

Claude Project, Opus 4.6

March 5, 2026

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

I have two letters in Catalan from 1387, written in fourteenth century Gothic Secretarial hand. Both letters are included the single image file attached here. Please do your best to transcribe these two letters.

7:46 AM

Grappled with medieval Catalan paleography and uncertain word readings

Grappled with medieval Catalan paleography and uncertain word readings

I'll examine the manuscript image carefully and produce my best transcription of both letters.

These are two royal mandates from Joan I in Catalan, both concerning the prosecution of criminals in the Kingdom of Valencia. Let me work through them line by line.

Document 1

Lo Rey

Sapiats quel portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia per [?] manament nostre preses [?] contra alguns homens del dit Regne delats de moltes e diuerses crims y los quals se son absentats. E als pres de que se iustificaran prenguen [?] cruels e tals que per [?] lurs merits se gran [?] que se'n [?] fara vigorosa cognicio. Y aço volem vos es manam y en aço vos hajats [?] per nos ebyts [?] a [?] vos lo dit portantveus e altres coses d'aquell [?] defenderets e enrenats [?] diligentment per [?] la nostra [?] cort. Car nos qui confiam de vostra aptesa [?] e bona diligencia vos farem plenament parsa [?] de nostres novelles [?]. Dada per [?] nostre segell secret [?] en Barchinona a xxv dies de octubre [?] en l'any de la nativitat de nostre senyor de m ccc lxxx set / Ffrancesc [?] / Iacob [?]

ffuit missa — dominus Rex mandavit michi P. d'Albernes [?]

Document 2

Lo Rey

Ja sabets con lo portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia per [?] manament nostre [?] preses [?] contra alguns homens delats de diuerses e enormes crims y los quals se son absentats. Perque volem es manam expressament que [?] en aço nos [?] hajats [?] contra tots los dits delats vos havets vigorosament e hi obra [?] complitats [?] tot ço que·l dit en Julià Garrig[a] [?] de part nostra [?] car nos li manarem per la dita rahó. Dada per [?] nostre segell secret [?] a xxv dies de octubre [?] en l'any del nat[ivitat] de nostre senyor de mccc lxxx set / Ffrancesc [?] / Iacob [?]

{ idem }

Notes on the Transcription

Document type: Two companion royal mandates from Joan I concerning the prosecution of fugitive criminals in the Kingdom of Valencia. The first is longer and more detailed; the second is briefer and names a royal agent (en Julià Garriga [?]) who will convey specific instructions.

Major uncertainties:

1. **The verb after "manament nostre"** (both documents): I read *preses* but am not confident. It could be *procehex* (proceeds), *persequex* (pursues), or another form. The context requires a verb meaning "proceeds/acts against."
2. **Lines 3–6 of Document 1** are the most difficult passage. The text between "E als pres de que se iustificaran" and "diligentment per la nostra cort" is very hard to parse. I believe the sense is: the king commands the recipient to assist the portantveus, to ensure that the captured criminals receive appropriately severe punishments, and that a vigorous investigation (*vigorosa cognicio*) be conducted — but many individual word readings are insecure.
3. **"abresa" / "aptesa"** (Doc 1, line 7): The word describing the recipient's quality in which the king trusts. Could be *aptesa* (aptitude/ability) or something else; the letter forms are ambiguous.
4. **The closing formula phrase** (Doc 1, line 8): "vos farem plenament parsa [?] de nostres novelles [?]" — I suspect this is a formulaic closing along the lines of "we will fully inform you of our news" (*novelles*), but the first noun is very uncertain. Could also be *roballes* or another word.

5. **The month in the date formula** (both documents): I tentatively read *octubre*, but the word is not clearly legible. It could be *novembre* or another month. The year is clearly 1387.
6. **The name in Document 2** (line 5): I read "en Julià Garriga" but this is uncertain, especially the surname.
7. **The scribal attribution**: "ffuit missa" is clear. The right-hand note appears to be "dominus Rex mandavit michi P. d'Albernes [?]" — the surname of the chancery official is uncertain.
8. **"segell secret" vs. "segell petit"**: The word after "segell" in the closing formula is unclear; I read *secret* based on standard chancery formulae, but *petit* is also possible.

The HTR pass should help considerably with the middle section of Document 1 in particular. Ready for Stage 2 whenever you have it.

Here is the other HTR output for Stage 2: Transcription of Letter 1 (Top) Lo Rey Sapiats quel portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia y manament nostre segueix contra alguns homens del dit Regne delats de molts e divers crims per los quals se son absentats E car nos de que se inculpan sien trals e tals que per lur merit se deuria fer justicia rigurosa emperó que per lo dret en que estam y en aturar lo grat de nos volgués estar a tot lo dit per dret e daltres coses d'aquest dependents enenats diligentment y la mia tot tota vos qui confiam de lora vostra bona diligencia vos farem plenerament parles de nostres treballs dant per la me present poder en breu a XV dies de Març en lany de la nat de nostre Senyor M CCC LXXX VII. [1387] (signat) Joan. Fuit missa (seguida de la signatura del secretari)

Transcription of Letter 2 (Bottom) Lo Rey Ya sabeu con lo portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia y mana- ment nostre segueix contra alguns homens delats de crims e enormes crims per los quals se son absentats perque volem en manament existint que en aturar ne puguis contra tots los dits delats vos donats rigurosament e per obra complidores tot ço que us dirà en Julià Garcés de per part nra [nostra] car nos li manarem que la dita raho dita per nostre regit poder a XV dies de Març en lany de la nat de nre [nostre] Senyor M CCC LXXX VII. [1387] (signat) Joan. Fuit missa (seguida de la signatura del secretari)

Show more

7:55 AM

Meticulously adjudicated manuscript divergences between transcriptions and HTR output

Meticulously adjudicated manuscript divergences between transcriptions and HTR output

Stage 2: Reconciliation

I've re-examined the manuscript image against both readings. Here is the structured comparison.

(A) Where HTR Corrects My Initial Reading

- 1. "segueix" (both documents)** The verb after "manament nostre" — HTR reads *segueix* (pursues/proceeds), where I was uncertain and attempted *preses*. HTR is clearly right: *segueix contra* ("proceeds against") is grammatically and formulaically sound. The portantveus "proceeds against" accused criminals by royal mandate.
 - 2. "per los quals se son absentats" (Doc 1)** HTR's *per los quals* ("for which [crimes] they absented themselves") is grammatically superior to my *y los quals*. The preposition *per* makes the causal relationship clear. I can now see the abbreviated *per* in the ms.
 - 3. "E car los [crims?] de que se inculpan sien cruels e tals que per lurs merits se deuria fer justícia rigurosa" (Doc 1, lines 3–5)** This was the most difficult passage and the HTR captures the overall sense better than my attempt. The causal clause *E car* ("And because") opens a justification: the crimes of which they are accused are cruel and such that by their merits rigorous justice ought to be done. My reading attempted fragments (*vigorosa cognicio*) but never achieved grammatical coherence. That said, the HTR has some garbled individual words here (e.g., *trals* for what is almost certainly *cruels*), so I've corrected those in the reconciled version below.
 - 4. "per la dita rahó" (Doc 2, line 6)** HTR reads *que la dita rahó*, which I initially read as *per la dita rahó*. Re-examining the ms, I now think the HTR captures the syntax better: *car nos li manarem que la dita rahó...* ("for we shall command him regarding the said matter"). However, see section (C) — the full clause remains difficult.
-

(B) Where My Initial Reading Is Preferred

- 1. "delats de diuerses e enormes crims" (Doc 2)** HTR reads "delats de crims e enormes crims" — redundant and clearly a misread. The ms shows *diuerses* before *e enormes crims*, matching standard chancery phrasing.
- 2. "Perque volem es manam expressament" (Doc 2)** HTR's "volem en manament existint" is garbled. The standard chancery formula *volem es manam* ("we wish and command") is visible in the ms and is overwhelmingly more likely.

3. "Car nos qui confiam de vostra abtesa e bona diligencia" (Doc 1, line 7) HTR's "y la mia tot tota vos qui confiam de lora vostra bona diligencia" is nonsensical. The ms clearly begins this clause with *Car nos qui confiam* ("For we who trust"), a standard trust formula. The word I transcribed as *aptesa* I now read as *abtesa* (ability/aptitude, variant of *aptesa*) — uncertain but far more plausible than the HTR's garble.

4. "vos havets vigorosament" (Doc 2) HTR's "vos donats rigurosament" — looking at the ms, I prefer *havets* over *donats* and *vigorosament* over *rigurosament*, though the adverb could go either way. The construction *vos havets vigorosament* ("you should conduct yourselves vigorously") is standard.

5. Scribal attributions The HTR ignores the chancery notes entirely. My reading of *ffuit missa* and the right-margin attribution *dominus Rex mandavit michi P. d'Abernes [?]* captures the standard format. Doc 2's *{idem}* refers back to the same scribal attribution.

(C) Where Both Remain Uncertain

1. The date formula (both documents) This is the single biggest unresolved crux. HTR reads *a XV dies de Març*; I read *a xxv dies de [octubre?]*. Re-examining the ms:

- The numeral: I see what appears to be three minims + v, suggesting *xxv* (25) rather than *xv* (15), but this is not secure.
- The month: The word after *dies de* is short enough to be *Març* but could also be a longer word partially abbreviated. I cannot confidently resolve this from the image.
- The place name: I initially read *en Barchinona*; HTR omits a place name entirely. I think I see a toponym but cannot confirm it.
- **Net assessment:** The year *M CCC LXXX set* (1387) is clear in both documents. The day and month require archival verification. Both March and October 1387 are plausible for Joan I's early reign.

2. "y manament nostre" vs. "per manament nostre" Both documents have this phrase. In this hand, abbreviated *per* (p with crossbar) can resemble *y*. The standard chancery formula is *per manament nostre*, which I'd expect — but the HTR consistently reads *y manament nostre*, which could function as a coordinating construction ("and by our mandate"). I tentatively prefer *per* but flag this as uncertain.

3. The name in Doc 2: "Julià Garcés" (HTR) vs. "Julià Garriga" (me) The first name *Julià* is clear. The surname begins *Gar-* but the ending is ambiguous. Both *Garcés* and *Garriga* are attested Valencian surnames in this period. Needs prosopographical verification.

4. "vos farem plenament [part?/parsa?] de nostres [novelles?/treballs?]" (Doc 1, line 8) HTR reads *parles de nostres treballs*; I read *parsa de nostres novelles*. Neither is convincing. I suspect the formula is something like *vos farem plenament part de nostres novelles* ("we will fully inform you of our news"), which is attested in other Aragonese royal correspondence — but the actual letter forms are hard to resolve. The word after *nostres* is particularly opaque.

5. Lines 5–6 of Doc 1: the mandate clause Between the *justícia rigurosa* clause and the *Car nos qui confiam* formula, the text instructs the recipient to act. I believe the sense is: "And this we wish and command you, and in assisting [the portantveus] you should... defend and conduct [other matters] diligently for our court." But individual word readings remain shaky. Key uncertainties: *aturar* (to assist?) vs. *aço* (this); the exact verbs of obligation; whether *portantveus* or *governador* appears again in this section.

6. Doc 2, line 5: "e hi obra complidament/complidores" HTR reads *per obra complidores*; I read *hi obra complitats*. The sense is "and by deed fulfill/complete" — standard reinforcement of a mandate. The exact verb form and construction are unclear from the ms.

(D) Reconciled Transcription

Document 1

Lo Rey

Sapiats que·l portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia per [?] manament nostre segueix contra alguns homens del dit Regne delats de molts e diuerses crims per los quals se son absentats. E car los [crims?] de que se inculpan sien cruels e tals que per lurs merits se deuria fer justícia rigurosa [**high confidence, combining HTR structure with corrected individual words**], emperò [?] que per lo [dret?] [?] volem vos es manam y en aturar [?] lo [?] de nos [?] enar [?] o·ls [?] lo dit portantveus e altres coses d'aquell [?] dependents enenats [?] diligentment [**low confidence — sense is clear but individual readings largely uncertain**] per la nostra cort. Car nos qui confiam de vostra abtesa [?] e bona diligencia vos farem plenament part [?] de nostres novelles [?] [**medium confidence**]. Dada per nostre segell secret [?] en Barch[inon]a [?] a xxv [?] dies de [Març? octubre?] en l'any de la nativitat de nostre senyor M CCC LXXX set.

Ffrancesc [?] / Iacob [?]

ffuit missa ——— dominus Rex mandavit michi P. d'Abernes [?]

Document 2

Lo Rey

Ja sabets con lo portantveus de Governador en Regne de Valencia per [?] manament nostre segueix contra alguns homens delats de diuerses e enormes crims per los quals se son absentats. Perque volem es manam expressament que en aturar [?] ne [?] hajats [?] contra tots los dits delats vos havets vigorosament e hi [?] obra complidament [?] tot ço que us dirà en Julià Garcés/Garrig[a] [?] de part nostra, car nos li manarem que [?] la dita rahó. Dada per nostre segell secret [?] a xxv [?] dies de [Març? octubre?] en l'any de la nat[ivitat] de nostre senyor M CCC LXXX set.

Ffrancesc [?] / Iacob [?]

ffuit missa {idem}

Summary of Confidence Levels

High confidence: Opening address, *segueix contra*, the accusation clauses, the trust formula (*Car nos qui confiam*), the year (1387), scribal notes.

Medium confidence: The *justícia rigurosa* clause (Doc 1 lines 3–4), the name *Julià Garcés/Garriga*, the closing formula structure, *volem es manam* (Doc 2).

Low confidence: The central mandate clause (Doc 1 lines 5–6), the exact day and month, the phrase after *plenament*, the place name in the date formula, the surname of the chancery scribe.

Ready for your corrections and/or to proceed to Stage 3.

Line 6 of Document 1: *consequencio per co volem [eius] eus manam que en anotar lo particular de nostre physich*. Please also note that in Document 2 line 5 there is a similar phrase: *en anotar nostre phyisch contra dos los dits delats vos haiats curosamenter...* Please reconsider some of your transcription in light of these corrections and then proceed to Stage 3.

8:20 AM

Reconciled paleographic corrections and revised medieval Catalan transcriptions accordingly

Reconciled paleographic corrections and revised medieval Catalan transcriptions accordingly

Thank you — those corrections unlock the central mandate clauses in both documents. Let me incorporate them and produce the Stage 3 deliverable.

Pivoted toward markdown format for document delivery

Pivoted toward markdown format for document delivery

The project calls for markdown output, so I'll create the .md file directly.

Acknowledged corrections and prepared to advance workflow

Acknowledged corrections and prepared to advance workflow

Here's the Stage 3 deliverable. Your corrections to *anotar* and *physich/physich* were essential — they restructured the central mandate clauses in both documents from incoherent fragments into legible commands.

The biggest remaining puzzle is *physich/physich* itself. The *ph-* spelling is consistent across both letters, which argues against a one-off scribal slip, but a physician in the context of criminal prosecution mandates is hard to explain unless these documents concern a specific case (suspicious deaths, forensic examination) rather than a general criminal sweep. The alternative — that this is a variant for *fisc/fiscal* — would make perfect contextual sense but requires some phonological gymnastics to get from *physich* to *fiscal*. I've flagged this prominently in both the footnotes and the unresolved ambiguities section.

F27r two mandates joan i 1387

Document · MD

Good work. Now that I am looking at what you created for Stage 3, I have a question. Could the word "phisch" in the document be an alternative spelling for "fisc"?

8:25 AM

Validated medieval orthographic pathway from phisch to fisc

Validated medieval orthographic pathway from phisch to fisc

That's a very plausible reading, and it would resolve the central interpretive crux in both documents. The orthographic pathway from *fisc* to *phisch* is defensible on several grounds.

The *ph-* for *f-* interchange is well attested in late medieval scribal practice. Scribes working in a Latinate chancery environment were habituated to *ph* from learned Latin and Greek-derived words (*philosophia*, *Pharao*, etc.), and hypercorrection — extending *ph-* to words that etymologically carry plain *f-* — is a recognized phenomenon. *Fiscus* → *phisch-* is exactly the kind of substitution one might expect.

The final *-sch* or *-ch* is also unproblematic. In medieval Catalan orthography, final [k] after a sibilant or in a consonant cluster was often represented with *-ch* — so *fisc* could naturally appear as *fisch* or, with the *ph-* substitution, *phisch*. The earlier readings that seemed to show additional vowels (*physich*, *phyisch*) may have been over-reading minims or pen strokes as vowel letters when they were actually part of the consonantal cluster.

Contextually, *fisc* transforms both documents from puzzling to completely standard. "En anotar lo particular de nostre fisc" becomes "in assisting the representative of our fisc [royal treasury]" — i.e., a fiscal officer charged with prosecuting the accused and presumably seizing their assets. And "en anotar nostre fisc contra tots los dits delats" is simply "in assisting our fisc against all the said accused." Criminal prosecution and fiscal seizure of fugitives' property went hand in hand in Aragonese royal administration; the *procurador fiscal* was a standard officer in these proceedings.

I'd say this reading is strongly preferable to "physician" and should replace it in the transcription. Want me to update the markdown file accordingly?

Want to be notified when Claude responds?

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

Claude