

The Fiscal Power of James the Conqueror (ca. 1230-1276): a Provisional Study

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Once he came of age, towards 1226-1228, King Jaume I ('the Conqueror') was well endowed economically, perhaps the most favorably endowed with patrimonial means of any lord-king in Christendom. This was so not because of the superior agrarian resources and commercial potential of Old Catalonia. Capetian France, if not also England and Germany, were more than his match in those respects. But no other land, perhaps not even Castile-León, had such enticing and vulnerable frontiers to exploit; and while it cannot be said that the conquests of Mallorca and Valencia were easy triumphs, still less that of Murcia (which in any case went to Castile), they resulted in just the sort of expanded domains from which the Catalan ancestors of the Conqueror and his barons had profited.

It would be mistaken to pretend that this historical dynamic fully explains the reign of the great ruler whose birth we commemorate here. But it does explain the most salient characteristic of Jaume's managerial work with his resources: his persistent reliance on credit to meet the expenses of his family, court, and crusading ambitions, as well as his exploitative taxation. His personal credit must have been second to none, because his landed wealth was progressively enlarged after 1230: he had more and more assets to pledge. He could borrow from anyone who had money to lend. What is more, he was no reckless borrower. He took great interest in the state of his finances, in the adjustment between his resources and his needs. The evidence of this is to be found in the records his scribes produced and preserved, a veritable archive of IOUs (as we speakers of English say); an archive that is at once extremely rich and highly problematic.

In this study I shall be concerned with how the lord-king Jaume thought about his patrimony, and how we should think about it. The evidence, as we have it, does not clearly respond to these points: that is why it is problematic. I shall address three questions: (1) the nature of the evidence in the present state of our knowledge; (2) the normal practice of accountability, as it engaged the Conqueror, his scribes, and his barons and creditors; and (3) the historical nature of their power over the *hisenda reial*.

I

It must be admitted at once —this is my first point— that no study of this subject can yet be definitive. Despite heroic enterprises, perhaps most notably (and lately) by Professor Robert I.

Burns, S.J., no scholar yet commands the whole documentation of James the Conqueror.¹ Part of the reason for this goes back to the thirteenth century. The scribes who recorded the conqueror-king's enactments and commands had all they could do to keep up with his current needs; they had neither time nor intention to serve the curiosity of future generations. It was they who began to consolidate copies of documents on loose leaves so as to form 'registers'; yet the twenty-four (or so) collections of copies that survived from the reign seemed so disordered by the early nineteenth century that Pròsper de Bofarull did not scruple to rearrange them as the eighteen registers (not counting those of the Infant Pere) that we have today. Bofarull was under no illusion that all extant records of Jaume I were to be found in the registers. He and Miret i Sans attempted to read all the written evidence from the reign; and it is altogether likely that Ambrosio Huici and his continuator meant to provide a comprehensive collection of records from the reign. Unfortunately, this did not—perhaps could not—mean a complete collection; and no archivist or scholar of our times (to my knowledge) has attempted that.²

What these works proved was that the vast bulk of fiscal materials—whether charters or 'accounts' or lists of taxable people and fiscal memoranda—was to be found in the registers of the old 'arxiu reial.' When Jesús Ernesto Martínez Ferrando set out to catalogue the 'documentación relativa al antiguo reino de Valencia' preserved in the ACA in 1934, one had to read the finer print below to learn that his *Catálogo* was limited to the registers, taking no account of the *pergaminos* that number nearly 2400 for all the king's lands, nor of some 187 *Cartas reales*.³ Likewise, Fr. Burns, whose massive *Diplomatarium* for Valencia contains the best editing yet achieved for King James, limits himself to Valencia and omits the *pergamins*, even though it is well understood that few if any of the latter were registered. It follows that we still have no plausible enumeration of the registered documents of Jaume I; and this means, further, that any attempt to classify records as commissions, acknowledgments of debt, and accounts, such as I shall offer in this *ponència*, can only be provisional. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to conjecture that between the notices provided by Miret i Sans, the Huici-Desamparados *Documentos de Jaime I*, the records of Jews printed by Bofarull i Sans, and the Burns *Diplomatarium*, a very large conspectus of the registers is available; so that, if I cannot be cogently statistical about the fiscal records, my sample is large and continuous enough to justify some useful conclusions.

1. In addition to the archival work of Pròsper de Bofarull i Mascaró (1777-1859), I refer to: «Catalogue des actes de Jaime I, Pedro III, & Alfonso III, rois d'Aragon, concernant les juifs (1213 - 1291)», ed. Jean RÉGNÉ, *Revue des Études juives*, LX (1906), p. 161-201, and continued in LXI-LXX (1907-20); Francisco de A. BOFARULL Y SANS, «Jaime I y los judíos», *Congrés d'història de la Corona d'Aragó dedicat al rey En Jaume I y a la seua època*, 2 parts (Barcelona 1909-1913), II, p. 819-943, with Apèndice of 168 records, mostly from the registers; *Colección diplomática de Jaime I, el Conquistador*, ed. Antonio HUICI MIRANDA, 3 vols. (Valencia 1916-20), as greatly expanded by Maria Desamparados CABANES PECOURT, *Documentos de Jaime I de Aragón*, 5 vols. to date. Textos medievales 49-51, 55, 77 (Valencia and Zaragoza 1976-88); Joaquim MIRET I SANS, *Itinerari de Jaume I "El Conqueridor"*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans (Barcelona 1918); *Catálogo de los documentos del antiguo reino de Valencia*, ed. Jesús ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ FERRANDO, 2 vols. Cuerpo Facultativo de Archiveros, Bibliotecarios y Arqueólogos. Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (Madrid 1934). I. *Jaime I, El Conquistador*; and a series of volumes bearing the series title *Diplomatarium of the crusader kingdom of Valencia. The registered documents of its conqueror, Jaume I, 1257-1276*, ed. Robert I. BURNS, S.J., of which four of a projected five volumes have been published (Princeton 1985-2007; to be cited as DV).

2. See in general Robert I. BURNS, *Society and documentation in crusader Valencia* (DV 1, Princeton 1985) chs. 2-5.

3. José TRENCHS, Antonio María ARAGÓ, *Las cancellerías de la Corona de Aragón y Mallorca desde Jaime I a la muerte de Juan II*, Folia Parisiensia, 1. Institución "Fernando el Católico" (CSIC), p. 915 (Zaragoza 1982), p. 14.

II

As the boy-king became conscious of his inheritance towards 1220, his courtier-regents persisted in the patrimonial accountability continuous since the twelfth century. For Aragonese domains and castles they had no written accountability at all. The lordships of castles were in baronial hands, with little better oversight than the custom of reversionary tenancy (*tenencias*). In Catalonia a certain regularity of audits of vicars and bailiffs may have survived King Pere's death, at least to the extent that the Templars oversaw the recovery of pledged domains. But for the period down to about 1240, that of the conquests of Mallorca and Valencia, all we know is that the major bailiwicks of Girona, Vic, Barcelona, and Lleida were functioning, for they were the chief resource for repayment to the king's creditors.⁴ And this is our clue to another reality of these years.

Whatever the residual value of the patrimonial domain, King Jaume soon discovered that it was easier to pay for his upkeep and projects by borrowing from people with ready cash than by attempting to manage the surpluses from scattered domains. This inclination was doubtless encouraged by Jaume's personal efforts to mobilize the campaign against Mallorca; and it was complicated by the infusion of money raised ad hoc. The Templars and courtiers drop out of sight as royal accountants, while the young King Jaume himself negotiated old debts and new obligations with barons, prelates, and finally with bailiffs themselves. Ramon Folc IV of Cardona (d. 1273) was one such creditor, and his hold on major royal castles and bailiwicks did little to secure his fidelity.⁵ Following the Valencian campaigns we find the originals of the king's accounts with the bailiff of Barcelona in July 1240 and February 1241, then nothing more for a decade, and practically nothing more for some sixteen years.⁶

Now here for a moment I need to return to the question of evidence. Why is it that down to 1257 *our* only record—hence something probably rare—is found in originals or discreet copies; and after 1257 practically the only evidence of accounts—and this evidence is abundant—is found in registers? This question is not so easy to answer as it may appear. To answer it one needs to know two other things: (1) that the registers of 1257 and after are *not* the earliest registers produced by royal scribes in Catalonia. Registers made by royal courtiers are first attested in the 1180s. But the fiscal registers deployed by Ramon de Caldes and Guillem de Bassa contained chiefly surveys of domain, not accounts of debt or balance (*computa*); they must have gone out of date by 1210 to 1220; and none of them survived.⁷ (2) Only a small number of accounts *after* 1257 also survive as originals or unregistered copies. These facts, when considered together with other known circumstances, point to the following conclusion: the registered accounts of Jaume I were the result of a deliberate change of procedure in the king's court dating from the years 1226-35. This had more to do with the young king's character—his interest in finance and his manifest willingness to create new wealth through aggressive

4. Thomas N. BISSON, «Las finanzas del joven Jaime I (1213 - 1228)», *Jaime I y su época*, 3 vols., in *X Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, Instituto «Fernando el Católico» (CSIC), p. 675, 746, 847 (Zaragoza 1979-1980), II, p. 161-208 (reprinted in English in *idem*, *Medieval France and her Pyrenean neighbours...* [London 1989], ch. 19).

5. ACA, Canc. pergamins Jaume I 1389; *Documentos de Jaime I*, III, no. 663; ACA, perg. Jaume I 1692, 1697, 1843; S. SOBREQÜÉS I VIDAL, *Els barons de Catalunya*, Biografies Catalanes, Sèrie Històrica, 3 (Barcelona 1957), p. 112-113.

6. BISSON, «Finanzas», p. 197-208 (apéndice, nos. 4-12); MIRET, *Itinerari*, 37-267; HUICI-MIRANDA, *Documentos de Jaime I*, I-III (nos. 22-723). It is true that the great *repartiment* of Valencia was undertaken in 1237; see below, p. 256.

7. See generally *Fiscal accounts of Catalonia under the early count-kings (1151-1213)*, ed. Thomas N. BISSON, 2 vols. (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1984; hereafter FAC), I, chs. 2, 3; and II, nos. 59, 61, 64, 66, 68-70, 75, 80-84, 87-90, 92-95, 97, 98; and for an enlarged comparative study, T. N. BISSON, *The crisis of the twelfth century. Power, lordship, and the origins of European government* (Princeton 2009), ch. 5.

enterprise— than with the conquest of Mallorca per se. The king himself became the chief accountant instead of his courtiers, meeting his bailiffs and creditors whenever needed or convenient in settlements recorded by his scribes like royal charters. Typically bonds of indebtedness, these charters soon multiplied. By the 1240s, I would conjecture, royal scribes must have been keeping truncated versions on sheets of paper, less costly than parchment, that were hard to preserve and easy to lose, so that it was not until the 1250s that they resolved to consolidate these copies in registers.

Let me return to the accounts of 1240 and 1241 in light of this hypothesis. On 28 July 1240 King Jaume recorded his personal receipt and audit («recognoscimus [...] nos personaliter recepissem et audivisse») of account in Valencia with Romeo Durfort for his collection ‘from the bailiwick of Barcelona and other dependent bailiwicks’ for the years 1239 and 1240 as late as Holy Cross of May (3 May). The totals are 24,136s. 3d. b. for 1239, and 25,641s. (b.) for 1240, resulting in a grand total (*summa maior*) of 49,677s. 3d. b. for the two years (to date). From this ‘you [R. Durfort] have spent by our order’ for the upkeep of the royal family coming to Barcelona from Montpellier 17,305s., ‘which we owed to you in an *albaranum*,’ and this means that you owe on next 3 May 4854s. 3d. b., ‘and you ought to account [*computare*] and render to us for this year till 3 May all the [profits of] rents, services, and justice not yet accounted in this *summa*.’ The record goes on to specify expenses for which the bailiff is exempt because the king has paid them (gifts to Poblet, Valbona, and other churches, etc.), amounting to 1235s. There follow lengthy clauses of assurance (to the bailiff) that payments and accounts will be held valid; the balance in favor of the king is reiterated (4854s. 3d.); and the record ends by explicitly excluding from the account the proceeds for Terrassa, Manresa, Sallent, Santpedor, and Vilamajor, presently in other hands. R. Durfort is further acquitted of responsibility for any such quests (*questiae*) as the king may have imposed on ‘Catalonia’ during these years.⁸

For the history of the *hisenda reial* under Jaume I this record of account—called ‘charter or *albaranum*’ by the scribe— has pivotal importance. It is the first extant evidence of how the war-tested lord-king intended to manage his vastly augmented domains. In his only previous enactment of equal import (July 1220), the twelve-year-old king had, on advice, assigned the supervision of ordinary revenues in Aragon and Catalonia to the Templars.⁹ Twenty years later it is the king himself who directs and accounts, certainly in Catalonia, and most likely in Aragon and Valencia as well. This was new, for there is little evidence that Jaume’s father and grandfather had ever worked this hard at finance, and none at all that they wished to do so.

Yet the novelty was not absolute, nor was King Jaume the innovator. For the bailiff in 1240-41 was none other than the son of Guillem Durfort, a wealthy Barcelona entrepreneur with whom King Pere I himself had accounted for receipts and expenditures in ‘all Catalonia’ and Montpellier in 1207.¹⁰ It was this king, not his son, who in increasingly difficult financial circumstances had first broken with the new system of local accountability, having thereafter to negotiate directly (and urgently) with creditors on the security of his bailiwicks.¹¹ Not everything bound up with delegated accountability was lost. The formulaic verbiage in the bailiffs’ accounts of the 1180s and 1190s recurs

8. ACA, Cancellaria, pergamins Jaume I, 809 (ed. HUICI-MIRANDA, *Documentos de Jaime I*, II, no. 317).

9. ACA, perg. Jaume I, 147 (ed. *Documentos de Jaime I*, I, no. 23); and BISSON, «Finanzas», p. 169-70 («Finances», p. 357).

10. *FAC*, II, no. 120. On R. Durfort, see Stephen P. BENSCH, *Barcelona and its rulers, 1096-1291*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and thought, fourth series (Cambridge 1995), p. 321, 407, 410; and Pere ORTI GOST, *Renda i fiscalitat en una ciutat medieval: Barcelona, segles XII-XIV*, CSIC, Anuario de Estudios medievales, anejo 41 (Barcelona 2000), p. 477-478.

11. *FAC*, II, nos. 120-128, 132, 133, 136; I, ch. 4.

in the years 1207-1213, in 1240-1241, and for the rest of Jaume's reign. Words like *computum, facto computo ... invenimus per summas et per minutum* point to practised regularity in counting and the proofs of amounts and balances.¹²

So the innovation of Jaume I was to decide to persist in his father's accountability of credit. The decision must have been deliberate, temperamental; it was not forced upon him, even if the Templars lost their privileged place in the accounts because the lord-king needed money more than expertise. A second account with Bailiff Romeo Durfort in February 1241 permits us to see how speedily credit has overtaken routine balances of revenue and expense. The king's credit of 4854s. has been swamped in a debt to Durfort now exceeding 20,000s. Other shifts become visible. The king (himself) accounts with a bailiff of Barcelona responsible for multiple zones of royal lordship extending far beyond the city. As in the past, the bailiff has purchased his function, resulting in a state of account that comes first. But what is wholly different from the days of Ramon de Caldes, the bailiff R. Durfort accounts not only for his receipts, but massively for his credit, as well. His advances to the king amount to some thirty percent of his gross receipts, and it looks as if he was virtually supporting the royal family for extended periods of residence in Catalonia. Moreover, while it is explicit that R. Durfort is not liable for five other neighboring bailiwicks, it is from his account that we learn who presently holds them; all five, it seems, in pledge for repayment of loans. This is a *summa maior*, indeed.¹³

How this accountability for Catalonia persisted is unclear for lack of evidence in the 1240s. What is certain is that the accounts of 1240-1241 represent a continuous impulse: the two records not only read alike and look alike, they were slit-cancelled in the same manner. Why do they stand alone, apparently without successors? It is tempting to believe that original accounts were lost as the king's scribes began to record and abridge them on sheets of paper not yet well kept when used up. This would help to explain why comparatively few accounts of receipts and debts are to be found among the *pergamins* preserved in the lord-king's chancery.¹⁴ When the registered documentation begins in 1257-1258 it is full of accounts, to the extent of imposing the conclusion that the chief purpose of registration was to improve the control of royal finance. For the final twenty years of his reign the scribes of Jaume the Conqueror compiled a massive fiscal archive. Although it is not without problems and still incompletely published, it quite suffices to make several points clear.

The reliance on bailiffs for territorial control was discontinued, at least for Catalonia. No subsequent records of account much resemble those of 1240-1241. Yet the lord-king continued to account in person with bailiffs and creditor-courtiers for major domains or aggregates of bailiwicks and commended castles. In February 1258 at Tortosa Jaume audited the *computum* of Jimeno Pérez de Arenoso for the receipts and expenses of his tenures in the 'kingdoms' of Valencia and Aragon up to the past 1 January. The king was found to owe 153,055s. of Valencia, and the creditor was directed to recover the money from the proceeds of Daroca among other sources.¹⁵ In the same place two weeks later, Jaume heard and approved the accounts of G. de Rocafull, bailiff of Montpellier, for his district and neighboring castles and villages; in this case the lord-king owed 11,916s. 5*d.* *melg.*, to be

12. Among countless examples, ACA, perg. Jaume I 1697; Reg. 15, fols. 52v-53r; Reg. 20, fol. 196r; *Documentos de Jaime I*, II, nos. 317, 322; *DV*, II, nos. 39, 296.

13. ACA, perg. Jaume I, 832 (ed. *Documentos de Jaime I*, II, no. 322).

14. See, e.g., ACA, perg. Jaume I, 908, 985, 1142, 1692, 1697, 1884, 1887, 1972.

15. ACA, reg. 10, fol. 34rv (*DV*, II, no. 70).

repaid from receipts of the bailiwick.¹⁶ In May 1263 Jaume audited Jahuda de Cavalleria for the receipts of Zaragoza bailiwick ‘and of all other vills and places you hold of us in Aragon’ until the next 1 January; here again the bailiff was a major creditor, his repayment amounting to 88,828s. 10*d.* 1 *obol* to be drawn from his bailiwick.¹⁷

In all these accounts, the key word is ‘receipts’ (*de omnibus redditibus et exitibus nostris*). Without it, these audits would be indistinct from a mass of other records of the king’s indebtedness to creditors of every sort. It is fair to wonder whether *any* notion of normative seigneurial value persisted under Jaume I. For in fact, extremely few accounts by bailiffs to men other than the lord-king have survived;¹⁸ and while the king’s accounts with bailiffs, vicars, and castellans do survive, they are hardly numerous enough to prove that the lord-king was much concerned with the routine loyalty and competence of his lesser functionaries. One example may serve. On 25 August 1260 Jaume audited the *comptum* of Arnaldo de Monzón for his revenues and expenses of the castles of Biar, Almirra, and Benejama, with the result of a royal debt to the castellan amounting to 3280s. of Valencian *reales*, to be repaid from next collections in the castles.¹⁹ One clue here links this record with some other accounts of castles and bailiwicks. This is a summary of a more detailed reckoning of receipts and expenses, a reckoning mostly likely not in the king’s presence before scribes who retain little more than the balance for the king to approve. The master accountants already mentioned, such as Romeo Durfort and Jahuda de Cavalleria, surely audited lesser accountants to arrive at their totals.²⁰ Moreover, it was they, not Jaume, who knew what to charge for bailiwicks when they were commissioned or ‘sold,’ typically for one or two years. And with their help the lord-king could impose on bailiwicks as such, as he did in February 1274, when he needed money to attend the council of Lyon.²¹

In fact, it is all but impossible to speak of this ruler’s accountability *except* in terms of finance. There is no reason to suppose that he or his scribes made a distinction between ‘administration,’ a term all but unknown to them, and finance. Quite certainly economic necessity was overwhelmingly the reason for the fiscal records that fill the registers. In these records the formulary is not: ‘we [Jaume] recognize that you [*talis*] have rendered a just and lawful account’; it is: ‘we Jaume recognize that we owe to you such and such.’ And in practise finance swamped regularity. Creditors might well be bailiffs, as in July 1264 when the king leaned on those of Barcelona to provide 5970s. for building a ship.²² As for greater fiscal resources—the mills of Barcelona, the market of Valencia; above all, the profitable coinages of Barcelona and Valencia— King Jaume and his courtiers preferred to exploit them rather than to husband them in regional treasuries. In his later years, well-endowed officials and baronial creditors virtually bankrolled royal sojourns in his principal cities.²³

The accountability of credit became a convenience for all concerned. What mattered was to keep track of the bonds (*albarana*), and this need, for countless debts large and small, must have been the lubricant of written registration. Repeatedly, the lord-king requires creditors to surrender old or

16. ACA, reg. 9, fol. 23 (*Documentos de Jaime I*, iv, no. 963).

17. Reg. 14, fol. 22v (BOFARULL Y SANS, «Jaime I y los judíos», p. 869-871).

18. For an example see Reg. 21, fol. 148 (*Itinerari* 482).

19. Reg. 11, fol. 178v (*DV*, ii, no. 296).

20. See also BURNS, *Society and documentation*, p. 197.

21. *Itinerari* 500, from Reg. 18, fol. not cited.

22. Reg. 14, fol. 62 (*Itinerari* 355).

23. *Itinerari* 446-447 (Galceran de Pinós, 1271), 457 (Jahuda de Cavalleria, 1272), 466 (Bernat de Sapiach, May 1272 in prospect of travel to France), 476 (Bertran de Bellpuig, 1273), etc.

superseded bonds.²⁴ Moreover, it looks as if the accessibility of an ever-itinerant ruler was what chiefly determined the dates of audit, not major feast days as in France and England, let alone the expiration-dates of credits and tenures. People knew when the lord-king would be in Perpinyà or Huesca. Yet apart from a certain concentration of accounts in April, it is hard to discern any calendrical regularity. Moreover, the multiplication of accounts on certain days—such as in late April 1258 or July 1264—surely tells us less about the king's fervor for fiscal accountancy than the convenience of scribes.

Amongst accountable royal assets, taxation had great importance. It was partly public in nature. The *bovatges* (in Catalonia) and the money-tax (*monetaticum*, in Aragon) were always justified by appeals to the king's need even though they had originated as purchases of peace and the stability of coinage.²⁵ Both taxes required persuasion, of a sort that King Jaume learned to avoid; neither left much evidence in the registers. More characteristic, and probably more lucrative, were the recurrent impositions of protective lordship. The Jewish and Muslim communities paid tribute with some regularity, the Jews perhaps annually. So we have the lord-king's receipts for 1157-1158 from the Jewish *aljama* of Barcelona, Vilafranca (del Penedès), Tarragona, 'and other places'; and for 1264 from that of Barcelona.²⁶ These were proofs of obligatory payment. Other taxes were accounted differently. Those imposed on Muslims in Valencia in 1255, 1257, and 1262 were labeled *peytas* or *questiae* (or not at all) by scribes who noted them as events and listed payments reported by collectors.²⁷ Possibly Register 8 was meant to serve as evidence for taxation, for in addition to the documents just cited, it contains a notice that the lord-king meant to collect *herbagium* in Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia (25 November 1262).²⁸ All such impositions were subject to the exemptions that figured in the king's engagements to major creditors.

III

In sum, most of the evidence of King Jaume's engagement with the royal patrimony relates to his mobilization of credit. Not even his taxation could alter that reality. But his work with an expanding domain, all of it, required interaction with appointed agents and unappointed courtiers and creditors. So it remains to ask: what was the historical nature of this work? To what extent can it be truthfully said that Jaume the Conqueror governed his peoples bureaucratically?

Two considerations warmly encourage such an interpretation. Jaume I came to know his peoples well. He traveled incessantly between Montpellier (his homeland) and the furthest reaches of his conquests: Játiva and Denia as well as Valencia, Calatayud and Daroca as well as Zaragoza and Huesca, Tortosa and Vilafranca as well as Lleida, Barcelona, and Girona; even (though seldom) Mallorca. And he worked in these places, as well as ate and spent and loved. If it is true that much of this work was fundraising, it is also true that he heard appeals in justice while encouraging the observance of law

24. e.g., reg. 14, fol. 11 (*DV*, II, no. 437).

25. On these taxes and the incipient state, see Pere ORTÍ GOST, «La primera articulación del estado feudal en Cataluña a través de un impuesto: el bovaje (ss. XII-XIII)», *Hispania*, LXI: 209 (2001), p. 967-998; Bisson, *Crisis of the twelfth century*, ch. 6.

26. Reg. 10, fol. 28, reg. 14, fol. 48 (ed. BOFARULL Y SANS, «Jaime I y los judíos», p. 859-860, 875-876). There is evidence of a tributary levy in 1268, reg. 15, fol. 96r, Yom Tov ASSIS, *Jewish economy in the medieval Crown of Aragon 1213-1327*. Brill's Series in Jewish Studies 18 (Leiden 1997), p. 140.

27. Reg. 8, fols. 21v, 36, 61v-62 (*DV*, II, nos. 1, 53, 467).

28. Reg. 8, fol. 76v (*DV*, II, no. 417). See also fol. 44v (*DV*, II, no. 232).

and customs everywhere. The registers have all the looks of an incipient royal government oriented to the maintenance of public order.

Moreover (secondly), there were, to this purpose, officials everywhere. The distinguished editor of the Valencian records, Robert I. Burns, was quite right to write of 'bureaucracy' in this early Crown of Aragon.²⁹ If I myself have chosen to work on vicars and bailiffs and their accountability, others, notably Josep Trenchs Odena, have rightly stressed the widening roles of scribes in a courtly life moving from *scribania* to *cancellaria*. New ways of impersonal record-keeping, such as had helped to create governments in England from about 1175 and in France from 1190, became fully manifest in Catalonia and Aragon with the conquests of Mallorca and Valencia. The *Libre del repartiment* of Valencia (from 1237) may reasonably be viewed as the first written monument of a new government.³⁰

This perspective is illustrated by the early extant written commissions to bailiffs, which, however, need to be read with care. On 11 February 1251 at Morella, King Jaume conferred the bailiwick of Murviedro on Robaldo Voltorasch, to hold as long as he was 'faithful in office,' with compensation 'for your office' of one fifteenth of the revenues.³¹ When B. de Canadell received the bailiwick of Vilamajor on 13 January 1258, he was to be paid 'as was customary' during his 'faithful' department.³² In both instances, all looks official; nothing is said about loans to be repaid. But neither is anything stipulated about accountability. Such commissions are not unique in the registers. But they are vastly outnumbered by commissions of bailiwicks (or simply of revenues) or castles or other lordships as devices for the recovery of money that has been loaned. Bailiwicks may be 'offices' but they are also virtually lordships: that is, concessions of exploitative power to men who were normally required to account only when their terms ended. When the Jew Astruch Jacob Jijon was appointed bailiff of Tortosa (1 March 1263), the king expressly exempted him from any obligation to account; yet also empowered him to appoint a substitute bailiff who *would* be required to account with the lord-king, or with *his* deputy.³³

So it is not really correct to conclude that Jaume the Conqueror governed bureaucratically. Such a conclusion falsely exaggerates the appearances of familiar administrative modernity. If a bailiff or castellan looks to us like a 'faithful' royal servant, then he must have been, we imagine, a competent and accountable one. Yet as a rule, nothing *more* than fidelity, quite as in the twelfth century, was required of him. There is practically nothing in the registers to show that expertise mattered as much as wealth in this lord-king's management of domains. Or that the values of lordship had given way to an administrative ethos. In an astonishing record dated Cervera 3 February 1260 King Jaume secured alliance with Guerau VI of Cabrera by granting him the revenues of Caldes de Malavella and Llagostera for six years *secundum forum Aragonum*. That is, a substantial bailiwick of Old Catalonia, one that was normally appointed for two-year accountable terms, was ceded like a baronial tenure, perhaps even with the (redundant?) implication that it was revocable!³⁴

29. BURNS, *Society and documentation*, chs. 1-8, 29-35.

30. ACA, reg. 5-7, ed. María Desamparados CABANES PECOURT and Ramon FERRER NAVARRO, *Libre del repartiment del regne de Valencia*, 3 vols., Textos medievales 66 (Zaragoza 1979-1980).

31. *Documentos de Jaime I*, III, no. 557. Exceptionally, this piece was preserved in the Arxiu reial de Valencia, «Privilegios y ordenaciones», 630, fol. 193.

32. ACA, reg. 9, fol. 11 (*Documentos de Jaime I*, IV, no. 925).

33. Reg. 12, fol. 15 (BOFARULL Y SANS, «Jaime I y los judíos» p. 869).

34. Reg. 10, fol. 229 (*Documentos de Jaime I*, IV, no. 1164). See also Reg. 9, fol. 66v (*Documentos*, IV, no. 1062); and reg. 13, fol. 288 (*Itinerari* 382).

Other considerations remind us that the Conqueror, for all his progressive ways with the domain, remained a product of his societal inheritance. It is hard to believe that he personally directed all the 21 major agreements that are registered as his doings from 26 April to 2 May 1158 (all in Valencia), eleven of them on two of those days;³⁵ far easier to suppose that, while he *did* normally preside over accounting sessions (as the summations seem to say), the formulaic verbiage of the registers means that his scribes not only did the time-consuming work, but even much un-registered work to establish the summary totals of acknowledged debts. As in France and England, the scribes —many of them also appointed to other offices— were virtually the movers of a very personal lordship. In his admirable edition of the Valencian records Fr. Burns seems to have overlooked this point. He writes throughout of the ‘crown’ as actor, accountant, beneficiary, etc.³⁶ But this is wrong. The word *corona* is never used. The registered documents are always in the king’s voice. Nor was this only a personal exercise of power; it was in some ways a dynastic one as well. Romeo Durfort was by no means the only official son of an official father. On 31 August 1273 Jaume I appointed Salomon, son of the powerful bailiff Jahuda de Cavalleria of Zaragoza, to the bailiwick of Murviedro.³⁷ There were other families of service, notably in the Jewish societies of Catalonia and Aragon.

One further point requires notice in this context. From his experience early in the reign Jaume became cautious with the customary obligations of Aragon and Catalonia. This was, in effect, to insist on his lordship at the expense of an incipient state. (In fairness to Jaume, his great contemporary Louis IX did the same in France, although for different reasons). In the Crown of Aragon, already by 1228 it was clear that the *bovatge* and money-tax could only be levied with the broad consensus, however achieved, of his barons, knights, and townspeople. In his later years Jaume was reluctant to convoke to Corts or Cortes that had already gained political leverage over custom. The heavy reliance on credit was surely a consequence of this. His imposition of the *monetaticum* on the Muslims of Valencia in December 1272 looks like an act of arbitrary lordship (as well as of denatured purpose).³⁸ For this famous ruler not to engage with his peoples as such with the same success as he had enjoyed in 1228 and 1236 was a sign that, in the end, Jaume the Conqueror was more like his father than like Saint-Louis. His domains were to be exploited, like a patrimonial lordship, as well as governed. He himself was ‘lord-king’ (*dominus rex*), as his scribes never forgot.

35. *DV*, II, nos. 93-114. All but four of these were copied in Reg. 10, fols. 58-65.

36. *DV*, II, *passim*. The problem diminishes in volumes III and IV, where the headlines become more nearly translations. But see IV, nos. 1389, 1425, etc.

37. Reg. 19, fol. 50v (BOFARULL Y SANS, «Jaime I y los judíos», 921-22). See also ORTÍ GOST, *Renda i fiscalitat*, p. 484; *Itinerari*, p. 453.

38. Reg. 18, fols. 94v-95 (*DV*, IV, no. 1416).