36, pp. 5-6; No. 37, pp. 3-4; RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, G. and AGERO TEIXIDOR, V.: *Contribución al estudio de la Historia de Béjar. Colección de Estudios y Documentos*. Béjar, 1919, pp. 108. Available from: <https://bibliotecadigital.jcyl.es/es/consulta/registro.cmd?id=762> [31.01.2018].

32. RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, G.: *Manufacturas Laneras de Castilla. Siglo XVIII*. Béjar, 1948. p. 97. See also, by the same author, «Apuntes biográficos sobre los Señores Duques de Béjar». In RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, G. and AGERO TEIXIDOR: *Contribución al Estudio...*, pp. 71-112.

view that «*To this extremely charitable and intelligent duke [Don Manuel] is the cloth industry highly indebted...*» To which he added, by borrowing the Duke's own words, that Don Manuel was concerned with ensuring that «*...his vassals thrived while the younger generation did not remain idle...*»³³

By contrast, Majada Neila expresses a very different view when he refers to the ducal rule as being despotic and feudal and complains that local historians impressed upon the minds of the inhabitants of «*Béjar a devout, uncritical and subservient memory of the dukes*», thus eliciting in them some kind of *Stockholm syndrome*³⁴. Other authors believe that the dukes' interest over manufactures was due to the economic profit they obtained from the *alcabalas*, which generally accounted for the largest share in the ducal revenue³⁵.

Regarding the Ducal House industrial interests, Ros Massana both ventures a positive view of the dukes' commitment to innovation and expresses a negative judgement on the effects of the ducal monopoly on dyeing, which eventually became consolidated by the end of the 17th century³⁶. On the other hand, when prompted by the situation —as in the case of conflicts with manufacturers over the violation of their privileges, e.g. water disputes or challenges to the dyeing monopoly—, the dukes would give preference to their own economic interests over any other consideration.

The Ducal House's control over dyeing has been the object of study by nearly all researchers into the history of Béjar's industry, since they regarded it as a key factor for the expansion and survival of wool manufactures³⁷.

In 1592 Béjar's local council or *Concejo* entreated Francisco III to build a dyeworks by the river, and in the same year it was agreed to grant some communal land near a ford on the river (El Vado) that was close to several mills³⁸. Wool dyeing

33. MUÑOZ GARCÍA, E.: *Historia del Buen Duque Don Manuel de Zúñiga*. Béjar, 1976, 4th ed., p 53.

34. MAJADA NEILA, J.L.: *Historia de Béjar (1209-1868)*. Salamanca, 1998, p. 18.

35. HERAS SANTOS: 2012, pp. 381-382; ROS MASSANA, R.: «La economía». In HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. and DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U. (Coords.). *Historia de Béjar. Vol. I*. Béjar, 2012, pp. 428-429.

36. ROS MASSANA: *La industria textil...*, 1999, pp. 56-57.

37. RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, G. and AGERO TEIXIDOR, V.: *Contribución al estudio de la Historia de Béjar. Colección de Estudios y Documentos*. Béjar, 1919. Available from: <https://bibliotecadigital.jcyl.es/es/consulta/registro.cmd?id=762>. [31.01.2018]; MARTÍN LÁZARO: «La fábrica...», 1925-1926, Nos. 200-241; MUÑOZ GARCÍA, J., «Datos para la historia de nuestra industria», *Béjar en Madrid*, No. 947, 1940, pp. 3-4; No. 951, p. 7; ROS MASSANA: «La economía...» 2012, p. 425; MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ: *La villa El Bosque...* 2011, pp. 38-39. Unpublished.

38. Council resolution whereby the Duke of Béjar is granted comunal land to build a dyeworks (1592). «... *the most convenient spot to build this works is past the bridge leading into*

did not just provide the dukes with hard cash for every yardstick of cloth manufactured in Béjar, but also allowed them to control the amount of cloth produced on the basis of sales tax revenues.

The Italian- born painter Buonaventura Ligli, known in Spain as Ventura Lirios, mentions the dyeworks and the scalding cistern in the legend on his 1727 painting *A View of Béjar*. The same legend also refers to a «...virile, wild river, so prodigal... that it profusely bestows its load upon the water- and fulling mills along its course»³⁹.

Shortly after setting up his dyeworks, Francisco III decided to purchase the mill that belonged to Teresa de Oviedo. The operation was closed on 3 March 1595, as written instructions were sent to his accountant so that he paid «...Teresa de Obiedo one hundred thousand mrs in rs for a watermill that I am buying from her in order to build a fulling mill»⁴⁰.

Cloth- making in Béjar expanded during the latter half of the 17th century, so that the dukes decided to use this boom in their own benefit. On several occasions they expressed their will to play an active role in the textile industry and even, insofar as it was possible, to control by means of regulations and procedures an activity in which they were at once judge and party.

In such an endeavour, an important part was played by Duchess Teresa Sarmiento (1631-c. 1709). Married to Juan Manuel I, she was the mother of Duke Don Manuel Diego, who died in 1686 in Hungary during the siege of Buda. During her son's minority, she acted as regent after her husband's death in 1660, a position she again held after her son's decease. Duchess Teresa encouraged the implementation of a water-management policy as well as the Ducal House active intervention in wool manufacturing. In the 1660s she took a number of steps in order to hamper water supply to a dyeworks and a fulling mill that were close to those run by the Ducal House. The duchess had the river course diverted, thus causing those facilities to run dry during the low water season. The ensuing economic losses suffered by their owner eventually led him to close them and put them up for sale. In the course of the 1712 lawsuit against the Duke, Juan del Carpio a former ducal administrator

the pastures, on the right side of the road, towards the mills, namely between the road and the mills themselves before reaching the pastures, in the towns's communal, uncultivated land, since the place provides amenities like washing places and places for hanging cloth, and there is ample sunlight too....». AHN, Nobleza, Osuna. Leg. 231, No. 8. Originally transcribed by GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Informe sobre el «Tinte del Duque» (1592-2001)*. 9. *Propuesta de protección como B.I.C. Béjar*, 2002. Unpaged. Unpublished.

39. LIGLI, B.: *Vista de Béjar*, 1727. Painting's legend: 26 *El Tinte, escaldadero y justa*.

40. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ and SÁNCHEZ SANCHO: «Los batanes ducales...», No. 10, 2006, pp. 20-21.

and foreman of the cloth factory declared that the above events declared Teresa Sarmiento's intent not to authorize another dyeworks in Béjar⁴¹.

In order to modernise wool manufacturing in Béjar, the Ducal House summoned a group of artisans from The Low Countries, most of them French-speaking, and commissioned them to instruct locals in the art of weaving fine cloth. Arrangements were started by Don Manuel and later resumed by his mother the Duchess, Teresa Sarmiento, and his widow María Alberta de Castro, both of whom signed the agreement whereby foreign weavers would arrive in Béjar in September 1691. The contract was very clear regarding the part to be played by the so-called Flemish masters in the modernisation of textile manufacturing, since it stated their obligation to «...move to the town of Béjar and reside there; and they will moreover establish and put in place in the aforesaid town the manufacture of cloth, baize, droguet, ratine and serge, as well as improving the craft and instructing the local people in the manufacturing of these goods»⁴².

The Flemish weavers would receive a loan of 12,000 reales to get production started and were granted permission to sell the latter and exempted from paying *alcabalas*. The early stages of this operation must have been quite difficult, the profits of both parties —the Flemish and the duchesses— falling far below what was initially expected. This is why the latter introduced a major change in the terms of the agreement: the masters would stay away from the trading of cloth and exclusively see to its manufacturing and the training of local weavers.

The conditions imposed by the new agreement did not please everyone and some of the Flemish masters decided to leave Béjar and either settle elsewhere in the Iberian Peninsula or return to their country. This was not the case with Juan Bissón, the Lidóns or Juan Luis Meluis, among others, since they eventually settled in the town, where they married either to local women or from their own countries, and stayed active in local cloth production. It was in their memory that the street called del Collado was renamed as Flamencos («Flemish»)— a designation that it still keeps.

Leaving aside the role played by the Flemish master weavers who arrived in 1691, a few years later Duke Juan Manuel II would actively encourage the settlement in Béjar of other textile craftsmen from several parts of Europe. This gave rise to a quick transformation of Béjar's industry. Both in technical terms and in the way labour was organised. As a result of these changes, a quarter century later the fine-cloth factory was set up.

41. ROS MASSANA: *La industria textil...*, 1999, p. 56.

42. Transcription available from MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, J.: *Los maestros flamencos*. Béjar, 2006, p. 17.

4.2. *The 18th century. Transformation of Béjar's manufactures*

During the 18th century the Ducal House continued its implication in textile manufactures, but the period saw changes in the structure of factories, markets, capital flows and other aspects that substantially modified the role and capabilities of the Dukes.

Don Juan Manuel II (1686-1747) fostered the period of innovation and expansion undergone by the local cloth industry during the first third of the 18th century, when more Flemish masters and other textile experts from several European countries arrived in Béjar: so much so, that Buonaventura Ligli compared the town with Babylon⁴³. On the other hand Don Juan Manuel II became personally involved in textile manufacturing through the maintenance and expansion of his dyeworks. The process whereby the Duke's dyeworks would in 1719 become a monopoly that survived until 1782, has been described by Ros Massana⁴⁴, for whom such a monopoly helped check the growth of Béjar's production, limited the variety of colours in manufactured fabrics and diminished the industry's ability to adapt itself to market fluctuations.

The Duke Joaquín Diego (1747-1777), who died without leaving descendants, was the last member of the Zúñiga dynasty to be the head of the duchy of Béjar after nearly 300 years of rule. He followed in his father's footsteps as regards the direct involvement in the textile industry and the personal management of all affairs connected with the latter.

The *batán de abajo* or «downstream fulling mill» was the last of textile facilities whose construction was ordered by the Ducal House at a time when the latter's intervention in the wool industry was reaching its peak. This fulling mill had been built in 1753 on the left bank of the river, upstream from the bridge of San Albín, although very close to it, on the same site depicted in Buonaventura Ligli's *A View of Béjar* which features a watermill. In fact, Don Joaquín explained to his accountant the benefits of purchasing the existing mill so as to avoid building a new water inlet: «*not only is this convenient, but if we do otherwise we may cause a stir in the Board of Trade, and I want none of that*»⁴⁵.

43. «... of this mountainous, well-populated and extremely long in shape Christian Babylon, where I believe all 72 languages are spoken.... », in Letter from Ligli to the Duke. AHN, Nobleza, Osuna: http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas/servlets/ImageServlet?accion=41&txt_id_imagen=43&txt_rotar=0&txt_contraste=0&txt_zoom=10&appOrigen=&cabecera=N [2.02.18]. Reference provided by José Muñoz. Private communication.

44. ROS MASSANA: Op. cit., pp. 56-57.

45. AHN Nobleza, Osuna, Leg. 262, No. 42, Fol. 37v. 1753. Qtd. by SÁNCHEZ SANCHO and MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ in *Los batanes...* 2007, p. 97.

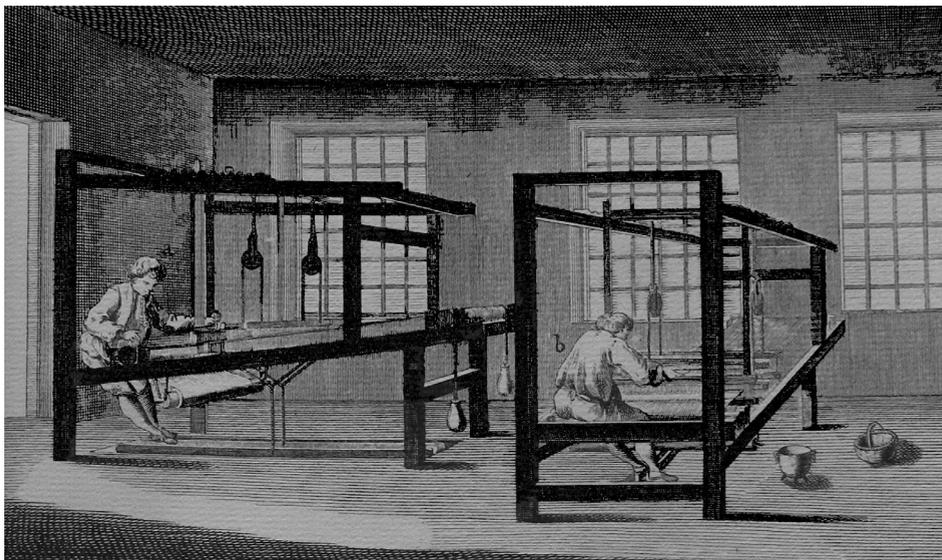


Fig. 4. Weaving machines. Diderot et d'Alambert, *Encyclopedie Française*. Vol. 11, Tisserand, pl. 1

The General Board of Trade had been established through a Royal decree signed by Charles II on 29 January 1679. Some of its goals were «...to diminish exactions imposed on traders and manufacturers, to ban the use of foreign commodities, to promote foreign craftsmen so that they instruct the Spaniards in the best weaving techniques...»⁴⁶.

The fulling mill, however, was not directly operated by the dukes. Instead, it was rented out to other manufacturers as had happened earlier with other ducal facilities⁴⁷. In 1759 the fulling mill at San Albín, including its two basins, was taken on lease by some Juan Gómez. By 1777 the facility was still the property of the Ducal House and featured in the inventory of assets of Don Joaquín's last will and testament, while twenty years later it had already become the possession of José Hernández Bueno.

The embedding of the duchy of Béjar into the House of Osuna caused the nobility's quick estrangement from Béjar's society and textile industry. The manufacturing facilities that had belonged to the Zúñiga family were rented out before being gradually sold, while the Ducal House ceased to take part in regulatory activities

46. *La Junta General de Comercio*, http://historico.oepm.es/historia_oepm/gabinete_maquinas.html [6.11.2017]

47. ROS MASSANA: *La industria textil...* 1999, pp. 123-126.

and to mediate between the wealthier and the poorer manufacturers the way it had frequently done until 1777.

During the 18th century, there took place a number of key changes in the structure of the Béjar- based wool manufacturing industry, which had until then essentially mirrored the organisation of the local guild system. Three guilds operated in Béjar: one comprised wool carders, combers and spinners; and the other two respectively included weavers, on the one hand, and fullers, perchers and shearers on the other. They had the prerogative to propose the Council *veedores* or «overseers» for the several crafts, so has to ensure the quality of the goods and control access to the trade by apprentices. The power of guilds remained large in the main textile centres in the Peninsula⁴⁸, including Béjar, before reforms were introduced in the 18th century.

In 1676 the Ducal House promulgated the Ordinances for cloth making in Béjar. These were inspired by previous regulations in which the attributions of cloth-makers who were not weavers were strongly limited by the guilds' by-laws. Cloth-makers were not only banned from weaving in their own factories but also from commissioning the job to third parties without the participation of master weavers.

In 1724 the Ordinances of Béjar's Cloth Factory were passed in an attempt to secure greater production and quality control. According to these regulations, only one guild would be granted official status — that of cloth-makers. In order to enter this guild, it was not necessary to demonstrate practical expertise, but capital availability instead⁴⁹. The 1724 Ordinances were superseded by similar ones in 1765⁵⁰, which also included an apparently ineffectual regulation of the workers' wages. Changes in organisation were quick to take place, and even though they only applied to the manufacturing of fine draperies, by the end of the 18th century coarse cloth manufacturing was practically extinct in Béjar. The transformation of the guild structure whereby only the cloth-makers' guild was allowed to operate, was a real watershed in the organisation of textile manufactures: one which did not only take place in Béjar, but also in other Castilian textile centres⁵¹.

Duke Don Juan Manuel II encouraged the establishment of Béjar's Fine Cloth Factory and provided its Regulations in 1718: a forerunner of the 1724 Ordinances.

48. GARCÍA SANZ: «Verlagssystem y...», 1996, pp. 11-36; IRADIEL MURUGARREN: *Evolución de la industria...*, 1974, pp. 81-85.

49. A transcription of these Ordinances is included in BUENO AGUADO, C.: *Del obrador...* 1973, Annex 1, pp. 153-160.

50. See a transcription of the 1765 Ordinances in RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ and AGERO TEIXIDOR: *Contribución a la Historia...* 1919, pp. 205-218.

51. See in this respect: HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA: *La manufactura lanera...* 2010, pp. 169-301.

He also used his money and good offices to promote the granting of the Royal Charter of 1720, which allowed Béjar's Factory to set up a shop in Madrid for the sale of Béjar-made cloth. Additionally, this duke arranged for the commissioning of textile supplies for the army⁵², thus opening up a business line that would survive in Béjar for more than 250 years while making it possible for the industry to cope with critical periods caused by low private demand.

4.2.1. The economic importance of textile manufactures in the Ensenada Census (*Catastro*)

The Marquis of Ensenada's census or *Catastro* provides abundant and highly valuable information on several aspects of life and human activity in Béjar during the mid-18th century, including wool manufacturing and the economic pursuits of the Ducal House. *The Catastro's* evidence has been collated by researchers with information drawn from other sources, like for example notarial protocols, in order to outline the state of manufacturing and economic performance during the central part of the 18th century.

The *Catastro's* «General Answers» regarding item 17 refer to the existing fulling mills by stating that there was one such mill that was non- operational, plus some other five in working order, adding that among the latter one having two basins and yielding an annual revenue of 1,700 reales was owned by the Duke⁵³.

There is also mention of two dyeworks, one idle and owned by Francisco Téllez; and the other, the Duke's dyeworks, equipped with «...seven copper cauldrons, another one made of tin, a vat and two small cooper pots for scalding, as well as frames and other gear for all kinds of dyes... all of which may well earn him a yearly revenue of twelve thousand reales of vellon»⁵⁴.

The «General Answers» reported the existence of no fewer than «twenty-one cloth presses... and some other two that remain idle by the will of their owners... which may earn their ed and thirty-five reales and two maravedis every year»⁵⁵.

There were also thirty drying racks, none of which was owned by de Ducal House, used for *hanging and drying cloth*, whose annual yield, deducting the cost of repairs, was estimated at thirty- three reales and six maravedis. Other «Answers» report that «...for the making, refining and finishing of the Royal Factory's textiles [there are] about one hundred and thirty — one scissors of the regular type and

52. MUÑOZ GARCÍA: *Antiguas Ordenanzas...*, 1940, p. 208.

53. *Béjar 1753...* 1990, pp. 62-63.

54. Op. cit., pp. 63-64.

55. Op. cit., pp. 65-66.

forty — seven wool carding or wool shearing shops, all of which... yield a net profit of fourteen reales per cloth, costs deducted...».

Finally, and again with regard to textile manufacturing, mention is made of

...one hundred and fifty-nine ordinary looms and some other twenty-one that remain idle, the majority of which are owned by the manufacturers themselves, although some belong to the weavers and to other workers at the aforementioned Royal Cloth Factory; and a large number of spinning wheels scattered throughout this town and several other places under its jurisdiction⁵⁶.

Ensenada's Catastro likewise shows that the Duke was the biggest landowner in the majority of small towns and villages under Béjar's jurisdiction. Don Joaquín, for example, declared revenues worth 153,672 reales, which represented 99.5 % of all income declared by the biggest landowners in the territory under the above-mentioned jurisdiction, as pointed out by Heras Santos⁵⁷.

The Catastro also contains data on Béjar's textile production in 1751 and 1752 which were analysed by Ros Massana⁵⁸. Regarding the importance of Béjar's production during the second half of the 18th century, we may claim that its share in the whole of the wool cloth market was indeed remarkable in comparison with other manufacturing hubs in the Iberian Peninsula⁵⁹. By the end of the 18th century textile production in Béjar amounted to 2,409 pieces, twice as much as that of Guadalajara⁶⁰ and Terrasa⁶¹, for instance, and less than half the output of Segovia⁶² and Alcoy⁶³.

4.3. *Additional factors in the transformation of textile manufacture in Béjar and in other places during the 18th century*

As noted earlier, during the 18th century a number of changes took place regarding the organisation of manufacturing, specialization, capital flows, markets,

56. Op. cit., 66-70.

57. HERAS SANTOS: «Historia social...» 2012, p. 369.

58. ROS MASSANA R.; «La evolución de la industria lanera: un estado de la cuestión y algunos aspectos generales». *Investigaciones Históricas*, 1992, N° 12, p. 109.

59. ROS MASSANA: *La industria textil...* 1999, p. 35.

60. GONZÁLEZ ENCISO, A.: *Estado e industria en el siglo XVIII: La fábrica de Guadalajara*. Madrid, 1980, p. 639.

61. BENAUL BERENGUER, J.M.: «Los orígenes de la empresa textil lanera en Sabadell y Terrasa en el siglo XVIII». *Rev. de Historia Industrial*, N° 1, 1992, pp. 39-62.

62. GARCÍA SANZ, A.: *Desarrollo y crisis del Antiguo Régimen en Castilla la Vieja. Economía y Sociedad en tierras de Segovia de 1500 a 1814*. Madrid 1986, 2ª ed., p. 224.

63. ARACIL, R. y GARCÍA BERENGUER, M.: «Els inicis de la industrializació a Alcoi», *Recerques*, N° 3, 1974, p. 24.

commercial networks, and other aspects, all of which substantially modified the capacity and potential of factories, both in Béjar and elsewhere.

To begin with, the regulatory power progressively shifted from the local level, Béjar's Ducal House, to external settings under the supervision of the Crown or that of the *Junta de Comercio* (or General Board of Trade), within a liberalisation process that started with the beginning of Philip V's reign and became more noticeable under the reign of Charles III. For Béjar this meant, among other things, the breaking up of the Duke's Dyeworks monopoly and the liberalization of access to water by the several factories.



Fig. 5. Inner courtyard at Diego López's factory.
Source: LEÓN PÉREZ y PÉREZ GARCÍA, 2003

Throughout the 18th century the General Board of Trade promoted the renovation of Ordinances in many textile centres, while trying to improve the products' quality and their access to markets. As regards Castile and Leon, the Ordinances regulating the main textile factories can be consulted in Hernández García⁶⁴. The special situation of the Royal Cloth Factory of Guadalajara, under the direct supervision of the Royal Exchequer, implied that it was governed by very peculiar ordinances and operational rules that, among other things, granted salaries to foreign craftsmen on non-production days, as pointed out by some authors⁶⁵. On

64. HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA: *La manufactura lanera...*, 2010, p. 301.

65. RODRÍGUEZ BRUNO: *Manufacturas...* 1948, pp. 45-67; GONZÁLEZ ENCISO: *Estado e industria...*, 1980, pp. 279-360.

the other hand, García Sanz has analyzed a number of transformations in Segovia's industry under Charles III⁶⁶. A general view of the evolution of cloth making in Castile with a special reference to Palencia, can be found in García Colmenares⁶⁷.

On the other hand, during the 18th century, and especially throughout its second half, a marked increase of fixed and current assets related to textile manufacturing took place, leading to a progressive growth in the capacity of some manufacturers who became considerably richer during this period, as rightly pointed out by Ros Massana⁶⁸. In Igualada, for example, only three manufacturers concentrated in 1765 more than two thirds of the local production⁶⁹. By contrast, the same author also discusses the situation in Antequera, where the manufacturers' enrichment was not so pronounced⁷⁰.

Finally, during the 18th century a general process of consolidation of commercial networks and growth of trade exchanges took place in Spain, whose effects were felt in all fields of activity, including of course textile manufactures. It was against this backdrop that a *lonja* or market opened in Madrid for selling Bejar's cloths, as well as several others that became outlets for the textile production of other Iberian factories. Although the 1765 Ordinances stipulated that all clothmakers had to sell their goods through the *Béjar's Factory*, a few years later main manufacturers like Diego López or Hernández Bueno chose to sell on their own.

As a conclusion to this historical review, in the 18th century there already existed in Béjar enough elements to speak of an industrial landscape: an issue that will be further analysed in section 6.

5. WATER AND FORESTS IN BÉJAR'S MANUFACTURES

5.1. *The use of water*

Water was a determining factor in the location of wool manufacturing activities in Béjar. As far as the manufacturing process is concerned, water is needed in the first

66. GARCÍA SANZ, A. «Industria textil tradicional y las reformas de la ilustración: Las transformaciones de la pañería segoviana durante el reinado de Carlos III». *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre Carlos III y la Ilustración*. Madrid, 1989, pp. 362-387.

67. GARCÍA COLMENARES, P.: *Evolución y crisis de la industria textil castellana. Palencia 1750-1990*. Madrid, 1992, pp. 33-134.

68. ROS MASSANA, J.: «Gremios y empresas en la industria lanera de Béjar». *Rev. Historia Industrial*, 1998, Nº 13, pp. 17-18.

69. TORRAS ELÍAS, J.: «Redes comerciales y auge textil en España»; in *Mercados y Manufacturas en Europa*, BERG, M. Ed. Crítica, Barcelona 1995, pp. 111-132.

70. PAREJO BARRANCO, A.: *Industria dispersa e industrialización en Andalucía. El textil antequerano (1750-1900)*. Antequera, 1987, pp. 231-232. Quoted by Ros Massana: *La industria textil...* 199, p. 78.

place for the purpose of wool scouring (in order to remove grease and impurities) and rinsing (to clean the products used in the former operation). Water is likewise needed in fulling, where cloth is soaked in an aqueous solution containing alkaline products before being washed with abundant water in the final stage of the process. Finally, it is also needed in dyeing, an operation where Béjar's water was particularly suitable due to its low salt content⁷¹.

On the other hand, and starting in the 16th century, mechanical water-powered fulling mills became a common fixture in textile manufacturing. In those facilities, the water was made to fall on a wheel whose rotating action caused the stamps or hammers to beat the cloth. There is documentary evidence of the conversion of several watermills into fulling facilities. The «added value» of rivers as energy sources explains why many textile facilities installed during the 18th and 19th centuries were often built in riverside locations.

By the end of the Early Modern Period, the availability of water made it possible to mechanise the processes of spinning and weaving by using water-powered machines. In the case of Béjar, it would appear that the river itself strives to facilitate these operations by surrounding the high promontory on which the old town lies on three of its four sides. Additionally, the streambed slope in Béjar's surroundings determined the use of water as a power source⁷².

The abundance of hydropower would later contribute to the late introduction of steam in Béjar's textile industry. While the first industrial revolution took place in Béjar, just as in other textile hubs in Iberia, at the beginning of the 19th century, the renovation of industrial machinery as a result of using steam power happened rather late by comparison with other places, particularly Catalonia⁷³. In Béjar, steam arrived with the railway at the end of the 19th century, when this mode of transport made it possible to ship coal from one place to another at a low cost.

During the Early Modern Period, the Ducal House tried to cash in on the existing hydric resources by enacting regulations that restricted and hampered access to water. The latter's availability and, in the case of the dukes, the possibility of regulating it, enabled the manufacturer to intervene in key stages of production and therefore control the whole process. As pointed out earlier, throughout the

71. Analytical determinations provide hydrotimetric titles between 0.5 and 1 degrees: quite close to the hardness of distilled water.

72. There are a large number of water concessions in Béjar's surroundings, as pointed out in a monograph that specifies the height of waterfalls corresponding to each of them: OLLEROS GÓMEZ, R.: *Estudio de la Cuenca Hidrográfica del Tajo en la Provincia de Salamanca*. Béjar, 1930.

73. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Solicitud de modificación del B.I.C. Conjunto histórico de Béjar y de su entorno de protección, para incluir el patrimonio industrial ribereño de la ciudad. Anexo 2. Memoria Justificativa*. Béjar, 2004, pp. 3-4. Unpublished.

17th century the dukes gradually secured their monopoly on water. In the early years of the 18th century they succeeded in imposing a mandatory prior permission that should be requested by anyone wishing to extend the existing fulling mills or build new ones: a regulatory measure that involved changing the then current rules regarding water uses.

The Ducal House adduced their alleged rights to water ownership as sanctioned by a privilege alluded to in the above-mentioned document concerning the granting of seigneurial rights over the town and land of Béjar in exchange for the town of Frías: a document signed by Diego Lope de Stúñiga and Henry III of Castile⁷⁴. There is no evidence of such a claim before the litigation started by the local population in Béjar against the dukes regarding a number of grievances, including the restrictions on the use of water for irrigation purposes. In that 1555 lawsuit, the dukes were accused of diverting the river's water to their villa in El Bosque, which was being built at the time and included a large pond, fountains, gardens, orchards and meadows⁷⁵. The defence of the dukes claimed the latter's water rights on the basis of the above-mentioned document, which established that «...*the undersigned Diego López and his descendants... should forever hold full title to the aforementioned town of Béjar... including its mountains, hills and valleys, fields and rivers, springs, ponds and whatever other flowing waters as exist in the place...*»⁷⁶.

In 1720, Ligli drew a map of the river around the islet of La Aliseda and the nearby industrial facilities, providing all kinds of details, heights and distances by means of a series of perspectives which he called *vistas de oxos*⁷⁷. This is an exceptional document for the study of Béjar's industrial heritage. The map had been commissioned by the Duke as evidence to be presented in a lawsuit that he had filed at Valladolid's Royal High Court or *Chancillería* against Juan del Carpio⁷⁸, the former administrator and foreman of the ducal factory who then owned a fulling

74. BARRIOS GARCÍA, A. and MARTÍN EXPÓSITO, A.: *Documentación Medieval de los Archivos Municipales de Béjar y Candelario*. Transcription of the entire document: 45. *Enrique III permuta con Diego López de Estúñiga la villa de Béjar por la de Frías, concediendo a éste los derechos de señorío sobre aquella y sus aldeas*. Salamanca, 1986, pp 102-106.

75. GONZÁLEZ CANALEJO, M.D.: «*El Bosque*» de Béjar. *Estudio de un espacio urbano singular*. Final Project, Master's Degree in Environmental Sciences. Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, 1995, p 42. Published by Grupo Cultural San Gil, Béjar, 2019.

76. BARRIOS GARCÍA and MARTÍN EXPÓSITO: *Documentación Medieval...* 1986, p. 103.

77. SÁNCHEZ SANCHO, J.F. and MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, J.: «Mapa del Bexarano Río Cuerpo de Hombre». Un documento excepcional para la historia del patrimonio industrial de Béjar». *Estudios Bejaranos*, N° 13, 2009, pp. 175-178 and fold-out coloured map.

78. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ and SÁNCHEZ SANCHO: «A vueltas con el patrimonio industrial bejarano. El molino-batán de Juan del Carpio». *8th Int. Congress on Molinology. Tui (Pontevedra)*. 2012, pp. 1-6.

mill situated practically across the «upstream» ducal mill. Even though the court ruled that both owners should share the use of water, Juan Manuel II appealed that ruling and eventually managed to assert his preferential right to the use of water according to the document attesting to the above- mentioned domain exchange.

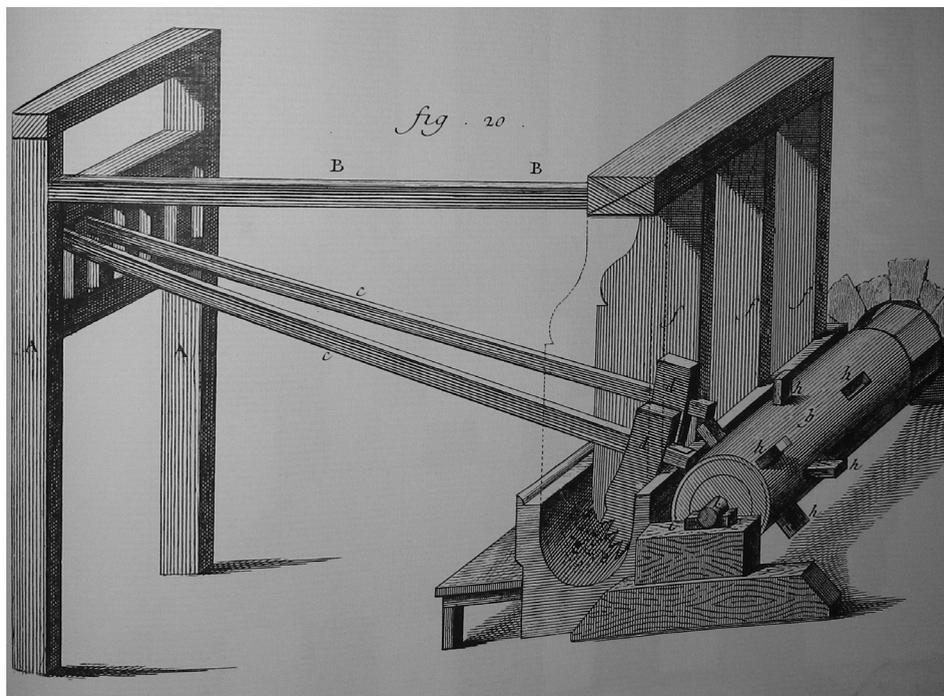


Fig. 6. Fulling mill. Diderot et d'Alambert, *Encyclopedie Française*. Vol. 3, Draperie, pl. 1

In 1723 Miguel Ramírez, the owner of a flour mill, began to build a fulling facility near the water inlet that supplied the «upstream» ducal mill. The Duke objected to this scheme by once again referring to the exchange document, and Miguel Ramírez gave up his project in order to avoid litigation with the Ducal House. The works were demolished, and no other fulling mill would be built there until twenty- one years later, when in 1744 a licence was granted for its construction. Ensenada's census included this recently built equipment as being in operation and producing a yearly revenue of 700 reales⁷⁹.

79. *Béjar 1753 según las Respuestas Generales del Catastro de Ensenada*. Madrid, 1990, p. 63.

As a conclusion, the preceding analysis shows that the Dukes increased their control over water throughout the 17th century and they even prohibited the construction of new dyeing works. The Ducal monopoly came to an end by the second half of the 18th century, when the General Board of Trade authorised the opening of dyeworks.

5.2. *Forests*

The area around Béjar and the surrounding settlements has been for centuries covered by woodland. This forest wealth traditionally compensated for other shortcomings, like for example the lack of farmland. It is not surprising, therefore, that the 1577 Ordinances regarding the use of forests paid a lot of attention to woodland conservation and management, regulating the latter in what we would call today a sustainable way so as to ensure the availability of trees and fruits over time.

In the preamble to the Ordinances, Francisco de Zúñiga y Sotomayor, the fourth Duke of Béjar, declares that

...I received a petition where you listed all ordinances and by-laws used by the aforementioned town and surrounding territories for the purpose of good governance since past times until the present date... [and bearing in mind] that what in those days was just and reasonable may not be so at present... and [the ordinances that] my predecessors and I myself had proclaimed as well as the chapters that I and my lawyers have drawn up over the last few years... it was agreed that the following chapters and ordinances should be sanctioned...⁸⁰

The above paragraph shows, on the one hand, the usual negotiation procedure between the Council and the ducal power in order to introduce modifications in the Ordinances, the final word belonging to the latter, since it was the Ducal House that effectively proclaimed the by-laws. On the other hand, the text highlights the fact that the Ordinances were drawn up on the basis of previous ones, yet including such additions and changes as were deemed necessary.

Wood use and forest management are dealt with by several individual ordinances, although two of them address the issue in greater depth: numbers XXXII and XLVI, the latter being even more comprehensive than the former⁸¹. Ordinance XXXII sees to the protection of woodlands and contemplates severe penalties for those who cut the stems or branches of several species, chestnuts being the most highly appreciated trees. Other actions that may cause tree damage are anticipated

80. MUÑOZ GARCÍA: *Antiguas Ordenanzas...*, 1940, pp. 3 y 4.

81. MUÑOZ GARCÍA: *Op. cit.*, pp 67-76. Commentary, pp 140-141

and penalised, including fire making in close proximity to the trees themselves, debarking them or letting livestock browse in forests without permission.

Ordinance XLVI allows residents to use as much wood as they need in order to build, repair or enlarge their homes. Wood was previously marked and had to be cut down as firewood during the months between October and February.

Charcoal production had to be done away from the woods and in order to sell coal or firewood outside Béjar's jurisdiction it was necessary to apply for the Council's permit. These restrictions applied to resources from both communal woodlands and private orchards.

The high value attributed to chestnut forests and the Council's interest over their upkeep so as to optimise their communal use are suggested by the following statement made in this ordinance: «...*the best thing that this town and land possess is their chestnut trees [emphasis added], which the local residents benefit from by using their wood to build their homes and their fruits to feed their pigs and themselves...*»

The text goes on to discuss the proper upkeep of these trees in the following terms: «... *and for the preservation of chestnuts it is advisable to prune and remove with an axe as much as is necessary...*»⁸².

Since pruning operations involved an expenditure that, according to the Council, they could not afford, the ordinance stipulated that «...*the thousand reales worth thirty-four [thousand] maravedís that are needed every year should be apportioned among the residents of this town and land...*»⁸³.

Despite such wise measures aimed at regulating the conservation and use of forests, some documentary evidence suggests that there were cases of overuse. References from 1572 and 1575 attest to the existence of thyme tickets (*tomillar*) that still existed in the 20th century. 16th century documents refer to spots known as «tomillar del Bosque» and «tomillar de Navahonda», near the Vado spot and the path leading to the upstream mills⁸⁴. Following the degradation of chestnut and oak forests, the soil was covered with thyme (*Thymus masticina*), although the prevailing species was the lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), which is commonly called *tomillo* (*thymus*) in Béjar (traditionally this plant is used to carpet the town streets where the Corpus Christi procession takes place).

Around 1751 Duke Don Joaquín was informed that the dyeworks uninterrupted operation may cause firewood supply problems, and that the district's woodlands were being laid waste by the industrial use of timber⁸⁵. On the other hand, Don

82. MUÑOZ GARCÍA, Op. cit., p 75.

83. MUÑOZ GARCÍA: Ibidem.

84. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, *La villa El Bosque...* 2011, p. 16

85. AHN, Nobleza, Osuna, Leg. 228, qtd. in MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, *La villa El Bosque...*, p. 16.

Joaquín's accountants and administrator issued adverse reports concerning the manufacturers' petition to be granted a price reduction on every batch of dyed-cloth, as producing the latter increased the cost of heating the stuff: since the fuel used was broom instead of thick chestnut firewood, it was necessary to hire an extra factory hand for the job of supplying fuel⁸⁶. We may safely infer that the reason why broom was used instead of thick firewood, despite the higher cost incurred, must have been the unavailability of the latter resource in sufficient amount.

Wood shortage also lies at the heart of another petition submitted to the duke by the representatives of the Cloth Factory in order to be granted permission to install in the sites named Campo Pardo and La Solana twelve wooden drying racks and cut all the forest wood they needed to use as supporting frames (the term *rachones* is used in this document to designate such pieces of timber). While His Excellency initially gave his consent to this request, he later changed his mind and turned it down arguing that *...there was not enough wood in the forest, unless great damage was caused*⁸⁷.

In a petition addressed to Duke Don Joaquín by a carpenter named Antonio Molina, he requested an exemption from the *alcabala* levied on *«the looms, presses and other tools that he carved and sold to the factory...»*⁸⁸. On the other hand, the Royal Charter of 1782 that granted Diego López permission to operate a dyeworks as well as several other mercies, provided him with the following authorisation: *«... III.ª, That he may likewise cut as much timber and firewood as he should need for his factory, machines and buildings...»*⁸⁹.

Let it be said in passing that the first machines built with parts of metal alloys that were used in Béjar would be imported from Belgium during the first third of the 19th century, in what came to be known as the first industrial phase⁹⁰. Up until then, Vitruvius's definition of a machine: remained applicable *«A machine is a combination of timbers fastened together...»*⁹¹. During the second half of the 19th century, the German engineer Franz Reuleaux, who is considered the founder of Machine Kinematics, analysed the durability of several combinations of elements

86. MARTÍN LÁZARO: «La Fábrica...». N° 236, 1925, p. 37.

87. MARTÍN LÁZARO: Op. cit., n° 237, p. 40.

88. Archivo Municipal de Béjar, *Acuerdos*, 23 feb 1741. Qtd. in MARTÍN LÁZARO: *Béjar en Madrid*, N° 232, 1926, p.32

89. *Real Cédula de Carlos III*, 5 November 1782, transcribed in RUPÉREZ ALMAJANO, M. N. and LORENZO LÓPEZ, R.M.: *La provincia de Salamanca... por D. Eugenio Larruga...* Salamanca, 1994, Volume XXXV, p. 323. Facsimile edition.

90. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Solicitud de modificación... Anexo 2. Memoria Justificativa*. Béjar, 2004, p. 4. Unpublished.

91. VITRUVIUS, M.L.: *The Ten Books of Architecture*. Translated by Morgan, M.H., Cambridge, Mass. 1914, p. 284.

assembled in order to transmit mechanical power, and in doing so he described applications where the pairs of toothed gear wheels were made of wood or where, in some cases, cast iron sprockets (the element that is most susceptible to wear since it is mounted on the fastest axis) were coupled with a wooden wheel⁹².

In conclusion, forest management as operated by Bejar's council under the Ducal House's surveillance meant that in this town the industry's pressure on the forest mass did not have such detrimental consequences as in other places of the Iberian Peninsula, like, for instance, those most heavily affected by iron manufacturing or shipbuilding.

6. BÉJAR'S INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

6.1. *The shaping of the industrial landscape*

Ponz, who visited Béjar in August 1777, refers to the town in the following terms: «...*the town's surroundings are a beautiful sight, with their large chestnut forests, fruit gardens and vineyards nestled among the mountain crags...*»⁹³. His account deals with both the local manufacturing of wool and the place's diverse and luxuriant landscape.

Painted in 1726-27 by Buonaventura Ligli, *A View of Béjar* constitutes an exceptional document for anyone studying the Béjar landscape in the early 18th century: an extremely thorough reproduction of the town as well as the buildings situated by the river course, the natural beauty spot of El Castañar and the shrines scattered across the area, together with the eponymous sanctuary and a bullring. Ligli's painting identifies several water- and fulling mills, the Duke's dyeworks, the Franciscan coarse wool factory and the so-called Casa de las Beatas, where orphan girls under the tutelage of the Ducal House were taught to spin yarn⁹⁴, as well as the drying racks on which brightly coloured cloths hung in several places in Béjar.

Some of these racks could still be seen in the 1980s, but have since disappeared from Béjar's landscape. Leaving aside their evident interest from the historical point of view, they provide a great example of the interaction between man and the environment in the definition of a landscape (industrial in this case) where nature

92. REULEAUX, F.: *Tratado general de mecánica. Vol. I.* Barcelona, 1886, pp 294-296.

93. PONZ, A.: *Viage de España. Vol. VIII.* Madrid, 1784. Facsimile ed., Madrid, 1972, pp. 8 and 10.

94. Such was the painter's account to Duke Don Juan Manuel as he explained to the latter the way in which he had handled perspective and proportion so as to foreground industrial buildings and churches. AHN, Nobleza, Osuna: http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas/servlets/ImageServlet?accion=41&txt_id_imagen=43&txt_rotar=0&txt_contraste=0&txt_zoom=10&appOrigen=&cabecera=N [2.02.2018].



Fig. 7. *A View of Béjar*, a painting by Buonaventura Ligli. Source: HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ y DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO Coords., 2012, fold-out opposite p. 448)

provided solar energy as an input into the wool manufacturing process. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that sunrays did not only provide the heat needed to dry cloth, but also facilitated the bleaching of fabrics as a result of the sunlight spectrum's ultraviolet range.

During the Early Modern Period, most workshops and manufacturing facilities were situated in the town's built-up area, and only those requiring water as a matter or source of energy were located on the Cuerpo de Hombre's riverside. This duality in the location of textile works has survived until today as a testimony to the origins of Béjar's industrial past. Next, a few significant factories from the early Modern Period will be described, beginning by those sited on the river bed or its surroundings. To this purpose, we refer the reader to the map in fig. 8.

In the first place, we have the Duke's Dyeworks, one of the oldest facilities and, without any doubt, the most important of all in Béjar's industrial heritage. These Dyeworks were placed near the riverside, although they did not take the water from the river but used instead the surplus from the Renaissance villa named El Bosque, as mentioned above. Near these works a big concentration of textile buildings would be erected in the 19th and 20th centuries starting from the initial hub of factories constructed in the Early Modern Period and shown in fig. 8.

Upstream from the settlement there are remains of a watermill that Miguel Ramirez tried to convert in 1723 into a fulling mill, located at what today is the factory of Navahonda⁹⁵ (Nº 1 in the *Inventary of Textile Industries*, henceforth referred to as *Inventary*⁹⁶).

Downstream from this place was Antonio Botello's watermill, whose remains lie where the Álvarez Anaya brothers' industrial premises used to be (from 1908 to 1923), later to become the site for THESA (1933) and Hispano Textil (Nº 91 in the *Inventary*). THESA was a company set up in Madrid in 1932 with the purpose of covering all the stages of the wool manufacturing process: a goal that ultimately remained unaccomplished. The factory closed down at the end of last century and several years later was destroyed by a fire. In 2014 Béjar's Council demolished all the buildings but two, and installed there the town's fairground.

Further downstream, the map in fig. 8 shows the site where some other two old watermills, respectively owned by Juan Nieto and the benefice holder of St John's Church, used to lie. There are no extant remains of either construction, but in the 20th century Transfitec's building occupied the site.

Right after crossing the New Bridge, there stood Teresa Oviedo's watermill, bought by Francisco III in 1595 to convert it into a fulling mill later called *batán de arriba* (upstream mill). Muñoz Domínguez and Sánchez Sancho situate this mill in the place where Musson's textile factory was built in the 1950s (Nº 59 in the *Inventary*)⁹⁷.

Close to the Duke's Dyeworks were sited Pedro Guijo's watermill and Pedro García Duro's fulling mill (both appear in Ligli's 1720 *View of Béjar*), but there are almost no remains. Near the Old Bridge, formerly named the *Corredera* Bridge, there was Juan del Carpio's watermill-fulling mill which, as mentioned above, that, was the subject-matter for a lawsuit against the Ducal House concerning the right to use the water. Over the remains of that construction was built in the 19th century Gosálvez's factory, later Francés Bruno's (Nº 98 in the *Inventary*).

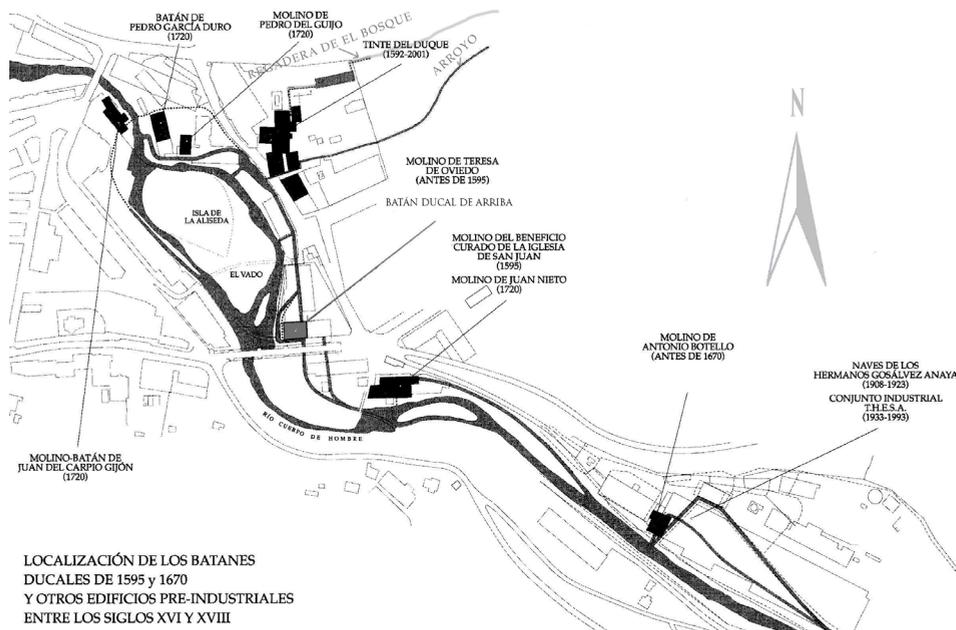
Other watermills from the Early Modern Period were converted into fulling mills and various industrial facilities. Among them are Doña Carlota's watermill, the one by the «Night Watchmen's Bridge» (*Puente de los Serenos*) within Basilio Cejuela's premises (Nº 12 in the *Inventary*), and, beyond the bridge, the Corralón

95. Navahonda was founded in 1842 by Cipriano Rodríguez Arias and it was kept in operation until the first years of this century.

96. When possible, the reference number will be quoted as it appears in LEÓN PÉREZ, M.C. and PÉREZ GARCÍA, J.: *Inventario de Industrias Textiles de Béjar*. Report. Madrid 2003. Unpublished.

97. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ and SÁNCHEZ SANCHO: *Los batanes...* 2006, p. 10

URBANO DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO
 WOOL MANUFACTURES IN BÉJAR DURING THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD.
 THE SHAPING OF AN INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE: ITS CHARACTER AND PROTECTION



LOCALIZACIÓN DE LOS BATANES
 DUCALES DE 1595 y 1670
 Y OTROS EDIFICIOS PRE-INDUSTRIALES
 ENTRE LOS SIGLOS XVI y XVIII

Fig. 8. Site plan of some pre-industrial buildings between the 16th and 18th centuries. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ & SÁNCHEZ SANCHO, 2003. Modified following indications by MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ (private communication)

de los Huérfanos (Nº 33 in the *Inventory*), which in spite of being in ruins, still contains abandoned textile machinery.

The exact siting of several old watermills that existed between the latter and St Albin's Bridge may be traced in a booklet published in 1930 by Béjar's Chamber of Commerce. In this booklet, 31 riverside facilities within Béjar's municipality are listed, with a total fall of 330.37 meters, of which 18 corresponded to textile factories that were operative when the document was published⁹⁸. With regard to the river section between those bridges, the booklet lists five factories then in operation: Cloth and other textile factories owned by Rafael Díaz's widow, don Francisco Muñoz, Martín González's widow, don Jerónimo Gómez Rodulfo Yagüe, as well as fulling mills and a tannery belonging to José Rodríguez Yagüe.

Following the river course and before reaching Saint Albin's Bridge, yet close to the latter, was placed the so called *batán de abajo* or downstream fulling mill,

98. OLLEROS GÓMEZ: *Estudio de la Cuenca...* 1930, pp. 13-16.

built by the Duke in 1753 over an old watermill that was visible in the painting by Buonaventura Ligli. By the middle of the 20th century, the old fulling mill's weirs and hydraulic components were repurposed in the construction of Gilart's dyeworks, whose most characteristic feature was its numerous chimneys. The building was enlarged and deeply modified to lodge Béjar's Textile Museum, opened in 2016 after 16 years of building works⁹⁹.

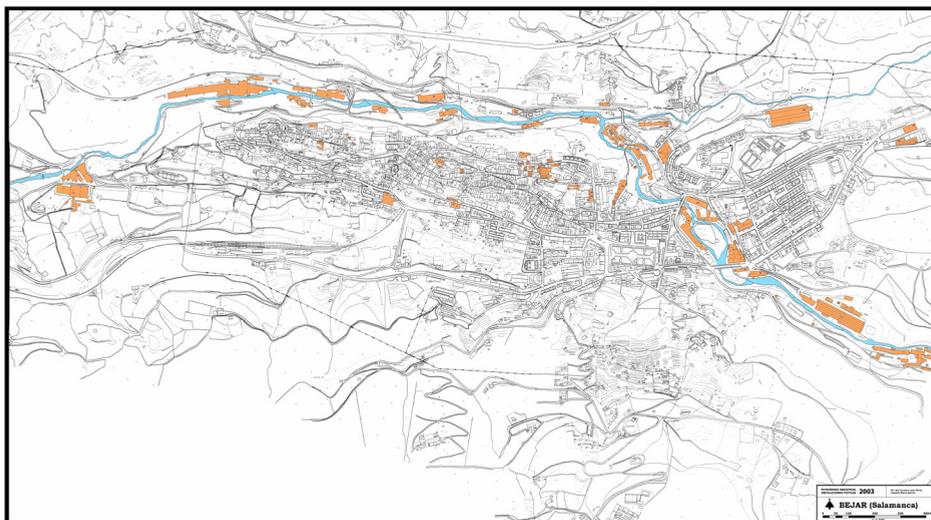


Fig. 9. A floor plan of old textile factories in Béjar.
Source: LEÓN PÉREZ Y PÉREZ GARCÍA, 2003.

As a consequence of the introduction in Béjar of hydraulic drive textile machines in the first third of the 19th century, new factories were built on the sites of facilities whose water rights were in order. Before the advent of rail transport, hydropower was the only competitive source of energy in Béjar.

It was not until the railway's arrival to Béjar in 1894, and the consequent cheapening of coal transportation costs, that the latter feedstock began to be used in local factories to power steam engines or, as the case may be, for heat production purposes. The burning of coal required tall brick chimneys, and this entailed a very visible change in Béjar's landscape.

99. <http://www.elnortedecastilla.es/salamanca/201503/13/museo-textil-bejar-abre-20150313121832.html>, [6.11.2017].

From then on, the siting of factories on riverside plots became a matter of convenience rather than necessity, since it was difficult to find land in the old part of town to accommodate the new industrial buildings. The widespread use of electric power well into the 20th century implied the gradual abandonment of steam as a driving force. In the final quarter of the last century, and as a consequence of the 1973 global energy crisis, many waterfalls were converted into small electric hydropower plants, a phenomenon that took place in many other places, both in Spain and abroad.

As indicated above, industrial facilities that were not dependent on water for their operation were preferably sited in the old town. They were in general small workshops and workrooms inside buildings that were not different from those of traditional architecture. It was not until the second half of the 18th century, when the new industries were taken over by wealthy manufacturers, that new buildings of a certain size, some of which can still be seen today, were built in the old town. On the lintel above the entrance door at number 4 on the street named Flamencos there is an inscription dated 1738 where we can read the name Juan Luis Meluis, one of the Flemish master weavers. No fewer than six old textile facilities are located on the same street, while quite a number of similar structures can be found on the adjacent streets. From the first half of the 18th century, it is worth mentioning Diego López's old factory (Nº 36 of the *Inventary*), situated next to Saint Mary's Church.

The several typologies of industrial buildings, which were already described in the *Solicitud de Modificación...* submitted in 2004 by the Grupo Cultural San Gil¹⁰⁰ are summarized in the following lines. The local pre-industrial architecture from the Early Modern Period shares many features with vernacular, popular forms of construction, with rectangular floor plans, single or double storey elevations built with granite masonry and ashlar on corners and hollow spaces, clear, unobstructed interiors, and enclosures made with chestnut timber frames and curved-tiled gable or hip roofs. A good example of this is the watermill by Night Watchmen's Bridge.

In the Late Modern Period two different typologies of industrial buildings can be distinguished as respectively belonging to the First and the Second Industrial Revolution. The former includes the so called «multi-storey factories» that were mainly erected between 1830 and 1880. Generally having rectangular floor plans, they were built with masonry and ashlar on corners and hollow spaces on the ground floor and the above storeys. The façades made no concessions to decoration and the windows were arranged in parallel series, while enclosures were plastered with lime mortar except on stonework sections. The roofs were hipped or gabled, with curved tiles and projecting eaves. As new constructive elements, foundry pillars

100. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Solicitud de modificación...* 2004. Memoria Justificativa, Ap. 2.2.

were introduced. A good example of this typology is Patricio Hernández Agero's detached warehouse.

With regard to the buildings from the Second Industrial Revolution, their typology retains the rectangular plans, but these are now arranged in modules along a single storey. The interiors feature slim load bearing components, leaving ample spaces closed by perimetric walls. Natural lighting is sought and saw-tooth roofs fitted with north-facing skylights are frequent. The first industrial building of this type was Gómez Rodulfo's (Nº 112 in the *Inventory*), built in 1924, but the best specimens of this typology were the buildings making up THESA's works, erected in 1933 and designed by the rationalist architect Eduardo Lozano Lardet.

Béjar's industry in the Early Modern Period has been studied from different points of view by Ros Massana¹⁰¹, Sánchez Rodríguez¹⁰², and Muñoz Domínguez¹⁰³. During the central years of the 19th century, there was a real boom of new factories in Béjar. Among them, mention must be made of the so called Arias workshop («*obrador*») (Nº 6 in the *Inventory*), in the surroundings of Saint Mary's Church, the building of the Salesian School (formerly Felisa Esteban's works), and other riverside factories such as Navazo (Nº 116 in the *Inventory*), the already mentioned plant in Navahonda (Nº 116 in the *Inventory*), and Faure's *Corralón*.

Other remnants of Béjar's industry appear both in several parts of the old town and outside the medieval wall, near the Cuerpo de Hombre's riverbanks. Urban works and riverside factories are complementary spaces, where the recurring architectural features and the buildings' uses define an industrial landscape whose backbone is the river. It can be said that hill and valley, belfries and chimneys are inseparable parts of a unique ensemble¹⁰⁴. For that reason, buildings, channels, weirs, cloth drying racks and other material remains deserve an appropriate protection.

The uniqueness of Béjar's industrial landscape within the whole territory of Castile and Leon has been pointed out by several authors¹⁰⁵. Nowhere else in Spain's

101. ROS MASSANA, R.: «La Industria (1800-1919)». In HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. and AVILÉS AMAT, A. (Coords.): *Historia de Béjar, Vol. II*. Béjar, 2013. pp. 49-79.

102. SÁNCHEZ RODRÍGUEZ, J.R.: «La industria textil de Béjar en el siglo XX y en los albores del XXI In HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. and AVILÉS AMAT, A. (Coords.): *Historia de Béjar, Vol. II*. Béjar, 2013. pp. 81-129.

103. MUÑOZ DOMÍNGUEZ, J.: «Huellas actuales de la historia Contemporánea de Béjar (1777-2012)». In HERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ, J.M. and AVILÉS AMAT, A. (Coords.): *Historia de Béjar, Vol. II*. Béjar, 2013. pp. 299-351.

104. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Solicitud de modificación...* 2004. Anexo 2. Memoria Justificativa, p. 8.

105. The term «Castilian Manchester» was popularised by LACOMBA ABELLÁN, J.A.: «Un núcleo industrial del siglo XIX: Béjar, el Manchester castellano». En JOVER ZAMORA, J.M. (Ed.): *El siglo XIX en España: doce estudios*. Barcelona, 1974, pp. 303-322. More recently,

Meseta has seen such a large concentration of various types of industrial buildings and facilities as exists here.

With regard to the old machinery, the majority has been sold as scrap and only a few pieces survive inside the Textile Museum. Many other heritage items ended up in landfills together with the debris from demolished buildings. The same fate awaited a large part of business correspondence, invoices, catalogues and textile samples, photographs and other minor items that were deemed worthless at the time but whose survival would have contributed very interesting evidence about the history of Béjar's textile industry. On the other hand, the preservation of other material remnants, both movable and immovable, together with the retrieval of industrial knowledge about textile processes from former times and the conservation of graphic and written documents (mostly extant in several family archives) concerning this aspect of Béjar's history, reveal part of the profound mark left by the cloth industry on the town and its surrounding district.

Moreover, Béjar's past activity have conformed set of social and ethnographic characters. Century-old dedication to industry as it happened at Béjar necessarily shaped its way of life, migratory movements, populational structure, social and labour organisation, trade union movement and even lifestyle and opinions. It has moreover determined the existence of that deserve to be recorded and protected together with Béjar's industrial built heritage. Such an extraordinary legacy cannot be encapsulated in a museum, but should instead be known and understood by walking through the town's spaces.

In the 1920's a booklet was printed which reflected the town's emerging focus on tourism and, above all, its industrial strength¹⁰⁶. On the other hand, during the 1960s Béjar's Town Council produced a number of stickers and other promotional materials with the slogan «Béjar: the first wool-manufacturing hub in western Spain», thus emphasizing textile activities as the town's main hallmark. From other point of view, many of those who lost their factory jobs in the 70s and 80s continued to consider themselves as spinners, weavers, etc. throughout the following decades, even though the chances of returning to those occupations were non-existent. All of which just goes to show Béjar's proud awareness of its industrial past and its still ongoing self-perception as a «textile» town.

GARCÍA MARTÍN: «Béjar según...» 1990, p. 17, referred to as *an industrial oasis in the middle of a farming environment*.

106. ANONYMOUS: *Béjar pintoresco e industrial*. Álbum de fotografías de la ciudad y alrededores. Béjar, c. 1915.

6.2. *The protection of Béjar's industrial landscape*

In Spain, the specific protection of industrial heritage developed later than in other European countries, as is shown by the fact that the 1985 law regulating the country's historical heritage (*Ley de Patrimonio Histórico Español*)¹⁰⁷ does not include a section dedicated to this heritage type, which is only alluded to in its Article 2. Moreover, the much later regional law concerning cultural heritage (*Ley de Patrimonio Cultural de Castilla y León*), contains one single reference to the industrial heritage of the latter Autonomous Community (Art. 6.2.2)¹⁰⁸. Competencies on culture correspond to the regional administrations according to the Spanish legislation, while the central government plays only a supervisory function. According to this distribution of power, the declaration of heritage assets as Properties of Cultural Interest (*BICs* in Spain's terminology) and the approval of protection measures are in the hands of regional governments. This is the reason why there is a great disparity across Autonomous Communities regarding criteria and procedures to be followed, especially in the area of industrial heritage.

The First National Plan for Industrial Heritage aimed at protecting isolated items, industrial ensembles and industrial landscapes conforming a heritage that was threatened with extinction¹⁰⁹. As a part of this Plan, an *Inventory of Béjar's Textile Industries* was made¹¹⁰, on the initiative of the then Instituto de Patrimonio Histórico (IPHE), today's Patrimonio Cultural Español (IPCE). The *Inventory* was meant to be a preliminary step leading to the regional government of Castile and Leon's approval of an industrial heritage catalogue whose assets would be officially declared as being of «cultural interest» (*BICs* in Spain's terminology). However, the regional administration did not issue such a declaration, nor did it meet the demands of Béjar's population in this regard¹¹¹.

The *Inventory* features sixty facilities. Figure 10 consists of a map showing the location of Béjar's old factories, identified by their corresponding number in the *Inventory*¹¹². They are classified into three groups, attending to their degree of heritage value: High (A), Medium (M), and Low (B). Those factories are situated

107. *Ley 16/1985, de 25 de junio, del Patrimonio Histórico Español*, 1985. BOE for 29.02.1985. Updated 30.11.2001.

108. *Ley 12/ 2001, de Patrimonio Cultural de Castilla y León*. BOCyL for 19.07.2002

109. <http://www.mcu.es/patrimonio/MC/IPHE/PlanesNac/PlanIndustrial/Necesidad.html>. [10.11.2017]

110. LEÓN PÉREZ and PÉREZ GARCÍA: *Inventario...* 2003.

111. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Solicitud de modificación...* 2004.

112. LEÓN PÉREZ and PÉREZ GARCÍA: *Inventario...*, Facilities' ground plan. 2003.

along the river banks (27), in Béjar's urban area (27), and outside Béjar (6), as is shown in Table 1, which also features their degree of relevance¹¹³.

Table 1. Béjar's textile industries included in the Inventory,
 with an indication of their location and degree of interest.

Source: *Inventario de Industrias Textiles de Béjar*, own construction¹¹⁴

Location	High (H)	Medium (M)	Low (L)	Total
Along river banks	19	8	0	27
Within the urban area	11	10	6	27
Outside Béjar	2	0	3	6 (*)
Overall Total	32	18	9	60

(*) No information is available regarding the relevance of one of these facilities

The *Inventory* also mentions up to 15 facilities already disappeared in 2003¹¹⁵, most of them as a result of demolition, of which there are no Inventory files. Among them were the buildings that made up the Duke's Dyeworks, demolished in 2001, which meant a very important loss of local industrial heritage. A report was drawn up in 2002 underlining the interest of the Dyeworks — a facility that remained operational until the very same year it was demolished (over more than four centuries). There is no doubt that its disappearance meant the loss of the jewel in the crown of Béjar's industrial heritage¹¹⁶.

After it was bulldozed, a petition was submitted to the authorities so as to secure protection for the site's subsoil, since the latter contained archaeological remains, but the request was turned down by both the local council and the regional government¹¹⁷. In 2002 no building project existed, and the local building promoter Faustino Esteban¹¹⁸ was then waiting for a modification to be

113. DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U.: «La protección de los edificios del patrimonio industrial de Béjar: el Inventario de Industrias Textiles y la Revisión de 2009 del Plan General de Ordenación Urbana». *Estudios Bejaranos*, Nº 13, 2009, p. 112.

114. *Ibidem*.

115. LEÓN PÉREZ and PÉREZ GARCÍA: *Inventario...* 2003, Memoria, p. 10.

116. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Informe sobre...* 2002. Unpublished.

117. GRUPO CULTURAL SAN GIL: *Alegaciones contra la aprobación inicial de la «Modificación Puntual del Plan General de Ordenación Urbana de Béjar con ordenación detallada del PERI Z-5»*, 2005. Unpublished.

118. This developer denied any information to the team that put together the Inventory of Béjar's Textile Industries. This explains why the sheet corresponding to the most emblematic of Béjar's factories is missing in the above Inventory.



Fig. 10. On the foreground, Gosálvez's factory by the Old Bridge. On the background, the Duke's Dyeworks. Photo by Juan Requena, c. 1930. Courtesy of the Gosálvez Miralles family

introduced into the town's masterplan (PGOU), in force since 1983, so as to increase the amount of buildable density. However, this modification did not take place until 2005, when the old factory owned by Faure and MATSA was also demolished to provide the site for a residential development named *Tintes del Duque* (the Duke's Dyeworks).

The main problem with the demolition of industrial buildings carried out in recent years is that nothing is left as collective heritage. As indicated previously, watermills were replaced by fulling mills and these gave way to new factories, thus contributing to the maintenance and extension of Béjar's valuable industrial heritage. Today industries are replaced by blocks of flats, residential garages and commercial premises, without any trace of previous activity being left, in a continuous process of historical heritage destruction.

A detailed analysis of the several local industries, their values and their vicissitudes falls outside the limits of this study. Indeed, such would be the purpose of a Catalogue leading to the much awaited BIC declaration that would provide these heritage assets with the necessary protection.

6.3. *The protection of industrial heritage by Béjar's local government*

Since the regional Government of Castile and Leon has not approved a Catalogue of industrial heritage properties as a prior step to granting the latter the subsequent protection afforded by the BIC status, the only protective measures are those enacted by the local Council.

The town's 1983 first masterplan did not include any factory in the catalogue of sites and buildings of interest¹¹⁹. Ten years later, the plan underwent a revision followed by some other not approved four updates between 1996 and 2012, although it was necessary to wait until 2014 for a new masterplan to be approved¹²⁰, which included in its Catalogue a certain number of industrial buildings. Until that year most of Béjar's industrial heritage buildings did not benefit from any kind of official protection status.

The masterplan approved in 2014 lists twenty-five textile facilities (sheets 28 to 52), four diversion dams and waterfalls (sheet 22), and three industrial chimneys (sheet 27). Moreover, under the heading Residential Buildings are listed houses numbered 12 through 16 on the street named Colón (sheet 53 in the Catalogue). i.e. what used to be Claudio Cascón's factory (sheet 46, an item declared as having a especially high interest in the *Inventory*). No connection can be found between these twenty-five facilities included in the Catalogue and their heritage interest as recognised in the *Inventory*. Instead, they appear to have been chosen arbitrarily. In fact, this document is not even mentioned in the masterplan, which is unforgivable in a planning instrument that includes a certain number of old industries in the municipal Catalogue.

A review of Béjar's industrial heritage and its protection can be found in Domínguez Garrido¹²¹, who discusses the protective measures introduced by the masterplan for industrial buildings included in the Catalogue. The latter lists twenty-four buildings that are granted an Environmental Protection status (PA), which according to Castile and Leon's Urban Planning Ordinance, consists in «a degree of protection affecting not only the building itself, but its historic memory as part of the collective industrial heritage». With regard to permitted works in buildings

119. AYUNTAMIENTO DE BÉJAR: *Plan General Municipal de Ordenación Urbana*, 1983.

120. AYUNTAMIENTO DE BÉJAR: *Plan General Municipal de Ordenación Urbana*, 2014.

121. DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U.: «El patrimonio industrial de Béjar. Antecedentes, protección legal, situación actual y perspectivas de futuro. *Estudios Bejaranos*, Nº 10, 2006, pp. 35-50; DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO, U.: «La protección de los edificios...», No. 13, 2009, pp. 109-128.

enjoying Environmental Protection, it is ruled that *...permission may be granted to create new openings on the façade... increase built volume and net floor plan area*¹²². It clearly follows that the general principle of protection may be changed in all its terms according to the municipal architect's opinion, and that the buildings could be modified so as to become unrecognisable.

In the sheets of the Catalogue of Industrial Buildings, the Protection, Conservation and Rehabilitation Measures for buildings under the PA category, are phrased in the following fashion:

Regarding possible interventions, we recommend the building's protection in order to preserve the façade's composition and the interspacing of openings while trying at all times to retain the building's complex's aesthetic.

Any intervention should have the corresponding municipal license. The installation of advertisement signs, cables, aerials, visible ducting and anything that might impair the element's view is strictly prohibited.

A comment on the inaccurate (intentional?) wording of the above two paragraphs, has appeared in a previous paper¹²³ in the following terms:

The mildness of the expression *we recommend the building's protection* in the first paragraph, in reference to profound and irreversible interventions, contrasts with the rotundity of the expression *strictly forbidden* in the second paragraph regarding minor and clearly reversible interventions.

The term *façade* is in the singular, and not in the plural, despite the fact that attached buildings have at least two façades, whereas detached ones have four or more façades, The wording used leaves the door open to deep and irreversible changes in the industrial buildings that the Catalogue claims to protect.

The only buildings enjoying Structural Protection (PE), i.e., «*a degree of protection extending to the building's integrity and to basic elements that define its architectural structure, use and occupation pattern*» are the Hispano Textil factories —formerly THESA's— (sheet 50 in the *Catalogue*). It is incongruent that by the time the Local Council's plenary session initially approved the masterplan's revision, those buildings, with the exception of two warehouses, had already been demolished by the Council itself.

The 2014 masterplan contemplates several actions targeted at old factories that can be seen in fig.11. One such action is the so-called Normalisation Unit 19 (key No. 1 in fig.11), between the streets named Flamencos, 29 de Septiembre, el Rollo

122. AYUNTAMIENTO DE BÉJAR: *Plan General...* 2014. Normativa del Catálogo, p. 6.

123. DOMÍNGUEZ GARRIDO: «La protección de los edificios...», N.º. 13, 2009, pp. 115-116.

and el Orujal. It concerns valuable assets in Béjar's industrial heritage like the old factories owned by Juan Muñoz García (N° 27 in the *Inventory*), having High (A) interest, and Manuel Bruno (N° 136 in the *Inventory*), with Medium (M) interest, as well as Emilio Muñoz's button factory, the only rationalist industrial building in Béjar (after the demolition of THESA's units) and one which was not included in the *Inventory* because it was not a textile factory. In spite of the unquestionable heritage value of these buildings, their demolition was permitted together with their replacement by blocks of flats (closed and entirely residential and for mixed uses).

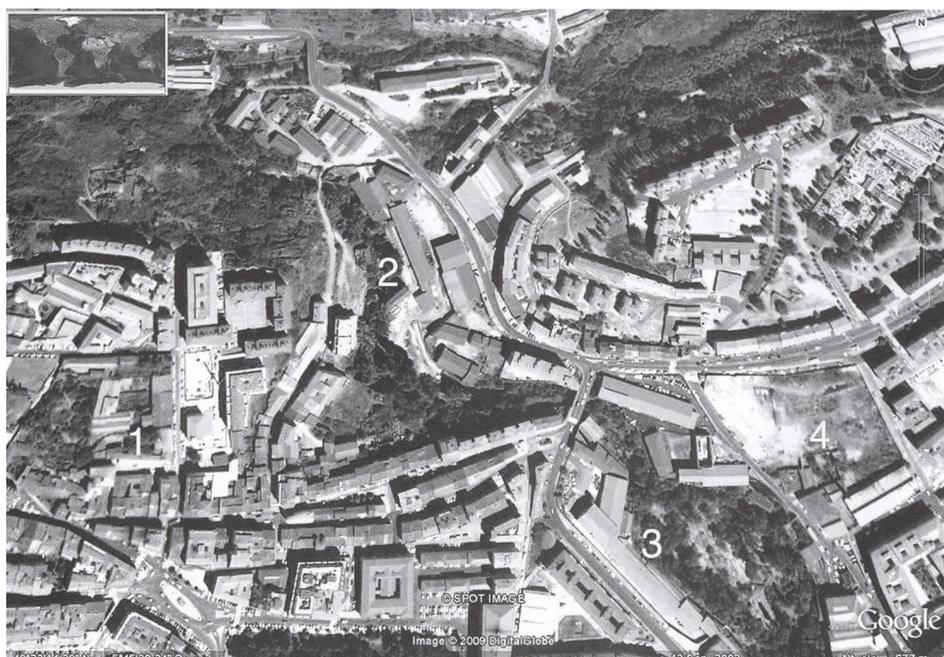


Fig. 11. Aerial view of the eastern part of Béjar's Historic Town as well as the section between the two bridges. Numbers refer to urban-planning interventions on industrial sites listed in the *Inventory*: 1. Campo Pardo factories; 2. Facilities owned by Basilio Cejuela (formerly by Patricio Hernández Agero); 3. Factory owned by Francés and Bruno (formerly by Gosálvez); 4. Site of the Duke's Dyeworks (demolished in 2001) and of the Faure and MATSA factories (demolished in 2006). Taken from Domínguez Garrido 2009, p. 122. Source: Google.

Likewise, the expectations for Unconsolidated Urban Land (SUNC) 16 (No. 2 in fig. 11)—i.e. the factory compound owned previously by Patricio Hernández Agero, and today by Basilio Cejuela (N° 12 in the *Inventory*)— clearly show the worst possible scenario for Béjar's industrial heritage. Even though all these buildings

are valued as being of High (A) interest in the *Inventory*, permission is granted to pull down a unique legacy of several centuries of industrial history with a great potential for contemporary uses: all in exchange for seven housing blocks of flats, parking garages and retail space.

Béjar's old town was declared a special conservation area (*Conjunto Histórico Artístico*) in 1974¹²⁴ following a decree that overscored the marked medieval layout of its old town without however mentioning the town's textile history or contemplating the protection of the latter's most significant landmarks, as was otherwise common in those years. In 1996, however, a Special Plan for the Protection of Béjar's Historic Town was enacted¹²⁵ which did list a number of industrial buildings of interest and set up several protection measures in the case of assets like Diego López's Royal Cloth Factory (Nº 36 in the *Inventory*) and the Arias' workshop (Nº 119 in the *Inventory*).

The case of Béjar, with its unprotected industrial heritage — a particularly regrettable situation given the latter's relevant value — is by no means unique. Initiatives like the Plan Nacional de Protección Industrial, launched in 2000 to save these heritage properties from ruin and plundering¹²⁶, have not brought about a significant improvement in that direction.

With regard to the Iberian Peninsula's textile industry, conservation actions must be positively valued. Examples are the schemes implemented in Alcoy and including from watermill and fulling mills over the Moliner and Barxell rivers to industrial buildings recovered for other purposes such as, for instance, the Engineering School, the Centre for Innovative Enterprises and the Dance Conservatory, to mention but a few. Nearer to Béjar than Alcoy, the former textile hub in Covilhá (Portugal) has reconverted the old industrial premises of the Royal Cloth Factory into a wool museum¹²⁷, with a section on dyeworks in the old town and another one in the Veiga Royal Factory, on the Ribera da Godra. Moreover, the University of Beira Interior has converted old factories into administrative, teaching and residential buildings.

Especially remarkable, moreover, is the conservation of industrial buildings in Catalonia. In Terrassa spaces and manufacturing facilities that remained idle have been repurposed as government offices (the Gibert i Junyent workshop), apartments

124. *Decreto 24077 1974*, 20 July, whereby the old town of Béjar (Salamanca) is declared *conjunto histórico-artístico* (special conservation area). BOE, 27.08.1974

125. AYUNTAMIENTO DE BÉJAR: *Plan Especial de Protección del Casco Histórico de Béjar*. 1996.

126. Pan Nacional de Patrimonio Industrial: [gl/dam/jcr:88a504bd-a083-4bb4-8292-5a2012274a8c/04-maquetado-patrimonio-industrial.pdf](http://dam/jcr:88a504bd-a083-4bb4-8292-5a2012274a8c/04-maquetado-patrimonio-industrial.pdf). [20.10.2018].

127. centerofportugal.com/es/museo-de-la-lana/ [20.10.18].

(the premises of the Sociedad General de Electricidad), or Catalonia's Museum of Science and Technology (Vapor Aymenich, Amat i Jover). Indeed, while not specifically a textile museum, Catalonia's Museum of Science has a section devoted to this industry and also coordinates a network of museums situated all over Catalonia¹²⁸. Also in Terrassa lies the Documentation Centre of Barcelona's Textile Museum, devoted to research and conservation of movable industrial heritage, both tangible and intangible. Among other changes in the uses of Catalonia's industrial heritage, special mention must be made of the recovery for touristic purposes of industrial colonies as part of a broader scheme involving the riverine park of Llobregat Navas-Berga¹²⁹.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Béjar's urban area is framed by the surrounding Sierra and several watercourses, as well as by woodlands and forests which, as pointed out earlier, have influenced the shaping of the town's industrial heritage. As far as woodland use and management are concerned, things have not changed much since the enactment of the 1577 Ordinances. Important transformations, however, have taken place regarding land ownership, which was communal in the Early Modern Period and is now private.

Our review of industrial location factors bears out the important role played by the Ducal House in the case of Béjar. This is a unique feature of this town which cannot be found in other Iberian textile centres.

The significance of environmental factors has changed over time and in this regard water is a case in point. While still preserving its function as a working material in the so-called wet processing stage of textile manufacturing, its use as main driving force has disappeared, water serving now to activate several small hydropower plants. Weirs and channels have transformed their productive role in the course of time.

Built from the 16th century onwards, textile works in Béjar embody the real value of this heritage and evidence the need for effective safeguarding actions. The current level of protection of Béjar's industrial heritage is clearly insufficient, as shown by the several cases analyzed in this research regarding the plundering of valuable elements. What is needed is for the Regional Government to produce as soon as possible a Catalogue of Béjar's Factories, since the latter require prompt and effective protection.

128. mnactec.cat/es/ [20.10.2018].

129. V.planur-e.es/articulos/ver/un-proyecto-de-futuro-para-nuestras-colonias-textiles-completo%3C/strong%3E y femturisme.cat/es/rutas/ruta-colonias-textiles-en-el-bergueda. [20.10.2018].

Regarding alternative uses for buildings that are part of Béjar's industrial landscape at a time when there is no recovery in sight for the town's industry, it should be enough to follow the example set by other localities and repurpose old factories as homes, administrative buildings or social and cultural spaces in tune with the *Inventory's* recommendations. In order to support this kind of initiatives, Béjar's masterplan should include stricter norms than those currently in force concerning interventions in old industrial buildings, so that the present-day incentives to demolition disappear.

Moreover, Bejar's long dedication to manufactures, has inevitably determined a set of peculiar ethnographic traits which deserve to be collected and preserved in the same way as the immovable industrial heritage. These are unique cultural assets that cannot be preserved inside a museum, but should instead be known and understood by walking the streets of Béjar, where those interested in this legacy will find abundant manifestations from several historical periods of how the local population defined the main features of the town's life and character. On the other hand, the Local Council should also be involved in the dissemination of that heritage by revitalizing the town's Textile Museum beyond simply receiving visitors during opening hours.

The aggregate of industrial buildings, machinery, and other tangible and intangible assets from Béjar's past as a textile town, together with the physical environment that contains them, conform a cultural and industrial landscape for which this paper advocates protection and enhancement as a valuable heritage.

The unique environmental value of Béjar's natural surroundings was acknowledged when it was initially included within the limits of the Candelario Natural Park. Additionally, the area is a part of the Biosphere Reserve comprising the Béjar and Francia sierras ever since the latter's recognition in 2006. Finally, Béjar belongs to the protected area Candelario (LIC ES41 50101), and downstream from the town the river enters the Site of Community Importance named *Valle del Cuerpo de Hombre* (LIC ES41 50126).

Let us finish by taking one last look at the piece of landscape with which we started this article: the view from the church on Monte Mario. Much of what the local people of Béjar would have seen from here in the Early Modern Period still remains, yet transformed by new ways of living and working into other factories and other houses built in a territory where a fair number of invariants have survived over the centuries in Béjar's landscape thus shaping the unique character of the town and its surroundings.

Final note. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Grupo Cultural San Gil for their continued efforts in the defense of Béjar's heritage, and particularly to José Muñoz for providing some comments, documents and

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