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# Engaging Élites: counts, capital and frontier communities in the ninth and tenth centuries, in Catalonia and elsewhere<sup>\*</sup>

Jonathan Jarrett

## Introduction

The medieval frontier has received a great deal of scholarly attention in the last two decades, especially in the Anglophone world, and a great deal of healthy comparison has resulted, as well as the first signs of a much-needed engagement with the ageing theoretical terms of this discourse.<sup>1</sup> Rewardingly for historians of the Iberian Peninsula, their scholarly territory has not been left out of these developments.<sup>2</sup> All the same, blind spots seem to have developed. A particularly ironic one is that the Anglophone critique of the idea of Reconquista, with all its nationalist colouring, has become so entrenched that we have not necessarily noticed that most scholars working in Iberian-peninsula languages have either abandoned the term or reworked

<sup>\*</sup> I must thank the editors of *Networks and Neighbours* for encouraging the submission of this article and Professor Naomi Standen and Rebecca Darley for extremely helpful comments, as well as Amy Brown for access to various resources at a critical stage. The comments of the anonymous reviewers of the article challenged me to broaden it both conceptually and in citation, and much of what is now good about the below is down to their stimulus. The article's shortcomings, however, remain only my own. Much of the material cited is available online: to prevent footnotes overwhelming the text, however, dois and URLs have been provided only in the bibliography and the latter only where open-access.

<sup>1</sup> R. Bartlett & A. Mackay (eds), *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford, 1989); D. Power & N. Standen (eds), *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian borderlands, 700–1700* (London, 1999); D. Abulafia & N. Berend (eds), *Medieval Frontiers: concepts and practices* (Aldershot, 2002); F. Curta (ed.), *Borders, barriers, and ethnogenesis: frontiers in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, *Studies in the Middle Ages* 12 (Turnhout, 2005); see also N. Berend, 'Medievalists and the notion of the frontier', *Medieval History Journal* 2 (1999), pp. 55–72. In the terms of these writers, I deal here with frontier zones, rather than linear frontiers. On their characterisation in this area see the following note.

<sup>2</sup> E. g. E. Manzano Moreno, 'The Christian-Muslim Frontier in al-Andalus: idea and reality', in D.A. Agius & R. Hitchcock (eds) *The Arab Influence in Medieval Europe* (Reading, IL, 1994), pp. 83–96; A. Christys, 'Christian-Muslim Frontiers in Early Medieval Spain', *Bulletin of International Medieval Research* 5 (1999), pp. 1–19; Manzano, 'The Creation of a Medieval Frontier: Islam and Christianity in the Iberian Peninsula, eighth to twelfth centuries' in Power & Standen, *Frontiers in Question*, pp. 32–52; P. Linehan, 'At The Spanish Frontier', in P. Linehan & J.L. Nelson (eds), *The Medieval World* (London, 2001), pp. 37–59.

it as the more contemporary ‘restauración’ (although this is subject to many of the same problems).<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, few if any such scholars see any problems with the vocabulary of feudalism as tools for their work, despite the reluctance most Anglophone scholars now have to use that language.<sup>4</sup>

Another area where sight is at best partial is that of the control and organisation of the populations of the frontier zones between Christian and Muslim polities before the Castilian, Aragonese and Portuguese advances into the Muslim South had become irreversible, and how such structures were incorporated into the expanding and centralising polities beyond whose periphery they were located. Many views have been expressed on this, but this article will contend that we can think more deeply into the processes involved in this incorporation by considering them as choices, made by persons possessed of agency, rather than as structural integrations, and that in understanding those choices Bourdieu’s theories of capital offer new insights even now.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The canonical Anglophone reference is R. Fletcher, ‘Reconquest and Crusade in Spain c. 1050–1150’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th Series 37 (1987), pp. 31–47, repr. in T. Madden (ed.), *The Crusades: the essential readings* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 51–68; P. Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain* (Oxford, 1993) gives more context and detail. Compare now M. Ríos Saloma, ‘La « Reconquista » : una aspiración peninsular? Estudio comparativo entre dos tradiciones historiográficas’ in *Le Moyen Âge vu d’ailleurs*, Bulletin du Centre d’Études Médiévales, Hors-série 2 (Auxerre, 2008), doi: 10.4000/cem.9702, which takes instances even of defensive warfare by Christians as unambiguous evidence for political will to restore Christian rule to the Peninsula.

<sup>4</sup> E. g. J.M. Salrach, ‘Entre l’estat antic i feudal. Mutacions socials i dinàmica polític-militar a l’occident carolingi i als comtats catalans’, in F. Udina i Martorell (ed.), *Symposium Internacional sobre els Orígens de Catalunya (segles VIII–XI)*, 2 vols (Barcelona, 1991–92), also published as *Memorias de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 23 & 24 (Barcelona, 1991, 1992), I, pp. 191–251; I. Álvarez Borge, *Monarquía feudal y organización territorial: Alfoces y merindades en Castilla (siglos X–XIV)*, Monografías 3 (Madrid, 1993); J. Escalona Monge, ‘De “señores y campesinos” a “poderes feudales y comunidades”. Elementos para definir la articulación entre territorio y clases sociales en la alta Edad Media castellana’, in I. Álvarez Borge (ed.), *Comunidades locales y poderes feudales en la Edad Media*, Biblioteca de Investigación 27 ([Logroño] 2001), pp. 117–55; J. M. Mínguez, ‘Pervivencia y transformaciones de la concepción y práctica del poder en el Reino de León (siglos X y XI)’, *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 25 (2007), pp. 15–65. Cf. E.A.R. Brown, ‘The Tyranny of a Construct: feudalism and the historians of medieval Europe’, *American Historical Review* 79 (1974), pp. 1063–88, repr. in L.K. Little & B.H. Rosenwein (eds), *Debating the Middle Ages: issues and readings* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 148–69; S. Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: the medieval evidence reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994). Saving throws attempted by C. Wickham, ‘Le forme del feudalesimo’ and J.A. García de Cortázar, ‘Estructuras sociales y relaciones de poder en León y Castilla en los siglos VIII a XII: la formación de una sociedad feudal’, both in *Il Feudalesimo nell’alto medioevo*, Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull’Alto Medioevo 47 (Spoleto, 2000), pp. 15–46 and pp. 497–563 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> The present writer’s field of expertise is Catalonia, and most of the examples in what follows will be drawn from there (although parallel discussion from the Castilian historiography will be noted in footnotes where I am aware of it). There are problems in drawing comparisons between Catalonia and its westerly contemporaries that go beyond the linguistic division of the two historiographies, but they can be overstated, as discussed at pp. 28–31 below.

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No man's land no longer

For some time, during the 1960s and 1970s it was more or less accepted that there were no such populations, and that the claims of sources, written for kings and monks, that those kings' and monks' predecessors had laid claim to these territories, having either found or made them empty, were to be taken at face value.<sup>6</sup> If any people remained they were, in the terms of the sources, nefarious pagans or questionably Christian (*nefandi pagani et Christiani perversi*), fit only to be expelled and expropriated.<sup>7</sup> Such claims were accepted not just out of positivism, but because it made a story of state-formation easier to tell: government was rolled out, infidel opposition endured then defeated, and law and order brought to the wild frontier. If these terms seem to describe the American West more than the Douro/Duero and Ebro valleys, that is no coincidence: the work of Frederick Jackson Turner, arguing that the United States of America was effectively created on its (open) frontier, loomed large in this scholarship. It served such purposes well, because emphasising the Iberian frontier as an open one in his terms allowed the classification of Spanish Islam as an 'other' whose claims to both territory and civilised status could thus be ignored, and because these writers desired, like Turner, to root the unique characteristics they saw in their nation in its creation and unification by this process.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> C. Sanchez-Albornoz, *Despoblación y repoblación del valle del Duero* (Buenos Aires, 1966). Such sources would include, for that work, the Asturian Chronicles, of which there are four modern editions without a shared idea of how to divide up the texts. That most often cited is J. Gil Fernández (ed.), J.-L. Moralejo (trans.) & J.I. Ruiz de la Peña, *Crónicas Asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y «A Sebastián»)*, *Crónica Albeldense y «Profética»* (Oviedo, 1985), but I find the division and commentary in *Chroniques asturiennes (fin IX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, ed. & trans. Y. Bonnaz (Paris, 1987) more useful and cite it hereafter.

<sup>7</sup> *Cartulario de «Sant Cugat» del Vallés*, vol. 2, ed. J. Rius Serra (Barcelona, 1946), doc. no. 449: '*nefandi pagani et christiani perversi*'. On such rhetoric in the sources see J. Jarrett, 'Centurions, Alcalas, and *Christiani perversi*: Organisation of Society in the pre-Catalan "Terra de Ningu"', in †A. Deyermond & M. Ryan (eds), *Early Medieval Spain: a symposium*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar 63 (London, 2010), pp. 97–128.

<sup>8</sup> Referring to F. J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York City, NY, 1920); see D. Power, 'Introduction A: frontiers, terms, conceptions, and the historians of medieval and early modern Europe', in Power & Standen, *Frontiers in Question*, pp. 1–13, and Fletcher, 'Reconquest and Crusade'.

Since the 1980s, however, information from archaeology and place-names has combined with the tendencies of historians more interested in marginal populations to focus more attention on the people who lived in these zones.<sup>9</sup> The result has been a new emphasis that their settlements were often more or less ancient and probably continuous since then, and that even as settlers did move into such areas, they did so among and between existing divisions of land, churches and territories which were not being created so much as reactivated or refurbished.<sup>10</sup> This has given the narratives of state formation (which do, after all, have the formation of historical states to explain) a certain amount of trouble.

In Catalonia, this has been partly met by moving the agency of development down the social scale. Where Ramon d'Abadal i de Vinyals saw an Albornocian repopulation of frontier waste zones by comital initiative, Pierre Bonnassie saw slow waves of peasant migration from the over-populated Pyrenees pushing Christian jurisdiction slowly outwards, and in this he has been followed by most subsequent work. (This also allows a focus on the Catalan people as agents, rather than the comital family who would lead the future Generalitat into union with Aragón, eventually Castile and thus modern Spain, and this presumably has its own part to play in the model's continuing popularity among scholars who continue to be concerned about the federal state's pressure on their language and culture.<sup>11</sup>)

<sup>9</sup> Especially Manzano, 'Christian-Muslim Frontier' and *idem*, 'Creation of a Medieval Frontier'; see also Jarrett, 'Centurions, Alcalas and *Christiani perversi*'.

<sup>10</sup> E. Peña Bocos, 'Las presuras y la repoblación del Valle del Duero: algunas cuestiones en torno a la atribución y organización social del espacio castellano en el siglo X', in J.L. Hernández Garrido (ed.), *Repoblación y Reconquista: Actas del III Curso de Cultura Medieval. Seminario, Centro de Estudios del Románico, Aguilar de Campoo, septiembre de 1991* (Aguilar de Campoo, 1993), pp. 249–59; J.J. Larrea & R. Viader, 'Aprisions et presuras au début du IXe siècle : pour une étude des formes d'appropriation du territoire dans la Tarraconaise du haut moyen âge' in P. Sénac (ed.), *De la Tarraconaise à la Marche Supérieure d'al-Andalus (IVe–XIe) siècle: les habitats ruraux. Desde la Tarraconense hasta la Marca Superior d'al-Andalus (siglos IV–XI): los asentamientos rurales, Méridiennes : Études Médiévales Ibériques ACT1* (Toulouse, 2006), pp. 167–209; J. Jarrett, 'Settling the kings' lands: *aprisio* in Catalonia in perspective', *Early Medieval Europe* 18 (2010), pp. 320–42.

<sup>11</sup> R. d'Abadal i de Vinyals, *Els primers comtes catalans*, Biografies catalans: sèrie històrica 1 (Barcelona, 1958), pp. 73–114; P. Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle: croissance et mutations d'une société*, Publications de l'Université de Toulouse-le-Mirail, Série A, 23 & 29, 2 vols (Toulouse, 1975–76), I, pp. 99–118; J.M. Salrach, *El procés de feudalització (segles III–XII)*, Història de Catalunya 2 (Barcelona, 1987), pp. 183–223; P.H. Freedman, *The Origins of Peasant Servitude in Catalonia* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 56–72. Peasant settlement is not missing from Abadal's work entirely, and J. Iglésies, *La reconquesta a les valls de Anoia i el Gaià*, Episodis de la història 67 (Barcelona, 1963), pp. 51–64, gives an illuminating depiction of it. Cf. G. Feliu i Montfort, 'La pagesia catalana abans de la feudalització', *Anuario*

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While this writer is much less well positioned to generalise about the Castilian historiography, the trends that seem safe to remark upon (not least because they have been noted by scholars who participate in it) are more complex, and derive primarily from the impact of the work of Abilio Barbero and Marceló Vigil.<sup>12</sup> By raising against Sánchez-Albornoz's argument for a peculiarly Spanish hybrid feudalism composed of Visigothic, Muslim and Carolingian elements one home-grown from a deep continuity from the pre-Roman and even pre-Iberian eras, they also, as José María Mínguez has remarked, made the populations into which the nascent polities of Asturias, León and eventually Castile expanded more or less irrelevant to the futures of their societies.<sup>13</sup> Since the social structures that Barbero and Vigil saw as having developed in the more-or-less unconquered north became more or less standard throughout Castile, wholesale export of a model was the obvious answer. It has been easier for many scholars to assume that this was the result of aristocratic, and specifically comital or royal, imposition by *force majeure*<sup>14</sup> than to explain the lack of variation that one would expect from a situation where local communities retained any decisive role in their integration into a larger polity.<sup>15</sup>

*de Estudios Medievales* 26 (1994), pp. 19–41, repr. in Feliu, *La llarga nit feudal: mil anys de pugna entre senyors i pagesos* (Valencia, 2010), pp. 93–109, which returns the lords to the dominant position.

<sup>12</sup> A. Barbero & M. Vigil, *Sobre los orígenes sociales de la Reconquista*, Ariel quinquenal 91 (Barcelona, 1974); *idem*, *La formación del feudalismo en la Península Ibérica*, 2nd edn (Barcelona, 1979). See now J.M. Mínguez, 'La despoblación del Duero: un tema a debate', in S. Claramunt & A. Riera (eds), *Homenatge al Dr. Manuel Riu i Riu*, Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia 20-21 & 22, 2 vols (Barcelona 2000–01), II, pp. 67–80.

<sup>13</sup> J.M. Mínguez, 'Continuidad y ruptura en los orígenes de la sociedad asturleonera. De la *villa* a la comunidad campesina', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 16 (1998), pp. 89–127 at p. 92. The work of Sánchez-Albornoz reacted to by Barbero and Vigil is principally his *En torno a los orígenes del feudalismo*, 2 vols (Mendoza, 1942), 2nd edn. 3 vols (Buenos Aires, 1974–79).

<sup>14</sup> C. Estepa Díez, 'El alfoz castellano en los siglos IX al XII', in M.A. Ladero Quesada (ed.) *Estudios dedicados al profesor D. Angel Ferrari Nuñez*, España en la Edad Media 4, 2 vols (Madrid, 1984), I, pp. 305–41 at pp. 336–39; Álvarez, *Monarquía feudal, passim*; J. Escalona Monge, 'Comunidades, territorios y poder condal en la Castilla del Duero en el siglo X', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 18–19 (2000–01), pp. 85–120, though note his differences from Álvarez at pp. 104–05.

<sup>15</sup> The location of cultural production in the north, rather than in the borderlands beloved of modern anthropology, has also tended to make the frontier zones irrelevant to this scholarship, despite the fact that these are the places where alternative structures and models should have been most available. G. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands; the new mestiza. La frontera* (San Francisco, 1987) is the classic anthropological starting point, although hardly itself classical anthropology. Recent work in Spain has begun to reverse

Perhaps as a result, many scholars in the Castilian milieu have found the most productive approach to be one focused almost to exclusion on the geographical organisation of settlements and how that changed, which certainly gives a framework within which genuine change can be detected, but often entirely leaves out questions of how the occupants of such settlements may have understood, experienced or even contested such change, presumably because such questions (unlike the deep-reaching continuity crucial to the Barbero and Vigil thesis) left no detectable mark on the final outcome and thus were not historically significant.<sup>16</sup> In recent years, however, such variation has begun to be detected and very recently indeed, a model of negotiated interaction in which the ‘local elites’ of such communities (and not necessarily frontier communities) chose to interact with the wider structures of power has begun to appear in the scholarship.<sup>17</sup>

The wisdom of this is clear. Short of direct and continuous coercion, impractical on any scale in the early Middle Ages, to keep such groups and people responding with revenue, labour or time to one lord rather than another, especially in areas where alternative lords were easily available in the Muslim south, must have meant obtaining and keeping their cooperation. The historical cooperation and engagement

this trend, e.g. I. Martín Viso, ‘Una frontera casi invisible: los territorios al norte del Sistema Central en la Alta Edad Media (siglos VIII–XI)’, *Studia Historica: Historia Medieval* 23 (2005), pp. 89–114; J. Escalona & F. Reyes, ‘Scale Change on the Border: the county of Castile in the tenth century’ in J. Escalona & A. Reynolds (eds), *Scale and Scale Change in the Early Middle Ages: exploring landscape, local society, and the world beyond*, The Medieval Countryside 6 (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 153–83; Á. Carvajal Castro, ‘Superar la Frontera: mecanismos de integración territorial entre el Cea y el Pisuerga en el siglo X’, *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 42 (2012), pp. 601–28, doi: 10.3989/aem.2012.42.2.08.

<sup>16</sup> Here perhaps most of all Álvarez, *Monarquía feudal*, but see also Estepa, ‘Alfoz castellano’. Both those scholars drew on the work of José Angel García de Cortázar y Ruiz de Aguirre, who theorises such approaches in his ‘Organización social del espacio: propuestas de reflexión y análisis histórico de sus unidades en la España medieval’, *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 6 (1988), pp. 195–236. S. Castellanos & I. Martín Viso, ‘The local articulation of central power in the north of the Iberian Peninsula (500–1000)’, *Early Medieval Europe* 13 (2005), pp. 1–42, stress the need for consideration of human factors in such work at p. 2 but nonetheless study only settlement organisation thereafter, and that only for Castile westwards. I. Martín Viso, ‘Poblamiento y sociedad en la transición al feudalismo en Castilla: castros y aldeas en la Lora Burgalesa’, *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 13 (1995), pp. 3–45, represents a similar approach retaining focus on the area of ‘repopulation’ and its inhabitants; J. Bolòs, ‘La formación del hábitat medieval en Cataluña: Aldeas, espacios aldeanos y vías de comunicación’, *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 31 (2013), pp. 151–80, is a similar example from the Catalan perspective.

<sup>17</sup> Martín, ‘Frontera’, and Carvahal, ‘Superar la frontera’, the latter citing at p. 605 M. Innes, *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: the middle Rhine valley 400–1000*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought 4th Series 47 (Cambridge, 2000), an extremely useful work for developing such models.

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of such ‘local elites’ is therefore key to our explanation of the expansion of centralised rule southwards. Given this, little has been worked out about who these élites actually were and what induced them to participate in these greater projects.<sup>18</sup> The exchange between protection and self-government, between trade and freedom from toll, and between connection and autonomy, should not be assumed to be axiomatically weighted towards centralisation: it needs explaining, and this has only just begun to be done.<sup>19</sup>

This article, working specifically from the prolific evidence from Catalonia but with nods further west, explains how this may have been done by developing a model of ‘combination capital’. Its essential contention is that neither the economic capital of political and material gain nor the social capital of association with the looming symbolic mass of royal and religious lordship were sufficient enticements for such élites by themselves.<sup>20</sup> Rather, we see rulers and would-be lords persistently attempting, and so presumably needing, to combine the two.

<sup>18</sup> For example, in Escalona & Reynolds, *Scale and Scale Change*, six of the twelve authors (A. Vigil-Escalera Guirado & J. A. Quirós Castillo, ‘Early Medieval Rural Societies in North-Western Spain: archaeological reflections of fragmentation and convergence’, pp. 33–60; M. Fernández Mier, ‘Changing Scales of Local Power in the Early Medieval Iberian North-West’, pp. 87–120; Escalona & Reyes, ‘Scale Change on the Border.’; I. Martín Viso, ‘Circuits of Power in a Fragmented Space: gold coinage in the Meseta del Duero (sixth–seventh centuries)’, pp. 215–52) invoke the concept of local elites, and while two of them place the phrase in inverted commas (Vigil-Escalera & Quirós, p. 42), none of them provide a cite or a definition. Martín, ‘Frontera’, reports at p. 98 that Castellano & Martín, ‘Local articulation’, reckon these groups as those in control of a community’s labour, but at p. 102 instead prefers a different formulation to his own of two years before, ‘Las elites locales parecen haberse definido en primer lugar como dirigentes militares de las comunidades, con una actividad orientada a la rapiña y a la consecución de un botín, pero también a la defensa frente ataques externos.’ There is more detail in Martín, ‘Poblamiento’, p. 34, but it is far from clear that all authors using this term share even Martín’s shifting understanding of it. Escalona, ‘De “señores y campesinos”’, goes some way towards problematising the model; W. Davies, ‘Lordship and Community: Northern Spain on the Eve of the Year 1000’, *Past and Present* Supplement 2 (2007), pp. 18–33 offers a very useful summary of how such groups might work at pp. 30–32 without invoking ‘local elites’ at all.

<sup>19</sup> This writer’s choice for guidance here is again Innes, *State and Society*.

<sup>20</sup> Here, obviously, I deploy the language of Pierre Bourdieu, most immediately his ‘Ökonomisches Kapital, kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital’, in R. Kreckel (ed.), *Soziale Ungleichheiten*, Soziale Welt, Sonderheft 2 (Göttingen, 1983), pp. 183–98, trans. R. Nice as ‘The forms of capital’, in J. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York City, NY, 1986), pp. 241–58, cited here from the version online at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm>, last modified 12 September 2009 as of 22 April 2014.



## Intellectual Models

Before invoking outside theorists, however, it is worth attempting to form some models of our own. While it is not yet agreed what induced such élites to throw their lots in with outside powers, it is easy to think of possibilities, many of which have indeed been suggested. Oppositions can be set up: one would be between a view of such communities being brought into kingdoms more or less by threat of force and one in which the encroaching authority had some cachet of legitimacy, even in the view of those outside it, that allowed it a particular sphere of action. Another would lie between a view of communities as negatively incentivised, by military threat or insecurity, to seek protection from outside and one in which positive incentives such as trade revenue or personal advancement were the crucial elements.<sup>21</sup> Obviously all these are components of which most interpretative structures use more than one, but each has concomitants that are worth considering, because they expose their inherent problems, and thus raise questions about a fifth model that incorporates aspects of them all. Perhaps the most common in the current historiography, this other model involves outside powers persuading or buying their way into dominant positions within such communities, from which they were able to bring about a more generalised subjection to seigneurial lordship.<sup>22</sup>

## Destruction-testing our models

The model of conquest is the easiest to find in narrative sources, focused as they tend to be on the actions of those at the top level of society.<sup>23</sup> If a king moved into an area and built and garrisoned fortresses, the locals' power to resist was limited. There are many recorded cases of such occupations, often framed as reoccupations: witness the

<sup>21</sup> Suppression by force: Barbero & Vigil, *Formación del feudalismo*, pp. 354–94; legitimacy, see pp. 9–12 below; military insecurity, Iglésies, *Reconquesta*; pp. 57–9 or Escalona, 'Comunidades, territorios y poder condal', pp. 92–4; positive incentives, A. Christys, 'Crossing the Frontier of Ninth-Century Hispania' in Abulafia & Berend, *Medieval Frontiers*, pp. 35–53. See further Manzano, 'Creation of a Frontier'.

<sup>22</sup> Most clearly in I. Álvarez Borge, 'El proceso de transformación de las comunidades de aldea: una aproximación al estudio de la formación del feudalismo en Castilla (siglos X y XI)', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 5 (1987), pp. 145–60; nuances in Escalona, 'Comunidades, territorios y poder condal', pp. 108–18 and Escalona, 'De "señores y campesinos"', pp. 140–154; Mínguez, 'Pervivencia y transformaciones', pp. 50–51, makes the same case for kings.

<sup>23</sup> P. Martínez Sopeno, 'Herederos, conquistadores y colonos: sobre el imaginario de las fuentes castellano-leonesas de los siglos IX–XII', *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas* 14 (2006), pp. 79–110.

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claims in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* for the reign of King Alfonso I or the various frontier castles built by followers of the counts of Barcelona in the mid-tenth century.<sup>24</sup> All the same, each such garrison would be a drain on the ruler's resources, and it is presumably no coincidence that we see the Barcelona counts' endeavours principally through the window of documents in which responsibility for such garrisons was farmed out to others.<sup>25</sup> As long as force was required to retain the obedience of such populations, the investment required would grow unsustainably. With the first step onto retaining obedience by other means, however, this model's usefulness is exhausted; it does not tell us how peaceful cooperation might be achieved. Conquest was presumably never the end of such stories.

#### Legitimising intervention

The model of legitimacy, as it may be characterised, is less simple to appreciate. It may be best to exemplify it from a recent intervention:

'The southern local communities were seemingly subjected by methods not too different from their northern counterparts [*sic*]: a general notion of collective political subjection enabled leading aristocrats to exercise a sort of subsidiary authority on community resources, as well as to obtain specific pieces of property...'<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Bonnaz, *Chroniques*, 'Chronique d'Alphonse III', 8.1, but see for interpretation J. Escalona, 'Family Memories: inventing Alfonso I of Asturias' in M.I. Alfonso Antón, H. Kennedy & J. Escalona Monge (eds), *Building Legitimacy: political discourses and forms of legitimacy in medieval societies*, The Medieval Mediterranean 53 (Leiden, 2004), pp. 223–62; the Catalan case in Iglésies, *Reconquesta*, pp. 3–19, J. Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled in Frontier Catalonia, 880–1010: pathways of power* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 117–21 or 144–54.

<sup>25</sup> M. Zimmermann, 'La rôle de la frontière dans la formation de Catalogne (IX–XIIème siècle)', in J.A. Fernández Otal, E. Mainé Burguete & M.L. Rodrigo Estevan (eds), *Las Sociedades de Frontera en la España Medieval. Aragón en la Edad Media: sesiones de trabajo, II seminario de historia medieval* (Zaragoza 1993), pp. 7–29 at pp. 13–20; an example in 'Diplomatari del monestir de Sant Sadurn de Tavèrnoles (segles IX–XIII)', ed. C. Baraut in *Urgellia* 12 (1995), pp. 7–414, doc. no. 23.

<sup>26</sup> Escalona & Reyes, 'Scale Change on the Border', p. 171. There are more developed versions of this formulation in Martín, 'Poblamiento' (esp. p. 34) and Escalona, 'Comunidades, territorios y poder condal', but neither escape the issue outlined here. Á. Carvajal Castro, 'Sociedad y territorio en el norte de León: Valdoré, los Flaínez y en entorno del Alto Esla (siglos IX–XI)', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 31 (2013), pp. 105–31, represents an exception.

This makes the elephant in this theory's room more obvious: whence came such a 'general notion of collective political subjection'? What is required for this model, in fact, is a framework shared between 'local communities' and 'leading aristocrats' in which both recognised that the other had a role and that these roles were correctly arranged in a hierarchy.

It is rarely clear that such frameworks existed. One frequently imagined to have done such work is the echo of the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo evoked periodically by the kings of León and Castile, but such efforts were genuinely episodic and ring far stronger in some texts than in others.<sup>27</sup> In any case, why would a frontier headman, perhaps already rejoicing in a title like *princeps*, *vicarius* or even *amir*, recognise Toledan authority in the kings of Asturias just because they claimed it? By what reasoning would the recipients of such projection accept that new kingships based in the Atlantic north, where some would say the Visigoths never really ruled, had anything to do with Toledo or, more relevantly, to the territories into which they now moved? Certainly this was an exercise in Foucauldian governmentality that we can occasionally show medieval rulers attempting, as with comital claims to jurisdiction over adultery in León or over a wasteland in Catalonia, both sometimes citing Visigothic legal precedent.<sup>28</sup> In both those cases, however, we see such justifications for intervention in the context of established comital courts: such (sharp) practices do not tell us how the legitimacy of those courts had become accepted. Here the teleology of the future state may weigh too heavily on the discussion.

<sup>27</sup> A. Isla Frez, 'Identidades y goticismo en época de Alfonso III: las propuestas de la Albeldense', *Territorio, sociedad y poder* 6 (2011), pp. 11–21.

<sup>28</sup> Adultery: G. Barrett, 'Literacy, Law and Libido in Early Medieval Spain', paper presented at the International Congress of Medieval Studies, University of West Michigan, Kalamazoo, WM, 15 May 2010; this paper remains unpublished at the time of writing. Waste land: Jarrett, 'Settling the Kings' Lands'. Governmentality: M. Foucault, 'Governmentality', trans. R. Braidotti & rev. C. Gordon, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (eds) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, IL, 1991), pp. 87–104.

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The weight of the future state has, however, been less important for several scholars than that of the past, and a deeper past than the Visigothic or even Roman one. That portion of the Castilian scholarship most concerned with settlement organisation has focused on the long survival of pre-Roman hillforts as articulating points of territories after the Visigothic collapse and brief Muslim dominance.<sup>29</sup> There are marked differences between regions and between scholars as to whether such centres retained any organising role into the ninth or tenth centuries, and if not for how long that had lapsed, and in relatively few cases has the archaeology been done that would tell us if the sites were even occupied, however.<sup>30</sup> This is of course important, even if they remained evident as territorial descriptors in charters, showing the enduring importance of these centres for people's sense of where they lived and what distinguished it. Such sites are not unknown in Catalonia, but at the best-excavated and most closely-studied of them, l'Esquerda in the modern town of Roda de Ter, such invocations as a territorial focus did not at all mean that the site was still defensible, occupied, or any kind of jurisdictional centre (except in that a church was located within it).<sup>31</sup> It seems indisputable that some hillforts or *castra* in Castile, at least, had owners, since in the case of Castrillo de Butrón in Lora someone could dispose of it entirely to the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, but as Iñaki Martín Viso points out in his discussion of this case, this does not prove that the site was in fact in use as a settlement or defence, still less that this owner held any attached jurisdiction over the associated *villa*.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Martín, 'Poblamiento'; M.C. Pallares & E. Portela, 'De la *villa* del siglo IX a la aldea del siglo XIII. Espacio agrario y feudalización en Galicia', *Asturiensia medievalia* 8 (1995–96), pp. 47–69; Mínguez, 'Continuidad'; Mínguez, 'La nueva ordenación del poblamiento en la cuenca septentrional del Duero en los inicios de la Edad Media', in *Homenaje a la profesora Carmen Orcástegui Gros*, Aragón en la Edad Media 14–15, 2 vols (Zaragoza, 1999), II, pp. 1027–46; Castellano & Martín, 'Local articulation'; Vigil-Escalera & Quirós, 'Early Medieval Rural Societies'; Fernández, 'Changing Scales of Local Power'; many more could be named.

<sup>30</sup> An intriguing exception is I. Muñiz López & A. García Álvarez-Busto, 'El castillo de Gauzón (Castrillón, Asturias), Campañas de 2007–2009: El proceso de Feudalización entre la Antigüedad Tardía y la Edad Media a través de una fortaleza', *Territorio, sociedad y poder* 5 (2010), pp. 81–121, where remains of the period of Alfonso III have been found. This site is a long way from the supposed frontier, however.

<sup>31</sup> Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 87–99, and refs there.

<sup>32</sup> Martín, 'Poblamiento', p. 23; citing *Becerro Gótico de Cardeña*, ed. L. Serrano (Silos, 1910), doc. no. 270 (3 September 945); compare the Castell d'Orsal in Catalonia, discussed in Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 82–86.

It is hard, therefore, to point to such sites, whose visually dominant positions would have made them useful landmarks whether they were in use or not, as signs of surviving social hierarchy that might preserve a memory of duty to outside rulers with titles like *comes* or *rex*. In any case, as said above, such a ruler would still need to convince the incumbents of such places that his claim as count or king related specifically to this place. A more convincing case might be made for churches, which plainly could articulate community in the absence of a wider jurisdiction for some time but over which more convincing arguments of jurisdiction could be made, due to the institutional role of bishops. The case of Tona, given in detail below, shows how this might play out, but also shows that this need not immediately encapsulate a place into a diocesan structure, and another Catalan example helps remind us how easily such necessities might be forgotten. Santa Margarida de Martorell, in the western zones of the county of Barcelona, is first documented in the twelfth century, but, when dug, was found to have an archaeological sequence going back to the fifth or sixth, in none of which time we have any record of it. During those six centuries the church had been continuously modified, with one campaign of works being datable to the mid-eleventh century and some before.<sup>33</sup> At no point in this time have we any record that a bishop came near the place. This is of course an argument from silence, but it is one that tends to suggest that the bishops of Barcelona did not make the kind of efforts here that they did with other such frontier churches and that, unlike those, Santa Margarida remained beyond the frontier despite the expanding ecclesiastical interests not far away.<sup>34</sup>

Christianity might of course be thought to be one source of legitimacy that outside rulers should automatically have had when the alternative was Muslim rule, but it is not clear that that always was the alternative, as opposed to continuing autonomy as

<sup>33</sup> A. Mauri & M. Soler, 'Les conques baixes del Llobregat i l'Anoia a la fi del 1r mil·lenni' in I. Ollich i Castanyer (ed.), *Actes del Congrés Internacional Gerbert d'Orlhac i el seu Temps: Catalunya i Europa a la fi del 1r mil·lenni, Vic-Ripoll, 10-13 de novembre de 1999* (Vic, 1999), pp. 209-24, with English abstract p. 225, at p. 211; R. Navarro & A. Mauri, 'Les excavacions arqueològiques al jaciment de Sta. Margarida de Martorell', *Quatre Ratlles* 1 (1986), pp. 13-33 at pp. 14-16.

<sup>34</sup> For Barcelona's management of its property in the period see G. Feliu, 'El bisbe Vives de Barcelona i el patrimoni de la catedral (974-995)', in *Miscel·lània d'Homenatge a Miquel Coll i Alentorn en el seu vuitantè aniversari* (Barcelona, 1984), pp. 167-91 & *idem*, 'El patrimoni de la Seu de Barcelona durant el pontificat del bisbe Aeci (995-1010)', in *Miscel·lània Ramon d'Abadal: estudis d'història oferts a Ramon d'Abadal i de Vinyals en el centenari del seu naixement*, *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 30 (Barcelona, 1994), pp. 51-68.

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at Martorell. It is clear, also, that many Christians could live quite happily under Islam, to the extent of finding ways to place blame for the problems of so doing on their own community leaders rather than challenge that *status quo*.<sup>35</sup> In general, while such theories help us understand what rulers did to bring new populations under their control, they do not explain why those populations found such efforts convincing and why the terms in which those efforts were framed had resonance outside their originating frameworks.

#### Incentives negative and positive

The theory of insecurity, which could be linked to that of conquest by the modern ambiguities of the word ‘protection’ as followed, for instance, by ‘racket’, finds much readier support in the sources. Armies did frequently move through frontier zones, border raiding is hard to find in sources but shows up enough that we may safely imagine it as a factor in people’s lives, and arrangements for defence are frequently obvious in the landscape even today.<sup>36</sup> The obvious concomitant here is the same as the problem, however: because frontiers are two-sided, there is involved in this thinking either an assumption that the powers of the Christian north were somehow the proper ones to whom to appeal, that is to say, an underlying example of the argument from legitimacy just critiqued, or an assessment, by contemporaries and by historians, that those powers were or became genuinely able to provide more effective protection than their Muslim rivals to the south. Against the former one can cite the famous example of the villagers of Agualiu, in modern Ribagorza, who,

<sup>35</sup> On frontier religion see Linehan, ‘Spanish Frontier’, pp. 42–4 or Jarrett, ‘Centurions, Alcalas and *Christiani perversi*’, pp. 111–14. In *Samsonis apologeticum contra perfidos*, ed. Joan Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Mozarabicorum*, Manuales y Anejos de «Emerita» 28, 2 vols (Madrid, 1969–73), II, pp. 505–658, II. Pr 5, we see a cleric blaming his bishop for the subjection of the Christians of Córdoba to the *jizya*, rather than the Muslim rulers for whom, it transpires, he was working (II. Pr. 9). More generally, see A. Christys, *Christians in al-Andalus (711–1000)* (Richmond, VA, 2002).

<sup>36</sup> E. Lourie, ‘A Society Organized for War: Medieval Spain’, *Past and Present* 35 (1966), pp. 54–76, repr. in her *Crusade and Colonisation: Muslims, Christians and Jews in medieval Aragon*, Variorum Collected Studies 317 (Aldershot, 1990), I, and in J. France (ed.), *Medieval warfare: 1000–1300* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 339–62; J. Escalona Monge, ‘Las prestaciones de servicios militares en fortalezas y la organización de la sociedad feudal castellana: los infanzones de Espeja’, *Castillos de España* 94 (1987), pp. 55–60; A. Benet i Clarà, ‘Castells, guàrdies i torres de defensa’, in Udina, *Symposium internacional*, I, pp. 393–407; Escalona, ‘Comunidades, territorios y poder condal’, pp. 109–113.

despite the presence of Christian counts and their officials closer by in either Aragón or Pallars, in 987 sent miles further afield to Muslim Lleida for a Christian priest to judge a dispute whose record has come down to us.<sup>37</sup> Against the latter, one only need mention the Muslim lordly family of the Banū Qāsī as recorded in al-‘Udrī’s geography of al-Andalus, repeatedly in rebellion and as repeatedly returned to office, very clearly the only people who could effectively rule the upper march of the emirate for more than a century.<sup>38</sup> Their numerous sallies northwards either on their own behalf or Córdoba’s seem to have met little resistance.<sup>39</sup> In order for that to change, those lords had to lose their local support to rivals. This theory, however, cannot explain how that should happen as long as they remained effective, and it cannot explain how Christian ventures into the frontier could attract interest from those living there until al-Andalus lost its strength. Such expansion is clear even at the fiercest heights of the Caliphate, though, so this will not do.<sup>40</sup>

Lastly there is the model of positive incentives. There is little question that we can often understand pre-industrial power as an ability to control or manipulate the supply of prestige; this is the form in which Bourdieu’s theories of capital have most often been involved in the study of medieval power, especially among archaeologists for whom flows of goods may be the primary reconstruction permitted by their evidence.<sup>41</sup> It is also asinine to doubt the existence of shared frameworks of appreciation here: whether one appeals to the universal fascination of gold or the specific circumstantial value accorded to that which is scarce or hard to obtain, trade

<sup>37</sup> R. Collins, ‘Visigothic Law and Regional Diversity in Disputes in Early Medieval Spain’, in W. Davies & P. Fouracre (eds), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 85–104, at p. 96, incl. translation and text of the original document, repr. in R. Collins, *Law, Culture and Regionalism in Early Medieval Spain*, Variorum Collected Studies 356 (Aldershot, 1992), XVI.

<sup>38</sup> F. de la Granja (trans.), ‘La marca superior en la obra de al-‘Udrī’, *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona d’Aragón* 8, Publicaciones de la Secció de Zaragoza 10 (1967), pp. 447–545, at pp. 468–87; A. Cañada Juste, ‘Los Banu Qasi (714–924)’, *Príncipe de Viana* 41 (1980), pp. 5–95; E. Manzano Moreno, *La frontera de al-Andalus en la época Omeya*, Biblioteca de Historia 9 (Madrid, 1991), pp. 110–124. I have not been able to obtain Jesús Lorenzo Jiménez, *La Dawla de los Banu Qasi: origen, auge y caída de una dinastía muladí en la frontera superior de al-Andalus* (Madrid, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Muslim sources might be expected to say this, of course, but the *Chronicle of Albelda* shows similar estimations from a Christian writer: Bonnaz, *Chronique Asturiennes*, ‘Chronique d’Albelda’, 47.7.

<sup>40</sup> Iglésies, *Reconquesta*; Escalona & Reyes, ‘Scale Change on the Border’.

<sup>41</sup> Bourdieu, ‘Forms of Capital’; archaeological application of his theories in H. Hamerow, *Early Medieval Settlements: The Archaeology of Rural Communities in Northwest Europe, 400–900* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 50–51. Others could be cited.

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must have made desirable things available to populations otherwise unable to get them, and it is also easy to see that the larger political sphere of a kingdom would offer greater levels of prestige to the ambitious than a village with only grudging outside connections, even though it is harder to see why such ambitious persons would stay in the village.<sup>42</sup> The corollary is, however, that local élites wishing to profit from such incentives would have to retain a monopoly on them in order to maintain their position; if their fellows could access such goods or wider importance other than through them, their status would suffer, and yet how could they hope to block all the social, economic or geographic mobility of persons that such resources would enable, and why should a governmentalising state wish to cooperate?<sup>43</sup>

One can get a certain distance further by combining these different aspects, of course: a population under military threat might be highly susceptible to arguments of righteous legitimacy by a rival military leader, especially if he came offering wealth and advancement. This is, however, not to sharpen analysis but to blunt it, to abdicate judgement about which factors were most effective and why. Before succumbing to this it is worth seeing if the sources' testimony adheres more closely to any of these models or any particular combination thereof than to the others.

### Naming the élites

At the moment, to this writer at least, the most problematic aspect of work on this issue is the unconceptualised nature of the local élites. One assumes that

<sup>42</sup> On commodity exchange and social capital the classic treatment is A. Appadurai, 'Introduction: commodities and the politics of value', in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: commodities in cultural perspective* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 1–63. For social climbing out of local communities, see esp. Escalona, 'De "señores y campesinos"', p. 149 on the local ambitious: 'Pertenece a los escalones inferiores de la clase dominante del sistema feudal, pero se distinguen de la aristocracia magnática en que su destino y sus posibilidades de crecimiento están limitadas por la pertenencia a la comunidad. A menudo la única forma de elevarse será para ellos romper o minimizar sus lazos con su comunidad de origen.'

<sup>43</sup> These concepts derive less from Bourdieu than from central-place theory, which I access via C. Fabeck, 'Organising the Landscape: a matter of production, power, and religion', in T. Dickinson & D. Griffiths (eds), *The Making of Kingdoms: papers from the 47th Sachsensymposium, York, September 1996*, Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History 10 (Oxford, 1999), pp. 37–47. Cf. the use of systems theory in Escalona, 'De "señores y campesinos"', pp. 135–41, and see n. 79 below.



communities were under some kind of leadership even where official templates had not laid that down or adapted it, but very rarely has this assumption been tested in evidence, rather than supplied from anthropological theory, often dangerously outdated.<sup>44</sup> Exceptions to this include the chapter of Escalona and Reyes already cited, which not only names two such local notables, Kardellus the founder of San Andrés de Aja in Cantabria and Abbot Avitus of San Román de Tobillas, but compares their known property-holding and political range.<sup>45</sup> Monastic documentation, however, for all that it is often all we have, filters the visible community quite significantly. By using a category of documentation common in Catalonia and almost absent elsewhere, acts of church consecration, it is possible to get a slightly broader picture of a community's composition at the point where it first engaged with what we might call the 'inside world'.<sup>46</sup>

The best example here is one that has been studied elsewhere, Sant Andreu de Tona, south of the city of Vic, north-west of Barcelona.<sup>47</sup> Tona first comes to our notice when it still lay beyond the near edge of the effective frontier, in 889; at this point, its community, whose peculiar self-conception seems to have had a Romanising flavour, called on the newly-established Bishop Godmar of Osona to consecrate the church that they had built next to the probably-Roman watchtower that anchored their identity.<sup>48</sup> This is the last we hear of Tona for thirty-four years except a passing mention in the will of the next bishop, Jordi.<sup>49</sup> Only thereafter did the area

<sup>44</sup> E.g. Barbero & Vigil, *Formación del feudalismo*, pp. 27–53, a book of 1978 using J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: a study in magic and religion*, 2 vols (London, 1890), albeit in the 1922 one-volume abridgement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (6 vols, London, 1915–20), which omitted all Frazer's references to Christianity.

<sup>45</sup> Escalona & Reyes, 'Scale Change on the Border', pp. 164–68. Cf. other examples in I. Santos Salazar, 'Los privilegios de Berbeia y Barrio: elites, memoria y poder en Lantarón durante el siglo X', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 31 (2013), pp. 51–81 and Carvalho, 'Sociedad y territorio', esp. pp. 119–20.

<sup>46</sup> The Catalan church consecrations are edited in *Les Dotacions de les Esglésies de Catalunya (segles IX–XII)*, ed. R. Ordeig i Mata, *Estudis Històrics: Diplomataris 1–4* (Vic 1993–97), 2 vols in 4; for a guide to the procedure see Ordeig, 'La consagració i la dotació d'esglésies a Catalunya en les segles IX–XI' in Udina, *Symposium internacional*, II, pp. 85–101.

<sup>47</sup> A. Pladevall i Font, *Tona: mil cent anys d'història* (Tona, 1990); more briefly, Jarrett, 'Centurions, Alcalas and *Christiani perversi*', pp. 106–08.

<sup>48</sup> On the church see J.A. Adell i Gisbert, A. Pladevall i Font, A. Benet i Clarà, D. Arumí i Gómez, A. Cavallé i Crivillés & R. Espadaler i Parsarises, 'Sant Andreu de Tona' in J. Vigué (ed.), *Catalunya Romànica III: Osona II* (Barcelona, 1986), pp. 639–44; on the tower, M. Sarri i Vilageliu, Pladevall, Benet, Arumí, Cavallé & Espadaler, 'Castell de Tona', *ibid.* pp. 636–39.

<sup>49</sup> *Catalunya Carolíngia IV: els comtats d'Osona i Manresa*, ed. R. Ordeig i Mata, *Memòries de la Secció històrico-arqueològica* 53, 3 vols (Barcelona, 1999), doc. nos 75 & 78 non-respectively.

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begin to take part in the kind of activity that brought its members into the neighbouring city and villages to have records written. Without their need for the services made available by the reestablishment of the bishopric, only the archaeology of the hilltop would have revealed any earlier settlement.<sup>50</sup>

The consecration act, however, shows us Tona's community in developed action. Fifty-one people signed the act, nine of them, including one woman, autograph (according to the editor's judgement).<sup>51</sup> Of these, the scribe was a member of the cathedral chapter, whose hand is visible in other documents there, but the three other clergy were probably the ministers of the new church.<sup>52</sup> Two of them, Albarus and Recharedus, were also among the six people of the fifty-one specifically named as having decided, 'with contrite heart and the support of God', to build it.<sup>53</sup> These six, again including one woman, went on to make gifts for its endowment. The two priests mainly gave books and liturgical clothing but Albarus also paired up with his father, who boasted the significant name Centurius, to give the lion's share of the new church's landed property as well, five *modiatas* of cultivated land. The forty-six other locals, not initially named, gave only four *modiatas* in combination, and the other three main donors did not equal that even together.

This act thus shows us not just local élites in action but also the hierarchy that even a relatively minor community might contain. Àlvar, Recared, Centurí, Bera, El·la and Galieno, as they are named on the memorial that now stands on the hilltop, were presumably most of, if not all, of the 'local élites' of Tona, but Centurius' family was apparently more élite than the others. These were the people to whom, had there not

<sup>50</sup> A. Cavallé i Crivillers & R. Espadaler i Parsarises, 'Pla de les Lloses' in Vigué, *Catalunya Carolíngia III*, p. 645, suggests that late Roman remains might be expected in any further digging.

<sup>51</sup> Ordeig, *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. no. 9.

<sup>52</sup> On the role of such local priests in their community elsewhere in the peninsula see Álvarez Borge, 'Proceso de transformación', pp. 148–49 and soon W. Davies, 'Local priests and the writing of charters in northern Iberia in the tenth century', in J. Escalona & H. Sirantoine (eds), *Documentos y cartularios como instrumentos de poder. España y el occidente cristiano (ss. viii–xii)*, (Toulouse, forthcoming). I must thank Profesor Davies for providing me with a draft version of this paper.

<sup>53</sup> Ordeig, *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. no. 9: '*corde constricto et nutu divino*'.

been a new church and a nearby bishop (who may have come from Tona, since he also had land next to the church to give), outside interests would have had to appeal. While not everywhere can have been a Tona, it gives us, at least, a model with which to continue forward as we consider whether such appeals can be seen in our evidence.

### Conquest and clearance

Although, as said, the model of military takeover seems unlikely to provide answers to the kinds of questions this article raises, it is not infrequent in the sources. A franchise of Count-Marquis Borrell II of Barcelona to the city of Cardona in 987, for example, among its myriad other provisions by which the count hoped to fix settlers in the place, assures those settlers of their right to any land that they could take from anyone, either pagan or Christian.<sup>54</sup> Conquest is, however, almost never one of the ways in which land is said to have been acquired when passed on in charters from this area, the commonest categories of title being from kinsmen (*de parentorum*), from purchase (*de comparatione*), or from clearance (*de aprisione* or *de ruptura*). The last of these especially, it has been argued, might hide a multitude of previous abrogated tenures, as part of establishing a new *status quo* that all concerned could live with, but that this is possible does not of itself prove that those tenures had existed and been ended by violence.<sup>55</sup>

In fact, in the very few cases where the rhetoric of conquest is used to justify landed possessions, it is used of the past and it is aimed at Muslims. Their use as such obviously illegitimate holders of land against whom military action was appropriate is the kind of strategy beloved by historians of the Turnerian mould, but as recent work has shown, the reports of conquest were almost always false.<sup>56</sup> In one very obvious case, a hearing in 913 over the Vall de Sant Joan de les Abadesses, some way north of Vic, the defending abbess had her witnesses recorded as swearing to the fact

<sup>54</sup> *Diplomatari de la vila de Cardona, anys 966–1276: Arxiu Parroquial de Sant Miquel i Sant Vicenç de Cardona, Arxiu Abacial de Cardona, Arxiu Històric de Cardona, Arxius Patrimonials de les masies Garriga de Bergus, Pala de Coma i Pinell*, ed. A. Galera i Pedrosa, Col·lecció Diplomatariis 15 (Barcelona, 1998), doc. no. 7.

<sup>55</sup> See Jarrett, 'Settling the Kings' Lands'.

<sup>56</sup> J. Jarrett, 'Power over Past and Future: Abbess Emma and the nunnery of Sant Joan de les Abadesses', *Early Medieval Europe* 12 (2003), pp. 229–58, esp. pp. 235–48; Jarrett, 'Caliph, King, or Grandfather: Strategies of Legitimization on the Spanish March in the Reign of Lothar III', *The Mediaeval Journal* 1.2 (2011), pp. 1–22, at pp. 11–19.

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that her father, Count Guifré the Hairy, had driven the Saracens out of the valley and placed her in charge as *primus homo* on the freshly-emptied land. The actual documents of her father and his establishment of the nunnery that survive, however, while not unproblematic, make it clear that he had largely bought his way into this area, including from several people who later apparently witnessed his daughter getting people to tell them otherwise.<sup>57</sup> Neither is this the only such case.<sup>58</sup> What this probably tells us is that mentions of conquest, like claims of emptiness and abandonment, were a last resort when for whatever reason other truer stories of property acquisition could not be told.

#### Attractions to Engagement

How had it become worth it for those who had sold Count Guifré their land to pretend, publicly at least, that this had not happened? What could invest such people so deeply in a relatively recent structure of governance? Count Guifré himself was some years dead at this stage, but even if the judicial panel's relationship with Guifré's successors was worth a lot to them, the very fact that the hearing had to be held, presumably to indicate to the abbey's new subjects that they had no appeal beyond the abbess, shows that the participation of these local élites was also very important to the counts. How had this been achieved?

The Vall de Sant Joan hearing makes a good case to think with because, while the visible loyalty of the locality to the new regime is considerable, the amount that regime could offer in terms of material profit or opportunity seems relatively limited. Count Guifré had met his death in battle against the aforementioned Banū Qāsī in

<sup>57</sup> Ordeig, *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. nos 119 & 120; for analysis see Jarrett, 'Power over Past and Future', pp. 241–48, and Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 35–42.

<sup>58</sup> J. Jarrett, 'Poor Tools to Think With: the human space in digital diplomacy', in A. Ambrosiani & G. Vogeler (eds), *Digital Diplomacy 2011*, Beihefte der Archiv für Diplomatie (München, forthcoming), pp. 291–302 at pp. 297–299.

898.<sup>59</sup> While Abbess Emma's brother Count Sunyer, on the notionally-losing side in the hearing, would change this twenty years later, in 913 there seems to have been little prospect of getting rich on plunder-riding with the counts or making great new border clearances in the wake of their non-existent conquests.<sup>60</sup> Neither is there much evidence of trade from which to draw revenue or any detectable uplift in material culture in this zone. The parlous state of local archaeology admittedly makes this a shaky position to hold, but the rising wealth of al-Andalus increasingly dominates the aesthetic and architectural style of the artefacts and buildings of this period that we do have, largely from further west.<sup>61</sup> The frontiersmen were then in a better position to access cultural capital themselves by looking south-west than by going through the counts to their east.<sup>62</sup> The counts had some role to play in guaranteeing safety to traders and travellers who wanted to cross the supposed no-man's land to do business with al-Andalus, certainly; this is visible in the series of escorts and checks that Aimon of Saint-Germain-des-Prés recorded in telling the story of his brother monks who had obtained relics of Saint Vincent from Córdoba for his Paris monastery.<sup>63</sup> This is not, however, the same as saying that no one else could make such arrangements, particularly over more regularly-travelled distances: the villagers of Aguinaliu already mentioned could obviously reach Lleida without a count, for example. Neither is it to say that the counts could restrict with whom such travellers dealt, even in their own territories; for all that the counts themselves

<sup>59</sup> *De quan erem o no musulmans: textos del 713 al 1000. Continuació de l'obra de J. M. Millàs i Vallicrosa*, trans. D. Bramon (Vic, 2000), § 316.

<sup>60</sup> On Sunyer's successes see J. Jarrett, 'Archbishop Ató of Osona: false metropolitans on the Marca hispanica', *Archiv für Diplomatik* 56 (2010), pp. 1–42, at pp. 14–15.

<sup>61</sup> On local archaeology see M. Riu, 'L'aportació de l'arqueologia a l'estudi de la formació i expansió del feudalisme català' in J. Portella i Comas (ed.), *La formació i expansió del feudalisme Català: actes del col·loqui organitzat pel Col·legi Universitari de Girona (8-11 de gener de 1985). Homenatge a Santiago Sobrequés i Vidal*, *Estudi General* 5-6 (1986), pp. 27-47 with English summary p. 555; more recent perspectives in Mauri & Soler, 'Conques baixes del Llobregat', or J. Gibert i Rebull, 'Els inicis de l'edat mitjana (segles VIII-IX) al Penedès i el Baix Llobregat: una aproximació arqueològica', *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics* 16 (2006), 65–84. On Andalusí culture in the area see I. G. Bango Torviso, 'El ocaso de la antigüedad. Arte y arquitectura en la alta edad media hispánica' in J. Camps (ed.), *Cataluña en la época carolingia: arte y cultura antes del Románico (siglos IX y X)* (Barcelona 1999), pp. 175–180, trans. as 'The Decline of Antiquity. Art and Architecture in the Hispanic Early Middle Age', *ibid.* pp. 506–09, and J. Camps i Sòria and C. Mancho, 'La escultura en Cataluña en los siglos IX y X', *ibid.* pp. 215–18, trans. as 'Sculpture in Catalonia in the 9th and 10th centuries', *ibid.* pp. 525–27.

<sup>62</sup> Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, I, pp. 414–25, updated somewhat by G. Feliu i Montfort, 'La vida económica', in M. Riu i Riu (ed.), *La España cristiana de los siglos VIII al XI, volumen II. Los núcleos pirenaicos (718–1035): Navarra, Aragón, Cataluña*, *Historia de España Menéndez Pidal* 7.2 (Madrid, 1999), pp. 651–97, at pp. 674–77.

<sup>63</sup> A. Christys, 'Saint-Germain-des-Prés, St Vincent and the Martyrs of Córdoba', *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), pp. 199–216; Christys, 'Crossing the Frontier'.

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might strive to be the best buyers, there were others in the land who could manifest such wealth. Furthermore, if trade was in fact so ephemeral that it could only operate in the luxury strata of the ultra-high aristocracy, as has been suggested for sixth-century Britain, mere connection to the counts was not going to bring such wealth down to frontier village level.<sup>64</sup> If it was any less rarefied, however, it is hard to see how the counts could have been a better deal, in purely economic terms, than doing one's own buying and selling.

The explanation in terms of material gain seems, therefore, to be inadequate. Bourdieu offered a conceptual way across such a divide by linking economic capital and symbolic capital. Certainly, we can imagine that economic capital might be exchanged for symbolic capital: the sixth-century British comparison might make us think perhaps of badges of office, clothes or jewellery that could be used to indicate access to resources not available to others which their bearers could then convert into social capital in their communities. Such jewellery is not at all attested on the Catalan frontier, however, and while fabrics are, foreign stuffs that presumably came through al-Andalus, rather than points east, seem to have been the highly-prized items.<sup>65</sup> Neither does contact with the counts seem inherently likely to have brought wealth with which such foreign goods could be obtained but without which they could not.<sup>66</sup> Imagining these operations cannot, therefore, make them real and so it is worth asking what forms of symbolic capital the counts deployed, here and elsewhere, that might have been exchangeable in the other direction.

<sup>64</sup> Sixth-century Britain: M.G. Fulford, 'Byzantium and Britain: a Mediterranean perspective on post-Roman Mediterranean imports in western Britain and Ireland', *Medieval Archaeology* 33 (1989), pp. 1–6; cf. L. Alcock, *Kings & Warriors, Craftsmen & Priests in Northern Britain AD 550–850* (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 209–10.

<sup>65</sup> Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, I, pp. 417–23; R.M. Martín i Ros, 'Los tejidos en Europa: de Carlomagno al año 1000' in Camps, *Cataluña en la época carolingia*, pp. 265–69, trans. as 'Textiles in Europe: from Charlemagne to the Year 1000', *ibid.*, pp. 551–54.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. G. Duby, *La société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1971), pp. 56–63; Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 116–120. Nonetheless, the first non-foreign trader we see in person in this area was a deacon of the cathedral of Barcelona, not a comital follower: see P. Wolff, 'Quidam homo nomine Roberto negociatore', *Le Moyen Age* 69 (1963), pp. 123–39, repr. in Wolff, *Regards sur le Midi médiéval* (Toulouse, 1978), pp. 473–80.

## Cultural and Symbolic Capital

## Patronage of Learning

In the current trend of work on the Carolingian Empire, especially, to which Catalonia once belonged, cultural capital was amassed most obviously, given the focus of our sources, by the patronage of learning. From such learning could be derived art, writing, ceremony and thought that enhanced the royal office in new ways (often, of course, made to look old) and raised the estimation of its holders in the eyes of their beholders. Here the work of Rosamond McKitterick has been path-breaking, and there seems little reason to doubt, for example, that a court of scholars and an unparalleled library served Charlemagne well in his project of building a court which only the Byzantine emperor could rival for wealth and attraction.<sup>67</sup> It was not just royal courts that deployed such techniques, either, although it is hard to disassociate such intentions from the coincidental ones to equip a working administration or to garner the favour of God, both directly pragmatic accompaniments to any symbolic pay-off. Thus, Guifré the Hairy made considerable gifts to the twin churches of Santa Maria and Sant Joan de Ripoll that established them among the leading monastic communities in Catalonia, and his heirs' continuing investment in Santa Maria certainly supplied its climb to a status as the area's premier seat of learning alongside the cathedrals of Vic and Barcelona, as recognised in the late tenth century by Gerbert of Aurillac when he sought his training there.<sup>68</sup> Whether or not the aims of the long series of comital patrons listed in the act of consecration of Santa Maria's new church in 977 had necessarily been to

<sup>67</sup> R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989); McKitterick (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990); McKitterick, 'Royal patronage of culture in the Frankish kingdoms under the Carolingians: motives and consequences', in *Committenti e produzione artistico-letteraria nell'alto medioevo occidentale*, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 39 (1992), pp. 93–129, repr. in McKitterick, *The Frankish Kings and Culture in the Early Middle Ages*, Variorum Collected Studies 477 (Aldershot, 1995), VII. On Charlemagne's library specifically see B. Bischoff, 'Der Hofbibliothek Karls des Große' in W. Braunsfels (ed.), *Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben. Bd. I: Persönlichkeit und Geschichte*, ed. H. Beumann (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 42–62, repr. in Bischoff, *Mittelalterliche Studien: ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte*, 3 vols (Stuttgart 1966–81), III, pp. 149–69, transl. M. Gorman and rev. as 'The Court Library of Charlemagne' in Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 56–92.

<sup>68</sup> R. d'Abadal i de Vinyals, 'La fundació del monestir de Ripoll', in *Miscel·lània Anselm M. Albareda*, *Analecta Montserratensia* 9–10, 2 vols (Montserrat 1962–63), I, pp. 187–97, repr. in Abadal, *Dels Visigots als Catalans*, ed. J. Sobrequés i Callicó, *Estudis i Documents* 13 & 14, 2 vols (Barcelona, 1969), I, pp. 485–94; Jarrett, 'Power over Past and Future'; J. Samsó, 'Cultura científica arab i cultura científica llatina a la Catalunya altmedieval: el monestir de Ripoll i el naixement de la ciència catalana', in Udina, *Symposium internacional*, I, pp. 253–69.

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create a house of learning, rather than one of prayer for their souls, they had, and Count-Bishop Miró Bonfill, a grandson of Guifré who redacted that consecration, was anything but blind to the results.<sup>69</sup>

Neither was his cousin Count-Marquis Borrell II, who was also at that gathering. Borrell seems to have built up a cadre of highly-educated clerically-trained judicial professionals from the 970s onwards.<sup>70</sup> One effect of this was presumably to overhaul the giving of justice in his dominions, thus increasing his revenues and his felt presence among his subjects, but it also opened to him a new level of theoretical representation of his power and presumably enhanced his reputation as a just ruler, not least because these judges came to operate in the counties of his cousins as well as his own.<sup>71</sup> To reuse another example, the potential for such investment to enable a governmentalising intervention in otherwise inaccessible communities is demonstrated by the appeal of the villagers of Aguinalliu to Lleida for a judge, when Borrell's nephews the counts of Pallars, apparently less alert to such possibilities than their uncle, were much closer by.

These examples help explain why rulers interested in reaching out into the frontiers might invest in intellectual assets, and help us avoid the axiomatic belief of the academy that learning is automatically worth having.<sup>72</sup> Such learning was certainly cultural capital. Nonetheless, it is worth considering how easily it could have been exchanged for any other form. As we shall see shortly in the discussion of *fueros* and

<sup>69</sup> Ordeig, *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. no. 1242; J.M. Salrach i Marés, 'El comte-bisbe Miró Bonfill i l'acta de consagració de Ripoll de l'any 977', in *Estudis de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes Oferts a R. Aramon i Serra en el seu setanté aniversari IV*, *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 26 (1984), pp. 303–18; Jarrett, 'Caliph, King or Grandfather', pp. 16–19.

<sup>70</sup> J.M. Font i Rius, 'L'escola jurídica de Barcelona', in *Liber Iudicum Popularis ordenat pel jutge Bonsom de Barcelona*, eds J. Alturo, J. Bellès, J.M. Font i Rius, Y. García & A.M. Mundó, *Textos Jurídics de Catalunya* 23 (Barcelona, 2003), pp. 67–100, J. Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks: property, proof, and dispute in Catalonia around the year 1000* (Ithaca, NY, 2004), pp. 81–99; cf. Jarrett, 'Centurions, Alcalas and *Christiani perversi*', p. 105.

<sup>71</sup> E.g. Ordeig, *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. no. 1526, though this was a bungled document the relevant judge would probably not have wished cited.

<sup>72</sup> Bourdieu, 'Forms of Capital', of course points out that such emphasis on its pricelessness is crucial to the valuation of cultural capital that makes it actually exchangeable.



franchises, sometimes it was worth making concessions to escape such outside influence. For those who wished to be the chief influences within their community of origin themselves, meanwhile, opportunities to be got from engaging with the wider intellectual world were limited. The most obvious route to learning was via the Church, but even though some churches seem to have had a surprisingly large staff, beyond them there would have been little chance for such skills to find a use.<sup>73</sup> Arithmetic and administration might also serve pragmatic purposes, as might more military forms of training and experience, but all of them would open to their acquirers roads to better prospects elsewhere as well as a slight advantage at home.<sup>74</sup> Learning might be one area where rulers could successfully defend a near-monopoly, but we should not assume that this automatically gave them capital that they could expend on frontier outreach.

#### Royalty and Regalia

It is the interests of those without the desire to escape or to ply a new career at court which are crucial to our question, in fact. The rulers attempting the engagement of frontier populations needed people on the spot; therefore, they had to be able to offer capital that could be locally exchanged. Here the symbolic capital of titled authority offered numerous prospects, as did the rights that office might bring.<sup>75</sup> While it has seemed to some that the counts of Catalonia had comparatively little ability to control what powerful persons called themselves, it was still to their advantage that such persons used titles at all; someone calling himself a *vicecomes* or a *vicarius*, and presumably deriving advantage from so doing, by his use of a late Roman template for his position made it hard for himself to deny the authority of the *comes* of whom such officers were the notional subordinates.<sup>76</sup> Some managed to ignore it anyway, and the counts themselves could be made vulnerable to such attacks by those who were willing and able to access the counts' increasingly notional, but never forgotten, royal superiors, but by taking part in the hierarchy of office its

<sup>73</sup> Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 93–97 & 122–25.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. n. 42 above.

<sup>75</sup> R. d'Abadal i de Vinyals, 'La institució comtal carolíngia en la pre-Catalunya del segle IX', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 1 (1964), pp. 29–75, repr. in Abadal, *Dels Visigots als Catalans*, I, pp. 181–226; Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 129–33.

<sup>76</sup> *Idem*.

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participants legitimated it and defined, thus fixing, their positions within it.<sup>77</sup> It was thus to the advantage of the counts to encourage such usages, and the same applies with even more force to rulers of polities further west where authority used royal titles and recognised no distant superior.

To the extent that these men could award such titles, however, and lesser ones like *iudex* (judge, superintendent) or *saio* (roughly, court enforcer) rather more, it was also to the advantage of their recipients: not only did these titles imply specific rights, to demand renders or to appropriate property in judicial action for example, but it showed those of whom such demands might be made that the holder of the title had support in making them.<sup>78</sup> Here social capital could be used to gain economic capital that reinforced social capital: judicial profits might be enjoyable and could be disbursed to feed followers or build a more impressive dwelling, but being the count's (or viscount's or bishop's or abbot's or *vicarius's*) friend or *fidelis* could be important not primarily because of its potential for material profit but because of its exclusivity and links to wider world-systems that were otherwise unreachable from the village world, links that the office-holder could then monopolise.<sup>79</sup> This duality of economic and symbolic value can also be seen in the administrative and ideological complex represented by learning, but is easier to locate, at the social level in which we are interested, in a more directly material sphere.

<sup>77</sup> Jarrett, 'Caliph, King or Grandfather', esp. pp. 13–15, to which cf. J.M. Salrach, *Justícia i poder a Catalunya abans de l'any mil*, Referències 55 (Vic, 2013), pp. 177–78.

<sup>78</sup> On such titles in their original context see P.D. King, *Law and Society in Visigothic Spain*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought 3rd Series 5 (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 79–88; more locally see Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 42–3.

<sup>79</sup> W. Davies, *Small Worlds: the village community in early medieval Brittany* (London, 1988), pp. 105–33, is the wellspring of the study of such connections; cf. Innes, *State and Society*, pp. 82–140, integrating this with connections of wider range. We might now represent such differentiations in terms of social reach (Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 143–66), of scale (J. Escalona, 'The Early Middle Ages: a scale-based approach', in Escalona & Reynolds, *Scale and Scale Change*, pp. 9–30, esp. pp. 17–20) or of network connectivity (e.g. R. Boulet, B. Jouse, F. Rossi & N. Villa, 'Batch kernel SOM and related Laplacian methods for social network analysis', *Journal of Neurocomputing* 71 (2008), pp. 1257–73, or M.A. Martín Romera, 'Nuevas perspectivas para el estudio de las sociedades medievales: El análisis de redes sociales', *Studia Historica: historia medieval* 28 (2010), 217–39) but none of these really provide more than Davies's approach.

## Law and local élites

Nowhere is this junction of material and ideological interests more visible than in the notably Iberian phenomenon of the local law-code, in Catalonia usually termed a franchise or a *carta de població* and further west better known as a *fuero*.<sup>80</sup> Although these documents are most thickly attested in the twelfth century, the first ones preserved date from the tenth: we have already invoked one, Count-Marquis Borrell II's grant of rights to the frontier city of Cardona, but there are more.<sup>81</sup> The Cardona document is, in fact, unusual because of its size and its high style, as well as the rhetorical feint by which it accords considerable rights of self-government to a community that was nonetheless also being placed under the direct authority of one of Borrell's viscounts; it was more usual for a franchise to deal in exemptions from authority, as the name suggests. In León and Castile, *fueros* are relatively simple and quite vernacular documents, arranged in capitulary clauses, that appoint and restrict officials, set punitive tariffs, assign duties and make clear systems of appeal. Despite the Catalan term, *carta de població*, and the example of Cardona, such privileges were not awarded only to new settlers; they could also be the way in which a pre-existent community achieved legal recognition as an entity with respect to the central power that awarded the privilege.<sup>82</sup>

It is worth dwelling for a second on the paradoxical situation of authority in these documents. By such an award, a count, bishop or king denied himself demands that he might otherwise have made on the basis of law and custom elsewhere. On the other hand, in a small example of the sovereign paradox, only his authority could

<sup>80</sup> I owe many thanks in this section to Rodrigo García-Velasco; his 'Legislation and Resistance: limitations of royal power on the Catalan and Aragonese frontiers, 986–1134', MSt dissertation, University of Oxford, 2013, was the source of a number of the ideas presented here.

<sup>81</sup> See n. 54, but the text is also printed with its typological fellows in *Cartas de población y franquicia de Cataluña*, ed. J.M. Font Rius (Madrid, 1969), doc. no. 9. For other areas' texts of this kind see *Colección de fueros y cartas pueblas*, ed. T. Muñoz Romero (Madrid, 1847); *Los fueros del Reino de León*, ed. J. Rodríguez Fernández (León, 1981); and *Cartas de población del reino de Aragón en los siglos medievales*, ed. M.L. Ledesma Rubio (Zaragoza, 1991).

<sup>82</sup> A starting point with the extensive literature on the genre is A. García Gallo, 'Aportación al estudio de los fueros', *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español* 26 (1956), pp. 387–446; more recent thinking can be found in M.L. Ledesma Rubio, 'Las cartas de población medievales en el reino de Aragón', in *Cartas de población, fueros y ordenaciones municipales de Aragón. Tercera muestra de documentación histórica aragonesa* (Zaragoza, 1990), pp. 21–30, and J. Alvarado Planas (ed.), *Espacios y fueros en Castilla-La Mancha (siglos XI–XV): una perspectiva metodológica* (Madrid, 1995). I owe my knowledge of much of this literature to García-Velasco, 'Legislation and Resistance'.

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grant its own abrogation.<sup>83</sup> The community, meanwhile, secured its self-government and the local élites' monopoly on power only at the cost of admitting it was part of a larger organisation with duties that it might, come the raising of an army or the presence of the king's court in the area, be called on to fulfil. A final twist is provided by considering the possibility that, before this award were made, the count or king might not have been able to enforce such demands: this implies a particular tipping point in these cases where it became worth admitting that he could in order to ensure that he did not, like a more empowered reflection of later commutations of serfs' dues that fixed otherwise arbitrary and illegal 'bad customs'.<sup>84</sup> *Fueros* and *cartas de població* were considered to be good customs, of course, but custom presumably only needed recording at all if it was under threat.

There is little reason to doubt, therefore, that as well as the practical benefits obtained from such a concession these awards had a strong ideological element. Nonetheless, these documents also assigned people status, defined an in-group, the community, and an out-group, those not admitted to the community. This is sharpest of all at Cardona, where the out-group was conceptualised fundamentally as targets, but it is implicit in all such awards. While establishing structures of responsibility and report upon the much-mentioned local élites may have been the gain for the rulers, as well as the simple ideological bonus of having their authority recognised and thereby reinforced, creating an identity that could be defined and controlled must also have appealed to those who received these privileges on both material and symbolic levels.<sup>85</sup> These agreements defined an outside and an inside by

<sup>83</sup> For explanation of the sovereign paradox, see K. Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: how ideas of feudalism and secularization govern the politics of time* (Philadelphia, 2008), p. 7 (more or less repeated pp. 34, 59, 73, 79–80 & 83, but useful the first time).

<sup>84</sup> This is very much the interpretation of García-Velasco, 'Legislation and Resistance', which I duly acknowledge. On 'mals usos' see Freedman, *Origins of Peasant Servitude*, pp. 89–110.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. B.H. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space: power, restraint, and privileges of immunity in early medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1999): this work comes to quite different conclusions about the power balance involved in royal self-exclusion, but they lose force in a frontier situation where the ruler could only assert, not enforce, his power. This applies not just to the *fueros* but to the numerous actual immunities issued by the Frankish kings to the Spanish March, published in *Catalunya Carolingia II: es diplomes carolingis a Catalunya*, ed. R. d'Abadal i de Vinyals, *Memòries de la Secció històrico-arqueològica 2 & 3*, 2 vols (Barcelona, 1926–52), repr. as *Memòries 75* (2009).

moving the area concerned into the latter. Before this could be completed, poised in the space between the outside and inside they now created, local élites and rulers met in these documents and exchanged promises of both social and economic capital.

If we think back to the act of consecration at Tona with which we almost began, we may now recognise the same processes at work there. Raising the church and obtaining its consecration involved sacrificing a number of autonomies: the ideological framework in which it was done determined that the building could not be put to use without help from beyond Tona, which would not however be given without the assurance of adequate help from within the community.<sup>86</sup> The participants had to sacrifice substantial wealth and as a result got a non-local magnate assuming supervision of their use of their resources, but on the other hand the two priests of Tona now obtained recognition from that outsider and his endorsement of their right to tithes, and the donors to the church accessed not just the spiritual support of the prayers that would be made for them there but also the recognition of the lesser persons of the settlement that this great thing had been done through them. As with kings and recipients of *fueros*, here the leading parishioners and bishop met and reinforced their positions behind and across a frontier, in an exchange of capitals both sides obviously found worthwhile, but without which the parishioners would have remained completely beyond that frontier for the time being.

### Catalonia and Comparability

We thus return to Old Catalonia after a foray, via the *fueros*, into wider territory, but it is worth asking how much more widely conclusions based on Catalonia can be applied. There is some resistance to the idea that cases from Catalonia have any application to Castile, especially, which Josep María Salrach has attempted to refute.<sup>87</sup> Obviously there are differences between the areas. Catalonia is wetter and

<sup>86</sup> The liturgy of consecration required the bishop to hear and find adequate the new church's endowment before proceeding: see Ordeig, 'La consagració i la dotació', pp. 85–7.

<sup>87</sup> J.M. Salrach, 'Orígens i transformacions de la senyoria a Catalunya (segles IX–XIII)', *Revista d'Història Medieval* 8 (1997), 25–55 at pp. 30–43; against this trend, until his death in 2011, stood Manuel Riu i Riu,

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more temperate than most other parts of the Peninsula, though without the Atlantic climate of Galicia, and its agriculture has historically been different to Castile's as a result. Nonetheless, as Salrach points out, the documents of our period nonetheless make renders and payments in kind in basically the same substances, wheat, oats, wine and meat, and territorial divisions in terms of *castrum*, *villa* and *locus* are easy to find in both areas.<sup>88</sup>

A more substantial difference, especially for an argument in which the ideology of power has a role to play, is the absence of royal government from Catalonia. The counts, even those of Barcelona, recognised a king as superior until 987 to at least a basic degree, but no ruler of the Franks had come south of the Pyrenees since 829 and few even close to them since then. In Asturias and then León, of course, the king was present and available and could choose to act in his territories, though we might wonder how often and how completely that zone of action included Castile, especially in the period before the future county's unification. Nonetheless, the Carolingian kings did have input into Catalonia in exceptional circumstances, and even as late as 986 embassies were going back and forth between the March and the court, albeit rarely, to obtain royal precepts and backing for political action. Until that time, they remained available as a symbolic resource and one that could even be used against the counts by those suitably determined and equipped.<sup>89</sup> Before then, and also afterwards, the popes had been developed as an alternative source of higher patronage in the area, so that the counts were, if in practical terms irrefragable, at least ideologically subordinate.<sup>90</sup> In this respect, indeed, Barcelona makes a better

who attempted to construct a Catalanised version of the arguments of Barbero and Vigil in his 'Hipòtesi entorn dels orígens del feudalisme a Catalunya', *Quaderns d'Estudis Medievals* 2 (1981), 195–208 and in whose *Festschrift* Mínguez, 'Despoblación', appeared along with papers by Castilian- and Catalan-speakers alike.

<sup>88</sup> Salrach, 'Orígens i transformaciones', pp. 40–41 & 43.

<sup>89</sup> Jarrett, 'Caliph, King or Grandfather'; Salrach, *Justícia i poder*, pp. 42–48 & 61–66.

<sup>90</sup> Abadal, *Primers comtes*, pp. 302–13.

comparison to Castile than to other parts of the kingdom of Asturias-León where royal action was less irregular!<sup>91</sup>

Nonetheless, a consensus on the manner in which aristocrats and kings obtained influence in frontier or other unattached communities is detectable among the Castilian historiography, and the consensus model is quite different from that just developed here. It is a model based fundamentally on economic and social might, as measured in terms of buying power by which the count or king might acquire shares or dominant interests in a community's property or the connections and political range that made him attractive either as a resort for judgements or as a patron for those in difficulties. All of these eventualities, it is persuasively argued, would tend to redirect loyalties from a horizontal solidarity to a range of vertical relationships with the king, count or their subordinates, reducing community cohesion and the ability to combine against incorporation into a wider and less autonomous structure of lordship.<sup>92</sup> There is little sign in this model of the kind of courting with cultural capital that has been argued for here in the Catalan counties. Is the interpretative divide thus justified despite all Salrach's arguments and indeed my own?

There are two reasons to suppose that it may not be. The first of these is that, perhaps ineluctably, we do also see the counts of Barcelona, Girona and Osona, and to an extent others, engaged in such activities. The tiny scale and massive dispersal of the property of the counts has been remarked upon and it can probably be assumed firstly that the often-miniscule properties identified as the counts' in transaction charters were not typical of their resources, as very large fiscal estates which presumably did not usually come onto the land market that generated our

<sup>91</sup> Barcelona, Castile and León, of course, all also recognised a kind of higher authority in their shared use of the law-book of the Visigothic kings, the *Forum Iudicum*, as their final resort for judgement in court, but finding this custom a footing in the kind of situations under discussion here would exceed the scope of this paper. It is, all the same, another uniting rather than dividing factor. See R. Collins, 'Sicut lex Gothorum continet: law and charters in 9th- and 10th-century León and Catalonia', *English Historical Review* 100 (1985), 489–512, repr. in *idem, Law, Culture and Regionalism*, V; *idem*, 'Visigothic Law'. Note also the kindred documentary cultures, quantitatively demonstrated in J. Jarrett, 'Comparing the Earliest Documentary Culture in Carolingian Catalonia', in Jarrett & A.S. McKinley (eds), *Problems and Possibilities of Early Medieval Charters*, International Medieval Research 19 (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 89–126.

<sup>92</sup> See n. 14 above and Álvarez, 'Proceso de transformación'; more nuanced versions now in Escalona, 'De "señores y campesinos"', pp. 140–54, Carvajal, 'Superar la frontera', *passim* & Carvajal, 'Sociedad y territorio', pp. 108–10; cf. the bottom-up view of Castellano & Martín, 'Local articulation'.

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evidence can sometimes also be detected, and that much of the more scattered holdings related to resources allotted to the upkeep of castles, otherwise seen as *fisci* or *beneficia* without named holders.<sup>93</sup> Nonetheless, they did also buy on small scales from people of no great standing or importance, which indubitably had the effect of creating links of obligation, and it may well be that the Castilian model deserves therefore to be added to the above as part of the medieval frontier magnate's portfolio of power-plays.<sup>94</sup>

The other reason to hope for comparability, however, is that the Castilian model also involves types of ruling action by the counts that can arguably be termed public, fiscal, or some similar term, such as holding a hearing with judges, taking fiscal revenues (if we accept Salrach's argument that this should be the origin of Castilian *tributum*<sup>95</sup>) or demanding or excusing military service.<sup>96</sup> These capacities represent more than simply the results of economic strong-arming; they are an invocation of just the kind of cultural capital we have discussed above, the access to concepts of social practice reserved to an élite. They are, indeed, the source of the arguments of

<sup>93</sup> J.M. Salrach, 'El régimen político condal' in Riu, *España cristiana* 2, pp. 575–611. A large fiscal estate more or less visible in *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. nos 419, 420 & 535; see Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled*, pp. 107–08.

<sup>94</sup> Examples of such purchases in *Catalunya Carolíngia IV*, doc. nos 730, 1107 or 1135. One reason this perspective may be less common in Catalonia is that evidence of common landholding there is much rarer than in some areas to the west. It may then be no coincidence that the scholar who has done most work on common land in this period, Gaspar Feliu i Montfort, is also the one with the gloomiest view of the comital defence of the peasantry: see his 'La pagesia i els béns comunals' in J. Farré & F. Sabaté (eds), *Els grans espais baronials a l'Edat Mitjana: desenvolupament socioeconòmic. Reunió Científica: I Curs d'Estiu Comtat d'Urgell (Balaguer, 10, 11 i 12 de juliol de 1996)* (Lleida 2002), pp. 23–40, repr. in Feliu, *Llarga nit feudal*, pp. 13–27; cf. his 'Pagesia abans de la feudalització'.

<sup>95</sup> Salrach, 'Orígens i transformacions', p. 41; note that *tributum* is also the term used by Samson of Córdoba (see n. 35 above) for the taxes raised on the population of Córdoba by the emirs of al-Andalus. On this see M. Barceló, 'La primerenca organització fiscal d'Al-Andalus, segons la "Crònica del 754"', *Faventia* 1 (1979), pp. 231–61, transl. as 'La más temprana organización fiscal de al-Andalus según la "Crónica del 754" (95/713(4)-138/755)' in Barceló, *El sol que salió por Occidente (estudios sobre el estado omeya en al-Andalus)* (Jaén, 1997), pp. 23–54.

<sup>96</sup> See esp. Álvarez, *Monarquía feudal*, pp. 39–44, Mínguez, 'Continuidad y ruptura', pp. 123–27 and Mínguez, 'Pervivencia y transformaciones', but also Escalona, 'Comunidades y territorios', pp. 110–13, Santos, 'Privilegios de Berbeia y Barrio', p. 79 and Carvajal, 'Sociedad y territorio', pp. 113–14.



incipient legitimacy critiqued above, and we may justifiably ask, with one of the authors there cited, “*pero ¿como se llegó a esta situación?*”<sup>97</sup>

The place of these capacities in the scheme of takeover instanced above from the Castilian historiography has been somewhat ambiguous: in one case it is argued that the counts and kings got such rights by exercising them, a somewhat circular formulation, but where more thoroughly worked out than this the preferred answer seems to be these rights were the desired end result of the magnate’s manoeuvres, the incorporation of the target community within a wider structure of the accepted rights and practices of the early medieval ruling class.<sup>98</sup> This is, however, to suppose that powerful persons in a position to arrange, more or less arbitrarily, the control and rule of a population too divided to resist, would naturally adopt a restrictive and traditional cultural cladding for their power, and one that, in the case of the counts, gave their superiors or rivals means of claiming rights as well. That this was not naturally preferable is inherent in the progress towards rule by violence and arbitrary maltreatment taken to be typical of the endpoint of the process of feudalisation in the Iberian Peninsula and elsewhere.<sup>99</sup> Why did the counts of tenth-century Castile, and indeed the kings to whom they answered, accept less when they were in a position to impose more? The answer can surely only be that it helped to achieve their goals to do so, that these traditional trappings of legitimacy evoked a response among their intended subjects that was worth the restrictions of the structure they implied. In other words, we see here again combined economic and cultural capital used in exchanges for the symbolic capital of recognition in authority; the model can be made to work here too.

<sup>97</sup> Escalona, ‘Comunidades y territorios’, p. 89.

<sup>98</sup> Álvarez, *Monarquía feudal*, pp. 39–40, for the circular argument; for others see n. 96 above.

<sup>99</sup> Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, II, pp. 781–830, or see his ‘The Banal Seigneurie and the “Reconditioning” of the Free Peasantry’ in Little & Rosenwein, *Debating the Middle Ages*, pp. 114–33; Salrach, *Feudalització*, pp. 289–324; García de Cortázar, ‘Estructuras sociales’, pp. 542–49; more widely, T.N. Bisson, ‘The Feudal Revolution’, *Past and Present* 142 (1994), 6–42, and the following debate: D. Barthélemy, ‘Debate: the feudal revolution. I’, transl. J. Birrell, *ibid.* 152 (1996), 196–205; S.D. White, ‘The “feudal revolution”: comment. II’, *ibid.* 205–23, repr. in White, *Feuding and Peace-Making in Eleventh-Century France*, Variorum Collected Studies 817 (Aldershot, 2005), II; T. Reuter, ‘Debate: the “Feudal Revolution”. III’, *Past and Present* 155 (1997), 177–95, repr. as ‘Debating the “Feudal Revolution”’ in Reuter, *Medieval politics and modern mentalities*, ed. J.L. Nelson (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 72–88; C. Wickham, ‘Debate: the “Feudal Revolution”. IV’, *Past and Present* 155 (1997), 197–208 and Bisson, ‘Debate: the “Feudal Revolution”. Reply’, *ibid.* 208–34.

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### Conclusion: Cultural Cladding

In ninth- and tenth-century Catalonia, then, and arguably beyond, the pragmatic advantages of support, protection and wealth offered by engagement with an outside power do not seem to have been enough by themselves to induce the vaunted local élites to participate in larger structures, perhaps because of the disincentives implicit in the accompanying loss of autonomy (something that forms of engagement like the later *fueros*, at least, attempted to avert or limit). Those offering either the retention or increase of economic capital as a bribe for participation thus had to clad this in symbolic or cultural capital, ornamenting their offerings with vestiges of resonance well beyond the immediate. We should not ignore the apparent necessity of such cladding for successful would-be lords of frontier communities. While it is common to suppose that symbolism would not appeal to hard-headed community leaders while they retained a genuine choice as to whether to join a larger polity, it seems from the sources that neither would simple profit (although either might make coercion more tolerable).

In electronics terms, such situations were AND gates: both inputs had to be live to generate an output.<sup>100</sup> Only signalling on both channels broadcast royal or comital power at a frequency the local élites were willing to receive. This combination theory could be applied to a range of situations, but it is the only sufficient one to describe the drawing into engagement of these border populations, without whose support the medieval kingdoms of Spain could never have taken shape.

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<sup>100</sup> An introduction to such concepts can be found in W. Sangosanya, 'Basic Gates and Functions', rev. D. Bellon & R. Bigwood, <http://www.ee.surrey.ac.uk/Projects/CAL/digital-logic/gatesfunc/index.html>, last modified 8 December 2005 as of 19 April 2014.

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