



Currency Change in Pre-millennial Catalonia: Coinage, Counts and Economics

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BARCELONA in the late tenth century was on the verge of becoming a commercial as well as a political capital. The wealth of the four counties that its ruler, Count-Marquis Borrell II (945–93), controlled had been growing throughout his reign. Agricultural yields rose as a result of an increase in cultivation and an extension of the frontier that had been established by the conquests of the Carolingian rulers Charlemagne (768–814) and Louis the Pious (814–40). The no-man’s land between the Christian counties and the Muslim city-states of Lleida and Tortosa, referred to by one charter as the ‘extreme utmost limits of the March’, was crossed by traders apparently using the old Roman roads, linking Barcelona to Valencia, to Lleida and Saragossa and, at some removes, Córdoba, whither Borrell periodically sent embassies. Wills of the period bequeath Greek and Andalusí fabrics, and the land charters of the area demonstrate a thriving land market, especially on the frontiers, made possible by the growing surpluses.¹

The charters also make it clear that such lands and goods were sometimes, and in some areas often, paid for with coin and sometimes go into detail about the coin involved. Little is known about the coins in question, finds are very rare and the coins difficult to attribute, leaving much room for controversy. We do not even know if we have any of Borrell’s coins or not. A vital source for the economy and its management

¹ General background on the area and period in English is scant: see R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: unity and diversity, 400–1000*, New Studies in Medieval History, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, 1995), pp. 250–63 and M. Zimmermann, ‘Western Francia: the southern principalities’ in T. Reuter (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History III: c.900–c.1024* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 420–56 at pp. 441–9, though this should be treated with caution. There is also J. Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled in Frontier Catalonia 880–1010: pathways of power* (London, forthcoming) which will provide a deeper background for the tenth century. In other languages the essential study is P. Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du X^e à la fin du XI^e siècle: croissance et mutations d’une société* (Toulouse, 1975–6), but the best detailed narrative is J.M. Salrach i Marès, *El Procés de formació nacional de Catalunya (segles VIII–IX)*, Llibres de l’Abast 136–37 (Barcelona, 1978). On Barcelona’s tenth-century growth see also R. d’Abadal i de Vinyals, *Com Catalunya s’obrí al món mils anys enrera*, Episodis de la Història 3 (Barcelona, 1960). For agricultural growth see Bonnassie, ‘La croissance agricole du haut moyen âge dans la Gaule du Midi et le nord-est de la péninsule ibérique: chronologie, modalités, limites’ in *La Croissance agricole du haut moyen âge: chronologie, modalités, géographie. Dixième Journées Internationales d’Histoire, 9, 10, 11, Septembre 1988, Flaran 10* (1990), pp. 13–35. The charter referred to is Condal 174: ‘in extremis ultimas finium marchas’. On the road network, see J. Bolòs i Masclans, ‘Aportacions al coneixement de les vies de comunicació’ in F. Udina i Martorell (ed.), *Symposium Internacional sobre els Orígens de Catalunya (segles VIII–XI)* (Barcelona, 1991–2), also published as *MRABLB 23 and 24* (1991–2), vol. 1, pp. 409–36. The area’s wills are all edited with a commentary in A.M. Udina i Abelló, *La Successió Testada a la Catalunya Medieval*, Textos i Documents 5 (Barcelona, 1984).

at a crucial time in the history of Barcelona and the Mediterranean area of which it formed part is thus closed to us. It is worth trying to resolve the difficulties. This can only be achieved by analysing the coins and written sources together. The aim of this paper is to document the evidence, both literary and numismatic, for Borrell's coinage policy.

NUMISMATIC EVIDENCE FOR THE COINAGE OF THE TENTH CENTURY

Carolingian conquest, Carolingian coins

In numismatic terms as well as many others, the counties that were to become modern Catalonia were a Carolingian province. After Charlemagne's ill-fated Spanish expedition of 778 apparently sparked secession in the oft-rebellious Tarraconensis from sketchily-established Muslim rule, the counties of Urgell, Cerdanya and, most important, Girona, adopted Frankish rule in 785.² Repeated campaigns by Louis the Pious (as king of Aquitaine, 781–814) finally established the frontier a short way beyond the city of Barcelona which was captured by his forces in 801.

Under the Carolingian kings, Barcelona and its neighbouring counties (which were not ruled as a single unit until 1131) frequently became centres of rebellion by threatened or over-mighty Frankish marquises.³ The indigenous nobility, though entrusted with less wealthy Pyrenean counties, remained unswervingly loyal, and in 878 this loyalty was recognised when Count Guifré the Hairy, already count of Urgell and Cerdanya, and his brother Miró count of Rosselló (now Roussillon in France), were allotted most of the other counties of the March after their forfeiture by the rebel Marquis Bernard of Gothia. Guifré thus became count of Barcelona and Girona and in 879 seems to have set about restoring the frontier county of Osona, defunct since a rebellion in 826.⁴ In 898, when Guifré was killed fighting the Muslim lords of Lleida, his sons succeeded jointly to his counties without royal intervention and Guifré's appointment thus in practice ended Carolingian control of the March.⁵ When Guifré's youngest son Sunyer (marquis of Barcelona, Girona and Osona, 911–47) retired to the monastery of la Grasse in 947, the succession of his son Borrell

² The history of the Tarraconensis as a distinct zone is best told in J.M. Salrach, 'El passat hispanovisigòtic' in B. de Riquer i Permanyer (ed.), *Història Política, Societat i Cultura dels Països Catalans*, vol. 2, *la formació de la societat feudal, segles VI–XII*, ed. J.M. Salrach i Marés (Barcelona, 1998, repr. 2001), pp. 70–3, 75–7 and 79–83.

³ On the eventual unification see A.J. Kostko, *Making Agreements in Medieval Catalonia: power, order and the written word, 1000–1200*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought (4th series) 51 (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 219–26. On the rebellions see the works in note 1 above but also M. Aurell, 'Pouvoir et parenté des comtes de la Marche Hispanique (801–911)' in R. le Jan (ed.), *La Royauté et les Élités dans l'Europe Carolingienne (début IX^e siècle aux environs de 900)* (Villeneuve de l'Ascq, 1998), pp. 467–80.

⁴ On Guifré see R. Collins, 'Charles the Bald and Wifred the Hairy' in J.L. Nelson and M. Gibson (eds), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot, 1990), pp. 169–88 and R. d'Abadal i de Vinyals, *Els Temps i el regiment del comte Guifré el Pilós* (Barcelona, 1989).

⁵ Salrach, *Procés* (n. 1), vol. 2, pp. 141–75.

II who ruled jointly with Miró (947–66) took this shared family rule into its third generation.⁶



Fig. 1. *AR* denier (1.30 g) of Louis the Pious (814–40), Barcelona; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Cabinet des Médailles, 831. Reproduced from J. Camps (ed.), *Cataluña en la época carolingia* (Madrid, 1999), cat. no. 2-6.

In this Carolingian territory at least four mints (Barcelona, Girona, Empúries and *Rodda*, usually held to be Roses even though this town is immediately across a bay from Empúries) struck Carolingian-standard deniers and obols, and coins from these mints have been found far north of the Pyrenees.⁷ As well as the coins, the Carolingians also brought their units of account: for generations after prices were paid in *solidi*, sometimes *solidos de dinarios*; there is no evidence that denominations higher than the denier were struck or used in the area under Carolingian rule.

Issues on a regular Carolingian standard presumably continued until 864, but the reforms to the coinage by Charles the Bald (840–77) that year at Pîtres do not appear to have been carried out in Catalonia: no coins of the new types are known from any of the Catalan mints.⁸ Instead there began a new series of coins, at the old standard now superseded in the north, in the name of Charles, and subsequently in that of Louis, with the standard cross-in-circle obverse, with a reverse showing a device of three connected horizontal lines with a rounded top (Fig. 2).

⁶ P. Bofarull y Mascaró, *Los Condes de Barcelona vindicados, y cronología y genealogía de los Reyes de España considerados como Soberanos Independientes de su Marca* (Barcelona, 1836; repr. 1990), vol. 1, pp. 139–80; M. Coll i Alentorn, ‘Dos comtes de Barcelona germans, Miró i Borrell’ in M. Grau and O. Poisson (eds), *Études roussillonnaises offertes à Pierre Ponsich. Mélanges d’archéologie, d’histoire et d’histoire de l’art du Roussillon et de la Cerdagne* (Perpignan, 1987), pp. 145–62. Borrell’s rule is conventionally dated from 947 but he attested a consecration as count in 945: R. Ordeig i Mata (ed.), *Les dotals de les esglésies de Catalunya: (segles IX–XII)*, *Estudis Històrics: Diplomataris* 1–5 (Vic, 199–4), 3 vols in 5, doc. no. 91.

⁷ Numismatists will soon be able to use *MEC* 6, where the relevant section will be chapter 4; until then the text of resort for the coinages of this period is A.M. Balaguer, *Història de la Moneda dels Comtats Catalans* (Barcelona, 1999). See pp. 23–36; for Carolingian minting in the area. There is also M. Crusafont i Sabater, *Numismàtica de la corona catalano-aragonesa medieval, 785–1516* (Barcelona, 1982). G. Feliu, ‘La Moneda a Barcelona entre el 960 i el 1030’ in *La Gènesi de l’autonomia fiscal del municipi*, *BQH* 2–3 (1996), pp. 103–15 is important for this paper’s material and I am grateful to Professor Feliu for sending me an offprint.

⁸ On the Edict of Pîtres see P. Grierson, ‘The ‘*Gratia Dei Rex*’ coinage of Charles the Bald’ in Gibson and Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (n. 4), pp. 52–64 at pp. 55–60; S. Coupland, ‘The early coinage of Charles the Bald’, *NC* 151 (1991), pp. 121–58 at p. 126 states that Empúries, Barcelona and Gerona (*i.a.*) cannot be said with any certainty to have been active after 840. See, however M. Crusafont, ‘Nou tipus carolingi de Barcelona de Carles el Calb. El diner de Barcelona fins a R. Berenguer I’ in *II simposi numismàtic de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1980), pp. 47–55.



Fig. 2. AR denier, 1.46g, in name of Charles the Bald (840–77), Barcelona, ninth century, ‘Tomb’ type; Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya, MNAC/GNC 11365. Reproduced from Camps, *Cataluña*, cat. no. 2-9.

This has been interpreted as the tomb of Santa Eulàlia, whose body was found in 877 and who was then made the patron saint of Barcelona’s cathedral by the Frankish bishop Frodoí.⁹ Since Frodoí is also known to have had at least one concession from the Carolingian kings of a third of the *moneta* that had belonged to the count in Barcelona, this explanation of the type, which bears some resemblance to a modified *Christiana religio* style temple, seems quite plausible. It is therefore referred to as the ‘Tomb’ type.¹⁰ The coins must have been struck after the pretended *inventio* of St Eulàlia’s body in 877, meaning that no coins of the area are known that could have been struck between 864 and 877.¹¹ Some twenty of these coins, both deniers and obols (diners and òbols in Catalan), of more-or-less regular weight (the example above weighs 1.46 grams) and with decipherable legends are now known. Others exist of irregular weight below 0.78 grams, albeit damaged) and with illiterate legends.¹²



⁹ Originally suggested in Crusafont, *Numismàtica catalano-aragonesa* (n. 7), p. 31; X. Sanahuja i Anguera, ‘La moneda de Barcelona al segle X segons les troballes Espanya-1 i Espanya-2 (925)’, *AN* 36 (2006), pp. 79–113, evinces doubts p. 94.

¹⁰ Frodoí’s concession of 878 is edited in R. d’Abadal i de Vinyals (ed.), *Catalunya Carolíngia II: els diplomes carolíngis a Catalunya*, Memòries de la Secció Històrico-Arqueològica II and III (Barcelona, 1926–52), part 1, Barcelona: Santa Creu II. Note that the document of 862, referred to by Crusafont, is a *deperditum* whose existence is inferred from this document, reconstructed *ibid.*, Santa Creu I. On the Temple type see S. Coupland, ‘Money and coinage under Louis the Pious’, *Francia* 17 (1990), pp. 23–54, repr. in *idem*, *Carolingian Coinage and the Vikings: studies on Power and Trade in the 9th century*, Variorum Collected Studies 847 (Aldershot, 2007), III. Professor Gaspar Feliu suggests to me that this coin type could instead be seen as an adaptation of a Visigothic type depicting an altar known from the reign of Recceswinth, but the rounded top of the ‘Tomb’ design seems to me to weigh against this.

¹¹ For a corpus of the coins see Sanahuja, ‘Moneda de Barcelona’ (n. 9), pp. 99–113. This section however closely follows the arguments of M. Crusafont i Sabater, ‘La moneda Barcelonina del segle X. Altres novetats comtals’, *AN* 38 (2008), pp. 91–121 at pp. 94–8.

¹² Three of these pieces, two Cross types and one Annulets type, have been sold in recent auctions. *Aureo y Calicó* Auction 219, 2 July 2009, Barcelona, lot lots 138 and 139 and *Aureo y Calicó*, 220, 16 September 2009, Barcelona, lot 398, raising the distinct possibility that a hoard has been recently discovered but not declared. The coins were sold as pieces of Count Sunyer and Count Ramon Borrell, the latter of which at least is as acknowledged at variance with the opinion of Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’, which the catalogue nonetheless cites as a reference (July sale, lot 139).

Fig. 3. *Æ* diner, Barcelona, ninth to tenth century ‘Tomb’ type; Barcelona, Museu de Història de la Ciutat, MHCB 17156; found 1995 in excavations beneath the Museum building, which was once the episcopal & comital palace complex. Reproduced from Camps, *Cataluña*, cat. no. 33-7.

Post-Carolingian Coins

The next relatively fixed point in our understanding is not until the eleventh century, whence four coins exist which bear on the obverse a cross in a circle with the legend *RAIMVS* (for *RAIMVNDVS*) around and on the reverse a triangle of annulets with the legend *BARCA*.¹³ Although Barcelona was blessed with a long if intermittent series of counts called Ramon in the eleventh century these coins are best assigned to Ramon Borrell of Barcelona, Girona and Osona (992–1018), the son of Borrell II, because the weight and fabric of three of the four is more or less Carolingian (that illustrated in Fig. 4 weighing 1.16 grams), whereas coins that can be more certainly attributed to Ramon Berenguer I, II or III (1035–1137) are known only at a smaller size and weight. The fourth coin of Ramon Borrell is lighter than those later ones (0.65 grams) but is outwardly the same as its full-weight brethren, if somewhat cruder in execution. It is not impossible that it is a contemporary fake.¹⁴ Coins of his successors Berenguer Ramon and Ramon Berenguer I are known from a few small finds and a large hoard of comital and episcopal diners found at Òrrius in 1982 the deposition of which is probably around 1035.¹⁵ The coins of those rulers are also fairly well known, therefore.



Fig. 4. *Æ* diner (1.16 g) of Marquis Ramon Borrell of Barcelona (992–1018), Barcelona; Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya, MNAC/GNC 11367. Image kindly supplied by MNAC.



Fig. 5. Billon diner (0.33 g) of Marquis Berenguer Ramon I of Barcelona (1018–35), Barcelona; from the Òrrius hoard. Reproduced from A. M. Balaguer, *Història de la moneda en els comtats catalans* (Barcelona 1999), cat. 24-1.

¹³ Balaguer, *Historia*, p. 68 and AB 15–16.

¹⁴ Published as part of a discussion of Ramon Borrell’s coins in Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’ (n. 11), pp. 102–4.

¹⁵ Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 82–7; A.M. Balaguer and M. Crusafont i Sabater, *Estudi Preliminar de la Troballa de Monedes Comtals a les Excavacions de l’Església e Sant Andreu d’Òrrius* (Barcelona, 1983); A. Balaguer and M. Teresa Sisó, ‘Dos tipus monetaris inèdits del comtat de Barcelona de Berenguer Ramon I (1018–1035)’, *AN* 31 (2001), pp. 79–84. The coins in question are AB nos 24–26.

Very little can be said with certainty about coins issued between the reigns of Bishop Frodoí and Marquis Ramon Borrell but a series of what are known to Catalan numismatists as *diners de transició* appears to bridge some of the gap. These occur in three types:

1. Tomb type but with illiterate legends formed with wedges paired either with various forms of degenerate monogram or else a central cross in a circle.
2. Cross type with a cross-in-circle on both sides, and the legends made of wedges and annulets.
3. Annulet type. Cross-in-circle on the obverse and a triangle of annulets on the reverse as on the coins of Ramon Borrell but with blundered legends as on the Cross type.

Only around thirty of these pieces are known, mostly in bad condition, and all are of a much lower weight and a smaller size than the regular Carolingian issues or the signed coins of Ramon Borrell. Numismatists have been uncertain as to whether some are diners or òbols. (Catalan forms for the denominations are used from here on since the coinage had clearly ceased to be Carolingian. The pieces illustrated in Figs 6–8 weigh 0.75, 0.41 and 0.41 grams respectively.) Despite this, the commonality of types with earlier and later coins and the links between both Tomb and Annulets types to the Cross type make it more or less safe to assign these coins to Barcelona.¹⁶ Ingenious attempts have been made to make them fit into a wider weight system possibly influenced by al-Andalus, but the most recent commentator feels it more likely that these pieces circulated as bullion rather than at any regulated value.¹⁷



Fig. 6. Æ diner (0.75 g), Barcelona, tenth century, Tomb type; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, CM.345-2001; found c.1990 in the Serra de Monderes, near Alfarràs (Lleida, Catalunya). Image copyright Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, used with permission.



Fig. 7. Æ òbol (0.41 g), Barcelona, tenth century, Cross type; location unknown. Reproduced from *Aureo y Calicó* Auction 219, 2 July 2009, Barcelona, lot 138.

¹⁶ Sanahuja, 'Moneda de Barcelona' (n. 9), pp. 94–6.

¹⁷ Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina' (n. 11), pp. 98–9. Sanahuja, 'Moneda de Barcelona', pp. 97–9 compares alternatives to the bullion hypothesis and asks, fairly, what the point of turning the metal into coins would be if their value was unaltered. One answer might be that if these coins were being issued by the bishops of Barcelona, they may have been issued for alms-giving. It must be admitted that this only explains the Tomb type, which could have functioned as cult propaganda if it did in fact represent the tomb of St Eulàlia.



Fig. 8. Æ òbol (0.41 g), Barcelona, tenth century, Annulets type; location unknown. Reproduced from *Aureo y Calicó* Auction 219, 2 July 2009, lot 139.

Aside from a few single finds and pieces without provenance, the bulk of this coinage comes from what has been considered to be two hoards whose precise details are unknown. The first of these was published in 1983 by Miquel Crusafont i Sabater who dated its deposition to *c.*928, although he stresses that the coins, which he then believed were the work of Bishop Frodoí, are so worn that a pre-890 date was possible.¹⁸

The second ‘hoard’ is an exercise in speculation by Xavier Sanahuja i Anguera. It is based on the association of a number of *diners de transició* that came on the market at roughly the same time as a group of Carolingian deniers and obols. The latter appeared to conform to what was known of a partially reported hoard of 1866, said to come from ‘somewhere in Spain’.¹⁹ The 1866 account does not mention any Catalan coins but even if they had been present they would not then have been recognised as Barcelona pieces.²⁰ Sanahuja uses the Carolingian coins to argue for a deposition date of *c.*923, or at least no later than 936. Crusafont prefers a later date and since, in any case, the association of the Barcelona coins with the Carolingian ones is not certain, almost any date between 890 (the death of Bishop Frodoí) and 1018 (that of Ramon Borrell) is possible.²¹

Crusafont has devised a chronology of the Tomb, Cross and Annulets types, based on the antecessors and successors and the link between them in the Cross type. He suggests that the Tomb type should be assigned to Bishop Teodoríc of Barcelona (*fl.* *c.*900), the Cross to Count-Marquis Sunyer (911–47) and the Annulets to Borrell II and the first years of Ramon Borrell. The arrangement is convenient but given the state of the evidence it can only be hypothetical.²²

Knowledge of the coinage of Barcelona for the entirety of the tenth century thus rests on these unprepossessing *diners de transició*. Whether Crusafont’s sequence is correct or not, these pieces certainly come between the issues attributed to Bishop Frodoí and those of Marquis Ramon Borrell, both of which are of more or less regular

¹⁸ M. Crusafont i Sabater, ‘Consecuencias de los hallazgos de monedas catalano-carolingias de transición’ in J. Bousquet and P. Naster (eds), *Mélanges offerts au docteur J.-B. Colbert de Beaulieu* (Paris, 1987), pp. 227–34, modified by Crusafont ‘Moneda barcelonina’, p. 98.

¹⁹ Sanahuja, ‘Moneda de Barcelona’ (n. 9), pp. 79–80.

²⁰ Coins of this type were first published from the Artur Pedrals collection in 1908 by Joaquim Botet i Sisó, *Monedes Catalans* (Barcelona, 1908–10), vol. 1, p. 189 and vol. 3, pp. 547–8, but the attribution to Barcelona is that of Miquel Crusafont, who made it in ‘Nou tipus carolíngi de Barcelona de Carles el Calb’ (n. 8), pp. 47–55.

²¹ Sanahuja, ‘Moneda de Barcelona’, pp. 93–4; Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’, pp. 100–1.

²² Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’, pp. 104–8. It should be noted that later in the same article Crusafont is forced to abandon a similar ‘one ruler, one type’ system for the coins of Urgell. More finds will quite probably undermine such a solution in Barcelona.

Carolingian weight. Furthermore, the coinage of Barcelona once restored to weight by Ramon Borrell promptly lost weight again to an even greater degree than under his successors.²³ There must therefore have been two reforms as well as the initial degeneration, one upwards back to the Carolingian weight of Ramon Borrell's coins and one downwards to the weight of the coins in the Òrrius hoard.

WRITTEN SOURCES FOR THE COINAGE OF THE TENTH CENTURY

The reform which led to a reduction in weight has already been extensively treated elsewhere using the written documents but the conclusions have not been consistent. It is worth setting out the evidence in brief. So far three sorts of documentary reference have been brought into play. The first is concessions of minting rights from the late ninth and early tenth century; the second, a single supposed equivalence of gold and silver coins dated to *c.* 1000; and the third, specifications of the sorts of diner in transaction charters, which begin to be made from around 995.

Minting concessions and the ownership of the coinage

The Carolingian kings, as has already been mentioned above, made concessions of coinage rights to the bishops of Barcelona in 862 and 878, the right conceded being *tercia parte monetae*. This is usually held to be the comital third of the royal revenues due from minting.²⁴ Further concessions were made by the counts, though none are without diplomatic problems. First, in 911, Marquis Guifré II Borrell of Barcelona, Girona, and Osona (898–911) bequeathed one third of the *moneta* of the county of Osona to its bishop at Vic, subject to royal confirmation. The will in question, however, also exists in an alternate version with no such provision, which suggests to the documents' most recent editor that either royal confirmation was not obtainable or that Count Sunyer, Guifré's brother and successor, preferred to retain the right.²⁵ Both versions appear to be contemporary to the concession, and their priority cannot be established, so it is in theory possible that the version referring to the *moneta* is the later of the two. This would fit with the second document, a concession of 934 to the cathedral of Girona by the same Marquis Sunyer (911–47) in which that cathedral also received a third part of the money of its county, but that document only exists as a later copy and names as sole beneficiary only one of Sunyer's three sons. This suggests that it may have been fabricated after the death of Miró III of Barcelona in 966, perhaps to match similar concessions which, as we shall see, were then in force at Barcelona. In any case, the comital concession is heavily hedged, with a royal approval required that never seems to have been obtained, and Sunyer retained the right to sell the minting rights to another party if he wished.²⁶

These two documents have been cited as proof that minting at Barcelona was in the hands of the counts. The argument, made by Anna Balaguer, goes as follows:

²³ No analysis of the fineness of the transition diners has been carried out.

²⁴ See n. 10 above and Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina', pp. 94–5.

²⁵ The Vic concession is printed with discussion in E. Junyent i Subira (ed.), *El Diplomatarium de la Catedral de Vic, segles IX i X*, ed. R. Ordeig i Mata (Vic 1980–96), doc. no. 55; it is also CC IV 155.

²⁶ CC V 233. I must thank Professor Gaspar Feliu for clarification of the reading of this document.

accepting both documents as authentic, the counts had by 934 conceded their rights in two of their three mints to bishops, implying that they retained only Barcelona, which they must have held on to as otherwise they would have lost all control of this valuable prerogative.²⁷ This is to lose sight of the fact that both bishops, if they did indeed receive the concessions, received only a third part of whatever revenue was concerned. This was the only part to which a Carolingian count would have been entitled,²⁸ but it was no longer the era of Carolingian rule and it is surprisingly unlikely that Sunyer was sending two-thirds of his fiscal revenue north to the kings. It seems more likely that Sunyer could easily afford to make such concessions because the royal two-thirds were now in his control. What he may have obtained in exchange for these concessions is the farming of the mint's operations to the bishops for a third of the revenue. This would fit first with the episcopal coinages known from the two sees and secondly with later arrangements at Barcelona under his son Borrell II.²⁹

A supposed gold-silver equivalence from Montserrat

A key document in arguments over the coinage reform has been a land sale of 1 January 1000 in which six *solidi* of diners are considered an acceptable alternative to a payment of one *mancus*. The latter term refers to Arabic gold dinars which by 1000 had become a regular feature of contracts in the Catalan counties especially in Barcelona, where land usually sold for larger sums than elsewhere. This equivalence has been held to suggest a diner of *c.*0.37 grams, which is indeed close to the average weight of the small coins of Berenguer Ramon and his son, and therefore suggests that the reduction in weight predates 1000.³⁰ The document is so noted by Balaguer, but her reference is only to the work of Botet and she gives no text.³¹ Following this reference reveals that Joaquim Botet also gave no text but referred in his turn to the rather older treatise of Josef Salat.³² Salat did not give an exact text either, but translated the key phrase as 'un manchoso del valor de 6 sueldos'. He also gave a shelfmark which located the document in a cartulary belonging to the monastery of Santa Cecília de Montserrat.³³ This presents problems for the present-day enquirer, as the cartulary in question was burnt with the archive by French troops in 1811.³⁴ There remains a manuscript *regestum* made by Jeronimo Pasqual in the eighteenth century which gives summaries of its contents, and these include a document with the same shelfmark by the same transactors but dated 31 January 1000, in which

²⁷ Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 64–7, summarised by Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina' (n. 11), p. 100.

²⁸ R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians* (London, 1983), pp. 87–8.

²⁹ On the episcopal coinages of Girona and Osona see Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 113–4 and 149–63.

³⁰ J. Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal: homenatge a Joaquim Botet i Sisó' in J.M. Gurt and A.M. Balaguer (eds), *Symposium Numismàtic de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 261–311 at pp. 285–7.

³¹ Balaguer, *Història*, p. 68; see also Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal', pp. 269 and 286, and Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina' (n. 11), where the document is mentioned as 'l'equivalència de l'any 1000' without explanation or citation.

³² Botet, *Monedes catalans* (n. 20), vol. 1, p. 31 and n. 1.

³³ J. Salat, *Tratado de las monedas labradas en la principado de Cataluña* (Barcelona, 1818), vol. 1, p. 90. The shelfmark is to be found there as Arxiu de l'Abadia de Montserrat, calaix 22, leg. 14, fol. 2.

³⁴ R. Ordeig i Mata (ed.), *Catalunya carolíngia IV: els comtats d'Osona i Manresa*, *Memòries de la secció històrico-arqueològica LIII* (Barcelona, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 43–4.

the price is '*I manchoso in rem valentem et solidos VI*' (my emphasis).³⁵ This is not the same thing as Salat and Botet claimed and on what in turn Balaguer relies. It is possible that this was not the same document that Salat saw; such land sales are often short and two could plausibly have been copied onto the same folio of the cartulary. If so, however, Pasqual's omission of the document from his *regestum* is hard to explain, as he certainly saw its companion, and it seems more likely that the whole interpretation rests on a misreading by Salat. I have therefore rejected arguments based on this document in the following discussion.

Dineros grosos seu curribiles

The first reference from the Barcelona area to *denarios curribiles* occurs in a sale charter of 991.³⁶ Further mentions have been cited from 997, 1004 (perhaps *recte* 1005) and 1014, though I have not been able to locate the latter two.³⁷ In 1005 documents begin to refer to *denarios grosos*, and references to these coins also occur in 1015 (allegedly) and in 1020.³⁸ Other terms for coins that appear in documents before this are *cacimis*, referring to Andalusí silver dirhams, *argentazas*, an obscure unit largely confined to the county of Urgell, and *pesas*, which appear to have been measures of bullion weight though their exact value is unclear. An early suggestion by Gaspar Feliu, that they represented a pound of silver or an ounce of gold, reckoned as equivalents, has the virtue of simplicity but he has subsequently joined others in deciding that matters were actually more complicated.³⁹ There is no reason to think that any of these terms refer to silver diners: the *cacimis* would have been more than twice the weight of a *diner de transició* and not easily divisible into diners, *pesas*

³⁵ J. Pasqual, '*Sacrae Antiquitatis Cathaloniae Monumenta*', Biblioteca de Catalunya MS 429, cited by F.X. Altés i Aguiló (ed.), 'El diplomatari del monestir de Santa Cecília de Montserrat, II: anys 1000–1077', *Studia Monastica* 37 (1995), pp. 301–94, as source for his doc. no. 100.

³⁶ Barca I 213.

³⁷ Balaguer, *Història*, p. 68, without full citations. The first of the three documents is Comtal 237; I have not been able to locate the 1004 one, to which Balaguer does not give a reference, unless she refers to Comtal 77, *recte* 1005 (*solidos XXIII de denariis curribiles placibiles*). The 1014 document, for which she cites (*Història*, p. 315 ap. 4, *reg.* only) Botet, *Monedes catalans* (n. 20), I, p. 31, is not printed in Comtal as Botet's reference suggests it should be, and I have been unable to locate it elsewhere.

³⁸ Comtal 80. I have not been able to find the 1015 reference that Balaguer says is the next known occurrence (but for which she does not give a reference), but Comtal 149, which is from the abbey of Sant Joan de les Abadesses near Ripoll in 1020, refers to a price of *solidos CC septuaginta grosos* which shows that the new currency was known by this time, and required definition, even in this marginal area.

³⁹ For *cacimis* see Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal' (n. 30), p. 266; cf. Sant Cugat 188 (986): '*argento spanesco*'. For *argentazas*, compare C. Baraut (ed.), 'Els documents, dels segles IX i X, conservats a l'Arxiu Capitular de la Seu d'Urgell', *Urgellia* 2 (1979), pp. 7–143 at p. 14, Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal', pp. 268–9, and Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 50–1. Professor Gaspar Feliu informs me that later usages in other areas make these units a quarter-ounce of silver, reckoned to be worth half a mancus, but the Urgell documents clearly refer to smaller-value units: see n. 41 below. On *pesas* compare G. Feliu Montfort, 'Las ventas con pago en moneda en el Condado de Barcelona hasta el año 1010', *CHEC* 5 (1971), pp. 9–42 at p. 12; G. Feliu i Montfort, 'La moneda prefeudal' in Riquer *Història Política, Societat i Cultura* 2, pp. 152–3 at p. 153; and Feliu, 'Moneda a Barcelona', pp. 110–13, with Balaguer, *Història*, p. 51, and M. Riu, 'Alguns problemes de metrologia' in Udina, *Symposium Internacional* (n. 1), vol. 2, pp. 117–21.

were clearly much larger even than that, and *argentazas* were too local, although their value does seem to have been similar.⁴⁰ It should be noted that the bishopric of Urgell, where *argentazas* are principally mentioned, did not strike its own coins.

With a single exception the terms *dineros grosos* and *dineros curribiles* only occur in documents from the Barcelona archives.⁴¹ It seems reasonable to suppose that they refer to coins current in Barcelona and therefore can be related to the changes in the standard.

Botet, though he knew of the heavy coins of Ramon Borrell and the later small ones of Berenguer Ramon, was cautious enough to say no more than that these usages indicated two standards of diner circulating in c.1000 Barcelona.⁴² In 1979 Josep Pellicer placed the metrology of the Catalan coins in a far wider context. He suggested that the *denarios curribiles* were the new light ones, introduced as he saw it by Ramon Borrell around 992. The weight was then rapidly adjusted slightly downwards to match the silver standard across the border in al-Andalus more closely (a standard that, Pellicer argued, was itself a creation of the Muslim caliphate to integrate more closely with the western standard!). The *grosos* were the pre-992 coins that remained in circulation.⁴³ Pellicer's conclusions rely on the exact weights of a very few worn coins, and it is arguable how far they can be accepted without more finds to substantiate them. Secondly, while he is clearly right to suggest a change to the coinage by the counts in the era of Ramon Borrell, that ruler's father, Borrell, remained alive until 993.⁴⁴ While Ramon Borrell may have had authority in Barcelona in 992, this is not documented elsewhere. Pellicer allows for the possibility that the weight reduction could be attributed to Borrell instead, but this will not do because of the existence of full-weight coins of Ramon Borrell.⁴⁵

Balaguer has suggested that there was indeed a coinage reform under Ramon Borrell, but it was carried out more or less at the turn of the millennium.⁴⁶ Although this is still at variance with the finds pattern, the latter is too sparse to be conclusive. Balaguer's argument, however, hinges on the Montserrat document of 1000, which forces her to date the reform to early in Ramon Borrell's reign. She therefore associates the mentions in documents of *denarios de Barcinone curribiles* with the new light coinage and the later mentions of *dinarios grosos* with the previous, heavy,

⁴⁰ Urgell 186 gives a price of *solidos IIII et argencios II in rem valentem*, Urgell 190 *solido I et denarios VI* and Urgell 191 *solido I et denario I*, the usages seem parallel.

⁴¹ See n. 38 above for the exception.

⁴² Botet, *Monedes catalans* (n. 20), vol. 1, pp. 29–32.

⁴³ Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal' (n. 30), esp. pp. 267–74 with a summary of findings at p. 283 and again at p. 293. The integration of Andalusí silver standards is discussed *ibid.*, pp. 276–7 and repeated in the same summaries. Cf. Feliu, 'Moneda a Barcelona' (n. 7), pp. 103–6, and Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina' (n. 11), pp. 103–4.

⁴⁴ Ramon Borrell's first appearance as count known to me is in Condal 225. Borrell II's last mention is in his will, Urgell 232. On the correct dating of this and his death, see Baraut, 'La data i el lloc de la mort del comte Borrell II de Barcelona-Urgell', *Urgellia* 10 (1991), pp. 469–72.

⁴⁵ Pellicer, 'Metrologia comtal' (n. 30), p. 268, following M. Crusafont i Sabaté [*sic*], 'Nou diner de Barcelona, atribució a Ramon Berenguer I', *AN* 6 (1976), pp. 131–9 at pp. 136–7.

⁴⁶ Balaguer, *Història*, p. 68; also *MEC* 6, chapter 4.

one of Ramon Borrell.⁴⁷ There are several problems with this theory. First, there are references to *denarios curribiles* from well before 1000, the earliest being that of 991 when Borrell II was still ruling in Barcelona.⁴⁸ This clearly shows that *denarios curribiles* cannot simply have replaced older *grosos* in the time of Ramon Borrell as Balaguer suggests. Furthermore, that *denarios curribiles* had to be specified at all implies another sort of coin from which they had to be distinguished. That is to say that it is necessary to envisage two standards of diner in circulation even in 991. Also, in a reform of any kind the old diners would presumably have been the most plentiful, and therefore most likely to be mentioned, when the new coinage was freshly arrived in circulation. This makes the first mention of *denarios grosos* very late, and hard to explain, if they were indeed the obsolete coins.

The formula *denarios curribiles* surely suggests an expression of currency rather than novelty. The literal reading of the word is ‘running coin’, that is, the current issue, which we should expect to refer to the coinage being issued at the time of whatever standard. In this case the reference to *denarios curribiles* from 997 could be to the old coinage attributed to Ramon Borrell, but the same term could in 1014 have referred to the post-reform issues. The 991 mention of *denarios curribiles* would be to the heavy coinage, then new, but the date shows that it was being produced under Borrell II. The new term must therefore spring not from a weight reduction by Ramon Borrell, making the old heavy coins *grosos* compared to new light *curribiles*, but to an increase in weight by Borrell making heavy *curribiles* the new current issue. By the same reasoning, the 1005 appearance of the term *denarios grosos* indicates a further novelty, a new term for the heavy coins necessitated by a new and contrasting coinage. Whether this was the small coinage of the later counts, or a reduced-weight one of Ramon Borrell is not certain. A recent find may indicate that it was the latter.⁴⁹

The question is, when did the coinage called *denarios grosos*, which continued to run for some time alongside the *denarios curribiles*, begin? Having argued the case for a reform under Borrell II from the surviving coins, we can now explore the contemporary literary evidence.

The use of coin in Barcelona compared with other regions in Catalonia

It is clear from a comparison of Barcelona with other areas that it was the most monetised zone of Borrell’s rule.⁵⁰ In the plentiful land sales recorded at the monastery

⁴⁷ Note that Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’ (n. 11), pp. 103–4, revives the alternative view of Pellicer that the *grosos* should in fact be considered later than the *curribiles*.

⁴⁸ Barca I 213. I cannot understand Balaguer’s omission of this document, as it is not only cited by Botet (*Monedes catalans* (n. 20), vol. 1, pp. 26–7), but also by Pellicer (‘Metrologia comtal’ (n. 30), p. 269 referring to n. 46 on p. 302), that is, an article that Balaguer edited for publication.

⁴⁹ The latest find is in Crusafont, ‘Moneda barcelonina’ (n. 11), p. 103. Gaspar Feliu argues that references to *denarios grosos* should be taken to refer to imported Andalusí dirhams: Feliu, ‘Moneda prefeudal’ (n. 39), p. 153. It seems unlikely that the citizens of Barcelona would identify such foreign coins with a term so familiar as *denarius* (rather than the established term *cacimis*; see above), and it would be very strange if such references only began in 1005, since the Umayyads had been minting silver dirhams in al-Andalus since the conquest in 711. The coins must have been known in Barcelona before the eleventh century.

⁵⁰ Barcelona’s economic peculiarity is well expressed by Feliu, ‘Ventas’ (n. 39), pp. 9–11.

of Sant Benet de Bages, in frontier Manresa, for example, or in those of the nunnery of Sant Joan de Ripoll further north, those from the cathedral of Urgell in the mountains and even from the mint city of Vic d'Osona, somewhere between a half and two-thirds of documents record a price *in rem valentem*, best translated as 'in things of the same value'.⁵¹ The same term occurs in documents from areas where no coins circulated. On the basis of this it has been questioned whether transactions which do not specify payment in kind really were paid in coin.⁵² This cannot be definitively answered, but references such as one in the will of Count Sunifred of Cerdanya, who died in 966, to a bequest of ten *pesas* of deniers 'of Osona or Barcelona or Girona', or in the 972 consecration act of the monastery of Sant Benet de Bages, deep in Borrell's frontier territories, where it was ordained that the monastery's endowment would fund an annual subsidy to San Pietro di Roma of 30 *solidi* to be paid 'in the proper public money of Osona', indicate that contemporaries were able to use actual coin from local mints.⁵³ We simply do not have any of it. In Barcelona, however, between 971 and 981 only one price in kind is recorded, and all the others are either in coin or in precious metal. The following table summarises the Barcelona evidence for that period.

| <i>Charter</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Nature</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|--|
| Barca I 99 | 971 | sale | <i>pesas V de argento mero et purissimo</i> paid to the bishop |
| Barca I 101 | 971 | sale | ... <i>centum quinquaginta in rem valentem</i> |
| Barca I 102 | 972 | will | bequests of <i>solidos I per signum & solidos XX per checeua</i> |
| Barca I 103 | 972 | sale | <i>denarios X</i> |
| Barca I 104 | 972 | sale | <i>solido I et denarios III</i> |
| Barca I 106 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos X</i> |
| Barca I 107 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos XVI</i> |
| Barca I 110 | 974 | sale | <i>solido I et dinarios III</i> |
| Barca I 111 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos II</i> |
| Barca I 115 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barca I 116 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos XII</i> |
| Barca I 117 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos CCC de argento</i> |
| Barca I 118 | 976 | sale | <i>solidos III</i> |
| Barca I 119 | 977 | sale | <i>solido I et dinarius II</i> |
| Barca I 122 | 977 | sale | <i>solidos VIII</i> |

⁵¹ The sale charters from Sant Benet de Bages from 971–85 are CC IV 1091, 1098–1102, 1108–10, 1112, 1114–16, 1118, 1119, 1124, 1127, 1129, 1131, 1133, 1139, 1141, 1142, 1147, 1148, 1150, 1153, 1154, 1156–8, 1160, 1161, 1164, 1165, 1167–9, 1181, 1183, 1188, 1189–91, 1196, 1197, 1201, 1202, 1204–7, 1209, 1223, 1224, 1232, 1233, 1238, 1239, 1246, 1249, 1252, 1255, 1257, 1261, 1267, 1270, 1273, 1278, 1279, 1283, 1284, 1286, 1287, 1297, 1299–1301, 1307, 1318, 1322, 1344, 1346, 1348, 1352, 1361, 1362, 1364, 1368–72, 1374, 1376, 1378, 1381, 1386, 1391, 1403–6, 1411–14, 1417, 1418, 1422, 1424–7, 1429, 1432, 1436, 1444, 1447, 1448, 1451, 1456, 1458, 1463–6, 1469 and 1479–81. Those from Sant Joan are Condal 171, 172, 176, 178, 179, 184, 187, 191 and 202 and those from Urgell, Urgell 161, 165, 167, 168, 170, 172, 175, 177, 180–2, 184–7, 190, 191, 195 and 198–202.

⁵² W. Davies, 'Sale, price and valuation in Galicia and Castile-Leon in the tenth century', *EME* 11 (2002), pp. 149–74.

⁵³ CC V 374 and CC IV 1172 respectively.

| <i>Charter</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Nature</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|---|
| Barca I 124 | 978 | sale | <i>solidos XXX</i> |
| Barca I 125 | 978 | pledge | <i>mancusos X et VII et quarta parte iam dictis iafaris</i> |
| Barca I 126 | 979 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barca I 129 | 980 | sale | <i>media pesa de argento mero placibile</i> |
| Barca I 132 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos LXX</i> |
| Barca I 134 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barca I 135 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XXX</i> |
| Barca I 136 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barca I 137 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XXX</i> |

Table 1. Charters featuring prices or payments from SS Creu and Eulàlia de Barcelona, 971–81

In Barcelona, the largest city in 970s Catalonia, high-value transactions are, unsurprisingly, more noticeable than elsewhere although the three sale charters of the same years from nearby Girona, then likewise important, record similarly high values. They are not confined to the count and his officials, indeed none of these transactions feature Borrell.⁵⁴ For comparison, Table 2 lists prices and payments from the nearby monastery of Sant Cugat and Table 3 similar documents from Sant Pere de Vic.

| <i>Charter ref.</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Nature</i> | <i>Payments or Prices</i> |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------|---|
| Sant Cugat 95 | 971 | sale | <i>X solidos in rem valentem</i> |
| CC V 408 | 971 | sale | <i>solidos VIII</i> |
| Sant Cugat 100 | 973 | sale | produce |
| CC V 423 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos V</i> |
| Sant Cugat 109 | 975 | donation | <i>solidos X (servitium due from land)</i> |
| Sant Cugat 112 | 976 | donation | <i>solidos X (annual render due from land)</i> |
| Sant Cugat 118 | 976 | sale | <i>solid. XXV</i> |
| Sant Cugat 123 | 977 | will | bequests of <i>solidos VIII</i> and <i>solidos IIII</i> |
| Sant Cugat 124 | 977 | sale | <i>solid. V</i> |
| Sant Cugat 126 | 977 | sale | <i>pensas sexagintas</i> (paid to Count Borrell for a castle) |
| Sant Cugat 127 | 978 | donation | <i>solidata I de zera</i> (cens due from land) |
| Sant Cugat 133 | 979 | sale | <i>solidos XV</i> |
| CC V 462 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos V</i> |
| Sant Cugat 138 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XXVI</i> |
| Sant Cugat 139 | 981 | will | bequests of <i>pesa I</i> , <i>pesa III de auro</i> & <i>pesa I</i> |
| Sant Cugat 140 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos X</i> |
| Sant Cugat 142 | 981 | Sale | <i>solidos VII et medium</i> |

Table 2. Charters featuring prices or payments from Sant Cugat del Vallès, 971–81

| <i>Charter</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Nature</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| CC IV 1097 | 971 | sale | <i>solidos XIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC V 411 | 971 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |

⁵⁴ The Girona transactions are CC V 435, 459 and 463.

| <i>Charter</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Nature</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|---|
| CC IV 1110 | 972 | sale | <i>solidos IIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1116 | 972 | sale | <i>solidos VIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1120 | 972 | sale | <i>solidos III et medium</i> |
| CC IV 121 | 972 | sale | <i>solidos VI in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1123 | 972 | pledge | <i>solidos C aut solidadas C</i> |
| CC IV 1128 | 972 | sale | <i>solidos XIII</i> |
| CC IV 1130 | 973 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| CC IV 1136 | 973 | sale | <i>solidos XX in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1137 | 973 | sale | <i>solidos XX in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1144 | 973 | sale | <i>solidos X</i> |
| CC IV 1170 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos C in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1178 | 974 | sale | <i>solidos III in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1185 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos XII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1186 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| CC IV 1187 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos VI</i> |
| CC IV 1200 | 975 | sale | <i>solidos XXXXXX in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1218 | 976 | sale | <i>solidos XX in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1220 | 976 | sale | <i>solidos III</i> |
| CC IV 1222 | 976 | sale | <i>solidos XXVI</i> |
| CC IV 1240 | 977 | sale | <i>solidos VII</i> |
| CC IV 1243 | 977 | sale | <i>solidos X</i> |
| CC IV 1244 | 977 | pledge | <i>pesas V against an alod including a tower</i> |
| CC IV 1258 | 978 | sale | <i>solidos C</i> |
| CC IV 1269 | 979 | sale | <i>solidos XXX</i> |
| CC IV 1282 | 979 | sale | <i>solidos XXX in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1285 | 979 | sale | <i>solidos XXXX</i> |
| CC IV 1291 | 979 | sale | <i>solido I in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1303 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos VI in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1306 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| CC IV 1309 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos XXXX</i> |
| CC IV 1310 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos C</i> |
| CC IV 1313 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos V</i> |
| CC IV 1314 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos XXXXI in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1315 | 980 | sale | <i>solidos XV in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1324 | 980 | sale | <i>dinarios VIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1333 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos VIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1336 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1339 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos XXti in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1341 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos X in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1347 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos VIII in rem valentem</i> |
| CC IV 1351 | 981 | sale | <i>solidos L paid to Count Borrell</i> |
| CC IV 1353 | 981 | will | <i>solidos LX</i> |
| CC IV 1354 | 981 | will | <i>debts to be collected of manchosos VI & manchoso I</i> |

Table 3. Charters featuring prices or payments from Sant Pere de Vic, 971–81

At Vic the preponderance of payments in kind is very apparent. In the last Vic transaction and the second of 978 from Barcelona, there is the first sign of a phenomenon that would come to dominate commerce in Barcelona city, but make comparatively little difference elsewhere, the advent of the gold *mancus*. The nature of this Muslim coin has occasioned some debate.⁵⁵ Terms in use later in the period suggest that there were several different types of *mancus* available, from mints such as Saragossa, Ceuta, Dénia and of course Córdoba. In this early period the only specification used is *iafaris*, whose meaning is also debated but has been held to denote the caliphal *dinar* of Córdoba (Fig. 9).⁵⁶ It is hard to be sure what type of coin was in use since although Barcelona was minting its own *mancuses* by 1018, very few have been found (Fig. 10). This led Miquel Barceló to question the impression given by the documents of the frequent use of gold in the years before 1000.⁵⁷



Fig. 9. AV *dinar*, 3.70g, of Caliph Hisham II of Córdoba, 998/9, ‘al-Andalus’ (Madinat al-Zahra). Olèrdola, Museu Arqueològic de Catalunya - Olèrdola, MAC Olèrdola 278; found at Olèrdola (Alt Penedès, Catalunya). Reproduced from Camps, *Cataluña*, cat. no. 12.

⁵⁵ See Feliu, ‘Moneda a Barcelona’ (n. 7), pp. 106–8 and in more detail, A.M. Balaguer, ‘*Parias* and Myth of the *Mancus*’ in M. Gomes Marques and D.M. Metcalf (eds), *Problems of Medieval Coinage in the Iberian Area 3: a symposium held by the Sociedade numismática scalabitana and the Instituto de Sintra on 4–8 October, 1988* (Santarém, 1988), pp. 499–545, esp. pp. 501–2.

⁵⁶ The term *iafaris* has caused some difficulty. It is conventionally explained (e.g. by J.M. Salrach, *El Procés de feudalització, segles III–XII*, *Història de Catalunya 2* (Barcelona, 1987), p. 273) as a reference to a *hajīb* (prime minister) of the caliph al-Hakam II (961–76) by the name of Xafar, implying old *dinars* from Córdoba. C. du Fresne Du Cange, D. Carpenter and G.A.L. Henschel (eds), *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, re-ed. L. Favre (Paris, 1938), vol. 4, online at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/document?O=N051562> as of 17 October 2009, p. 277 *sub* ‘*iafarinos*’ however explained it as a reference to saffron, describing the colour of good gold. This seems oddly poetical for a business term, but where it is used it does seem to refer not to the coin but the metal, and I therefore find Du Cange’s explanation more useful.

⁵⁷ M. Barceló, ‘L’or d’al-Andalus circulant als comtats catalans entre 967 i 1100: un or vist i no vist’ in Gurt and Balaguer, *Symposium Numismàtic*, vol. 1 (n. 30), pp. 313–27. One of the queries about the Muslim gold coinage raised by Barceló in this paper, the source of the metal used after the Umayyads’ loss of control of territory in Morocco, is now answered by the work of Ian Blanchard on the Sahara gold routes. See J. Pellicer i Bru, ‘El patró oro en la península ibérica durante los siglos IV al VI h.316–540 h. (X al XIII d.c.): el oro andalusí’, *GacNum* 152 (1998), pp. 13–38, esp. p. 21, citing I.B. Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy and Minting in the Middle Ages* (Stuttgart, 2001), vol. 2, pp. 718 ff. Note however that the rigour of Blanchard’s methodology has been questioned: see the reviews by M. Allen, *EHR* 118 (2003), pp. 1037–8 and E. Westermann, *Journal of European Economic History* 36, 1 (2006), pp. 221–3.



Fig. 10. *A* mancus of Marquis Ramon Berenguer of Barcelona (1035–76), Barcelona; location unknown. Reproduced from *Aureo y Calicó* Auction 218-3 (21/2 October 2009) ‘Caballero de las Yndias’, 3a Parte/Part Three: España, lot 1472.

The use of mancuses, wherever they may have been come from, fits well with the generally higher value of transactions in Barcelona: a high value coin had a role here which it did not find in areas where lower prices were usual. High amounts were being reckoned not in coin but in gold and silver bullion, and the standard of such metal was, understandably, a matter of concern. It was thought wise to specify *argento mero et purissimo* or *mero placibile*.⁵⁸ Smaller transactions still appear to have been reckoned in *solidi*. It seems that Barcelona’s mint was answering its citizens’ needs, although the mancuses, in one case apparently cut into quarters, make it clear that the city’s coin was certainly not the only money in circulation.⁵⁹

Trends in Barcelona’s currency were not mirrored elsewhere, where the percentage of transactions in kind remained fairly steady and mancuses remained rare, despite Vic’s supposed mint activity which ought to have at least slightly monetised its area. The remainder of the paper, therefore, concentrates on Barcelona, and does not present detailed evidence from elsewhere.⁶⁰

The development of coin use in Barcelona

The cut-off date 981 of Tables 1–3 was chosen because after that the changes become apparent. These begin to answer the questions about coinage reform set out above. With the context established by the 971–81 documents the changes become clear. The data is again taken from the cathedral of Barcelona and the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès, but material from the comital archive, what there is of it so early, is included. The documents are presented chronologically by archive.

| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| 982 | | |
| Sant Cugat | Sant Cugat 143 | <i>solidos VI</i> |
| | Sant Cugat 144 | <i>solidos XV</i> |
| | Sant Cugat 146 | <i>pensas II de argento bono placibile</i> |
| | Sant Cugat 147 | <i>solidus I</i> |

⁵⁸ Barca I 99 and 129.

⁵⁹ Barca I 125. See Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 93–107 esp. pp. 93–7.

⁶⁰ *MEC* 6, chapter 2 gives a wider perspective. The pre-eminence of Barcelona in the currency changes of the period is clearly demonstrated not only by the documents cited in n. 51 above and other later documents, but by Barceló, ‘L’ or d’al-Andalus’, p. 317 and gráficas I and II (pp. 325–6).

| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Barcelona | Barca I 138 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| | Barca I 140 | <i>pesa I de argento bono placibilem ad peso legitimo</i> |
| | Barca I 141 | <i>pesas IIIor</i> |
| | Barca I 142 | <i>solidos L</i> |
| | Barca I 143 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| Comital Archive | Condal 192 | <i>solidos CLX</i> |
| | Condal 193 | <i>solidos LXXX</i> |
| 983 | | |
| Sant Cugat | Sant Cugat 157 | <i>solidos X</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 144 | <i>pense de argento valentes XL paid to Count Borrell</i> |
| | Barca I 145 | <i>solidos VIII</i> |
| | Barca I 146 | <i>pesas II et media</i> |
| | Barca I 147 | <i>solidos XXXa</i> |
| | Barca I 148 | <i>solidos XL</i> |
| Arxiu Comtal | Condal 195 | <i>peças III et media</i> |
| | Condal 196 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| 984 | | |
| Barcelona | Barca I 149 | <i>solidos X</i> |
| | Barca I 151 | <i>solidos XXX</i> |
| Arxiu Comtal | Condal 198 | <i>solidos octaginta</i> |
| | Condal 199 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| | Condal 200 | <i>solidos XXXX</i> |
| 985 | | |
| Sant Cugat | Sant Cugat 171 | <i>mancusos de auro cocto</i> owed to the maker of a will |
| Barcelona | Barca I 152 | <i>mancusos XXX</i> |

Table 4. Payments and prices from documents from the Barcelona area 982–5

985 was a bad year for Catalonia. The famous raid of the Muslim army of al-Mansur destroyed not only several religious houses (all the nuns of Barcelona's Sant Pere de les Puelles reportedly being carried off as slaves) but also large numbers of documents.⁶¹ Nonetheless the changes are already apparent. We see, most obviously, the advent of the mancus and signs of price inflation, but also a number of signs of decreasing confidence in the currency. The use of bullion was becoming more common, and the increasing incidence of qualifications like *bono placibile*, and in the case of the foreign mancuses, *chocto*, literally 'cooked', 'burnt', suggest that its standard was frequently a matter of concern.

The term '*chocto*' is worth a brief digression. This apparent testing or melting may have been because of a variety in standards of the gold dinars that were reaching Barcelona from various mints in al-Andalus and, probably, beyond. The origin of

⁶¹ G. Feliu i Montfort, *La Presa de Barcelona per Almansor: història i mitificació* (Barcelona, 2007), online at http://www.iecat.net/butlleti/pdf/116_butlleti_feliu.pdf, last modified 15 September 2008 as of 23 November 2008. I am grateful to Professor Feliu for providing me with a copy of this pamphlet.

individual dinars is only specified in later documents, when the bulk of coin in use must have been such that such testing would have been impractical. At this early stage foreign coins may have been converted on arrival into bullion of a known standard. It is hard to read the term *chocto* as referring to anything other than melting; destructive assay methods would hardly have been used on so large a scale and would, in any case, have left no minted coin with which to pay the required price.⁶² It may therefore be that the coins were being re-minted into local versions of the *mancus*.⁶³ When the supply of Islamic *mancuses* began to dry up in 1020, a moneyer by the name of Bonhom began to mint local ones that circulated for many years. The paucity of finds of imported coin of an earlier period might be explained by such a practice. On the other hand the lower-value silver currency, which should have been struck in greater volumes and lost more frequently, is even less visible in finds than the gold. By 1000 the metal supply was sufficient and gold bullion weighed in ounces had more or less become a currency in its own right. Before this the coins appear to have been in use as issued, and some transactors (mostly churchmen) seem to have been less ready to accept them than others.⁶⁴

Whatever the case with the gold coins, transactions along traditional lines reckoned in *solidi* and presumably paid in diners, also continued but the signs of change are apparent at Barcelona, and this impression deepens as the documents continue.

| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| 986 | | |
| Comital | Condal 203 | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 155 | <i>solidos XIII et medio</i> |
| | Barca I 156 | <i>solidos VI</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 158 | <i>penas II in rem valentem</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 159 | <i>pesa una de argento</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 160 | <i>penas V de argento</i> paid by Count Borrell |
| | Barca I 161 | <i>penas III de argento</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 162 | <i>solidos LXX de denarios</i> |
| | Barca I 163 | <i>solidos XX</i> paid by Bishop Godmar III of Girona |
| | Barca I 165 | <i>solidos X</i> |
| | Barca I 166 | <i>pes... .. et medio</i> |
| | Barca I 167 | <i>solidos XIII</i> |

⁶² See A. Oddy, 'Assaying in Antiquity' in *Gold Bulletin* 16 (1983), pp. 52–9. I am grateful to Marcus Phillips for bringing this useful paper to my attention.

⁶³ On local manufacture of *mancuses* elsewhere see L. Ilisch, 'Die imitativen *Solidi mancusi*. 'Arabische' Goldmünzen der Karolingerzeit' in R. Cunz (ed.), *Fundamenta Historiae: Geschichte im Spiegel der Numismatik und ihrer Nachbarwissenschaften. Festschrift für Niklot Klüßendorf zum 60. Geburtstag am 10. Februar 2004* (Hanover, 2004), pp. 91–106.

⁶⁴ On the *mancuses* of Bonhom and Eneas, see Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 53–5 and *MEC* 6, chapter 4. A perusal of the documents in Barca I, Comtal and J. Baucells i Reig, À. Fabrega i Grau, M. Riu i Riu, J. Hernando i Delgado and C. Batlle i Gallart (eds), *Diplomatari de l'Arxiu Capitular de Barcelona: segle XI*, *Fonts Documentals II* (Barcelona, 2007) demonstrates how the *mancus*, despite frequent concerns with its quality, became almost a standard currency in Barcelona after 995 or thereabouts. This is evidence of the high price of land in and around Barcelona rather than a decline in the use of silver. It certainly remained current elsewhere (see n. 51 above).

| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| 987 | | |
| Barcelona | Barca I 168 | <i>solidos XXX in rem valentem</i> |
| | Barca I 169 | <i>solidos XXVIII</i> |
| Comital | Condal 205 | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 171 | <i>mancusos II de auro</i> |
| Comital | Condal 206 | <i>pensa I de argento</i> |
| | Condal 207 | <i>media pensa de argento</i> owed by one brother to another in rearrangement of their father's will |
| | Condal 208* | <i>solidos X</i> |
| | Condal 209* | <i>pensa una de argento</i> |
| 988 | | |
| Barcelona | Barca I 174 | <i>solidos L</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 176 | <i>solidos LXXC</i> |
| | Barca I 178 | <i>pesas XXXta inter auro et argento placibiles</i> paid to Count Borrell by one of his major castellans |
| | Barca I 179 | <i>solidos V</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 180 | <i>solidos IIII</i> |
| | Barca I 181 | <i>exarachellos XII de argento</i> defaulted on by previous owner; <i>solidos XV</i> now paid ⁶⁵ |
| 989 | | |
| Barcelona | Barca I 182 | <i>solidos X</i> |
| | Barca I 183 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| | Barca I 184 | <i>solidos XXX</i> |
| Comital | Condal 211* | <i>media pessa de argento</i> paid by Count Borrell |
| | Condal 212 | <i>solidos XXX</i> paid by Abbess Adelaide, daughter of Count Borrell |
| | Condal 213 | <i>media pessa de argento</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 185 | <i>solidos VIII</i> |
| Comital | Condal 214* | <i>solidos quadraginta</i> paid to Count Borrell |
| | Condal 215* | <i>solidos XXX</i> paid to Count Borrell |
| | Condal 216 | <i>solidos C</i> |
| | Condal 217 | <i>solidos VIII</i> |
| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 189 | <i>solidos X de dinarios</i> |
| Comital | Condal 218 | <i>mancusos II de auro mero</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca I 190 | <i>mancoso I</i> |
| | Barca I 191 | <i>mancusos XII</i> paid by Bishop Godmar III |
| | Barca I 192 | <i>pensa et media de argento</i> paid by Bishop Vives |
| | Barca I 194 | <i>solidos L</i> |
| | Barca I 195 | <i>solido I et dinarios VI</i> |

⁶⁵ Feliu, 'Moneda a Barcelona' (n. 7), p. 113, suggests that the term *exarachellos* implies bezants, that is, coins of the Exarchate of Ravenna, but admits that this makes the valuation cited problematic.

| <i>Archive</i> | <i>Charter</i> | <i>Price or Payments</i> |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| Comital | Condal 219* | <i>solidos II</i> |
| | Condal 220 | <i>mancosos XVII et medio de auro mero iafaris</i> paid by Archdeacon Sunifred Llobet, of the Barcelona chapter |
| Barcelona | Barca I 196 | <i>solidos XV in rem valentem</i> |
| Comital | Condal 221* | <i>mancosos XVII et medio iafaris de auro cocto a penso legitimo</i> paid by Archdeacon Sunifred |
| Barcelona | Barca I 198* | <i>solidos X</i> |
| | Barca I 199 | bequests of <i>pensa X et VII de argento & pensa I</i> , among many other properties movable and immovable of Bishop Vives |
| 990 | | |
| Barcelona | Barca 200 | <i>solidos XXXII</i> |
| Comital | Condal 222 | <i>solidos XX</i> |
| Barcelona | Barca 201 | trial of Guiscafred <i>monetarius</i> for passing <i>denarios adulterinos</i> (see Appendix) |
| | Barca 202 | <i>pessas IIII</i> |
| | Barca 204 | <i>solidos quinque milia</i> |
| | Comital | Condal 223 |
| | Condal 224* | <i>solidos V</i> |
| | Condal 225 | <i>pesadas V</i> paid by Count Borrell and Countess Eimeruda |
| Barcelona | Barca 206 | <i>solidos sexaginta</i> |
| | Barca 207 | <i>mancosos II de auro mero iafaris</i> |
| | Barca 208 | <i>solidos VIII</i> |
| Comital | Condal 226 | <i>solidos XIII</i> |
| | Condal 227 | <i>solidos LX</i> |

Table 5. *Payments and prices from documents from the Barcelona area 986–90*⁶⁶

Although 985 was disastrous, recovery was rapid. The documents show that relief attempts were made by the count and bishops to stabilise conditions in the city in 986. As well as large quantities of aid in the form of precious metal, there was also occasional resort to payments in kind, so unusual here, though a fairly hectic normality soon reasserts itself. Many of the amounts that we see are extremely large, and were therefore paid in either silver or gold bullion. It is noticeable how quickly the mancus became a unit of account, and also how little trusted the coins were. Many of the mentions of Muslim coins still specify that they had had their quality tested or had been ‘cooked’ into bullion.

⁶⁶ Documents marked with an asterisk form part of the dossier of Vives of Provençals, a relative of the bishop’s. For Vives see P. Bonnassie, ‘Une famille de la campagne barcelonaise et ses activités économiques aux alentours de l’an mil’, *Annales du Midi* 76 (1964), pp. 261–97, transl. as ‘A Family of the Barcelona Countryside and Its Economic Activities Around the Year 1000’ in S.L. Thrupp (ed.), *Early Medieval Society* (New York, 1967), pp. 103–23.

There was no corresponding anxiety about silver. The last specifications of a standard for silver in our sample are from 982.⁶⁷ After that time it seems that all *solidi* had been adequately *placibiles*, and the same can apparently be said of *pesas de argento*. The contrast is sharply drawn in the 990 transaction that was paid in both mancuses, tested, and *solidi* in diners without further qualification.⁶⁸ What had occurred?

A new coinage?

The obvious answer seems to be that there was a new silver coinage in use in the city, whose standard was known to be acceptable. The huge 5,000 *solidi* transaction of 990 would have been paid in larger units, most likely in kind, if the units in which *solidi* were paid were not free of suspicion.⁶⁹ A slight deviation of quality in the units used here would multiply up to a swingeing loss if repeated 5,000 times over. Similar concerns should have assailed all the largest transactors, and yet it is only with gold that such worries were expressed.

In 990 we also see Borrell pursuing the enforcement of the coinage standard, which demonstrates that the city's coinage had an obvious quality which had apparently not been the case before 982.⁷⁰ A judicial hearing records that one Sendred, *custos monetae*, had spotted *denarios adulterinos* in circulation and had ascertained that they had come from Guiscfred *monetarius*. The moneyer was of the *familia* of Bishop Vives of Barcelona, and the document records Count Borrell's displeasure at finding that the case had not been resolved. The bishop claimed jurisdiction in the case because of the cathedral's royal immunity. Borrell recognised this but demanded that there be no further delays and judgement was duly passed by the court and the defendant arraigned by the bishop. His sentence is not recorded.⁷¹ (A text and translation of this document are given as an appendix.)

The document, although it is less about the crime than about the policing of it, sets out in fascinating brevity Borrell's concern for the money that was made under his authority. What a change had taken place! In 980 the count himself had needed to specify that he was paying in good silver (assuming that this was not simple scribal verbosity) and concerns over the quality of silver coin were, as we have seen, frequent in the documents.⁷² Now these worries were over, the standard of coin was

⁶⁷ Barca I 140; Sant Cugat 146.

⁶⁸ Condal 223.

⁶⁹ Barca I 204.

⁷⁰ Barca I 201.

⁷¹ In this respect, too, the counts had regained rights that had been the bishops' under the Carolingians. The capitulary legislation of Charlemagne defends the rights of bishops to try ecclesiastics (A. Boretius (ed.), *Capitularia Regum Francorum* vol. I, *MGH*, Legum Sectio II: Capitularia Regum Francorum I (Hannover, 1883, repr. 1984), no. 21, capp. 28 and 38, cit. J.R. Davis, 'A Pattern for Power: Charlemagne's delegation of judicial responsibilities' in *eadem* and M. McCormick (eds), *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies* (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 235–46 at p. 241).

⁷² CC V 463; cf. the same but with gold in 976, CC IV 1206. The only Barcelona example after 982 (and at least before c. 1015) that I have been able to find of silver being questioned in this way is Condal 232 of 992. Interestingly this is another comital transaction, a purchase by Ramon Borrell and his

good enough to make enforcement (and forgery) worthwhile, and the delinquent moneyer's fate, even in the temporising hands of the bishop, may not have been pleasant.

The reformed coinage does not seem to have circulated widely. In Osona and Urgell, even though Borrell spent a lot of time there, payment patterns continue with the same formulae as has already been observed in detail. Roughly half the payments are in kind and the rest in unspecified diners, though mancuses are increasingly used. In Girona there is too little evidence to say much except that mancuses were also in use there. A reference to the coinage in one further area, contained in a franchise charter to the frontier city of Cardona in 986, appears to be the first instance of that city's later right to mint. No coins exist to tell us whether the embattled citizens (this was the fourth attempt to establish Cardona in a century) had any use for their privilege or what standard of coin they might have struck if they did.⁷³

These circulation patterns raise a second question, which is who was issuing the coinage? The new coins were apparently only being made in Barcelona since there is no sign of them in the other mints' areas. It can be questioned just how much of, for example, the *propria moneta publica Ausonensi* was being made, given how much people in its county relied on payments in kind such as we almost never see in Barcelona.⁷⁴ This Barcelona focus, and the fact that the Barcelona moneyer Guiscafred was the bishop's man, may suggest that as part of Bishop Vives's and Borrell's collaboration in the repair of the Barcelona economy, the bishop was now making the coin in exchange for the traditional practice of a share of the profits. The coinage would have been intended for commercial use in the city's thriving markets, not just the land market although that is where we find its traces. For more than this we shall have to wait. Finds remain scarce but coins continue to turn up, and while it may well be that some of the existing *diners de transició* are Borrell's coins, a heavy coin of the same types as the transition coinage would still be a welcome confirmation of the theories here expounded.

brother Ermengol, the count of Urgell, of lands near Barcelona. Since Ermengol was presumably paying in coins of Urgell rather than Barcelona diners, I suspect this is why the price was set as '*pessas C de argento mero placibile*'. On the coinage of Urgell more generally see MEC 6, chapter 4 or Balaguer, *Història*, pp. 227–56.

⁷³ A. Galera i Pedrosa (ed.), *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*, Col·lecció Diplomataris 15 (Barcelona, 1998), doc. no. 7; see V. Farias, 'Guerra, llibertat i igualitarisme a la frontera' in Riquer, *Historia Política, Societat i Cultura dels Països Catalans* 2, pp. 112–13. T.N. Bisson, *Conservation of Coinage: monetary exploitation and its restraint in France, Catalonia and Aragón, c.AD 1000–c.AD 1225* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 57–8, sees this clause of the franchise as a statement of their duty to conform to the unified standard maintained in Borrell's other coinages. Comparison of the episcopal and comital coinages of this period make any notion of such a unity hard to maintain, and obviously the thesis of this paper presupposes an important difference in the coinage of the Barcelona mint. I would therefore prefer to read this as a concession of minting rights to Cardona without further specification.

⁷⁴ CC IV 1172; see Balaguer, *Història*, p. 130.

CONCLUSIONS

The surviving coinage of tenth-century Barcelona is scant, and none can be identified with certainty from the late tenth century. For its nature we have to rely on documentary testimonies. The surviving coin from before and after this period has been considered to adhere more or less to a Carolingian standard. It had been changed to a much lighter one by the time of the Òrrius hoard of c.1035. This change appears to be shown in documents by reference to *denarios curribiles* and *denarios grosos*, but the interpretation of these references is debatable and in part based on misreadings of the sources. Sanahuja's attribution of nineteen more coins of a degenerate sub-Carolingian standard to the Barcelona mint of the tenth century shows that as well as the weight reduction from the heavy coins of Ramon Borrell, an increase must also be accounted for. The documentary references, when correctly read, testify to this earlier reform as well as the later one. The earlier must have taken place under Count Borrell II, probably only at the Barcelona mint, and apparently in 982 when contemporary disquiet at the standard of current silver coin disappears from the records. By 990 Borrell, who was a reforming ruler in other respects, was policing the standard of the coinage. It was presumably he who set the weight and fineness of the known coins of his son, Ramon Borrell, though as yet we know of coin of this standard only in Ramon Borrell's name. In addition to this, it appears that minting at Barcelona was in the hands of the bishops on behalf of the counts, and a similar model needs to be considered at the other mints of late-Carolingian Catalonia, although their production appears to have been much less significant.

A final consideration: what might coins of Borrell look like, when and if they are found? It is a moot point whether Borrell, the count under whom Barcelona advanced into independence from Frankish rule, would have put his own name on his coins, as did his son. Borrell made a series of peaces with the caliphs of Córdoba without reference to the Carolingians. He claimed in a few charters that he had succeeded to royal power in the area, but he based this claim on a spurious charter that purported to have been given to his grandfather. After the 985 sack of Barcelona he renewed contact with King Lothar III (954–86) and received orders for the disposition of the frontier from him. His legitimist stance is therefore hard to assess.⁷⁵ We should note that the standard that he seems to have adopted for his coins was more or less Carolingian, although this may have been for commercial reasons as much as political display. Since coins of the early tenth century and Ramon Borrell's both bear the triple annulets reverse, it seems likely that those of Borrell would have done the same, and a small cross on the obverse also seems probable.⁷⁶ If his name were not obvious on the coinage, and degenerate forms of Carolingian names were still in use as on the coins that Sanahuja describes, we might expect to find a type intermediate between them and Ramon Borrell's, of the later weight and fabric but

⁷⁵ See M. Zimmermann, 'Catalogne et *Regnum Francorum*: les enseignements de la titulature comtale' in Udina, *Symposium Internacional* (n. 7), vol. 2, pp. 209–63, but cf. Jarrett, *Rulers and Ruled* (n. 1), chapter on Gurb.

⁷⁶ In this respect, I agree with Crusafont, 'Moneda barcelonina' (n. 11), pp. 100–2. I disagree with his chronology and the attribution of existing coins to this reign.

still using earlier designs. More finds of the reformed coinage of Barcelona would obviously help articulate the history of the mint for the tenth century, and if they occur, it will be Borrell's change of standard that provides that join.⁷⁷

Appendix: Arxiu Capítular de Barcelona, pergamins 1-1-867

Count Borrell and Bishop Vives make an agreement at the comital palace of Barcelona over the sentencing of the moneyer Guiscafred for the passing of substandard coinage, 28 March 990.

Original parchment in comital curial script. Ed. À. Fabregà i Grau (ed.), *Diplomatari de la Catedral de Barcelona: documents dels anys 844–1260. Volum I: documents dels anys 844-1000*, Fonts Documentals 1 (Barcelona, 1995), doc. no. 201.

Notitia sub presentia domni Borrelli incliti marchionis conscripta.

Anno Incarnationis Dominice / DCCCC^o XC^o, indiccione IIII^a, in cuius gloriosissimo palatio, intus in ciuitate Barchinnona, residebant comspectui / eius: domnus Viuas Barchinnone, gratia Dei pastor, et domnus Gondamarus Gerundensis chathedrae praesul, aliique / nobiles palacii eius, id est, Gauthfredus, Seniuldus, Bonutius, Senderedus, Eruigius leuita, Teofredus leuita, Senio/fredus, item Seniofredus, Sesenandus, Marchutius, item Marchutius, Paulus, Sanlo, Oliba, Arnuffus leui/ta, item Sanlo, Miro, Guitardus, Recosindus, Agalbertus leuita, Facultio leuita, item Gitardus, item Borrellus iudex, / et aliorum multorum bonorum hominum qui ibidem aderant, sicut fieri adsolet quando domnus comes exercet suam iustitiam. Uenit Sindaredus custos monetæ deferens querellam eo quod inuenerat denarios adulterinos in / manu Riculfi, frater Bonaricci presbiteri, quod et pro certo fecerat et scupserat Gischafredus monetarius, qui et homo erat de supradicto / domno Uiuane presule. Hac de causa, ut audiuit domnus comes, nihil esitans, sed sicut asuetus est iustitiam exinde de statim exer/cere uolens, ut corriperet malum inspectum et proiberet adfuturum alium faciendum, ut ita audiuit domnus æpiscopus, qui et ad eius præ/sentiam erat, postulans eius dignissima misericordia ut obseruaret reuerentiam et honorem chathedræ suæ, quod dudum per regali conlacione illius / aeclesiase successerat, sicut in preceptis eius regalibus resonabat ut habitatores terre ipsius ecclesie seu et francos neminem distrinxisset, et nisi eiusdem aeclesie episcopo. Ad quam domnus comes libenter audiens uocem eius, ita dicens: Reuerentiam et honorem chathedræ uestræ obseruauit et ob/seruabo; uolo autem sicut in decessores uestros actum est, ita et fiat, distringendi pontifici potestas; tantum uolo ut iustitia ne depereat, sed / modo quoerceatur. Et sic domnus pontifex, data sententia iudicum, suae in honore

⁷⁷ This article was originally written for presentation at the Departmental Seminar in the Department of Coins and Medals, Fitzwilliam Museum. I must thank Dr Elina Screen for her invitation, and Dr Marcus Phillips for his interest, encouragement and suggestions in the subsequent path towards publication. I owe considerable thanks to Professor Gaspar Feliu for supplying photocopies, advice and corrections. Without his input this paper would not have been possible. I should also thank Kathryn Thompson, with whom I planned the early versions. The faults that remain are of course mine alone.

ecclesiae distrinxit predictus in accusatio V kalendas / aprilis, anno III regnante Ugo Magnus regi franchorum.

+ Borrellus, gratia Dei comes. + Ato diacono. S+ Sesemundus. S+ Miro. S+ Eldefredo. S+ Gilelmus. SSS Senderedus.

XP Miro XP. XP Borrello iudice +. S+ Ennego. S+ Ainardo.

XP Teofredus leuita. S+ Uidale presbiter +

S+ Eruigius presbiter, cognomento Marcho, qui et iudex, qui hec scripsi et SSS die et anno quod supra.

Translation (by the author)

Notice written in the presence of the lord Borrell the illustrious Marquis.

In the Year of the Incarnation of the Lord 990, in the 4th Indiction, in whose most glorious palace, within the city of Barcelona, there were in session in his sight: the lord Vives, by grace of God pastor of Barcelona, and the lord Godmar chief-priest of the see of Girona, and other nobles of his palace, that is, Gauzfred, Seniul, Bonnuç, Sendred, Marcuç, another Marcuç, Paul, Sanlo, Oliba, the deacon Arnulf, another Sanlo, Miró, Guitard, Requesèn, Agalbert the deacon, Falcuç the deacon, another Guitard, another Borrell, judge, and many other worthy men who were in attendance, just as it is accustomed to be done when the lord count carries out his justice. There came Sendred, Guardian of Money, submitting this plea, that he had found adulterine diners in the hand of Riculf, brother of the priest Bonaricus, the which had certainly been made and passed by Guiscafred the moneyer, who was also the man of the above-said lord chief-priest Vives. About this case, as the lord count heard, nothing was resulting, but just as usual he wishes to see justice immediately done in it, so as to lay hold of the detected fraud and prevent another future occurrence, so thus the lord bishop heard, who was also in his presence, praying for his most worthy mercy so that he [the count] might observe the reverence and honour of his [the bishop's] cathedral, which formerly had followed from the royal endowment of that church, just as is recorded in its royal precepts that no-one might distraint the inhabitants or the freemen of the land of the selfsame church, except the bishop of that same church. To which the lord count willingly hearing his speech, thus saying: I have observed and will observe the reverence and honour of your see; I wish however the bishop's power of distraint be carried out as it was by your predecessors; so much do I want that justice perish not, but be immediately enforced. And thus the lord high-priest, once the sentence of judgement had been given, distrained the aforesaid accused in the honour of his church on the 5th Kalends of April, in the 3rd year of the rule of Hugh the Great King of the Franks.

+ Borrell, by grace of God count. XP Ató, deacon. S+ Sesmon. S+ Miró. S+ Eldefred. S+ Guillem. SSS Sendred.

XP Miró. XP Borrell, judge. S+ Ennec. S+ Ainard.

XP Teufred, deacon. S+ Vidal, priest +.

S+ Ervei, priest, also known as Marc, also judge, who have written and SSS the day and year as above.

Abbreviations of frequently cited catalogues and archival references.

AB = A.M. Balaguer, *Història de la Moneda dels Comtats Catalans* (Barcelona, 1999), text and catalogue. Page references cited as *Història*, coins in the catalogue prefixed by AB.

AN = *Acta Numismatica* (Barcelona).

Barca I = A. Fabregà i Grau (ed.), *Diplomatari de la Catedral de Barcelona: documents dels anys 844–1260. Vol. I: documents dels anys 844–1000*, *Fonts Documentals 1* (Barcelona, 1995), doc. no.

BQH = *Barcelona: Quaderns d'Història* (Barcelona).

CC IV = R. Ordeig i Mata (ed.), *Catalunya Carolíngia IV: els comtats de Osona i Manresa*, *Memòries de la Secció Històrico-Arqueològica LIII* (Barcelona, 1999), doc. no.

CC V = S. Sobrequés i Vidal, S. Riera i Viader and M. Rovira i Solà (eds), *Catalunya Carolíngia. Volum V: els comtats de Girona, Besalú, Empúries i Peralada*, rev. R. Ordeig i Mata, *Memòries de la Secció Històrico-Arqueològica LXI* (Barcelona, 2003), doc. no.

CHEC = *Cuadernos de historia económica de Cataluña* (Barcelona).

Comtal = G. Feliu i Montfort and J. M. Salrach (eds), *Els pergamins de l'Arxiu Comtal de Barcelona de Ramon Borrell a Ramon Berenguer I: estudi i edició*, *Col·lecció Diplomatari 18–20* (Barcelona, 1999), vol. 1, doc. no.

Condal = F. Udina Martorell (ed.), *El Archivo Condal de Barcelona en los siglos IX–X: estudio crítico de sus fondos*, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas: Escuela de Estudios Medievales, Textos 18, Publicaciones de la Sección de Barcelona 15 (Madrid, 1951), doc. no.

EME = *Early Medieval Europe* (Oxford).

MEC 6 = M. Crusafont i Sabater and A.M. Balaguer, *Medieval European Coinage, with a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum 6: The Iberian Peninsula*. (Cambridge, forthcoming).

MRALB = *Memorias de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* (Barcelona).

Sant Cugat = J. Rius (ed.), *Cartulario de <<Sant Cugat>> del Vallés* vol. I (Barcelona, 1945) and J. Rius Serra (ed.), *Cartulario de <<Sant Cugat>> del Vallés* vol. II (Barcelona, 1946), doc. no. (continuous through volumes).

Urgell = C. Baraut (ed.), 'Els documents, dels anys 981–1010, de l'Arxiu Capitular de la Seu d'Urgell', *Urgellia 3* (1980), 7–166, ap. no.