

Translation: ACA Register, ff. 66v–67r

Document Summary

A royal mandate issued by Joan I of Aragon (Barcelona, [9/10] March 1387), addressed to the lieutenant governor *ultra Saxonam* [provisional reading], *baiuli*, and other royal officials. The king orders these officials to cease obstructing the ancient privilege held by the *universitates* and Saracen *aljamas* of Elche and Crivillent, which permits the free export of livestock, wheat, and other grains by land or sea without requiring official license. The king notes that the revenues of these places belong to his brother, Infante Martin, and warns that the officials' recent interference damages both the privilege holders and the infante's income. The document was subscribed by Francesc Ça Costa, Joan I's vice-chancellor.

Latin Transcription (Reconciled)

Johannes dei gra[tia]. Dilecto gerentivices [?] Gubernatoris n[ost]ri [?] ultra Saxonam baiulis et aliis offic[ialibus] nostris vel eor[um] locatenentibus presentibus et futu[r]is quibus infrascripta spectare quomodolibet dinoscantur. Salutem et dileccionem. Noveritis p[er] [?] nostram [?] nuncii universitatum et aliamarem serracenorem d'Elx et de Crivallen[t] sua humili supplicacione nobis exposuerunt reverenter. Quod singulares universitatum et aliamarem serracenorem predictarum hab[uer]unt privilegium eis ab antiquo concessum et indultum co[n]suetum [?] fuit et assuet[um] [?] t[em]p[or]e [?] ipsa ante [?] licencia aliq[ua] [?] minime et pecora / [bestias?] ext[ra]here a d[ic]tis locis / et extrahi p[er] mare sive p[er] t[er]ram annonam triticum et alia blada et ea defferre vende[re] seu portari face[re] ad quascu[m]q[ue] p[ar]tes inf[r]a domin[ia] ad eor[um] libitum voluntat[is]. Q[uo]d q[ue] vos aut aliq[ui] ex vobis v[est]ra ipsa ante a pauco citra t[em]p[or]e in[de] [?] p[re]sentis [?] et p[ro]hibent[is] [?] supplicantibus p[re]d[ic]tis ne memorata blada a d[ic]tis locis ext[ra]ha[n]t absq[ue] v[est]ra licen[ci]a et permissu et hoc conantur [?] nisi fuisset [?] agere adeo ut sub hui[us] [?] colore [?] penas

a p[re]missis xp[ist]ianis et [sarracenis? / ffratribus?] valeant exhigere et habere. Quod q[ui] in damn[um] d[ic]tar[um] universitatum et aliamarem et det[ri]men[tum] p[ri]uil[egii] et redituum [?] i[n]d[ic]ti [?] infant[is] Martin[i] frat[ris] n[ost]ri carissimi / cui[us] d[ic]ta loca et redditus sunt p[er] nos p[er]petue [?] / dubio redundare. Quobrem eisdem nunciis a nobis humilit[er] supplicar[unt] ut et sup[er] hiis p[ro]vide de nostra solita clemencia deberemus. Ei[us] itaq[ue] supplicacio[ni]b[us] ut pote iustis et ratio[n]i co[n]sonis benigne favent[ibus] / vob[is] et cuiusq[ue] v[est]rum dici[m]us et manda[m]us [?] de certa [?] [?] d[ic]ta [?] iussio[ni]b[us] q[uo]d contra [?] vobis d[ic]to p[ri]uilegio memora[to] [iuxta?] contra ip[s]i[us] forma[m] supplicant[es] p[re]d[ic]tos ulterius moleste[ti]s et inquietari p[er] aliquos facatis aut p[er]mittatis quomodo / quinimo illud ip[s]is obs[er]ue[ti]s et teneri facatis iuxta eius serie[m] plenior[m] ac p[er] eos melius pos[s]it hactenus exple[er]unt. Cauent[es] attente ne p[re]fatos supplicant[es] quos respectu d[ic]ti n[ost]ri carissimi frat[ris] n[ost]ri tractare debent[ur] fauorabilit[er] et benigne p[er] hiis [?] cora[m] [?] nobis audiam[us] ultr[a] co[n]querent[es] / quoq[ue] ne suis [?] condigna pena punire p[er] [?] q[uo]d nobis d[ic]ta ma[n]dato[rie].

Dat[um] Barc[hinone] [sub nostro sigillo secreto?]. [x? / nona?] die marcii. Anno a Nat[iuitate] d[omi]ni M^o CCC^o LXXXVIJ^o. Ff[ranciscu]s ça Costa.

English Translation

Joan, by the grace of God,¹ to the beloved lieutenant of the governor² *ultra Saxonam*,³ the *baiuli*,⁴ and the other officials of ours, or their lieutenants, present and future, to whom the matters written below may in any way pertain: greetings and love.

Know that [messengers]⁵ of the *universitates* and Saracen *aljamas*⁶ of Elche and Crivillent⁷ have reverently set forth before us by their humble supplication that the individual members of the said *universitates* and Saracen *aljamas* have held a privilege granted and bestowed upon them from ancient times, [by which] it was customary and established⁸ that they could, without any license whatsoever, extract livestock from the said places, and export by sea or by land provisions, wheat, and other grains, and carry, sell, or cause to be transported the same to whatever parts within our dominion, at their free will.

But you, or certain of you, from a short time past,⁹ have been [preventing?]¹⁰ the aforesaid supplicants from extracting the said grains from the said places without your license and permission, and you attempt to act in this matter¹¹ to such a degree that under this pretext you are able to exact and obtain penalties from the aforesaid Christians and [Saracens?].¹²

All of which would without doubt redound to the harm of the said *universitates* and *aljamas*, and to the detriment of the privilege and revenues of the said Infante Martin, our most dear brother,¹³ to whom the said places and their revenues belong in perpetuity through our [grant].

Wherefore the same messengers humbly besought us that we should deign to provide over these matters from our accustomed clemency. Therefore, graciously favoring their petitions as being just and consonant with reason, we say to you and each of you and command [by express order]¹⁴ that, with respect to the said privilege, you no longer molest the aforesaid supplicants contrary to the form thereof, nor permit them to be harassed by anyone in any way; but rather that you observe the same [privilege] toward them and cause it to be maintained according to its fuller tenor, and [as]¹⁵ they have been better able to exercise it heretofore.

Take careful heed lest we hear the aforesaid supplicants — whom out of regard for our said most dear brother we ought to treat favorably and kindly — complaining further before us concerning these matters, so that we would be compelled to punish [you]¹⁶ with condign penalty, as our said mandate [requires].

Given at Barcelona,¹⁷ [under our secret seal,]¹⁸ the [ninth/tenth]¹⁹ day of March, in the year of the Nativity of the Lord 1387. Francesc Ça Costa.²⁰

Footnotes

Unresolved Ambiguities

1. ***Ultra Saxonam* vs. *ultra Sexonam***: The geographic jurisdiction named in the address remains the most significant unresolved problem. The paleographic reading *Saxonam* (with a clear *a*) points to the Catalan *governació* beyond the Segre, but the two places named in the document — Elche and Crivillent — belong to the Valencian *governació* south of Xixona. Possible explanations include: (a) scribal error (*Saxonam* for *Sexonam*); (b) a broader or more fluid use of *Saxonam* in chancery Latin than the standard distinction implies; (c) the mandate was copied into the wrong register section. Resolution would benefit from comparison with other documents in the same register to determine which jurisdiction's correspondence is being recorded in the surrounding folios.
 2. **"Christians and [?]" (f. 67r, line 1)**: The word following *christianis* in the penalty clause remains uncertain. The document's internal logic strongly predicts *sarracenis*, since the entire mandate concerns both *universitates* (Christian) and *aljamas sarracenorum* (Muslim). But the HTR reads *ffratribus*, and the letter forms have not been conclusively resolved.
 3. **Grievance clause (f. 66v, lines 7–13)**: Multiple individual word forms in the passage describing the officials' obstruction of the privilege remain uncertain, though the legal sense is recoverable: the officials have recently begun requiring licenses for the export of grain and livestock, in violation of the ancient privilege, and have been imposing penalties on those who export without such license.
 4. **Mandate formula (f. 67r, lines 20–21)**: The exact wording of the intensifying formula within the *mandamus* clause could not be fully resolved from either transcription.
 5. **Date**: Ninth or tenth of March 1387.
 6. **Words between "Gubernatoris" and "ultra" (f. 66v, line 1)**: The standard formula predicts a territorial qualifier such as *regni Valencie* (if the correct jurisdiction is indeed the Valencian governorship) or *in Cathalonia* (if *ultra Saxonam* is correct). The exact words remain partially illegible.
 7. **"Sub nostro sigillo secreto"**: Whether this authenticating clause is present in the date formula could not be confirmed.
1. The *intitulatio* omits Joan's full royal style, which would normally enumerate his kingdoms (Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia and Corsica, and the county of Barcelona). This abbreviated form is standard for routine administrative mandates as opposed to solemn charters. ↩
 2. Latin *gerentivices gubernatoris*: the lieutenant who exercises the functions of the governor (*governador*) in a particular territory. The *governació* was the principal unit of royal jurisdiction below the Crown in each kingdom. ↩

3. The reading *ultra Saxonam* is paleographically clear but geographically problematic. Elche and Crivillent lie in the Kingdom of Valencia, within the *governació* south of the Xixona line (*dellà Xixona / ultra Saxonam*), not in the Catalan *governació ultra Saxonam* (beyond the Segre, centered on Lleida). One would expect *ultra Sexonam* for this jurisdiction. The vowel difference (*Saxonam* vs. *Sexonam*) is minimal in this hand, but the scribe's *a* appears clearly formed. This reading is treated as provisional. It is possible that the scribe erred, or that the Latin forms were more fluid than the standard distinction implies. Alternatively, the mandate may have been addressed broadly to multiple jurisdictions. ↩
4. Latin *baiuli* (Catalan *batlles*): local royal officials responsible for justice and the administration of royal revenues at the municipal level. In the Kingdom of Valencia, the chief financial officer for the southern territory was the *batlle general dellà Xixona*. ↩
5. The word introducing the agents of the supplication (*nuncii* or similar) is partially illegible in the manuscript. The sense requires a noun designating the representatives who brought the petition before the king. ↩
6. Latin *aliama sarracenorum*: the organized Muslim community (*aljama*) with its own juridical personality, officials, and fiscal obligations to the Crown. Both Elche and Crivillent had substantial Mudejar populations throughout the fourteenth century. The pairing of *universitates* (Christian municipal corporations) and *aljamas* (Muslim communities) indicates that both religious communities benefited from the export privilege. ↩
7. Elche (Latin *Elx*, Catalan *Elx*) and Crivillent (Catalan *Crivillent*, modern Spanish *Crevillente*) are towns in the comarca of Baix Vinalopó in the modern province of Alicante. Both places belonged to Infante Martin by grant of his brother Joan I, forming part of the substantial territorial endowment the king provided to his brother upon accession in 1387. ↩
8. Latin *consuetum fuit et assuetum*: "it was customary and established" — a doublet formula emphasizing that the practice had the force of both custom and habit. The exact word forms in this passage remain partially uncertain; see Unresolved Ambiguities below. ↩
9. Latin *a pauco citra tempore*: "from a short time past" — indicates that the obstruction of the privilege is a recent development, not a long-standing dispute. ↩
10. The verb here is uncertain. The expected sense is that the officials have been preventing or obstructing (*impedientes* or *prohibentes*) the supplicants from exercising their privilege, but the exact reading is not secure. ↩
11. The Latin of this clause is garbled in both transcriptions. The reconstructed sense — that the officials attempt to enforce licensing requirements and extract penalties for non-compliance — is clear from context, but the precise wording cannot be established with confidence. ↩
12. The word after *christianis* is critical. If *sarracenis* (as the document's logic would predict, given its concern with both *universitates* and *aljamas*), the passage states that the officials have been extracting fines from both Christian and Muslim subjects. The alternative reading *ffratribus* ("brothers") makes less sense in this context. See Unresolved Ambiguities. ↩

13. Infante Martin (1356–1410), younger brother of Joan I, later King Martin I of Aragon (r. 1396–1410). In 1387, at the beginning of Joan's reign, Martin held extensive lordships in the Kingdom of Valencia including Elche and Crivillent, which Joan had granted or confirmed to him. The king's invocation of Martin's interests serves both to legitimate the supplicants' claim and to warn the officials that their interference diminishes revenues owed to a member of the royal family. ↩
14. The exact formula of the *mandamus* clause is partially illegible. The standard form would include an intensifying phrase such as *de certa sciencia et expresse* ("from certain knowledge and expressly") or *per presentes* ("by these presents"), but the manuscript readings are not fully resolved. ↩
15. The sense of the closing clause of the mandate is that the officials should observe the privilege and allow it to be exercised as the supplicants have enjoyed it in the past (*hactenus*). The exact syntax is somewhat confused in the manuscript, possibly reflecting scribal error or an unusual construction. ↩
16. The implied object of *punire* is the officials themselves — a standard threat in royal mandates that non-compliance will result in punishment. ↩
17. Joan I was resident in Barcelona in early 1387, having succeeded his father Pere III (who died on 5 January 1387). The first months of the reign saw a flurry of administrative activity including confirmations, grants, and the resolution of petitions from across the Crown's territories. ↩
18. The clause *sub nostro sigillo secreto* ("under our secret seal") is uncertain. If present, it indicates that the document was authenticated with the king's privy seal (*segell secret*) rather than the great seal (*segell comú* or *segell major*), which was normal for administrative mandates and correspondence as opposed to solemn charters and privileges. ↩
19. The date is either the ninth (*nona*) or tenth (*x*) of March. The difference between a single *x* and an abbreviation of *nona* is difficult to resolve in this hand. ↩
20. Francesc Ça Costa (*Franciscus ça Costa*) served as vice-chancellor (*vicecancellarius*) of Joan I. The vice-chancellor was the principal working officer of the royal chancery, responsible for the juridical review and authorization of documents issued in the king's name. His subscription here authenticates the mandate. ↩