

1. THE ECONOMY: MANUFACTURE AND TRADE

The city of Girona was an important hub of economic activity throughout the Middle Ages. Throughout the early centuries of the period, the bishop and canons, the clergy and members of the nobility and upper classes, whose dominions generated them great revenue, invigorated the economy, creating diversified demand that attracted merchants and craftsmen to Girona. From the 12th century onwards, as well as commercial interactions, the development of manufactured goods and services gained importance. Around 1300, Girona's merchants already traded goods from far afield, such as Flemish textiles, as well as products from the city itself, such as leather products. During the 15th century, however, the rising social tensions and, above all, the long civil war and its direct impact of the regional economy led to a crisis of major proportions in terms of the city's economy.

2. THE MARKET: ECONOMIC DRIVING FORCE

The markets of the medieval city developed on a range of levels. From very ancient times, there was a weekly market of agricultural produce, but later a market of manufactured goods and foods was established with permanent shops and stalls. The increasing number of customers and growing regional scope stimulated the diversification and specialization of trades. In Girona, goods were available that could not be found in the smaller towns of the region, such as jewellery, weapons, leather products, bedclothes and blankets. In addition to the goods that were produced in the city itself and the surrounding parishes, products from further afield were also on sale, such as cereals from Sicily, wool from the Maestrat region and fabrics from Perpignan and Camprodon. Girona's merchants also travelled to sell their wares and, from the start of the 14th Century, drapers from Girona are documented with stalls at markets in Caldes de Malavella, Amer and Besalú. Eventually, the Girona markets gave merchants from many small towns the opportunity to sell and buy in wholesale, a clear demonstration of the city's importance as a centre of trade at a regional level.

3. CRAFTSMEN'S WORKSHOPS: THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN

The whole family was employed in the craftsman's workshops, including women, who were responsible for maintaining the home and keeping it stocked, as well as caring for the children, elderly and sick. Women learned, helped and worked in their father's workshop, and subsequently in their husband's. In the event for the master craftsman's absence or death, the women ran the workshop. The tax records of the city of Girona in the 14th and 15th centuries show the names of several craftswomen with a record of their trade, such as Blanca, a painter, or Dominga, the stained glass-maker.

4. MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

After the plague of 1348, there was a total of over thirty medical specialists in Girona, including, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries and barbers, who possessed specialized books in their libraries. Some of these professionals, such as the famous surgeons Berenguer and Jaume Riera (also known as Sarriera), worked at the service of the king and court. Others served the bishops and canons, such as Ramón de Cornellà (1296), Master Albert (1305) and Master Guerau de Santdionís (1318). However, many medical professionals also tended to the sick from more humble backgrounds or offered their professional advice to the whole population. Interaction between Jewish and Christian doctors was very common. Medical services, therefore, constituted another specialty that Girona provided to the region. In the mid- 14th century, an apothecary by the name of Ramón de Sant Medir served clients from as far as Bisbal d'Empordà, Banyoles and Camprodon.

5. TEXTILES: THE LEADING MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS

Textiles were one of the main products manufactured in Girona and sold around the city's markets. Near to the river Ter, records show that there were many cloth mills from the 13th century onwards. In the 14th century, wool was imported from the Maestrat region, one of the most important manufacturing areas of the time. The production and consumption of linen was also common, above all for underwear and sheets. Carders, who were essential because they took charge of preparing wool, were awarded the status of a guild in a privilege granted in 1330. In the hearth tax records of 1360, 77 wool carders were registered, a number which underlines the importance of this manufacturing process in the city.

6. LAWYERS, NOTARIES AND MONEY LENDERS

Apart from the improvement in terms of communications, bridges and thoroughfares, the commercial growth that took place in the 13th and 14th Centuries was based on the development of credit and the legal apparatus required for buying and paying in instalments, and borrowing money relatively easily and securely for both parties. In contrast to smaller towns, in Girona, there were money lenders willing to offer funds (often through the city's Jewish population to disguise the usury, which was forbidden among Christians), notaries who would draft deeds for a modest fee (providing a level of security to commercial and lending operations) and lawyers to resort to in cases of conflict. Many of these professionals also offered their services at market stalls.

7. THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

The raw materials to construct the city have been extracted from the quarries of Montjuïc and Pedret since ancient times. The city walls, religious buildings and innumerable civic buildings were made possible by Girona's stonemasons, who carved the stones and manufactured large numbers of doorways, columns and capitals which were exported around the Mediterranean to form part of various constructions.

8. THE LEATHER TRADES

Another important sector of manufacturing was the leather industry. According to the hearth tax records of 1360, There were hundreds of craftsmen working with leather, many as shoemakers, who were relatively common everywhere, as well as tanners, vellum makers and bag producers, which were much less common and more specialized crafts. Some families from Girona, such as the Bell-llocs, began as leather smiths and ended up as merchants operating along the Mediterranean routes, becoming the head of one of the city's oligarchies.

9. THE METAL TRADES

Metalwork also accounted for a proportion of the professional trades in Girona, from silversmiths to ironmongers. Their importance is reflected in the street names of the city: 'Argenteria' (Silversmith) or 'Ferreria Velles' (Old iron forges). In addition, ironwork was also prominent in the manufacture of weapons (shield, swords and crossbows), which people from the local area came to purchase in the city. This led to the street known in the 13th century as 'de les Fàbregues' ('of the forges'), due to the ironsmiths located on the banks of the Onyar, being renamed as 'de les Ballesteries' ('of the armories').

10. POWER WITHIN THE CITY

Medieval Girona was governed by counts and bishops from the end of the 8th century through to the 11th century, when feudal representatives and highest-ranking vassals, both ecclesiastical and secular, took control. From the mid- 12th century, the emergence of a city bourgeoisie accompanied Girona's urban and economic growth, but definitive political recognition of this group would not arrive until the end of the 13th century, when the right to appoint elected officials known as jurors was gained. This municipal regime developed throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, although there was an increase in the number of conflicts related to the management of local power.

11. THE POWER OF THE COUNTS AND ROYALTY

With its assimilation into the Frankish kingdom, Girona became governed by a count appointed by the Emperor, which was a hereditary position from the end of the 9th century. In the 11th century, it became widespread for counts to undertake the feudal grant of part of their realm – jurisdiction, taxes, houses, walls, etc. – to noblemen and the clergy, thereby basing their power more on personal relationship of loyalty rather than on direct control. In the mid- 12th century, the Count of Barcelona (and Girona) of legal representatives (heads of the '*vegueria*' administrative jurisdictions, bailiffs and judges that formed the Court of Girona) led to serious conflicts with the bishop and clergy. The king, however, maintained the maximum authority over the city.

12. ECCLESIASTICAL POWER

Girona's status as an episcopal capital led to the proliferation of ecclesiastical institutions, which by their very nature were highly visible in the medieval world. The bishop had inherited a certain level of representation in terms of public power from the age of empire, but this power was increasingly exercised as a feudal lord. Meanwhile, an important role was also played by the chapters of canons of the Cathedral and Sant Feliu, the Benedictine orders of Sant Daniel and Sant Pere de Galligants (the abbot of which eventually had civil and criminal jurisdiction) and subsequently the Mendicant orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites and the Orders of Our Lady of Mercy and Saint Claire), and even the parish church and a growing number of incumbents and subordinate staff. As well as attending to the spiritual needs of the parishioners, these institutions of extremely high social and even political standing retained urban and rural property, from which they earned significant financial revenues, unevenly distributed among them.

13. ART AND CULTURE

Being one of the centres of Catalonia's medieval art scene, Girona still conserves a significant proportion of its artistic history from this long period, with notable creations from the Romanesque era, such as the exceptional *Tapestry of the Creation* and the cloisters of the Cathedral, Sant Pere de Galligants and Sant Daniel. Other masterpieces include remarkable Gothic constructions, such as the churches of Sant Feliu and Sant Domènec, the façade of the Pia Almoina and the Cathedral itself. In the same way, centres of intellect and learning such as the Cathedral and the Convent of Sant Domènec, as well as secular artists as time went on, ensured that Girona remained a cornerstone of the century's cultural and literary system throughout the Middle Ages.

14. MUNICIPAL POWER

The existence of an autonomous municipal power in Girona was consolidated when the king granted the status of *universitas* to the citizen's assembly (1263), which gave the city its own legal personality and power to appoint representatives with decisions-making powers. The king, in turn, gained a new interlocutor in this way, with whom to satisfy his increasing demands for money, which strengthened the city's political autonomy but led to chronic levels of debt throughout the 14th century. However, not all inhabitants of Girona were considered citizens: Jews, noblemen, the clergy, foreigners and slaves were excluded, for example.

15. LITERARY CREATION

As an intellectual centre, throughout the Middle Ages, Girona was home to some of the famous names of literature of the time, including a number of Jewish academics. Their Christian counterparts included celebrated poets, theologians and humanists who played a prominent role in the history of Catalan literature, particularly between the 13th and 15th Centuries.