Cottonopolis: Manchester, the growth and growing pains of a modern city

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Cottonopolis – contemporary tourist guides

- 1807: “an immense manufacturing, mercantile, and trading town” (John Britton, Beauties of England and Wales, vol. 9, p.251)
Royal Exchange, 1809 (by Paget, 1817)
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Manchester (Ancoats), late 20th century
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Cottonopolis – international and long run perspective

• 8,000 years ago: first city - Middle East
• Soon after, China and Indus Valley
• 1,500 BC: cities start to grow in size
• Europe enters: Ancient Rome (100 AD) 400k-1m population
• East then de-urbanises as the West urbanises
  • Yangtze Delta: early 13th c. 23% urban; by 1776, 15% (Xu, van Leeuwen and van Zanden, 2015)
  • Europe: 1500, 5.6%; by 1850, 16.7% (Broadberry and Gupta, 2006)
“The urban system that arose in Western Europe between 900 and 1300 was... geared towards generating its own resources via market exchange; it was highly competitive, independent of large territorial states (which were quite weak between 900 and 1300) and became oriented towards long-distance trade via the sea. It was this new dynamic, more state-independent urban system that generated the long term economic development that was characteristic of Western Europe in the millennium after 900 and which finally, spurred on by the impact of the Great Discoveries, made Europe overtake the Arab World in terms of economic prosperity.” (Bosker et al, 2013)
European urbanisation rates (1500-1850), %

- England and Wales
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- France
- Spain
- Italy
- Poland
- Austria/Bohemia
- Germany
- Europe

Broadberry and Gupta (2006)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Global urbanisation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2050</td>
<td>70% (estimated)</td>
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</table>

Source: Population Research Bureau
Why Manchester – and why cotton?

- Market-base plus technological developments
- Productivity race between agriculture and industry
- Cotton machinery: spinning and weaving
- From water to coal-powered steam engines
- Competition between producers (Leunig, 2003)
- Transport: Duke’s Canal (1761); Manchester-Liverpool Railway (1830); Manchester Ship Canal (1894)
Why Manchester – and why cotton?

• Women’s work: 58% of cotton industry (Burnette)
The result: headline figures

• 1831: cotton represents ½ of Britain’s merchandise exports; 22% of industrial value added; and ¼ of TFP growth from 1780 to 1860 (Crafts, 1985; Crafts and Wolf, 2013).

• Britain maintained a lead: 1800, 95% of spindles; 1900, 58% (Farnie and Jeremy, 2004).

• 1850: 66% of spindles in Lancashire; 1903, 79% (Crafts and Wolf, 2013)
Twin challenges

• (1) Market vs. State led origins of growth (Ha-Joon Chang, 2002)
Twin challenges

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  • Abraham Lincoln (1863): “I know and deeply deplore the sufferings which the working-men of Manchester, and in all Europe, are called to endure in this crisis."
Twin challenges

• (2) Domestic vs. International Origins
  • Cotton industry was global (Beckert, 2014 and Riello, 2013)
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  • Cotton industry was global (Beckert, 2014 and Riello, 2013)
  • “[i]deas and materials have filtered from the East but that is not the point, even without any allowance for independent [European] discoveries. The point is the response. However early in time developments in making cotton had occurred in Asia, and whatever transmission to Europe there was, the technological response in England was utterly novel and utterly formative of the modern world. The cant term would be “game changer”” (Eric Jones)
Twentieth century decline

• OECD (2015): specialisation “can yield returns if this part of the economy is performing well. However, it also reduces economic resilience and increases the risk of a severe downturn if the sector experiences an external shock or decline for other reasons”
Twentieth century decline

- OECD (2015): “Europe needs to deal with the fact that – in global comparison – its large cities are relatively small, which implies a specific need for cities to be well connected to each other”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnley</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Bolton</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Blackburn</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Grimsby/Hull</td>
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<td>Grimsby/Hull</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Middlesbrough</td>
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<td>Bradford</td>
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<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Future: Manchester meets Venice

  • Religious figures
  • Military
  • Politicians
  • Entrepreneurs
  • Artists