

Session at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans on the civic-political dimension of the oeuvre of historian Jaume Vicens Vives

THE OEUVRE OF JAUME VICENS VIVES

On the 18th of February 2010, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC) contributed to the celebrations of Jaume Vicens Vives Year, the year that marks the centennial of this historian's birth, with an academic session entitled "Vicens Vives, Beyond the Historian" which examined his civic and political dimension. Vicens was elected a member of the History-Archaeology Department of the IEC in 1958, just after he had published *Industrialists i polítics del segle XIX* (Industrialists and Politicians of the 19th Century) in the collection he oversaw, "Biografies Catalanes" (Catalan Biographies) published by Editorial Teide, a publishing house he had founded with his brother-in-law, Frederic Rahola. With that book, he ushered in the contemporary history of Catalonia at university level.

Jaume Vicens Vives was born in Girona in 1910. After his father died, he had to work while studying until he earned a scholarship. At the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Barcelona, he was a disciple of Antonio de la Torre (Cordoba 1878 - Madrid 1966), who familiarised him with the work on the documents from the Archive of the Crown of Aragon and with the subject of the reign of the Catholic Kings. Antonio de la Torre was against the regime at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in 1933. The Spanish Civil War caught him in an anti-republican zone, and in 1940 he moved to Madrid, where he came to direct the Spanish National Research Council, the successor of the Junta de Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas. From there he protected Vicens in his race for a university professorship.

Vicens Vives was appointed professor in charge of the programme at the University of Barcelona in 1933, and he earned his doctorate in February 1936 with a thesis on Ferdinand II the Catholic and the city of Barcelona. Earlier, he had been enmeshed in a controversy with Antoni Rovira i Virgili during which he declared his revisionist position with regard to the Catalan national historiography. Vicens upheld the role of the monarch as a moderator of the internal struggles in the late 15th century and as a moderniser and rationaliser before the Generalitat de Catalunya and Barcelona's Consell de Cent, the institu-

tions that limited the king's power and played a major role in the Catalan Civil War between 1462 and 1472. Vicens called earlier Catalan historiography romantic, that is, hackneyed and full of prejudices. Not even the work by Ferran Soldevila, a fellow professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, was exempt from his criticisms. Soldevila was extremely prestigious because he had just published his *Història de Catalunya* (History of Catalonia) (1934-1935).

Vicens Vives was expelled from the University of Barcelona after the Civil War, along with many of his colleagues. In 1942, he founded the Editorial Teide publishing house, which modernised scholarly textbooks and later buttressed his historiographic projects. He adopted the fascist rhetoric of the early Franco regime and the ideology of the victors of the war with works like *España. Geopolítica del Estado y del Imperio* (Spain: Geopolitics of the State and the Empire) (1940). After eight years of ostracism from the university and several failed attempts, in 1947 he landed a professorship of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Zaragoza. The following year, once again through a competition, he was appointed Chair of the same programme at the University of Barcelona. He had published his first post-war research book, *Historia de los remensas* (History of the Serfs) back in 1945, which examined the struggle and partial emancipation of the peasants attached to the land in the northern half of Catalonia in the 15th century.

Once settled in Barcelona, he sought contacts with the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, which was operating in a semi-covert fashion due to the policy of identity genocide which the Franco dictatorship had unleashed on Catalonia. In 1950, he attended the 9th International Congress of Historical Studies in Paris. It was the first one after World War II, and it signalled the start of the world hegemony of the Annales School. Vicens got in contact with Fernand Braudel at the same time that he adopted Charles Morazé's qualitativism. He also attempted to combine geohistory, Arnold Toynbee's historical morphologies and the generations method. However, Vicens' orientation was never Marxist.

In Barcelona, he founded the Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales in 1949, which was officially

recognised in 1955. This centre published two innovative journals: *Estudios de Historia Moderna* (1951-1959) and *Índice Histórico Español* (1953), a critical bibliographic publication that still exists today. The first editorial council of *Índice Histórico Español* was a team of Vicens' closest colleagues: Jordi Nadal, Emili Giralt, Joan Reglà, Joan Mercader, Ramon Gubern, Jordi Rubió i Lois, Manuel Riu, David Romano, Eduard Ripoll and Josep Pérez Ballestar. Through these two journals, he promoted a revamping of Spanish and Catalan history, which he regarded – particularly the former – as overly ideological and dependent on philosophical and political essay, as he indicated in his work *Aproximación a la Historia de España* (1952). There is an English version of this essay by Joan Connelly Ulman, *Approaches of the History of Spain*, published in 1967 and 1970 by the University of California Press. In order to explain the collective psychology of the Catalans and sketch the origins of the 1936 Civil War, he wrote the essay *Notícia de Catalunya* (Report on Catalonia) (1954). This was a brief yet hugely successful tome despite the sometimes elliptical style imposed by the censors and by the fact that the trauma of the Spanish Civil War was still so recent. In the second edition, released in 1960, he took into account criticisms and observations, to the satisfaction of the Catalan cultural resistance, which believed that he had appropriated it. The same publisher of the Catalan version also published it in Spanish as *Noticia de Cataluña* in 1954, 1962 and 1971.

Back in 1954, the publication of the article “Coyuntura económica y reformismo burgués” (Economic Juncture and Bourgeois Reformism) signals that Vicens had begun to study the 19th century.

In 1954, Vicens was appointed professor of Economic History of Spain in the new Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Barcelona. He wrote notes on the subject in 1956, and with the aid of his helper Jordi Nadal, in 1959 these notes became the acclaimed *Manual de historia económica de España*. An English version of this was published by Princeton University Press: *An Economic History of Spain* (1969).

His publishing house supervised and published two large collective enterprises: the eleven volumes of “Biografies Catalanes” (Catalan Biographies) (1955-1959), a veritable newly wrought history of Catalonia, and the five volumes of *Historia social y económica de España y América* (Social and Economic History of Spain and America) (1957-1959). As part of “Biografies Catalanes”, Vicens personally wrote the volume that examines the 15th century (*Els Trastàmars*) and the one that examines the 19th century, which was totally new: *Industrials i polítics del segle XIX* (Industrialists and Politicians of the 19th Century) (1958). This latter work was soon translated into Spanish and published in 1961 by Opus Dei's publishing house on the initiative of Florentino Pérez Embid in agreement with Vicens, in the collection supervised by Rafael Calvo Serer entitled *Cataluña en el siglo XIX* (Catalonia in the 19th Century). Vicens Vives' pre-

mature death at the age of 50 prevented him from writing the twelfth volume of the collection, which would have covered the 20th century and had been announced with the title *Homes del nostre temps* (Men of Our Times). While in the previous volume, Montserrat Llorens had overseen the part devoted to the biographies of representative figures from the 19th century, those of the 20th century were going to be overseen by writer Josep Pla, a friend of Vicens'.

Vicens was a mediaevalist specialising in the 15th century who later delved into the contemporary history of Catalonia, economic history and statistical quantification, which were total novelties in the field of history in Catalonia and Spain in his day. While Vicens the mediaevalist had explained the 15th century Catalan decline without palliatives and with harsh judgements on the ruling classes of those centuries, Vicens the contemporary historian praised Catalonia's recovery in the 19th century and used the industrial captain as a model, while he also offered a “total history” model: demographic, economic, social, political and cultural. Against all odds, his readers' ancestors had turned Catalonia into a modern country and had launched the *Renaixença*. This movement converted the vernacular language, Catalan, which had been expelled from public use since the 18th century, into a modern literary language. Vicens ended his book with praise of the generation of 1901, the one that launched the progress of political Catalanism, which had revived the ambition and responsibility for governing. This was the example he shared with the young future business leaders in the Club Comodín, later the Economy Circle, so they would overcome the fears inherited from the Civil War, adopt a hopeful outlook and open up to a prosperous, liberal Europe that was just beginning to unify. This proactive message contrasted with the determinism that Vicens used to explain other periods in history, and just like his *Notícia de Catalunya*, it contradicted the depoliticisation and scientificism that he espoused in his work as a historian.

In 1959, Vicens visited Washington for the meeting of the Historical Bibliographic Council of the United States Library of Congress. He submitted reports to the Spanish authorities and was given 100,000 pesetas in government funding for the CEHI to attend. At the same time, he forged close relations with the abbot of Montserrat, Aureli M. Escarré, who was beginning to challenge the Franco regime, and embarked on a relationship with the President of the Generalitat de Catalunya in exile, Josep Tarradellas, through Josep Pla and with the endorsement of Frederic Rahola, Vicens' brother-in-law and partner and Tarradellas' former associate.

Vicens Vives died at the age of 50 at a time of change which he himself was assimilating. Apart from his indisputable merits, he also displayed major contradictions which reflected those of a very specific moment in time quite different to today. For this reason, his legacy has yielded extraordinarily divergent appropriations.

Proof of his prestige outside his country can be found in the fact that Pierre Vilar, Raymond Carr, John Elliott, Alberto Boscolo and many other European historians have acknowledged and admired him. Vicens is the only Spanish historian with his own entry in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Historiques*, supervised by André Burguière. In contrast, there is no article devoted to Vicens Vives in the *Enciclopedia de historia de España* (Encyclopaedia of the History of Spain).

The speakers at the session at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans devoted to Vicens Vives were three historians who are deeply familiar with the subject. The first was Enric Pujol, professor in the Department of Modern and Contemporary History at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the author of a book which is the first history of Catalan historiography from the late 19th century until 1970: *Història i reconstrucció nacional. La historiografia catalana a l'època de Ferran Soldevila* (History and National Reconstruction: Catalan Historiography in the Age of Ferran Soldevila). One chapter of this book is entitled "Llums i ombres de Jaume Vicens Vives" (Lights and Shadows of Jaume Vicens Vives). Enric Pujol spoke about Vicens as a scholar and intellectual.

Antoni Simon, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and full member of the IEC, is the co-coordinator with Enric Pujol and Jordi Casassas of the *Diccionari d'historiografia catalana* (Dictionary of Catalan Historiography) (2003). He is particularly knowledgeable

on the subject as the co-editor of the two volumes of the *Epistolari de Jaume Vicens* (Letters of Jaume Vicens), which were issued in 1994 and 1998. Antoni Simon analysed Vicens' relations with the context of Spain.

Finally, Jaume Sobrequès, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and president of the Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics, is the author of the book *Història d'una amistat. Epistolari de Jaume Vicens Vives i Santiago Sobrequès i Vidal* (History of a Friendship: Letters between Jaume Vicens Vives and Santiago Sobrequès i Vidal), the latter being the speaker's father. Jaume Sobrequès spoke about other facets of Vicens' public persona, including his role as an editor and his relations with politicians.

The first summary we are presenting is the one of the lecture by Enric Pujol.

THE SCHOLAR AND HIS IDEOLOGICAL EVOLUTION: A PORTRAIT OF MATURITY

Vicens' position as a scholar in the two most important scholarly organisations of his day, the Acadèmia de Bones Lletres, which he joined in 1956, and the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, which he joined in 1958, not only signalled Vicens Vives' arrival as a professional, rather it also dovetailed with the development of his mature form of thinking, which evolved a great deal over the course of his life-



Figure 1. Vicens Vives at the congress on the history of the Crown of Aragon, in Càller, in December 1957. At his side, sitting, Ferran Soldevila. Behind, Emili Giralt and Jordi Nadal.

time because of the historic upheavals he lived through and his desire to influence the political discourse of his day.

Landing a university professorship (first in 1947 at the University of Zaragoza, and the next year – once again through civil service testing – at the University of Barcelona) helped to lay the groundwork for his recognition as a scholar. He replaced his master Antonio de la Torre at Barcelona's Acadèmia de Bones Lletres at a time when its president was historian Ramon d'Abadal, who also had ties with the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC), regarded at that time as the hotbed of anti-Franco cultural resistance. Vicens' interest in joining both academic institutions went beyond professional recognition. Especially in the case of the IEC, he sought to forge contacts with sectors of the democratic opposition so they would help him in his plan to update and modernise Spain so that Catalonia would be given some degree of political autonomy. However, it should be said that Vicens' initial contacts with the IEC initially triggered a great deal of reluctance, as before the end of World War II he had been attuned to the thinking of the Franco regime. Despite the mistrust, back at the start of the 1950s there were very palpable signs of open cooperation. For example, Vicens' machinations were crucial in landing the Institute a place on the Spanish Historical Sciences Committee when this organisation was founded in 1951. And he also most likely exerted an influence so that the IEC could be represented on the organising committee of the history congresses of the Crown of Aragon, of which he was one of the most prominent promoters.

The Vicens of the 1950s, then, was already committed to Catalan cultural (and national) revival, yet he also had certain complicities with the regime. It was a very interesting position at that time, as the important sectors of anti-Franco cultural resistance, realising that the allied triumph in World War II had not led to the defeat of the dictatorship and that the Franco regime was going to last many years, also sought a kind of pragmatic politics in which they could achieve specific conquests. This policy, which Joan Samsó has described as "possibilisme digne" (worthy pragmatism), is precisely what facilitated the Catalan cultural revival of the time. Furthermore, in the case of Vicens, his position as professor at the University of Barcelona opened up the possibility for a partnership between the university and the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, which back then was seeking alliances with the other cultural entities in Barcelona in the quest for the recognition that had been lost with Franco's victory. The Institute knew that if it did not earn the benevolence of the leading academic institutions, it would come upon yet another stumbling block in its pitiable and uncertain (and, ultimately, futile) progress towards legalisation and public financing.

When analysing Vicens' mature thinking, which took shape over the course of the 1950s, a comparison between the two published editions of his most famous book,

Notícia de Catalunya (one in 1954 and the other in 1960), can be enlightening, as the significant changes between both editions enable us to trace the evolution in his thinking in detail. The changes made to the second edition were qualitatively and quantitatively very important. Quantitatively, suffice it to say that of the 226 pages in the second edition, around 80 were totally new (which accounted for almost 40% of the text). So what were the additions and changes from the first edition? First, there was a set of changes that basically affected the historical summary which the work unquestionably contained and which, because of the time that had elapsed and Vicens' own historiographic reflection, required more extensive elaboration or more carefully weighed judgement. This might be the case of the elements he added from his historical synthesis of the 19th century, *Industrials i polítics* (1958). But another set of changes clearly reflected what we could call the more political part of the book, a public elucidation of a regenerative programme that he outlines quite explicitly at times. Thus, in his criticism of prior Catalan historiography, which he disparagingly labelled romantic, he berated historians (and by extension, all political pro-Catalanists) for their disdainful attitude towards the state and their systematic criticism "without attempting to publicly infiltrate their places of command". Therefore, he was in fact attempting to do this: to effect this "infiltration". And in order to do it, he sought allies both among the democratic opposition and within the regime itself, where he had the help of prominent figures like Florentino Pérez Embid and Rafael Calvo Serer. This is the root of the fuzziness of his political proposal. He had to convince highly divergent political sectors and gather them around his leadership. It should thus come as no surprise that his friend and associate, Josep Pla, wrote about him that "no one knew if he belonged to Opus Dei, if he was a capitalist or if he was simply an ambitious being".

What was totally clear was the segment of society that had to spearhead this process of change and modernisation: the most dynamic sectors in Catalan business. These sectors had to resume the policy conducted by their predecessors in the early 20th century (the famous generation of 1901 as defined by Vicens himself). Young Barcelona business leaders were to play a particularly important role. In order to train and guide them, he organised groups that over time came to play a decisive role in shaping a new business class (the Club Comodín and later the Economy Circle), and he guided the main core of his historiographic output towards this goal (especially with works like *Industrials i polítics*, and with the *Notícia de Catalunya* as well). In fact, in this aim to set his modernising plans into motion, he managed to assemble a group of people who were to operate as what we would call today a "pressure group" based on a hard core of individuals whom he fully trusted. The writer Josep Pla was one of them. Josep Tarradellas (then President of the Generalitat in exile) was charged with the contribution on the confederation and political organisation, Manuel Ortínez was

supposed to contribute to the sections on the industrial bourgeoisie, Vicens was occupied with ecclesiastic interests and Joan Sardà with economic issues.

The changes made to the second edition of *Notícia de Catalunya* reveal that even the “mature” Vicens’ ideological and political formulation was in constant mutation. It is a project that was never finished. His death in 1960, at the age of 50, right at the peak of his life and intellect, makes this even clearer. We do not know how he would have evolved in view of the vast changes in the 1960s and how he would have positioned himself in the process of the decline of the Franco regime. However, having established that his thinking was in constant metamorphosis according to each political situation, we have to conclude that there are fundamental points in his political proposition that are permanent and that we must now examine from a critical perspective. Obviously, there are others that are still fully valid. The latter are more often recalled and are constantly used. To illustrate with an example, we could first mention the very slogan of the work: getting to know ourselves. And all the others: the idea of Catalonia as a corridor and as a product of cross-breeding, the shaping of the national personality during the Middle Ages instead of earlier, the importance of overcoming a history focused solely on the major events (in order not to neglect the continuity of the collective social life), the peasant origins of the Catalans and the close relationship between country and city today, Catalonia as a model of feudalism, the importance of the struggle of the serfs, the aptitude for work, capitalisation and industrialisation despite limited natural resources, the importance of mediaeval and modern institutional development (the foundation of its own political tradition, pactism), the need to compare our historical development with Europe’s, the defence of immigration, and more.

Most of the points outlined are accepted, to varying degrees depending on the point, by a very significant majority of historians and intellectuals. However, there are other also prominent ones that are viewed critically today, especially because this criticism of Vicens’ mature oeuvre has not been very common. The image of Vicens as a precursor of autonomy was quite prevalent in the 1980s; it is a posthumous construct with a very clear political intent. However, the facet that has been debated the most in recent years was his historiographic project. Many historians (Josep Termes, Albert Balcells, Eva Serra, Antoni Simon and others) have made substantial contributions to historiographically go beyond what we could call the “Vicensian paradigm”. In contrast, this has yet to be done with his most explicitly political and ideological proposals. Here and now I shall only mention a handful of points that I personally believe we should revise.

First of all, we should question the purported neutrality, enveloped in supposed scientificism, of his overall precepts, as today the link between his proposals (even the historiographic ones) and a given politics and ideology has become clear, just as with all intellectuals and historians in the past and in the future. We should not make

such a specific rupture (as he did) with the previous cultural and political tradition (especially with historiography, but also with the rest of earlier intellectuality). Precisely now more than ever, we should study and recover this for the current generations, obviously from a critical yet also respectful perspective (as we do with Vicens’ contributions which are regarded as “classics” today). Another idea that should be refuted is the impossibility or unfeasibility of a sovereign or independent political approach, which he categorically denies, even as a long-term objective. And finally, we must clearly state whether we truly believe that the dialectic that regulates the evolution and historical reality of Catalonia can be explained by the contrast between *seny* (sense) and *rauxa* (impulse), as he claims in his book. In its day, this was one of the most hotly criticised extremes (which led him to rewrite the corresponding chapter in the second edition of *Notícia de Catalunya*), and today the psychological explanations of the personality of entire peoples are thoroughly derided for their lack of rigour. Believing in a dialectic between sense and impulse would distract us from finding constant features with greater historical solidity, even more so when others of his coeval historians have found several that are particularly valid today. One example is the dilemma pointed out by Ferran Soldevila in his *Història de Catalunya* (History of Catalonia) on modern and contemporary Catalan history: “Catalonia debating itself on the dilemma: either separating from Spain or leading Spain”.

Beyond the criticisms that can be levelled at him, Vicens remains an indisputably benchmark figure in a decisive decade (the 1950s), who in the ensuing two or three decades would be taken as a standard-bearer and symbol of modernisation in the liquidation of the Franco regime and the recovery of self-government. And naturally, he still remains a classic (“anti-canonical”, according to the terminology proposed by Harold Bloom) in 20th century Catalan historiography, on par with the other classic from that century: Ferran Soldevila. The merger of leitmotifs from the oeuvre of these two 20th century intellectual figures gives us the template that I think we should follow in today’s generations: “Getting to know ourselves in order to make Catalonia a normal people”.

The second summary we are presenting is from the lecture by Antoni Simon i Tarrés.

THE HISTORIAN AND HIS SCHOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF SPAIN

During the 1940s and 1950s, Jaume Vicens Vives worked in historiography, publishing, culture and politics in way we could call feverish. His epistolary relationship with historians and personalities of all kinds clearly reflects this. During those years, the Catalan historian consciously wanted to play the role of bridge and communication link between Catalan and Spanish historiographies, and

between them and the most cutting-edge trends in the field of the history in the Western world.

This contribution to the conference on Vicens aims to more deeply examine the part of this enterprise that absorbed Vicens' efforts in the two decades prior to his death. We shall attempt to reconstruct the origins and different facets of Vicens' ties and interests with the Spanish historiography of the 1940s and 1950s, with the desire to seek both their logic and the contradictions prompted by relations that, we should recall, took place in a highly polarised context: the Spanish university system in the post-war years.

I would first like to put forth two general considerations. The first alludes to the approach used in my analysis. I understand that we cannot study Vicens' relationship with Spanish historiography from a solely "intellectual" vantage point. I believe that it is impossible to understand the logic and historiographic dimension of a personality so closely tied to the universities as Vicens was without examining issues related to the complex play of academic power, especially regarding access to university professorships and the financing of institutional projects and research. On the other hand, in a figure that was so strong yet so eclectic and pragmatic, it is also important to analyse his personal relationships, which were extraordinarily broad and diverse in terms of their ideological and historiographic affiliation.

The second consideration that I wanted to examine refers to the main theme of this talk, Vicens' relationship with the leading historians and intellectuals in the religious institution Opus Dei. Apart from Vicens' initial impetus from his former teacher in Barcelona, Antonio de la Torre, and the support that he earned from the influential Cayetano Alcázar, Vicens' main academic and political ties in Spain during those decades included people linked to the religious institution founded in 1928 by José María Escrivá de Balaguer. Even though Vicens maintained friendly relations with other historians like Felipe Ruiz Martín, Jesús Pabón and José María Lacarra, he unquestionably forged deeper academic alliances and relationships with people from Opus Dei, a fact which has not always been sufficiently explained.

Even though Vicens interacted with other members of Opus Dei or people with close ties to the institution, the main web of contacts and interests between the Catalan historian and the followers of this religious institution came through three young history professors: Vicente Rodríguez Casado, Rafael Calvo Serer and Florentino Pérez Embid. As is well known, in the immediate post-war years, Vicens was purged, separated from the university and for political and administrative reasons was required to withdraw from the civil service tests for a university professorship that he had prepared for and started in October 1940. Even though Antonio de la Torre and Cayetano Alcázar were the prime engineers behind Vicens' return to the university, the Catalan historian also had the support of individuals from Opus Dei. Rodríguez

Casado was appointed to the tribunal which awarded Vicens the post of Professor of Modern and Contemporary History in Zaragoza in February 1947. He was also a member of the tribunal which just one year later, in February 1948, granted Vicens the same post in Barcelona. I think it is worth pointing out that this move was possible because Vicente Palacio Atard, then affiliated with Opus Dei and who had won the post in Barcelona the year before, was moving to Valladolid.

Unquestionably, in those years the Opus Dei people supported Vicens' interests and activities; however, his position within the Spanish university system was weak, and this alliance was not always effective. In fact, Vicens' interests were always relegated to secondary status compared to those of Opus Dei, which was particularly demonstrated throughout the Catalan historian's disciples' long and arduous process of consolidation within academia.

There were several reasons behind Vicens' proximity to this emerging group of Escrivá de Balaguer followers. There were unquestionably "utilitarian" reasons, as Vicens sought Opus Dei's support in order to rejoin the University of Barcelona after being purged after Franco's victory in 1939. He also sought their alliance in order to ensure that his disciples would land some of the hotly disputed civil service competitions to enter the university system or the Spanish National Research Council. Likewise, given the major role Opus Dei members would play in the Dirección General d'Información (censorship) at that time, Vicens approached them so that his books and articles, as well as those of his publishing house and friends like Josep Pla, would overcome the censorship obstacles. However, along with these professional reasons, there were other more personal and ideological ones: these Opus Dei historians were a motivated young group (they were young professors who were barely 30 years old when Vicens rejoined the university in 1947), and even though their focus might have been different to Vicens' they shared the idea that Spanish historiography needed to be brought up to date. What is more, on a personal level Vicens had close friendships with some of them, including Florentino Pérez Embid. And, as is well known, Vicens would first fall in with this intellectual group led by Calvo Serer in the controversy that these fanatical, anti-liberal Catholic sectors were engaged in between 1948 and 1953 with Laín Entralgo and Antonio Tovar's *Falangistas* about the so-called "Spanish problem", even though later Vicens wanted to serve as a bridge between the two clashing sides.

Vicens' earliest contact with Opus Dei took place in around 1943 through Florentino Pérez Embid. On a trip that Vicens took to Seville, he forged an academic and personal relationship with Pérez Embid that was far deeper and closer than his relationship with Rodríguez Casado and Calvo Serer. The cordiality and even confidentiality of the correspondence between both historians makes this clear. Vicens often contacted his friend *Floro* for a variety of questions related to his disciples' civil service tests, the financing of publications, overcoming the obstacles of

ensorship and his attempts to publish a journal in Catalan. During the 1950s, Florentino Pérez Embid often travelled to Barcelona, and Vicens organised a number of academic talks for him at the university and the Athenaeum. He also participated in the meetings that the Catalan historian hosted at his Barcelona home on Santaló Street. It is also easy to find Vicens' laudatory references to Pérez Embid in the briefs and informative articles that he published, especially in the journal *Destino*. Pérez Embid played a key role as middleman between Calvo Serer, Rodríguez Casado and Vicens, as he collaborated and had extremely close relationships with all three.

Floro was unquestionably Vicens' most trusted ally in government circles in Madrid, and the one whom Vicens let in on the political doings in Catalonia. In his letters to that Opus Dei member, who after being Director General of Information became the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Arriba*, Vicens expressed his opposition to Catalan separatism, but he censured the anti-Catalan and ultranationalistic Spanish attitudes of the *Falangistas* like Demetrio Ramos, who was then adjunct professor at the University of Barcelona and thwarted Vicens' efforts to bring Catalonia and Castile closer together. Still, as Vicens approached the end of his life, we can glimpse in his correspondence with his friend *Floro* an increasing disenchantment with this means of Castilian-Catalan rapprochement that he defended.

However, in all of Vicens' personal and academic relationships with Opus Dei members, it is not easy to make out the ones where he was operating more tactically and the ones grounded more on true friendship or historiographic affinity.

Just like in other facets of his professional and university career, in these relations with Spanish historiography Vicens reveals himself to have had a large dose of pragmatism and utilitarianism, which he combined on a political and ideological level with further doses of ambition, permeability and sometimes ingenuity, as Josep Pla and Albert Manent once noted. Vicens was convinced that the historiographic, cultural and therefore political reform of Catalonia and Spain after the collapse of the Three-Year War – as the Civil War from 1936-1939 was often called – could only take place through the sum of diverse people and forces, even if they were at odds with each other. For this reason, it should come as no surprise that he worked with and befriended those young nationalist-Catholics and anti-liberals from Opus Dei while also retaining strong ties and exerting a heavy influence with Catalan holdouts like Jordi Pujol, Josep Benet and Albert Manent.

Finally, we are presenting the summary of the lecture by Jaume Sobrequés.

THE PUBLISHER AND HIS OUTPUT

Jaume Sobrequés mentioned that Vicens Vives' more political activities took place between 1950 and 1960. How-

ever, he never supported any clandestine political party, nor did he commit himself to the anti-Franco opposition, even though he did gradually draw closer to the Catalan cultural resistance, as indicated by the interest he expressed along with his brother-in-law, Frederic Rahola, in promoting Catalan language classes held in small groups at different sites around Catalonia.

Vicens' European political referents were the Christian Democrats. His contacts with figures operating within the Franco regime apparatus were with people who were favourable to minimal decentralisation and tentative regionalism. However, his attempt to serve as a bridge between Barcelona and Madrid yielded no tangible results. He did not secure permission to publish a monthly journal in Catalan.

The Editorial Teide publishing house, founded by Vicens and his brother-in-law, Frederic Rahola, soon after the war ended, was much more than a business venture. Envisioned back in 1942 (in March of that year, Vicens wrote: "Now I'm focusing on a publishing business.") as a way of supplementing the meagre wages he earned from teaching, it soon became one of the core driving forces behind first-rate scientific initiatives.

Some of the historiographic productions spearheaded by Vicens would not have been possible without Teide. Neither *Estudios de Historia Moderna* (Studies of Modern History) nor *Índice Histórico Español* (Spanish Historical Index) nor *Historia social y económica de España y América* (Social and Economic History of Spain and America) would have been published without Teide, nor would the revamped history of Catalonia that he supervised under the title of "Biografies Catalanes" (Catalan Biographies).

Teide provided Vicens with the infrastructure he needed to engage in activities that universities were totally unable to sustain during the Franco regime. Teide became, then, a kind of university department where Vicens worked with his colleagues and disciples, and from which he could share his teachings. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that Vicens did not join the University of Barcelona until 1948 and that several important publishing initiatives, such as the revamping of the middle school teaching manuals, predated his university years.

Middle school teaching manuals

Even though Teide's true revolution lay in its baccalaureate texts, the first two books published by the new company were targeted at primary school. They were a course on the history of Spain and another on geography. They were signed only by Teide, but they were authored by Santiago Sobrequés – that was the first Teide book – and Vicens himself, respectively. After that, these two authors cooperated quite intensely on writing history and geography books for baccalaureate, an enterprise they continued until Vicens' death. Together they authored nine books until 1960. Sobrequés wrote four by himself, and Vicens six more which appeared only with his name.

These books were pioneers in modernising textbooks

in Spain. They did not always pass the dictatorship's censors, and they often had to be extremely diplomatic in the chapters on the Second Republic, the Civil War and the Franco regime. These books were also a major source of income for Vicens and contributed to bringing Teide the solidity it needed to finance other scientific projects.

The Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales

In 1949, soon after he arrived in Barcelona, Vicens decided to create the Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales. As the first article in its bylaws stated, it was part of the Department of Modern and Contemporary World History at the University of Barcelona. Its goal was to study the historical problems related to the economy, culture and diplomacy "of countries" – it did not specify which countries. These goals were achieved through scientific gatherings, research into the documentary and bibliography sources on international history, publications of scholarly studies, information dissemination through courses and lectures, and exchanges with similar centres operating in other countries.

With regard to Spain, in a letter addressed to Rafael Calvo Serer, head of CSCI, on the 27th of November 1949, on the economic resources that Vicens was trying to secure, Vicens proposed assigning the research into Spain as follows: "After thinking about it at length, I have decided to create the Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales at the University of Barcelona. My purpose is to provide the city with a centre that would complement the current mechanism of the resurgence of modern Spanish history."

Vicens went even further. He proposed a kind of assignment of historical studies all over Spain: "Madrid, general theory, synthesis, reflections, 18th and 19th centuries; Valladolid-Simancas: Spanish empire (16th - 17th centuries); Seville-Indies: Spain's project in the Americas; Barcelona: Mediterranean and Pyrenean relations". However, Vicens' rationalist dream did not come to fruition, and everyone ended up doing what they pleased. The solidity of Vicens' CEHI has enabled it to survive until today.

Estudios de Historia Moderna

The CEHI's first endeavour, driven with the support of the Jerónimo Zurita Institute, part of the Spanish National Research Council, was to create the journal *Estudios de Historia Moderna* in 1951. Its goal was to "fill the gaps in the edifice of research wherever they may appear". In the introduction to the first volume, Vicens stated that in Barcelona, "studies in modern history are so lacking that a herculean effort is needed to organise and outline their future structure".

Vicens' statement of intentions was specified in a Decalogue that was to serve as the conceptual and methodological guidelines for contributors to *Estudios*. It went as follows: "1. We fundamentally believe that History is Life [...]. 2. We believe that history has taken place in a geo-

graphical setting [...]. 3. We believe that man "is" in history [...]. 4. We believe in the principle of social articulation [...]. 5. We believe that History is an important factor in the struggle to distribute moral and material wealth [...]. 6. We believe that History must define the successive mindsets of the past. 7. We believe that each generation in history has its own mindset. 8. We believe that we must accept the consequences of historical deeds [...]; the historian tries not to emend historical events but to understand them in their entirety. 9. We believe in the efficiency of the statistical method for establishing historical certainty. 10. We feel at home in our Western civilisation, whose highest purpose we believe is to establish the historical truth for freedom of research and presentation." The writers in the first volume were Joan Mercader i Riba, Joan Reglà i Campistol and Pere Voltes i Bou.

Five issues of *Estudios* appeared during Vicens' lifetime. The sixth, which was prepared by its founder, was published shortly after his death, which effectively put an end to *Estudios*. No one had the strength and willpower to continue forward with the project.

Índice Histórico Español (Spanish Historical Index)

An important new product of the CEHI was the appearance of the *Índice Histórico Español. Bibliografía Histórica de España e Hispanoamérica* (Spanish Historical Index: Historical Bibliography of Spain and Hispanic America) in 1953-1954, an important compilation of critical essays on the historiographic output in Spain. The *Índice* was co-published by Editorial Teide, which was in charge of commercialising it. The work, which still survives today, was the outcome of initiatives that emerged from the History Seminar that Vicens orchestrated. Along with *Estudios*, it brought together the joint work of young historians and Vicens' disciples and associates linked to the University of Barcelona, as well as colleagues scattered all around Spain. The reception of the work abroad was outstanding, as can be seen in the compilation of comments published in the *Índice* itself. The credits for the first book stated who was behind that monumental work. In addition to Vicens' overall supervision, David Romano was the editorial secretary, and the writers included Emili Giralt i Raventós, Ramon Gubern i Domènech, Joan Mercader i Riba, Jordi Nadal i Oller, Jordi Pérez i Ballestar, Joan Reglà i Campistol, Eduard Ripoll i Perelló and Manuel Riu i Riu. The impressive list of contributors – the people who wrote the entries – illustrates both Vicens' extraordinary ability to get scholars onboard and the respect that the work earned, even among people whose way of thinking differed greatly to that of Vicens.

The "Biografies Catalanes" (Catalan Biographies)

Without neglecting Vicens' other initiatives, the supervision of a true general history of Catalonia, which appeared under the name of "Biografies Catalanes" (Catalan Biographies), was the publishing and research project led



Figure 2. The panel of experts at the academic session at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC). Left to right: Enric Pujol, professor in the Department of Modern and Contemporary History at the Autonomous University of Barcelona; Albert Balcells, full member of the IEC and director of the IEC's archive; Salvador Giner, president of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans; Jaume Sobrequés, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and president of the Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics; and Antoni Simon, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and full member of the IEC.

by Vicens into which he poured the most effort and enthusiasm, and also the one about which he felt the proudest. Proof of this is the letter he sent to Santiago Sobrequés on the 18th of December 1952: "When you come we'll talk about another publishing affair related to Catalan historiography. You'll be licking your chops!"

A few days later, Vicens revealed the mystery: "The fact that you didn't come," he wrote to Sobrequés on the 22nd of January 1953, "really tore me apart. We have so much to talk about, including [...] your contributing to Catalan biographies – the mysterious affair I wrote to you about."

In supervising this project in the second half of the 1950s, Vicens was once again able to convince the *crème de la crème* of Catalan historiography to write the volumes of the "Biographies" that spanned from the prehistoric roots of what would later become Catalonia until the 19th century. Who were these authors? Just citing a few names should suffice to endorse the validity of this innovative work spearheaded by Vicens: Miquel Tarradell, Ramon d'Abadal, Santiago Sobrequés i Vidal, Enric Bagué, Ferran Soldevila, Joan Reglà, Joan Mercader, Rafael Tasis, Joan F. Cabestany, J. E. Martínez Ferrando and Vicens himself.

Tarradell's books on ancient times, Abadal's on the historical origins of Catalonia, Sobrequés i Vidal's on the Catalan countships and the barons of Catalonia, Reglà's on the Austrias, Mercader's on the 18th century and Vicens' on the 15th and 19th centuries are crucial milestones in contemporary Catalan historiography. The countless reissues of the "Biographies" are clear proof that in many cases they have stolidly withstood the passage of time.

La Historia social y económica de España y América (Social and Economic History of Spain and America)

The most significant historiographic expression of Vicens' rupture with the old ways in which the vast majority of Spanish historians operated was his supervision of the *Historia social y económica de España y América* (Social and Economic History of Spain and America), published by Teide between 1957 and 1959. In the five volumes, all featuring lovely illustrations and a typography that was as revolutionary as the contents, Vicens compiled not only the chapters and volumes that he personally wrote, but also the work of his closest disciples and associates. It was the first time that a synthesis – be-

hind which, however, there was a great deal of research – had introduced and then placed a premium on analysis of economic and social factors and collective mindsets when trying to capture the historical processes of change over the centuries in their entirety.

What is more, in the *Historia social* – and this was particularly relevant for Catalonia – the Iberian Peninsula's past was presented as a whole for the first time. The nation-states from the Middle Ages and modern period, such as Catalonia and the Crown of Aragon, occupied the place they deserved as such and were no longer silenced. It is important to mention the role of writers of the volumes in this work: I. Lluís Pericot, Miquel Tarradell, Jesús García Tolsà, Jaume Vicens i Vives (*Feudalism*), Josep M. Font i Rius and Enric Bagué. II. Santiago Sobrequés i Vidal. III. Joan Reglá. IV. A. Domínguez Ortiz and Joan Mercader i Riba. V. Jordi Nadal Oller, Rosa Ortega and Jaume Vicens i Vives. The chapters on American history were written by M. Ballesteros Gaibrois, G. Céspedes del Castillo and Mario Hernández Sánchez-Barba.

For all of these reasons, the *Historia social*, directed, planned and partly written by Vicens, is one of the most important landmarks in contemporary Spanish historiography.

Other productions and publications promoted at Teide

From Teide's start, and this might have been the first project produced by the publishing house, Vicens spearheaded the publication of empty maps of the five continents targeted at secondary schools. They managed to become quite popular and were one of the publisher's most profitable products. This interest in cartography gave rise to the creation of URBS, Instituto Cartográfico Latino, in 1947, which published one of the most widely used atlases in secondary schools in Spain. The map was by Vicens and Santiago Sobrequés: *Atlas de geografía general* (Atlas of General Geography) (Barcelona, Teide, 1950). Two years earlier, Vicens had published his *Atlas de geografía económica* (Atlas of Economic Geography), a truly pioneering work in terms of both its content and its typographic presentation.

In its early years, the URBS, a Teide imprint, was owned as follows: Teide, 51% (50,000 pesetas); Josep M. Costa i Cels, the Teide executive highly esteemed by Vicens, 29% (29,000 pesetas); and Santiago Sobrequés i Vidal, 20% (20,000 pesetas). The company was dissolved on the 28th of February 1961, a few months after Vicens' death.

With combined commercial interests and the desire to issue a solvent publishing venture, Vicens commissioned two tourism guides, one about the city of Barcelona and another about his birthplace, Girona, and the Costa Brava. The proof that he wanted these two guides to be high quality can be seen by the fact that he assigned two eminent intellectuals of the day to write them. The Barcelona guide, which was called *Barcelona pas a pas* (Barcelona Step by

Step), was published in 1952 and written by Alexandre Cirici i Pellicer. After several re-editions, the book proved to be highly profitable for the publisher.

The guide on the *Costa Brava y Gerona*, which appeared in 1953, was written by Sobrequés i Vidal and issued in Spanish, French, English and German. It was one of the best books of its kind in Europe at the time. Vicens was very directly involved in it. On the 18th of December 1952, he wrote to the author of the guide's text: "We went to the Costa Brava and spent three days there making sketches, notes and photographs, and despite the heavy wind, we got a lot accomplished [...]. We would like the guide to come out in March, in time for the start of the season." The Teide and Sobrequés i Vidal guide was exceptionally successful and had a long life.

A last unfulfilled project: The *Llibre de les Institucions* (Book of Institutions)

The last major scientific project by Vicens-Teide, which like so many others ended up being personally assigned to Sobrequés i Vidal, was a book about the Catalan institutions, which was to be published – Vicens' death prevented it – with one of these titles: *Societat, govern i cultura als Països Catalans* (Society, Government and Culture in the Catalan-Speaking Lands), *Llibre de les Institucions dels Països Catalans* (Book of Institutions of the Catalan-Speaking Lands) or *Història de la societat, el govern i la cultura a Catalunya, València i Mallorca* (History of the Society, Government and Culture of Catalonia, Valencia and Mallorca). The book was to be written by Sobrequés i Vidal, with Josep Fontana i Lázaro, Josep M. Font i Rius, Joaquim de Camps i Arboix and Joan Ruiz i Calonja as occasional contributors. Sobrequés was to write 750 pages; Font i Rius, 100; Camps i Arboix, 100; and Ruiz i Calonja, 150. Fontana's participation in the project was never fully fleshed out.

The purpose of the work, according to what Vicens himself wrote, was to "present a historical overview of the institutions of Catalonia, Roussillon, Valencia and Mallorca in their obvious connection with those of Aragon, Castile, Sardinia, Sicily and Naples, and later those of the Spanish monarchy. By 'institution' we mean the form attained by a body or collective in the evolution of the society, government, law, economy and culture. The genesis, peak, decline and end of the institution must be described using the latest historical information. The narration, which must be plain and understandable, should not omit any important chronological fact so it may be an ideal reference book." With regard to the tone of the book, the project states, "It should not be overly apologetic. It should convince more through the weight of the Catalan institutional deeds than through the romantic flourishes of the language."

It was one of the first times, back in the 1950s, that someone posed the idea of presenting the historical reality of the Catalan-speaking lands in a single work of this scope. In this respect, too, Vicens was a pioneer. It is

something that no one talked about again until I explained this Vicens project for the first time in 2000. He himself prepared the index to the book.

Of this book, 35 pages from the summary of the history of Catalonia have remained unpublished. The letter dated the 29th of March 1960 from Sobrequés to Vicens asking whether the book should run up to the union with Castile, the Nueva Planta degree or the Second Republic with the

Charter of Self-Government was never answered. This was a ground-breaking project that was tragically cut short by the death of its visionary.

These are not the only scientific, academic and educational productions pioneered by Jaume Vicens i Vives in the short span of time from 1940 to 1960, but they are the most important ones and the ones that enable us to truly grasp the magnitude of his work.