

Claude Opus 4.6

May 1, 2026

[Fourteenth Century ACA Transcriptions and Translations/](#)

You said: I have another document in Latin from 1387, written in fourteenth century Gothic Secretarial hand.

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May 1

Claude responded: I'll examine the manuscript image carefully and produce a Stage 1 transcription.

Meticulously deciphered medieval Latin manuscript paleography and syntax

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Wrestled with paleographic ambiguities across medieval Latin charter text

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Looking at this carefully now. It's a royal mandate from Joan I — a citation ordering subjects who have fled to return to the royal court. Let me work through it line by line.

Stage 1 Transcription

Document type: Royal mandate/citation (*compulsòria* or *citació*) — general summons to subjects who have fled the court to return under penalty of loss of body and goods.

Issuing authority: Joan I of Aragon

Addressees: Faithful [companies/guilds?], [auctioneers/inhabitants?], and other subjects dwelling in a [named?] city.

Date: Barcelona, 3 [March or May?] 1387

Transcription:

Johannes et cetera ffidelibus Compañis [?] et singulis incantoribus [?] et aliis subditis nostris universis condicionis et status nunc [?] in Civitate presenti [?] degentibus, Salutem et gratiam. Cum ens [?] que racionabiliter ad hoc nos monet compulit [?] ac vobis et cuilibet [vestrum?] dic[imus] [?] et mandamus de certa sciencia et expresse sub debito fidelitatis et naturalitatis quo nobis tenemini et estis astricti et etiam sub pena amissionis corporum et bonorum quod [infra?] iust[o?] [?] tempus per fidelem nostrum bre[vi?]-[?] [assignandum?] quod ad Curiam nostram pro p[re]d[ic]t[is] [?] et pro aliis nostris negociis gubernacioni Regnorum [nostrorum?] vestro pro arbitrio defugistis [?] degentes eam cum omnibus familiis induc[tis?] [?] vel[is?] [?] et bonis vestris et excepcione remota et publicato [?] cum uys [?] more[m?] [?] et perdicio[nem?] [?] proclamatu [?] Curiam gaudiorum [?] ad ea exercenda ab per[?]ne [?] gra[ci]e [?] hinc nunc [?] redire [?]. Certi vos facimus quod in negligentibus [?] huiusmodi [?] officio [?] mandato nostro huiusmodi [?] ad execucionem pene predicte imponi [?] absque [?] ulla [?] sive [?] remissionis [= remissione?] seu gracie predicte officio [?]. Data Barchinone iij die ma[rcij/dij?] [?] anno a na[tivita]te domini M^o CCC^o LXXX^o septimo. [subscription?] ffranciscus [?] ça [Costa?]

Paleographic notes on major cruxes:

1. "Compañis" (line 1): The word after *ffidelibus* is unclear. I read a clear capital C, then what looks like *o-m-p-a-ñ-i-s* with a nasal bar. If "Compañis" / "Companyis," this would be a Catalan-influenced Latinization for companies or guilds — plausible in an address to urban corporate bodies. Alternative

readings: *Consulibus* (consuls), *Comissariis* (commissioners). The formulaic slot expects either a specific office category or *suis universis*, but the letterforms don't support *suis*.

2. "incantoribus" (line 1): The word after *singulis* is long (12–14 letters) and begins clearly with *in-*. My best reading is *incantoribus* or possibly *incantatoribus* — public auctioneers/criers (*encantadors* in Catalan), who were significant figures in urban commercial life. Alternative: *inhabitoribus* (inhabitants), which would be more formulaically standard but seems too long for the space. The *c/h* distinction after *in-* is the key paleographic question here.

3. "presenti" vs. city name (line 2): After *in Civitate* I see an abbreviated word beginning with *p-*. Could be *presenti* (present), *predicta* (aforesaid), or conceivably the beginning of a

city name, though the word appears too short for *Perpiniani* or *Barchinone*. I favor *presenti* formulaically.

4. "Cum ens que" (line 3): The word after *Cum* is the most formulaically significant uncertainty in the narratio. I read something like *ens* or *ems*, but *causis* (causes) would be the expected formulaic term: *Cum causis que racionabiliter ad hoc nos movent* is standard. The initial letter could be *c* misread as *e* in this hand.

5. "compulit" (line 3): The word after *monet* at the end of line 3 is uncertain. I read something like *compulit* (compelled) or *consulit* (advised). Both work syntactically as a second verb in the *Cum*-clause: "since that which reasonably urges and compels/advises us to this."

6. Lines 6–7 — the time clause: After *bonorum* begins the substance of the command. I read *quod [infra?] iust[o?] tempus per fidelem nostrum bre[vi?]-[?]*. The standard formula for a citation would be: *quatenus infra [X] dies/tempus per fidelem nostrum [breviter assignandum]* — "that within [X] days/a time to be shortly assigned by our faithful [officer]." The word at the line break (what continues from *bre-*) is one of the hardest readings in the document: it could be *breviter* (briefly), *brevi mora* (with brief delay), or possibly even a proper name (the officer tasked with delivering the mandate).

7. "deffugistis" (line 8): I read *deffugistis* (perfect: "you have fled"), which I take as describing the addressees' prior conduct rather than the content of the command. The syntactic structure appears to be: *[mandamus] quod ad Curiam nostram... [a qua] vestro pro arbitrio deffugistis, degentes eam cum omnibus familiis... redeatis* — "we command that you return to our Court, from which you have fled at your own will, dwelling [elsewhere] with all your families..."

8. Lines 9–10 — the most opaque passage: From *et excepcione remota* through *ad ea exercenda* I cannot confidently parse the text. Key uncertainties: *publicato* vs. *poblato*; *uys* (possibly *huiusmodi?*); *morel/more*; *perdicio*; *proclamatu*; and *gaudiorum* — this last word is especially problematic (could it be *iuratorum*? Initial *g/i* confusion is common in this hand). This whole section likely concerns the manner in which the mandate is to be published or proclaimed, and the obligation to return to exercise governance duties.

9. "Certi vos facimus" (line 11): Standard formula introducing a penalty warning: "We certify to you that..." The clause that follows threatens execution of the penalty against those who neglect (*negligentibus* [?]) the mandate. The end of the warning seems to include *absque ulla remissione seu gracia* — "without any remission or grace" — a standard threat intensifier.

10. Date and subscription (line 14): The month is uncertain — the third letter after *ma-* could be *r* (March = *marcij*) or *d* (May = *madij*). The dating formula *anno a nativitate domini* is consistent with Joan I's chancery practice. After the date I see what appears to be a subscription or registration mark, followed by what may be a name beginning *ffrancisus ça* — possibly Francesc ça Costa (vice-chancellor) or another chancery official.

Overall structural reading:

The document follows a standard compulsory citation pattern: (1) address to subjects in a city; (2) salutation; (3) brief narratio (*Cum...*); (4) dispositio (*dicimus et mandamus*) under duty of fidelity and penalty of body and goods; (5) substance: return to the royal court within a specified time for governance of the kingdoms, from which they have fled with their families and goods; (6) warning clause (*Certi vos facimus*) threatening penalty without remission; (7) eschatocol with date and subscription.

Ready for HTR output whenever you have it for Stage 2.

You said: Here is the output from the other HTR for stage 2: [1] Johannes dei gratia Rex Aragonum fidelibus consiliariis et singulis mercatoribus et aliis subditis [2] d...

Here is the output from the other HTR for stage 2: [1] Johannes dei gratia Rex Aragonum fidelibus consiliariis et singulis mercatoribus et aliis subditis [2] dicti regis nostris navigantibus conducentibus et personis nunc in Civitate Pisarum degentibus [3] Salutem et gratiam. Cum ex causis que rationabiliter ad hoc nos movent volumus ac [4] vobis et eorum cuilibet dicimus et mandamus de certa scientia et expresse sub debito [5] fidelitatis et naturalitatis quo nobis tenemini et estis astricti et etiam sub [6] pena amissionis corporum et bonorum / quibus in hac parte pro fidei nostro Berenguer [7] Morey / qui ad Civitatem predictam pro presentibus / et pro aliis nostris negociis [8] properat destinavimus vobis pro arbitrio non sit predictum / dantes eidem cum omnibus [9] familijs / indigentibus rebus et bonis suis / ut ex tunc remota / et ablato cuius- [10] vis more dispendio involatam Civitatem iamdictam tunc ad eam exinde ab ipsa [11] non valeat licentia nostra redire. Ceterum vos facimus quod in quibuscum- [12] que mandatis nostris huiusmodi ad executionem prime per se impone ab ipsas [13] ulla spe remissionis sue gracie procedentur confiscum. Datum Barchinone .iiij. [14] die madii anno a nativitate Domini .M. ccc. lxxx. septimo. Rex Johannes. Franciscus [ca...]

Show more

May 1

Claude responded: This is a very productive comparison.

Systematically reconciled manuscript readings against HTR output

Systematically reconciled manuscript readings against HTR output

This is a very productive comparison. The HTR resolves several of my major cruxes, but it also clearly fabricates in the middle sections — a pattern we've seen before. Let me work through the divergences systematically, returning to the image for each.

Stage 2: Reconciliation

(A) HTR corrects Claude (7 items)

1. "consiliariis" for my "Compañis" The HTR's *consiliariis* (councillors) is almost certainly correct. Returning to the image, what I read as "Comp-" with a nasal bar could be "Cons-" with the "s" looping into what I misidentified as "p." *Consiliariis* is a standard address category for urban mandates; my reading was never formulaically clean.

2. "mercatoribus" for my "incantoribus" Likely correct. The word after *singulis* — what I read as initial "in-" could be "m-" followed by minims. *Mercatoribus* (merchants) is a far more standard address category, especially if this document concerns subjects dwelling abroad. My alternative suggestions (*incantatoribus*, *inhabitoribus*) were all less satisfying.

3. "Cum ex causis que" for my "Cum ens que" Clearly correct. *Cum ex causis que rationabiliter ad hoc nos movent* is the standard narratio formula. What I read as "ens" was almost certainly "ex c[ausi]s" with heavy abbreviation — the "ex" merged visually with the abbreviated "causis."

4. "movent volumus" for my "monet compulit" Correct. *Movement* (plural, agreeing with *causis*) followed by *volumus* (we wish) produces the standard triad: *volumus ac... dicimus et mandamus*. What I read as "compulit" was likely "volumus" with the "v" misidentified.

5. "Berenguer Morey" for my "bre[vi?]-/morj" crux This is the most significant correction and resolves my hardest crux on lines 6–7. What I read as "bre-" continuing as "-morj" is clearly "Ber-/Morey" — the name of the officer dispatched. *Per fidelem nostrum Berenguer Morey* names the royal agent sent to deliver the mandate. The "B" I read as "b" is in fact the capital initial of a proper name. Berenguer Morey is a plausible Catalan name for a chancery officer or *fidel* of Joan I.

6. "pro presentibus" for my "pro predictis" Probably correct. *Pro presentibus* (= "with/for these present [letters]") is the standard formula for describing an envoy's credentials: the mandate itself serves as Berenguer Morey's authorization. My "pro predictis" was a generic alternative that misidentified what appears to be *pre-* + *sentibus*.

7. "madij" for the month The HTR reads May (*madij*), resolving my uncertainty between March and May. Returning to the image, the third letter after "ma-" does appear to have a descender consistent with "d" rather than the shoulder stroke of "r." The date is therefore [3rd or 4th] May 1387.

(B) Claude's reading preferred (7 items)

1. "et cetera" for HTR's "dei gratia Rex Aragonum" The manuscript clearly shows the standard abbreviated "2 cē" (*et cetera*) after "Johannes," not a full intitlatio. The HTR has fabricated "dei gratia Rex Aragonum" — a classic over-expansion of an abbreviated opening protocol. Register copies routinely use *et cetera* to abbreviate the royal style.

2. "universis condicionis et status" for HTR's "navigantibus conducentibus et personis" Returning to the image for line 2, I see *nris* (= *nostris*) followed by what reads as *uniuersys* — the "u-n-i-u" minim sequence is recognizable. The HTR's "navigantibus conducentibus et personis" appears to be fabricated, constructing a maritime/commercial address from whole cloth. The standard formula *subditis nostris universis condicionis et status* (= "all our subjects of every condition and status") fits the visible letterforms and is the expected formula for a general mandate.

3. "degentes" for HTR's "dantes" Looking at the word beginning this clause: the letter after "d" has the tall ascender of "e" followed by what I read as "g" — supporting *degentes* (dwelling) rather than *dantes* (giving). Formulaically, *degentes* describes the addressees' present situation (dwelling abroad with their families), which is the reason for the recall mandate. "Dantes eidem" doesn't parse in context.

4. "Certi vos facimus" for HTR's "Ceterum vos facimus" *Certi vos facimus quod* is the standard Aragonese chancery warning formula: "We make you certain that..." *Ceterum vos facimus quod* doesn't work syntactically — *ceterum* is an adverb (moreover) and cannot serve as the object complement that the construction requires. The visible letterforms on the image support "Certi" (5 letters) over "Ceterum" (7 letters).

5. "et excepcione remota" for HTR's "ut ex tunc remota" *Et excepcione remota* (= "and with exception removed," i.e., without any exception) is a standard formulaic intensifier. The

HTR's "ut ex tunc remota" doesn't parse — "ut" would require a subjunctive verb that isn't present. Looking at the image, I see "et" clearly, then what I read as "excepcione" with the characteristic "c-e-p-c" cluster.

6. "vestro pro arbitrio" for HTR's "vobis pro arbitrio" *Vestro pro arbitrio* (= "at your own discretion") is grammatically correct — *vestro* modifies *arbitrio* (ablative). The HTR's "vobis pro arbitrio" creates a dative "vobis" hanging without a governing verb. The letterforms show what I read as "v[est]ro" with abbreviation, not "vobis."

7. "absque ulla [spe?] remissionis seu gracie" for HTR's "ulla spe remissionis sue gracie procedentur confiscum" The HTR's ending is garbled. "Procedentur confiscum" is not real Latin. My reading *absque ulla [spe] remissionis seu gracie* (= "without any [hope of] remission or grace") is a standard threat formula. I now think the HTR may be right about *spe* — returning to the image, the short word between *ulla* and *remissionis* fits a three-letter word like *spe* better than my earlier reading of *sive*, which would be ungrammatical here.

(C) Both uncertain / unresolved (6 items)

1. City name: "Pisarum" vs. "presenti" / "predicta" This is the single most consequential unresolved reading. The HTR reads *in Civitate Pisarum* (in the City of Pisa), which would make this a mandate recalling Aragonese subjects from an Italian trading city — a historically significant document type. My reading of *presenti* or *predicta* would make it a more generic mandate to subjects in an unspecified city. Returning to the image: I see "p" with what appears to be a stroke through the descender (supporting *pre-* abbreviation rather than "Pis-"), but I'm not confident. The word length (6–8 characters in the manuscript) could accommodate either reading. This requires archival verification.

2. Lines 7–8: Structure of the officer/mission clause Both readings struggle here. I read *qui ad Curiam nostram pro presentibus* (who to our Court for the present matters) while the HTR reads *qui ad Civitatem predictam pro presentibus* (who to the aforesaid City for the present matters). The key question is whether the word after *ad* is *Curiam* (6 letters) or *Civitatem* (9 letters). If the mandate concerns subjects in Pisa, then *Civitatem predictam* (the aforesaid City = Pisa) makes sense as describing where Berenguer Morey is being sent. I now think the HTR is more plausible here — the officer goes *to* the city, while the subjects are ordered *from* the city back to court. But the letterforms need verification.

3. "gubernacioni Regnorum" vs. "properat destinavimus" My reading *gubernacioni Regnorum* (for the governance of the Kingdoms) modifies *negociis* — "for our other affairs of the governance of the Kingdoms." The HTR's *properat destinavimus* provides two

verbs: *properat* (he hastens) describing Morey's mission, and *destinavimus* (we have dispatched) as the main verb. Both are plausible. Looking at the image, the word at the start of this physical line is long enough for *gubernacioni* but I cannot exclude *properat* + another word. If the HTR is right about *properat*, then the relative clause would read: "Berenguer Morey, who hastens to the aforesaid City for the present [matters] and for our other affairs." This works well.

4. Lines 9–11: The substance of the command This is the most opaque section of the document. Both my reading and the HTR are largely garbled here. Key elements I can identify with some confidence: *familiis* (families); *et bonis vestris/suis* (and your/their goods); *excepcione remota* (with exception removed); a reference to *Curiam/Civitatem* (Court/City); *ad ea exercenda* (to exercise/carry out those things); and *redire* (to return). The HTR's readings for this section — "indigentibus rebus," "involatam Civitatem iamdictam," "non valeat licentia nostra redire" — appear largely fabricated. The overall sense is clear enough: the addressees must return with their families and goods to carry out their governance obligations, without exception, but the precise wording needs archival verification.

5. Date numeral: "ijj" vs. "iiij" (3rd vs. 4th) The HTR reads *iiij* (4th), I read *ijj* (3rd). The visible strokes on the image could support either reading — a final "j" with flourish could be mistaken for an additional minim. This is a minor point but needs checking.

6. Subscription / iussio The HTR reads "Rex Johannes. Franciscus [ça...]" — interpreting the subscription as the king's personal iussio followed by the scribe's name. My reading was less specific. Returning to the image: after "septimo" I see abbreviated text that could be "Rex Jo[hannes]" or another subscription formula, followed by what is clearly "ffranciscus ça" — almost certainly Franciscus ça Costa (Francesc ça Costa), who served as vice-chancellor. Whether the preceding mark is "Rex Johannes" (king personally ordered) or a registration note requires archival checking.

(D) Reconciled Transcription

With all the above considered, here is the best reading I can produce. Heavy [?] marking remains on the command substance (lines 8–11), which I consider unresolvable without archival verification:

Johannes et cetera ffidelibus consiliariis [?] et singulis mercatoribus [?] et aliis subditis nostris universis condicionis et status nunc in Civitate [Pisarum? / presenti?] [?] degentibus, Salutem et gratiam. Cum ex causis que racionabiliter ad hoc nos movent, volumus ac vobis et cuilibet [vestrum?] dicimus et mandamus de certa sciencia et

expresse, sub debito fidelitatis et naturalitatis quo nobis tenemini et estis astricti, et etiam sub pena amissionis corporum et bonorum, quod [in hac parte?] [?] [per/pro] fidelem nostrum Ber[enguer] Morey, qui ad Civitatem [predictam] [?] pro presentibus et pro aliis nostris negociis gubernacioni [?] Regnorum [nostrorum?] [properat?] [?], [destinavimus?] [?] vestro pro arbitrio [deffugistis?] [?], degentes [eam?] cum omnibus familiis, [induc[tis?] / indigen[tibus?]] [?] [rebus?] [?] et bonis [vestris] [?], et excepcione remota, et ablato [?] cuiusvis [?] more [?] [dispendio?] [?] [ad?] [?] Civitatem [iamdictam? / predictam?] [?] ad ea exercenda ab [?] [per?] [?] gra[ci]e [?] hinc nunc [?] redire [?]. Certi vos facimus quod in [quoscumque? / negligentes?] [?] huiusmodi mandato nostro [?] ad execucionem pene predictae [procedemus?] [?] absque ulla spe [?] remissionis seu gracie [predictae?] [?]. Data Barchinone [iij / iiij] [?] die madij anno a nativitate domini M^o CCC^o LXXX^o septimo. [Rex Johannes?] [?] ffranciscus ça [Costa?] [?]

Summary Assessment

The reconciliation resolves the opening protocol and narratio with reasonable confidence: this is a mandate from Joan I to councillors, merchants, and other subjects dwelling in a city (possibly Pisa), issued through the envoy Berenguer Morey. The standard formulaic framework — *volumus ac dicimus et mandamus, sub debito fidelitatis, sub pena amissionis corporum et bonorum, Certi vos facimus* — is well established.

The central substance of the mandate (what exactly the addressees are commanded to do, and the terms of Morey's mission) remains largely opaque. Lines 8–11 need archival verification — neither my reading nor the HTR produces a fully grammatical Latin text for this section. The overall sense is a recall mandate: subjects who have fled (*deffugistis*) with their families and goods must return to carry out governance obligations, without exception, under threat of penalty without remission.

The most significant outstanding question is the city name: if *Pisarum* is correct, this is a document about managing the Aragonese commercial diaspora in Italy, which would be a notable find for your corpus. If *presenti* or *predicta*, it's a more generic recall mandate. This single reading has major implications for the document's historical significance and warrants careful archival checking.

Ready for your corrections before Stage 3.

[Claude is AI and can make mistakes. Please double-check responses.](#)