

## Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines

128-1 | 2016

Sources et approches des biographies cardinalices  
(XIX<sup>e</sup>-XX<sup>e</sup> s.) - Familles laborieuses. Rémunération,  
transmission et apprentissage dans les ateliers  
familiaux de la fin du Moyen Âge à l'époque  
contemporaine en Europe - Varia

---

### Apprentices, women and masters in the silk weavers' guild of Barcelona, 1790-1840

Àngels Solà



**Electronic version**

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/2449>

DOI: 10.4000/mefrim.2449

ISSN: 1724-2142

**Publisher**

École française de Rome

**Printed version**

ISBN: 978-2-7283-1190-3

ISSN: 1123-9891

**Electronic reference**

Àngels Solà, « Apprentices, women and masters in the silk weavers' guild of Barcelona, 1790-1840 », *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* [Online], 128-1 | 2016, Online since 03 March 2016, connection on 03 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/2449> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrim.2449

---

# Apprentices, women and masters in the silk weavers' guild of Barcelona, 1790-1840

Àngels SOLÀ\*

À. Solà, Universitat de Barcelona, angelssola@ub.edu

Very little is known about the organisation and remuneration of labour within the Barcelona guilds during the final stages of the Old Regime. The same applies to the practice of apprenticeship and the access to the position of master, as well as to the role of the wives and daughters of masters in the workshops and in the management of inputs and outputs that passed through their hands. This paper is a first approach to these issues with the case study of the silk weavers. Notary documents have been the main sources for this article.

Artisan women work, unpaid work, apprentices, silk weavers, guilds, Barcelona, Eighteenth Century, Nineteenth Century

## INTRODUCTION

Very little is known about the organisation and remuneration of labour within the Barcelona guilds during the final stages of the Old Regime. The same applies to the practice of apprenticeship and the access to the position of master, as well as to the role of the wives and daughters of masters in the workshops and in the management of inputs and outputs that passed through their hands. This paper is a first approach to these issues with the case study of the silk weavers.

Since there is almost no mention, either in the guilds' regulations or in any other type of guild documentation, of the organisation of labour, of the gender of those working in production, under what conditions they worked and what they were paid, we must try to answer these questions using other documents. To begin with, I consulted notarised deeds such as apprenticeship and master certificates, pre-nuptial agreements, last wills,

inventories and partnership agreements. Through these, I have attempted an initial approach to these questions. So I will focus on the points of interest for this meeting, that is on paid and unpaid work within this craft corporation. I have attempted to ascertain, not without difficulty, what type of remuneration might be given to members – and non-members – of a family, taking into account the fact that apprentices were considered almost members of this productive, reproductive and affective unit. The great diversity in personal situations that existed, due to the variety of positions that each member of a family might have occupied or to other personal circumstances, makes it impossible – at least for the moment – to establish all the different types of remuneration that might have existed. I will therefore present here only some cases and types of possible remuneration.

This research is based on the consideration that neither the apprentices nor the wives or the offspring of master craftsmen received regular

\* This research is part of the project HAR2011/26151 *Reconstrucción de la actividad económica de Cataluña*, financed by the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes de España.

salaries or wages, but might be given a particular remuneration at some time in their lives: for instance, wives received the former if they became widowed and the latter upon marriage. Another form of «reward» was the respect owed to them in particular by their husbands and the authority they enjoyed within the family. The position enjoyed by wives was due both to the dowry in cash and/or various other objects they had brought as well as to their work within the domestic unit.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GUILD

The silk weavers' (*velers*) guild was one of the seven silk craft guilds in the city of Barcelona, which in 1800 had around 80,000 inhabitants. The guild of the *velers* was founded in 1533, but the activity had been in existence much longer. It expanded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but neither the guild nor production was as significant as they were in Valencia. The main products were the large silk scarves (*mocadors*) worn by women over their heads and shoulders and a fabric which would subsequently be painted; both products were sold on the colonial and Spanish markets thanks to the onset of consumerism. This guild was one of 90 that existed in Barcelona between mid- and late 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was one of the ten largest guilds in the city, only smaller than the tailors', cobblers', carpenters', *estevans*<sup>1</sup> and retailers' corporations. However, exactly how many master craftsmen belonged to it and how their number changed over time is not known, since the members were to a large extent concealed from the eyes of the tax authorities<sup>2</sup>.

Parallel to the production of silk weave in the workshops controlled by the guild, there was also an independent activity run by some women: they produced a special type of tulle (*filempues*) the sale of which was subject to specific rules. These had been imposed in the 1630s by the municipal

authorities, following the settlement of a dispute between the guild and the women who had been carrying out this activity since time immemorial. The guild, at a time of economic crisis, had tried to take this practice away from the women. They had resisted, retaining their position thanks to the rules imposed by the municipal authorities<sup>3</sup>. The women's rights are attested in the silk weavers' regulations of 1778, but it is very difficult to find documents that prove the existence of this independent female economic activity.

Apprenticeships were for young men only. The rules allowed just one apprentice, except in the last six months of an apprenticeship, when the master craftsman could take on another. This ensured that the second apprentice would be an able assistant by the time the first had completed his apprenticeship. By contrast, the hiring of any number of salaried skilled workmen (*oficiales, fadrins* or *mancebos*) was permitted. What their salaries amounted to is still unknown to us.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, some master craftsmen joined in the production of calicoes as entrepreneurs or simply as partners, without abandoning their silk weaving workshops and still calling themselves *velers*. In this way, some of these artisans made their fortune. The war against Napoleon's occupation (1808-1814) and the loss of the American markets caused the situation to change.

The guild existed until 1834, when, during the liberal revolution, its privileges were removed. They had, however, already been abolished for short periods between 1812 and 1814, and from March 1820 to the beginning of 1824. Despite losing its old privileges, the corporation continued to exist: it regulated formal trade apprenticeships (admitting numerous apprentices each year with certified contracts) and conferred the title of master to a number of silk craftsmen each year at least up to 1850. As indicated by Belén Moreno, apprenticeships outlived the guild<sup>4</sup>, as they were not a means of controlling recruitment and guaranteeing the survival of the trade, but also a mechanism that brought significant income to the corporation. It is worth noting that in 1789 the government had already removed the need to complete a four-year

1. Incorporating different trades, among them several metal working ones.
2. According to the 1770 tax records, there were 74 craftsmen, but according to internal data from the guild, in 1794 there were 472 master craftsmen and 36 women (widows of master craftsmen). Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (from now AHCB), AMM, 56.07.01.388, «Llibre per collecta del Gremi de Velers per lo pago real del any 1794». The figures of contribution in Molas, 1970, p. 254-256.

3. Solà – Renom 2014.

4. Moreno 2014.

apprenticeship with a master craftsman before being allowed to take the mastery exam. Despite these changes, the old master craftsmen did not stop taking on apprentices, not only because they were teaching the trade to those who wanted to be skilled in it, but also because their teaching was fundamental for the cotton industry, which had been rapidly expanding in Barcelona since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, after several years of economic downturn. It should be understood that the system of apprenticeships was a kind of industrial college with teachers and training spread over hundreds of family workshops. The master's certificate was in fact a qualification that certified its holder as an expert.

The importance of the silk industry began to decline with the growth of the cotton industry, although it did not totally disappear; it also increasingly started to use steam engines as from 1840<sup>5</sup>. In 1823 there were only 89 silk weave producers paying contributions<sup>6</sup>, although there would have been some who escaped tax control. At this time, clear social differentiations existed within the group. A small number of manufacturers, each with their corresponding master's certificates, owned workshops and considerable fixed assets. Some of the masters and officer craftsmen had by now moved completely to the production of cotton weave, an issue we are not concerned with here.

#### WORK AND REMUNERATION OF APPRENTICES, SKILLED WORKMEN AND WOMEN

##### Apprenticeships: rights and duties

Apprenticeships were acquired in one of two ways, depending on whether a boy was the son of a master craftsman belonging to the guild or not. First-born sons completed their apprenticeships in their paternal homes. If other offspring wanted to be *veler*, they could become apprentices in the workshop of a different master craftsman. This custom could result in the marriage of one of these offspring with the first-born daughter of another *veler*. In this way, both master craftsmen benefitted by marrying their offspring within a productive

sector that allowed their future prosperity and the accumulation of capital.

Apprenticeships lasted for four years. After the payment of a fee to the *velers'* guild, a master would begin to teach his new apprentice the trade, also providing board and lodging<sup>7</sup>. An apprentice could not leave his position without the authorization of his master and if he did so in the first or second year, he had to refund his master for the cost of food provided over this time<sup>8</sup>. The guarantor of an apprentice's honesty, obedience and work – usually his father – took responsibility for his behaviour and promised to refund any expenses or pay for any damage he might cause. After three further years of practice, an apprentice could take the master's examination. The fee required was expensive for those who were not masters' sons or sons-in-law.

##### Family and geographical origin of the apprentices

After the 1780s, most of the *velers'* apprentices came from peasants' family from areas near Barcelona – where commercial agriculture was the predominant activity – as well as from further away. For instance, in 1781-1782, they made up 27,5 % of the 32 apprentices, whereas in 1790 they represented 58 % (20 out of 34). The peasant origin of apprentices was also reflected by that of their masters. However, the number of peasant sons amongst the *velers'* apprentices decreased during the years of economic crisis, at the turn of the century. In 1799 they only represented 10 % (2 out of 20) and in 1800 even less (2 out of 18). If we consider that the crisis affected silk manufacturers in particular, most young workers may

7. «Accepto en deixeble al predit Josep Font y prometo ensenyarli lo ofici de veler en lo millor modo sabré y sa capacitat podrá apendre, y donarli menjar y beure segons mon estat y possibilitats baix obligació de tots mos béns », Arxiu Històric de Protocols de Barcelona (from now AHPB), Jaume Sanjoan, 1790, fol. 81-82.

8. «Y servira sens llicencia sua y en cas de ferho, vull puga obligarlo a tornar en sa casa per cumplir lo rasant del temps, y en cas de no tornarhi prometo pagarli la despesa del primer any o del temps est haura estat ab ell a us y costum de Barcelona, que dit mon fill li referá las fallas també a us y costum, y que si sen portara alguna cosa de sa casa deu no ho permetia, li esmeraré tot lo que sia... » «per causa de aprendre lo ofici de veler », AHPB, Jaume Sanjoan, 1790, fol. 82.

5. Solà 1991, p. 253, 257, 268 footnote 17.

6. AHCBC, « Contribución de guerra, 1823 », Cadastre VIII.5.

have decided to move to the linen weavers' trade, whose guilds also provided apprenticeship training in weaving skills but required an investment of just three years. Further research would, however, be required to verify this.

As a considerable number of apprentices' parents lived outside Barcelona, living in their masters' households was convenient both to the masters' families, who could rely on their apprentices' labour for all kind of jobs, and to the apprentices' parents, who were relieved of their sons' living expenses and could also stop worrying about their sons' behaviour. It is clear that board and lodging (including drinks), were part of the apprentices' income.

#### The position of daughters, wives and widows of master craftsmen

The daughters of master craftsmen helped in their family's workshops from an early age, in small manual tasks such as making spools at first, and later in tasks of greater importance. As adults, they also took part in the management of the business, serving customers in the shops and even taking care of the accounts, although few of them were literate. This informal apprenticeship prepared them to join a related workshop if they married a young master from the same guild. However, very few did this. The analysis of 75 wills, made by these women between 1770 and 1817, shows that only 17,33 % were daughters of master craftsmen from the same guild as their husbands<sup>9</sup>. A similar result is borne out by the initial scrutiny of pre-nuptial agreements. The detailed analysis of this type of documents, once completed, will offer conclusive figures<sup>10</sup>. The data shows that intermarriage was very limited, with greater value given to a future wife's sizeable dowry, to providing social mobility or to having skills that were not limited to the knowledge of her future husband's trade.

Women who contributed to their husbands' assets with cash dowries were in a privileged situation in their marriages. Catalan legislation allowed

a wife's dowry to be invested in her husband's business only if his property was set as a guarantee, so that, if he went bankrupt, the amount of the dowry would be the first to be recovered by the sale of assets. It is difficult to find examples showing that this investment was made, because, the terms of this practice were specified in a notarised document only when the family situation was out of the ordinary. For example, in the marriage contract between the master silk weaver (*veler*) Ramon Vilumara, a 32-year-old widower with two children, and Eulàlia Escuder, sister of his employer, Joan Escuder Anglada, also a master *veler*. The dowry was not very high, 650 Catalan pounds, but was more than double what their father had bequeathed in his will to Eulàlia as *llegítima*<sup>11</sup>. With this money, Ramon Vilumara built a silk factory. Because Ramon had two children and neither his own workshop nor other goods, the wedding contract specified that she was a partner in her husband's business<sup>12</sup>. Joan Escuder might have increased his sister's dowry because she had contributed to the enhancement of his business, which would become the largest silk factory in Barcelona<sup>13</sup>. Working in the small family business, Eulàlia did nothing more than follow the usual practice of artisans, a custom defined as an obligation in their father's last will<sup>14</sup>. We will never know whether Eulàlia took every year her half share of profits of her husband workshop, but it is conceivable that she did not, because the basis for the growth of such workshops was the reinvestment of profits. The chance to take out one's half of the profits would only arise in cases of disagreement, litigation or marriage separation.

The wives of the master *velers* contributed to the development of the marital business with the skills they already had, along with those they acquired later while looking after their household and raising children, but also with money. We already know that their work was unpaid in principle, but contributed to the standard of living the family enjoyed because everybody worked together, including the salaried skilled workmen

9. Yamamichi, in print.

10. I am working on this project with Yoshiko Yamamichi.

11. AHPB. Manuel Lafont, 1832, fol. 88.

12. «Queda associada en compras, millors [...] que totes les adquisicions se entenguin per meitats», *Ibid.*

13. Solà 1991, p. 260-262.

14. AHPB, Valentí Gros, 1829, fol. 166. He did so using the following words «per utilitat y profit de ma casa».

(if they had any) and the apprentice - or the two apprentices during the last months of the old apprentice's stay in the workshop. The fact that they were not paid was compensated in part also by their position as administrators of the family's finances, since they decided which goods and services to buy for the benefit of all. This was a role that, although unwritten, was the general norm and it is sometimes referred to in notarised documents. These women received the clearest recognition when their husbands recognised the value of their work in such a document. This occurred in two cases: first if there had been no pre-nuptial agreement and there were no offspring. In this case, both parties certified that all their assets were due to the work of both and they made a reciprocal donation of their assets. Secondly, this recognition was sometimes also made in *velers'* wills when they named their wives as heirs despite the existence of offspring and prenuptial agreements. This was done, for example, by Roc Xavet in 1793 and Francesc Torrents in 1789<sup>15</sup>. The former declared that «with my wife's work and supervision I have gained the assets I own», making her his heir despite having male offspring, albeit of young age<sup>16</sup>.

Young married couples, if they could, opened a workshop in the husband's trade. However, it was sometimes more desirable to open one in the father-in-law's trade, which also meant having the advantage of the wife's knowledge. In these cases, such knowledge was crucial to having a good start in the business. This happened in Barcelona in 1823, when the young *veler* Francesc Solernou Rosals married Paula Riera, daughter of a ribbon manufacturer. Despite being the sole heir of his father, Francisco Solernou Cotal, master *veler* from Manresa, young Francesc Solernou left his trade to work on multiple ribbon looms. The business was started thanks to the two looms his wife had received as part of her dowry; in these circumstances, she was, with her husband, a cornerstone in their economic future. This doubtlessly gave her

a recognised authority that could be seen as effective remuneration.

The wives' work was, in principle, not remunerated, but if the marital trade became a partnership with a third person, the contract stipulated the obligations and remunerations that pertained to each partner. This happened both with partnerships between different members of the same family, and with those between individuals where only two of them were husband and wife. One example is the case of the widow Rosa Roquer, nee Busquets, her elder daughter Caietana, aged 17, and Caietana's husband, Roc Xavet, a young *veler* and son of a humble master of the same trade (he only had two looms)<sup>17</sup>, who could give nothing to this son, as he had five more children to support. They all lived together in the house-workshop where they had their five looms<sup>18</sup>, all of them working as their situation allowed them, including Rosa's younger daughter, Maria Roquer Busquets. The mother/mother-in-law would be able, using what was earned by their joint work, to buy «clothes, vessels, tools, looms for silk weaving, and other things in order not to be disadvantaged in her business»<sup>19</sup>. If her elder daughter had died without issue in the first two years of her marriage, her husband would be paid 100 Catalan pounds; if she had died between the second and fifth year, he would receive 200 Catalan pounds, and after that, 300 pounds. The profits would be divided into three equal parts, two for Xavet and one for Rosa. When Rosa herself died, her part would pass onto her elder daughter, Xavet's wife. The couple had to live in the common household for at least three years; if they left within this time they would be paid nothing; if they left later, their mother/mother-in-law would pay them 200 Catalan pounds. It was also specified that all purchases should be made by common consent between Rosa and her son-in-law Roc Xavet. Finally, it was agreed that the young Maria Roquer would receive a so-called «legitimate» or forced inheritance of 200 Catalan pounds as a dowry when she married or became a nun.

15. «Instituesch a mi hereva universal [...] a dita Rosa Torrents carissima muller mia per lo molt amor, benevolencia y singulars bons oficis, y particularment per lo molt que ab sos afanys ha coherperat junt ab mi a la adquisició de aquells; y quals bens se incorporará y en dita universal heretat», AHPB, Francesc Madriguera Galí, 1793, fol. 413.

16. AHPB, Francesc Portell, 1793, fol. 240.

17. AHPB, Francesc Portell, 1793, fol. 395.

18. AHPB, Miquel Serra, 1793, fol. 95.

19. AHPB, Miquel Serra, 1782, fol. 100-102.

This document, in addition to showing us that a salaried master craftsman could earn 50 Catalan pounds a year, also demonstrates the attention Rosa Busquets paid to the good working order of her family workshop and how she retained her authority as beneficiary. The document shows the double remuneration – a proportion of the profits and a position of authority in the family group – she received for work she had been doing in the Roquer household since she had married Josep at least twenty years earlier. Rosa also ensured that her daughter receive part of the workshop's profits when she died, so as to avoid her depending on what her husband gave her for the household expenses, or having to ask him for anything. We do not know whether this decision was based on Rosa's bad experience whilst her husband was alive. This case also shows that some women might have received remuneration in cash for their work; it is of course true that this was due to the business having been provided by her (Caietana, in this case), and not by her husband (Roc).

Widows could certify that the apprentices had done their apprenticeship – usually a part of it – in their husbands' workshop, as seen for example in the cases of Magina Talavera, widow of Renom, in 1795, and of Maria Àngela Bracons, widow of Antoni Badia, in 1794<sup>20</sup>. They could also act as guarantors for the admittance of their sons as apprentices, although few did this. A good example is Madrona Font Villaronga, widow of Josep Font, a journeyman surgeon from Barcelona, in 1790<sup>21</sup>. However, they could have no apprentice. This prohibition was not written in the articles of the guild, in contrast to the guilds of *passementerie* and embroidery, other guilds of the silk industry that existed in Barcelona<sup>22</sup>; when they were widowed, they certified the training time that their apprentice had had with their husband, but did not take on another. In contrast, if apprentices cut short the apprenticeship with their master craftsmen, for whatever reason, they received certification of the training they had completed, and the master craftsmen as well as the apprentices could sign a new contract with another apprentice or another

master craftsman, respectively. In these circumstances, the widows' income (remuneration) decreased, since in order to compensate the loss of manpower that their husbands' death had caused and the fact that they could have no apprentice, they were forced to take on skilled workmen.

If a widow was her husband's second wife, and he had offspring from his first marriage and none from her, she could remain in the house of the heir. If she wished to leave, it was custom to give her a bed as well as the dowry she had brought to the marriage, as shown in the agreement between Teresa Rovira, widow of Joan Fàbregas, and M. Ventura Fàbregas, the beneficiary of the assets of Joan Fàbregas, her father in law<sup>23</sup>. It was a bonus that this widow received, apart from the significant dowry she brought her husband upon the marriage, which became considerably increased in a bequest in his will<sup>24</sup>.

#### Remuneration of unmarried sisters and brothers

In Catalunya, an unequal inheritance system established the first-born son as heir as a norm, even when he had one or more older sisters. However, the other siblings received by law a so-called «legitimate» (*llegítima*), a proportion of their father and mother's assets. In the case of daughters, this became their dowry upon marriage; generally speaking, sons received theirs when they set themselves up independently (sometimes on becoming master craftsmen) or when they married. It is understood that this represented the remuneration for the work they had done while growing up at home and participating in the labour of the workshop or shop. Some notarised documents show that this was the assumption. The offspring who did not marry and

20. AHPB, Jaume Sanjoan, 1795, fol. 88; Jaume Sanjoan, 1794, fol. 39.

21. For four years with Cristòfol Vilarrosal, AHPB, Jaume Sanjoan, 1790, fol. 81-82.

22. Yamamichi, footnote 36.

23. AHPB, Josep M. Pons, 1832, fol. 366.

24. AHPB, Josep M. Pons 1832, fol. 213. The second wife of a master guild member with offspring usually came from a poor family and she often had no dowry or only a very small one. In such a situation, the future husband would endow his future wife with quite a considerable sum. In this case, Teresa Boquet was given 2,000 *lliures catalanes*, increased by another 1,500 in the will. This was a substantial amount of money. This case is very different from the Vilumara – Escuder case that we have seen before. The difference stands on the different economic position of both silk weavers' masters: one rich and the other poor and an employee.

remained in the family home continuing to work there, did not receive the «legitimate» inheritance but all their needs covered. There were, however, differences in the recognition of their contribution to the family economy, depending to whether they were male or female.

Daughters lived with their parents, but may move in with their first-born brother, who in pre-nuptial agreement would be reminded of his obligations to his unmarried siblings. Ultimately all sisters, if they had not married, would leave all their assets to their older brother, with the exception of some small legacy left to other relations<sup>25</sup>. Their wills and post-mortem inventories show that their work had not been remunerated, because they had neither money nor assets. At most, they owned some high quality clothing. Despite working for many years, they had hardly been able to save. On the other hand, they had enjoyed the family's wealth and perhaps an occasional remuneration to pay for personal expenses. Without a doubt, the greatest beneficiary of this labour force was the head of the family.

In a family of *velers* with a thriving business, it was not unusual for another son, in addition to the first-born, to continue in his father's trade, working together with his father and elder brother once he had obtained his master's certificate. For example, in a workshop with six to ten looms there was work for everyone. I can confirm that there were cases of offspring who were not the first-born who did not marry. An example is Carlos Fàbregas Llagostera, who became a master craftsman in 1806. When he died as a single man in 1834, he had been living with his father – who had died two years earlier – without receiving the substantial «legitimate» that had been due to him, but having cash and credit because of some loans he had made<sup>26</sup>. This shows that he had received a salary or had benefitted from the profits, something not seen in the wills of the *velers'* unmarried daughters-sisters. Unfortunately, we do not know the amounts they received, but it is clear that unmarried brothers and sisters were treated differently in terms of remuneration.

## CONCLUSIONS

We still ignore the details of the remuneration received by the skilled workmen in the workshops of the Barcelona *velers* in the final stages of the Old Regime. We have not found a single formal contract and no clear sign that they existed. We might use as a ballpark figure the conditions imposed by the widow Roquer on her son-in-law Anton Xavet – who was a master craftsman and not a skilled workman – that show a possible wage of 50 Catalan pounds per year plus living expenses, clothing, shoes, accommodation and health care.

We have some idea of the remuneration that widows as usufructuaries could receive: a third of the profits, as well as accommodation, clothing, shoes, food and health care if they lived and worked with their son-in-law, if the widow was named beneficiary in the will. A widow from a master craftsman's second marriage, when he already had at least one first-born son from his first wife, received a good dowry from her husband, sometimes later increased, and the donation of a bed (often including all its accessories: mattress, pillow, sheets...) or the value of a bed agreed at 75 Catalan pounds in the families of the richest master craftsmen.

Wives who brought a sizeable dowry with which the couple could set up a workshop could obtain the right to half of the benefits, although they probably never received it, as the case Vilumara – Escuder has shown.

Women who were not widows and those who did not marry received no other remuneration than benefitting from the wealth of the family they were living with, together with the social recognition and certain «privileges» this could at some point bring with it. Unmarried sons or brothers who lived with their fathers or their first-born brothers were paid some kind of cash remuneration for their work in the family businesses, which allowed them to accumulate a certain amount of capital.

The educational role of apprenticeships was so highly valued that apprentices were appar-

25. Llúcia Vidal and Antònia Brell are good examples.

26. AHPB, Josep Antoni Catà, 1806, fol. 393; Josep M. Pons, 1834, fol. 326-377.

ently paid nothing, not even by way of clothing or shoes, at least not formally. These valuable apprenticeships meant that the *velers* never had problems finding apprentices, even after the abolition of the guilds. An apprenticeship with a master silk

weaver, which had for centuries been the only way to learn the trade and open a workshop, ended up being the best way for many young men to learn the art of weaving.

## Bibliography

- Molas 1970 = P. Molas, *Los gremios barceloneses del siglo XVIII*, Madrid, 1970, p. 254-256.
- Moreno 2014 = B. Moreno, *El aprendiz de gremio en la Barcelona del siglo XVIII*, paper read at the Congreso de la Asociación Española de Historia Económica, Madrid, September 4<sup>th</sup> 2014.
- Solà – Renom 2014 = À. Solà, M. Renom, *The independent textile women of Barcelona: «ilempueres» and «tafetaneres» in the Seventeenth Century*, paper presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> European Social Science History Conference, Vienna, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2014.
- Solà 1991 = À. Solà, *La indústria sedera a Barcelona en el segle XIX*, in *El món de la seda i Catalunya*, Terrassa, 1991, p. 251-274.
- Yamamichi (in print) = Y. Yamamichi, *Transmisión del oficio y familia en el mundo gremial. Los sederos de Barcelona, 1770 - 1817*, in *Estudis Històrics i Documents dels Arxius de Protocols*, XXXII, forthcoming.