
THE JOURNALS

Cuadernos de Historia Económica de Cataluña

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In commemorating the fifth anniversary of the publication of « Anuario de Estudios Medievales », created as the authoritative mouthpiece of the Barcelona medievalist school, Miguel Gual drew attention to how it harmonized historiographic tendencies of different origins, in a concept viewing the Middle Ages « as a single whole, with no exclusions [...]. Side by side with the *événementielle* history we find economic-social history and side by side with classical themes the newer themes of the institutionalist approach ». I should like to say that — perhaps with less emphasis on the historian's « deontología profesional », but certainly with the same declaredly rejuvenating perspective as compared with a tradition only too often overburdened with mannered historiographic romanticism — these « Cuadernos » (henceforth CHEC), from the first number which came out in June 1969 till the fifth number which has just appeared, have taken their place in a fairly rich array ranging from the « Anuario de Historia Económica y Social » to « Moneda y Crédito », to « Revista de Economía Política ».

Edited and published by the Cátedra de Historia Económica de la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas, Económicas y Comerciales of Barcelona University and by the group of young historians gathered around the holder of the Chair, Prof. Pedro Voltes Bou, the « Cuadernos » accompany the revived activity of the well-known Instituto Municipal de Historia. This activity, dating back to the last century, consists on one hand of the publication of sources relating to the city's institutions (among which the famous *Dietari*, reaching up to 1704, which — compiled by the clerks of the city's Razione dei Conti — had been submitted to the Municipal Council since far back in history) and on the other of the publication of monographic studies tending increasingly to an economic approach to Catalan history. Among the latter

it will be sufficient to mention the fundamental works by Voltes Bou on *Barcelona durante el Gobierno del Archiduque Carlos de Austria* and on *La Banca barcelonesa de 1840 a 1920* and the joint study by J. Fontana Lázaro and V. Villacampa on the origins and development of the city's Stock Exchange.

The Review bears clearly the mark of its origin: Barcelona, the seat of sources which are invaluable for historical research, such as the Archives of the Crown of Aragon or the files of the College of Notaries (from which, to give an idea of the latest directions followed by research, works such as Carrère's originate) or, again, the Instituto Municipal's own Archives. The Barcelona of Jaime Vicens Vives who first conceived this Institute as a live instrument of mediation between young students and their difficult initiation to historical research.

The heritage behind them is considerable, but for this very reason difficult to keep up with: they are faced with the commitment of unravelling, on the plane of concrete analysis, the many riddles in that « historical enigma » that Spain still remained for Claudio Sánchez Albornoz. From the expansion of its national components in the Mediterranean area, from its constitution as a political unit, to its decay, to secular economic degradation and lost opportunities of a return, which would not have been impossible, to the highest peaks of western civilization; right up to the drama of its contemporary history. It is against its ability to solve these riddles that young Spanish economic historiography has to measure its research methods and instruments. An element now being definitively achieved, and of considerable importance to it, is unquestionably the overcoming of the compartmentalization of problems in terms of Castilianism and Catalanism, of the « short-sighted pride of petty *capitales locales* », shortcomings which can only be overcome outside the bounds of ideological history which is slippery ground when it is one-sided. The refusal to allow any apriorism does not mean, however, that there is any lack of orientation in the work of this group of historians or in that of Sobrequés Vidal, Voltes, Nadal, Reglà; in the whole school of Vicens Vives, the 'Barcelona school'.

It is no mere chance that Reglà alone did not disdain the clear methodological position and commitment in works of *synthèse*, as is evidenced here too (*Des de la perspectiva actual*, IV pp. 162-63) by his emphasis on the ultimate consequences of the 'actualització' of history launched as password by the master who is no longer with us. The great *Historia social y económica de España y América* edited by him, and published here in Barcelona from 1957 to 1959, certainly contained more than one indication of this kind in its plan. And yet today, despite the existence of these « Cuadernos », we are still not quite clear as to the result of a historiography which he saw as « divided into three trends: the return to the philological-intuitional school,

the sudden flourishing in our country of the economic-social method proclaimed by the Parisian « Annales », and the extinction — far less rapid than had been expected — of the post-war ideologism ». (J. VICENS VIVES, *Profilo della storia di Spagna*, Torino, 1966, p. 11).

In this developing stage of historiography, it may be helpful that José-Luis Martín appealed to a lack of objective preparation for the writing of the economic history of Spain today, whether it be medieval or modern, based on his criticism of the recent periodization in terms of economic cycles attempted by Ubieto (see « Anuario de Estudios Medievales », V, 1968, pp. 711-25). However no contribution which attempts to make good this lack of preparation can be summarily rejected. This is presumably the case of the daring methodological innovations frequently met with in the review we are considering. These have two aspects. Firstly they form part of a tradition of cultural and research connections between Spanish and foreign historians (to quote some illustrious names, it is the tradition of Hamilton and of Usher, a translation of whose essay on the Deposit Bank of Barcelona, III pp. 157-181, is opportunely reprinted here; a tradition which needed, however, to be brought up to date. Thus frequent information concerning structuralist contributions, growth theories and the revision of economic models is offered the reader together with the more substantial fruits of this policy of international cooperation pursued by the editor, who succeeded in obtaining from Count Khevenhüller the secret diary of his ancestor, the Count of Frankenburg, Austrian ambassador to Philip II (CHEC, IV pp. 128-144). Moreover the contacts established with the Soviet historiographic world, no longer only at the informative level, are a constant feature. Besides the translation of an important joint study which appeared in « Novata i Noveishaia Istorîia » dealing with the evolution and present state of the use made by Russian historians of quantitative methods in data processing, we have to mention the article by B. N. Komissarov on the differences of opinion among Soviet historians concerning the nature of the Hispano-Russian secret convention of 1817 and the article by M. A. Dodalev in which he examines the influence of the Spanish revolution of 1820-1823 on Russian opposition without confining this influence, as it is generally done, to the Decembrist movement (respectively, CHEC, V pp. 139-142; IV pp. 101-106 and V pp. 120-132).

Secondly, the enthusiasm for the new dimensions that historical sciences are taking on thanks to the introduction of econometric models must be appreciated just as we have said, also in the less thought out form in which they emerge from time to time. That is, for historiography this is an important moment of renewal and of search for a connection with the process of exchanges within world historical culture which has increased enormously in recent years. In fact the other aspect of the dominant character of the

« Cuadernos » is their generous « inquietud actualizadora », which should be accepted as it stands.

This, I think, is the light in which J. Martí Artigas's deliberately popularizing essay (*La historia, les matemàtiques, els computadors*, CHEC, III pp. 387-398) must be read. After a first historical *excursus* of numeration problems, which shows how the need for the help of mechanical means emerged once the feudal system had been split up into a system of national states which were quick to rationalize their administrative structures, particularly as regards taxation, a survey follows of advances made in the mechanization of book-keeping, advances linked with the names of Pascal, Leibniz, Burroughs, down to Hollerith's punched cards and the Mark I and Univac systems. But the correct appliance of computers in the field of historiography is still conditioned by the difficulty of overcoming a most important obstacle. Historians persist in their reluctance to feed information to the computer. And since it seems most unlikely that a mere analyst can be able to produce a 'software' appropriate for the research in question, is there not the risk of continuing for a long time to be caught up in the tragic alternative between the craftsman's skill and the decay of historical studies? Meanwhile, mention must be made of the increasingly insistent demand for innovations in statistical methods and their use. An example is provided by the efforts made by J. Iglésias (CHEC, IV pp. 1-99) to give us an accurate picture of the changes in cultivation that have occurred after just over half a century in the agriculture of a coastal region of south-western Catalonia, the Camp de Tarragona. Based on the land registry figures for 1900 and 1963, the comparison reaches results which are fairly significant, more perhaps as regards the methodological *impasse* referred to than as regards the percentages of change between one type of culture and another given in the many tables, or the phenomenon of the cessation of cultivation recorded, as distinct to the depopulation of the mountainous areas.

The risk of providing material which, owing to the absence of criteria guiding the research, has not been suitably systematized is openly recognized by José Llopis in an essay which is interesting also because of the way in which the author succeeds in entering the debate under way on New Economic History keeping his initial perspective centred on the relationship between teaching and research (*Anotaciones sobre la Enseñanza Programada*, CHEC, IV pp. 147-160).

The conviction that an organic « alliance among disciplines, capable of overcoming the school's prejudices and the misleading personalisms » has moreover been expressed more than once by Voltes Bou himself, who has therefore placed it at the head of the Review's programme. The reader will in fact note the important presence on the editorial committee of experts from disciplines other than history and the recurrent consideration, from the very first number, of the central theme: history and economy.

The organic interdependence of disciplines has been recognized from the interdependence actually existing between historical facts. It is this reality, which escapes substantially conservative proposals of the type formulated by Hicks (and, strange to say, is not subjected to a proper critical examination: V pp. 157-159) that tends to damage that character of 'wholeness' which today is generally recognized to be essential to an understanding of the real development and growth of historical phenomena. Wholeness, if not of the practical examination, certainly as regards the historian's point of view. And inside economic history itself, Pierre Vilar has often asked himself, how is agriculture to be separated from industry on this plane or trade from the two other sectors? If these are the terms of methodological discussion today, it is clear that the task undertaken by the « Cuadernos » is assuming the form of an explicit confirmation of the reply given to this problem some time ago by Vicens Vives. For him, making a salutary break with the past, it was a question of relying — at a consciously nonepistemologic level of course — on the hope that the experiences of empiric work would eventually « take a general form » (*op. cit.*, p. 19). Today there is far more explicit foundation for this hope. Among other things, renewed methodological strength may give clearer outlines to that search for objectivity insisted on by the Review, in whose pages, moreover, it has a decidedly contemporary cachet: it makes itself indeed felt most strongly when events of 20th century Spanish history are dealt with.

We have spoken of relationship between teaching and research. And here it is necessary to recognize not only the theoretical effort made by Llopis to link up the individualization of teaching upon which *Enseñanza Programada* is based with the more recent development of what is known as technologically assisted education, but also the practical improvisations introduced by professors, assistants and students in the many activities they carry on in their Cátedra de Historia Económica. Here too, every attempt is being made to get the seed sown by Jaime Vicens Vives to bear fruit. The educational character of this discipline, supported by the great majority of the students as it is shown by the interesting inquiry the results of which are published (CHEC, IV pp. 174-180), can be ensured by combining the « teaching of the lessons with a wide range of initiatives encouraging bringing to light and fostering the student's abilities and directing their expression ». Among these initiatives must be mentioned the Seminars which, owing to their number and the choice of the subjects, provide further confirmation on the didactic plane of the advanced level of the scientific interests of this group of Barcelona historians. They range from the history of the Catalan metallurgical industry to that of the textile industry, from the appliance of mathematical techniques in Economic History to Catalan agrarian history, from research in the archives to the history of the municipal economic administration of Barcelona. Then there are the *trabajos libres*, the object of

which is to offer students — who choose the subjects inside some very general sectors each of which is entrusted, at the operational level, to a professor — the possibility of establishing a close relationship with research and its problems from the very beginning of the courses. A vertical restructuring of programmes has also been suggested, based on the different sectors of the economy irrespective of the division into periods in use at present. Finally, it is in this frame of enthusiastic activity, so characteristic of the sponsors of the «Cuadernos» in their capacity as teachers, that the interest shown in the history of teaching must be viewed (see, for example, the papers on the university Faculties and their staff in the Spain of 1849 published in III pp. 185-214).

Now, in dealing with the more properly analytic contributions, some of which in the Catalan tongue, which appeared in the last three numbers of the Review, it must be borne in mind that they are divided into the following sections: studies, documents, essays and notes, news and bibliographical notes. Among the most noteworthy studies is the careful research by Gaspar Feliu, almost all of which is first-hand (parchments and *Libri Antiquitatum* of the Cathedral Archives; parchments from the University Library; other minor files such as the parchments of the Monastery of Montserrat or the Condal Archives quoted from the Udina Martorell's publication). After a useful preliminary reconstruction of the system of weights and monetary values of the period, we find grouped together from the year 880 on *Las ventas con pago en moneda en el Condado de Barcelona hasta el año 1010* (CHEC, V pp. 9-41) testifying to the widespread use of money as means of payment for the purchase of land and buildings already in the high Middle Ages. This is another step — after those fixed for the Iberian peninsula by Sánchez Albornoz and D'Abadal — towards a final clarification of a controversy that has remained famous: was the society of the high Middle Ages a structure with a 'natural' or a monetary economy? Feliu's answer leaves no room for doubt: « the county of Barcelona, and more especially the city and the area surrounding it, fed an economy based on the exchange of money at least from the end of the 9th century on » (*cit.*, p. 37). More generally the large quantities of metal coins acquired through trade with the Moslem world laid the bases for Barcelona's future development in the Mediterranean, while the data supplied indicate at the same time to the possibility of documenting the concentration of land ownership and therefore the process of feudalization in its development.

Motivated to more or less considerable extent, as already said, by « geopolitical necessities », the economic growth of Catalonia throughout the low Middle Ages, and the political influence of the Aragon dynasty which originated there, are phenomena that have increasingly attracted the attention not only of the native historian. In fact a vast geographical area is concerned which, at least up to the 16th century, was of decisive importance in deter-

mining the international economic order. As far as Italian historians are concerned it will be sufficient to mention the studies of Boscolo, Dupré, Giunta, Pontieri, from whose school Mario Del Treppo has emerged. His works, in particular *I mercanti catalani e l'espansione della Corona Aragonesa nel sec. XV*, are an important step forward as regards the maturity of Italian historiography concerning the great historical process of the Catalan-Aragonese expansion in the Mediterranean and subsequent withdrawal from it. This does not mean that a greater exchange of experiences and a greater communication of research among historians of the two countries is not to be desired, today perhaps more than ever before, in the spirit of the correspondence already evident between our reviews and the « Cuadernos » (see, for example, CHEC, III p. 403).

J. M. Casas Homs (*L'heretatge d'un mercador barceloní*, CHEC, III pp. 9-112) devotes his attention to one of those businessmen who were to transfer their operations to the South of Italy after its conquest by Alphonso. The business and biography of the 14th century Catalan merchant Guillem Ferrer are reconstructed through a detailed inventory of the property he left as inheritance to his successors which was found in the notaries' files of the Instituto Municipal. The rich nomenclature of the goods lying in the warehouses allows the author to compile a useful and philologically valuable mercantile glossary, while the description, given in the document, of the account-books found on the merchant's death often makes it possible to trace an outline of the trading company he established in his life-time. But the most dynamic and prosperous sector of the whole Catalan economy of the period is unanimously recognized to have been the textile industry, both as regards the production of manufactures for which Barcelona was the major sales centre and, more broadly, as a stage in the process of production in which the *ganaderos* participated on an increasingly large scale. Naturally the dynamism and prosperity mentioned above lasted only until the middle of the 15th century or shortly after, since recent studies have shown clearly that this industry was unable to avoid the cyclical trends and depression of the economic system of which it was a part.

Wool is of course the product most widely referred to, and never ceased, from the time of Klein's classical work on the *Mesta*, to be the centre of the economic interests of historiography as it has been evident during more than one of the Study Weeks organized by the Datini Institute, where Vazques de Prada, Molas, Carrère gave brilliant proof of their preparation in this field. However silk is not neglected either, especially now that the editor of the « Cuadernos » himself, Pedro Voltes, has pointed out the prefiguration of an extremely modern internal structure (*Les Associacions de Seders medievals Barcelonins*, in « Anuario de Estudios Medievales », V, 1968, pp. 438-94). Certainly a great deal is being done to unveil the myth of Spanish wool: it is sufficient to mention the references cont-

ained in the works of José Gentil da Silva (the breeding of *merinos*: a conservative choice of the landed aristocracy and the merchants). A different line, but always up-to-date and fitting in the severity of its judgment is that taken by Miguel Gual and expressed — not to mention of his previous ampler and better known works — in his reports at Prato, in the last two years, on the origins and expansion of Catalan wool manufactures and on the technical and commercial aspects of the *Manual catalán de mercadería* of the 14th century, which is here briefly summarized a lucid note that accompanies the first serious attempt to provide a reasoned glossary of the textile industry which is actually valid well beyond the frontiers of the Iberian peninsula owing to the «singular universality of life and customs in medieval Europe» (CHEC, V pp. 97-101). It must lastly be mentioned that at one of the University seminars held some time ago by J. Sanmartí, the subject of economic and social conditions in the textile industry in 19th century Catalonia was dealt with.

As it has already been said at the beginning, the history of this region and of Spain as a whole presents some characteristic riddles which perhaps only economic historians will be able to unravel. A traditional matter of controversy for Spanish historiography and journalism has been the relatively rapid decay of Catalonia, sometimes traced to an alleged Castilian monopoly in the exploitation of the New World politically initiated by the Catholic kings. In fact the scientific or rather the more realistic tendency leans more and more towards a clear distinction, even in time, between the two phenomena: the fundamental autonomous reasons are sought which, operating inside the Catalan social structure, were responsible for the crisis that started in the middle of the 15th century. This is the feature which relates directly to the important critical and documentary innovations undertaken by Vicens Vives, who radically re-interpreted the whole of fifteenth century depression in Catalonia, linking it, among other things, with the general European situation. Following in his wake, further clarifications and details are offered by Madurell on the pacts and conditions contained in some of the merchant companies' contracts (CHEC, V pp. 67-78) and by Sobrequés Callicó on some *Aspectos económicos de la vida en Barcelona durante la guerra civil catalana de 1462-1472* (CHEC, III pp. 215-86). The author, a specialist on the 15th century who is one of the review's most assiduous contributors and *profesor ayudante* to the Chair of Barcelona Economic History, tackles the heavy task of describing one of the most famous Catalan revolts from a particular angle following what has now become the general tendency (see the other recent work by Sobrequés Vidal centred around the role played by the aristocracy in the revolt): the means by which it was financed, studied in relation to the administration by the Municipal Council and the *Generalitat de Catalunya*, between 1462 and 1465, of the special fund of 60,000 lire allocated for expenses. The text of the document on which the study is

based, which was found in the Instituto Municipal of which Sobrequés is *conservador*, enables him, through the register of the recipients of the various disbursements, to provide a cross-section of the civilian society operating in Barcelona in those years: « a society organized for war », a war which actually « as often happens, was beyond its possibilities and merely aggravated the precarious state of subsistence of the lower ranks of society, which are usually the hardest hit in situations like the ones Barcelona lived through in those years » (*cit.*, p. 234).

At this point an extension of an analysis which has so far been local or microscopic certainly seems imperative and it is to be hoped that it is among the intentions of the authors of these « Cuadernos ». One immediately has a vision of the total assimilation of the above type of analysis, which of course is also necessary, in a far broader frame achieved with the refinement for which Fernand Braudel is noted. Exemplary, among others, are his pages on the importance assumed by the Barcelona-Genoa route in the second half of the 16th century with regard to the spread to Central Europe of the precious metal coming from the New World. The extension of the analysis would allow some key points, which may almost be said to have been carefully left aside, to be attacked: development of the peninsula's agriculture and consequent feudal 'reaction' of the 16th century; tension on the land between the *señorios* and the *lugares* who were increasingly miserable; the role played by the structures of the State in the process of economic degradation; and, always in the same process, the role played by commercial capital which does not seem to have acted as a stimulant on the whole system, the substantial inertia of whose feudal and State structures seems to have increased rather than been troubled. And does not 17th century Catalan society too, its patriarchal character offset by the peasants' pauperism and the humiliating indigence of the younger sons, still offer ample possibilities of analysis, even after works like Vicen's, Reglà and Nadal's, Elliott's, A. Domínguez Ortiz's? Probably the truth is that the appointment with what Vilar calls the « dissymétries dans l'espace » cannot be put off any longer. Another French name and other exemplary pages come to mind which should dispel any doubt concerning the dangers of schematism that might be feared. I refer to the rich and, as far as I know, unsurpassed description of the 18th century Catalan agrarian structure which closes the second volume of *Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*.

For the 18th century, on the other hand, we have here an interesting collection of documents forming the third volume of Voltes Bou's work on Barcelona under Archduke Carlos (CHEC, III pp. 287-380). For the following century, in addition to the documentary section consisting of the papers of the Hanseatic consuls in Spain deposited at Bremen (III pp. 381-3; V pp. 81-93). In the mention made of the recipients of privileges we again find Vicens Vives's teaching being followed!), it is once more Voltes who

comes to grips with some problems in contemporary Catalan history. Having already written a clear-sighted study on protectionist tendencies between 1880 and 1890, he now tackles two other problems no less expertly. *Las dos huelgas de contribuyentes en la Barcelona de fin de siglo* (CHEC, V pp. 43-66) fits the rise of Catalanism into the dialectic between the government and its fiscal pressure on the one hand and the city middle class on the other, expressed in the pages of the paper «*La Vanguardia*», an important source extensively exploited by Voltes. In fact he uses it amply and exclusively also to get the appropriate perspective on *Enfoque barcelonés de la política económica del Gobierno de Primo de Rivera* (CHEC, III pp. 113-56): the reactionary views of the notorious general are clearly stated in the articles published by him in this local paper. Lastly, it is a pity only to be able to mention so briefly Jorge Ventura's stimulating work of reconstruction on *La verdadera personalidad del 'Barón de König'* (CHEC, V pp. 103-118). After remarking that the lack of proportion between the vast amount written on the Second Republic or on the Civil War and the comparatively modest attention devoted to the first quarter of the century — in which, after all, «the ground was prepared and the seed sown for later events» — can easily be remedied today provided some encouragement is given to the great interest in these themes of contemporary history evident among the younger generation in the Faculties, the author sheds some light on the dark figure of a shady personage. This is Rudolf Stallmann *alias* Baron König, the classical manipulator of that management practice of anti-labour provocation and terrorism, well known to the trade union and socialist movement, which explodes most violently when strife is keenest. This was precisely the case in Barcelona after the first war, where there reigned an atmosphere of espionage and social strife which is described most efficiently by the author, who uses among other things the fine book of memories of Angel Pestaña.