

Scholars and Literati at the University of Vich (1599–1713)

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This note is a summary of our research into the group of scholars and literati who were at the University of Vich (Vich is the historical spelling, found in older Spanish, Catalan, and Latin texts, while Vic is the modern Catalan name (also used in contemporary Spanish)).

1 SOURCES

“La Universidad de Vic (1599–1717)” by Ramis Barceló and Ramis Serra (2022b) provides a comprehensive prosopographical record of the professors who taught at this institution between the late 16th and early 18th centuries. The authors reconstruct the academic careers of the faculty, detailing their education, positions, ecclesiastical or religious affiliations, and periods of activity. The book includes an alphabetical index of professors, facilitating their identification. Unfortunately, it does not contain much information on dates of birth and death, nor on places.

The authors Rafael Ramis Barceló and Pedro Ramis Serra appear to have initiated a series of publications on the history of Catalan universities. One of their volumes (Ramis Barceló and Ramis Serra 2023) were used in preparing our summary of the University of Barcelona (De la Croix and Gualandris 2024), and their work on Girona (Ramis Barceló and Ramis Serra 2022a) also contributed significantly to our database.

2 THE UNIVERSITY

The original University of Vich was founded in 1599, when King Philip III of Spain (not Philip II, as sometimes misstated) granted the city the privilege to establish a *Studium Generale*—a university with the authority to confer recognized degrees. It offered studies primarily in philosophy and theology, closely tied to the Church and local ecclesiastical authorities.

Despite its official recognition, the university remained small and regional in scope, never attaining the prominence of other Spanish institutions like Salamanca or Valencia. Its activity was closely linked to the cathedral chapter of Vich and served to educate local clergy and scholars.

The cathedral chapter is a governing body of clergy (called canons) organizing and performing liturgical services at the cathedral, advising the bishop of the diocese, and managing the cathedral’s property and finances. The chapter provided faculty to the university (canons serving as teachers) and resources.

After the War of the Spanish Succession, Philip V of Bourbon became king of Spain, defeating the supporters of the Habsburg Archduke Charles, who had strong backing in Catalonia and other Crown of Aragon territories. In retaliation and as part of a broader campaign to consolidate royal power, Philip V enacted the *Nueva Planta* decrees (1707–1716), which abolished Catalonia’s traditional institutions and privileges, effectively dissolving its autonomous legal and political systems.

As part of these decrees, in 1717, Philip V suppressed all existing Catalan universities—including those in Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Vic. The aim was to weaken centers of regional identity, political dissent, and intellectual resistance associated with the Habsburg cause.

To replace them, the crown established a single new university in the loyal town of Cervera, which had sided with the Bourbons during the war. The University of Cervera was created by royal decree and became the only legal university in Catalonia, fully under Bourbon control and serving the centralizing goals of the monarchy.

3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics. Overall, we link 147 scholars to the University of Vich. The completeness of information is quite low. For example we observe the year and places of birth for about 2% of the sample. Most of these scholars are “obscure”: we find not find a single Wikipedia page, while 3.4% of the scholars left a footprint in the libraries of today.

Period	no. obs	birth date	known place	mean age at appoint.	mean age at death	med. dist. birth-univ.	with Wiki.	with VIAF
1527–1617	6	0%	16.7%	NaN	NaN	107	0%	0%
1618–1685	73	1.4%	1.4%	45	71	0	0%	5.5%
1686–1733	68	2.9%	1.5%	37	NaN	60	0%	1.5%
1200–1800	147	2%	2%	41	71	60	0%	3.4%

Table 1: Summary statistics by period

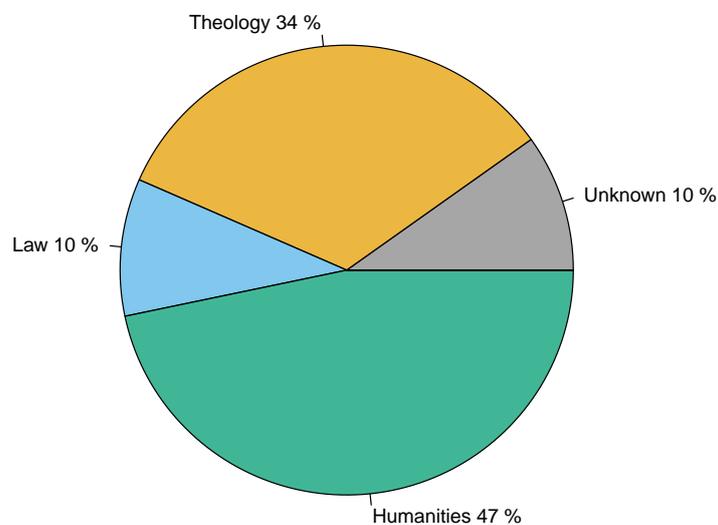


Figure 1: Broad fields at the University of Vich (all scholars)

4 FIELDS

Figure 1 confirms the description of the University of Vich as a center to educate the clergy, with humanities, theology, and a bit of law. Medicine or sciences are totally absent.

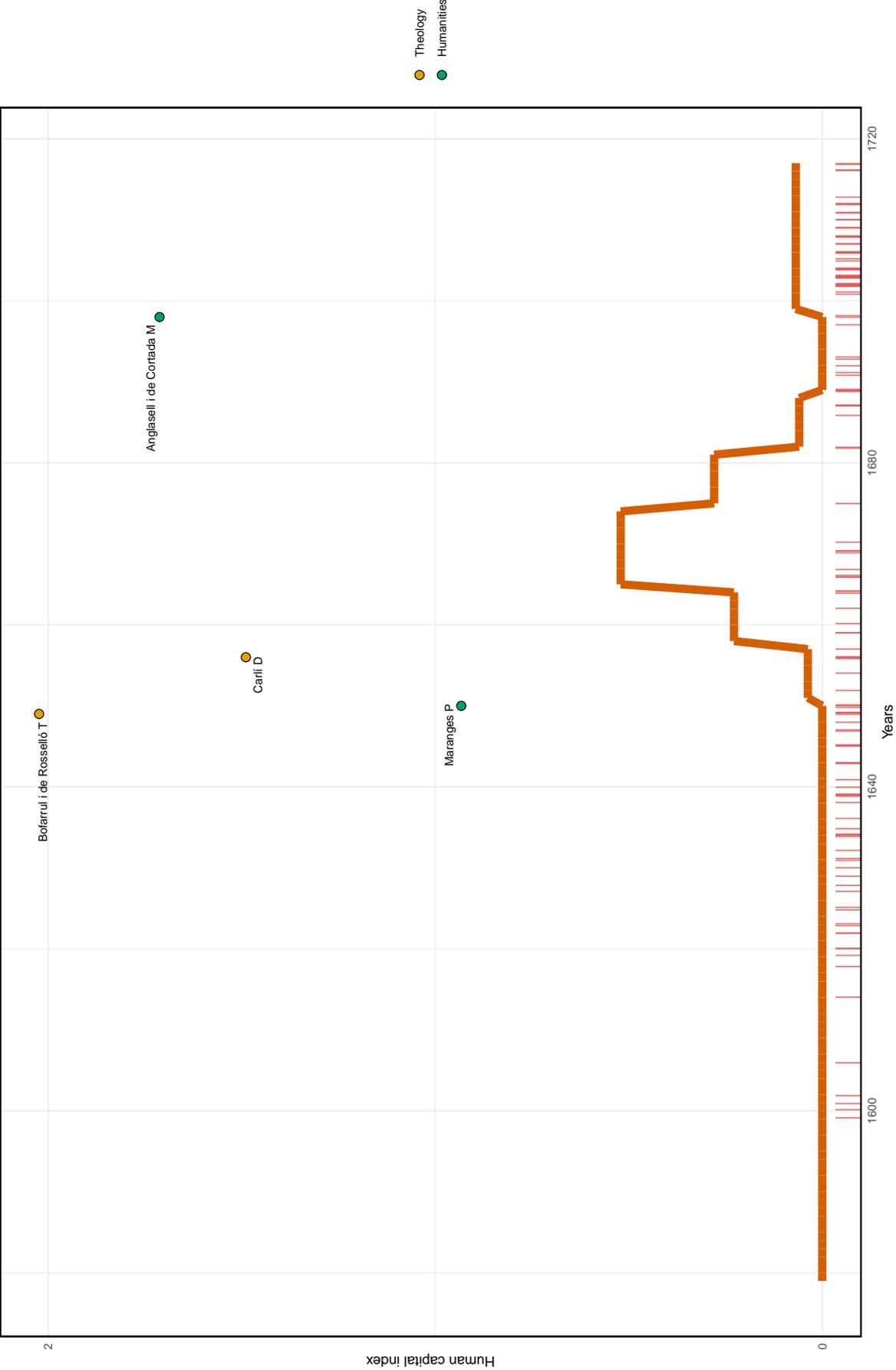


Figure 2: Famous scholars at the University of Vich

5 HUMAN CAPITAL OF SCHOLARS AND LITERATI

For each person in the database, we compute a heuristic human capital index, identified by combining information from VIAF and Wikipedia, using principal component analysis (Curtis et al. 2025). We also compute the notability of the university at each date by averaging the human capital of the five best scholars active in Vich 25 years before that date (De la Croix et al. 2024). Figure 2 shows the names of all the scholars with a positive human capital index. The orange line displays the notability of the university, based on how well published its top scholars were.

The university of Vich is among the less notable European universities. Only four persons have a positive human capital index, and hence contributed to our measure of the notability of the university.

6 TOP 4 PROFESSORS

We now provide a brief overview of the four professors with a positive human capital index.

Tomàs Bofarull i de Rosselló (1604–1675) was a Dominican, lector of arts at the convent of Santa Caterina in Barcelona in 1636, then professor of theology at Vich in 1649. Author of *Nuevas Indias de las alabanzas del S. Rosario de Maria Santísima* (1669).

Marià Anglasesell i de Cortada (–1754) was a member of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy, professor of philosophy at the University of Vich from 1698. Active in theological training, he presented several candidates for examinations between 1700 and 1705.

Diego Carlí (Tortosa – Barcelona 1705) was lector of arts at Solsona (1650), then of theology (1657), and taught at Vich from 1656 onwards. Rector at Solsona (1657–1658) and Barcelona (1681–1682). Twice prior of Santa Caterina (1683, 1692), he died in 1705 as vicar general of the province of Aragon.

Joan Maranges (XVIIth century) was lector of the major chair of grammar in 1650, a position he left the same year. He is the author of the *Episcopologium Vicensis Ecclesiae*, written in 1628, a non-critical hagiographic work contested by J. Ripoll and other authors.

7 FINAL THOUGHTS

While formally recognized as a university, the University of Vich remained a modest institution with primarily local reach and no broader impact.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 883033 “Did elite human capital trigger the rise of the West? Insights from a new database of European scholars.”

Homepage: <https://perso.uclouvain.be/david.delacroix/uthc.html>

Database: <https://shiny-lidam.sipr.ucl.ac.be/scholars/>

First version July 12, 2025

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