

Claude Opus 4.6

March 30, 2026

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

I have another letter in Catalan from 1387, written in fourteenth century Gothic Secretarial hand. Please do your best to transcribe for Stage 1.

12:43 PM

Examined medieval Catalan manuscript for paleographic transcription

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Here is my Stage 1 transcription:

Document type: Royal letter (*lletra closa*) from Joan I to the *jurats* and *prohomens* of Barbastro **Language:** Catalan **Date:** 1 April 1387 **Folio:** 37r (ACA, Cancillería, Reg. 1751)

Transcription:

Lo Rey.

Oïts [?] d'armes, nous membra ara un de nos prés que fóssem menció [?] de la estusa [?] de Solajent [?] que entany nos fon feta a Çaragoça per los missatgers de Barbastre, en los aempram que fussen d'algó de compnir [?]. E recordans-nos e en quina mana finalment per aquell fet nos podem encarregar en ells, mas no volríem reduyr a memòria les falses [?] de vostres promeses, maiorment per so tals que poden haveu reparo. Per que nos escrivim als jurats e prhòmens de Barbastre ab letra de creeça a vos comandada [?] per vèer [?] de la qual nos mana als digats de part nostra que fuesquen [?] de gent [?] en tal mana que reparen ço que han fallit, axí com dit és, e nos nos regam [?] d'ells e ben fuyts [?] e haja rahó de haveu-los recomanats en lurs oportunitats e a açò hàgats la carta que sabets en cas que no acompletssets [?] lo seny [?] que per nos volria [?]. Dada en Barçelona sots nostre segell secret primer dia de abril del any MCCCLXXXVII. Subsignada ab mots petit snell [?].

Preliminary observations and flagged uncertainties:

This is a challenging read — several passages gave me real difficulty, and I want to flag them honestly rather than force readings.

1. **Opening address** — "Oïts d'armes" is my best attempt, but I'm not confident. The first word could be a proper name or title. The stroke patterns are ambiguous.
2. **"estusa de Solajent"** — Very uncertain. This may be a toponym or a reference to an event/affair (*estuja? excusa?*). The second word could be a personal name. I'd want to revisit this with the HTR.
3. **"compnir"** — Likely *complir* with a nasal bar, but the letter forms are unclear.
4. **"fuesquen de gent"** — Uncertain. Could be *fuessin de gest* or similar; the intended meaning seems to be an instruction to act in a certain manner.
5. **"ben fuyts"** — Very uncertain. Possibly *ben fiats* or *ben fayts* ("well done/behaved").
6. **"petit snell"** — The closing formula is partly illegible to me. This likely refers to the *segell petit* (small seal) and perhaps an authentication note, but the exact reading is shaky.
7. **General sense of the letter:** Joan I reminds the *jurats* and *prohomens* of Barbastro of promises they made through their messengers at Zaragoza the previous year (*entany*), complains that they have not fulfilled them, and instructs his addressee (via a *lletra de creença*, a credence letter) to tell them to remedy their failure, with a veiled threat if they do not comply.

Ready for Stage 2 whenever you have the HTR output.

The letter begins Mossen en Jacme. The scribe has written the capital J over the "en." Later in the first line, after menbra ara, there is an abbreviated word with qn and the abbreviation is possibly an open top a and r. Think about what words that begin with q might fit contextually. Here is the other HTR output for Stage 2: Lo Rey. Oficial d'armes. nous membra ara com de nos p[r]op[r]e que fessen mencio dela escriptura de plazent que enuay nos fon feta a Sara- goça p[er] los missatges de Barbastre quan los reebem que fuessen falguats de conuyt. E recordans co e en quya mana- p[r]incipalment p[er] aquell fet nos podem encarregar en ells mas ne volrem reduyr a memoria lo falre de n[ost]res p[ro]metes maiorment p[er] que p[er] tals que poden hauer reparo p[er] que nos escriuim als iurats e p[ro]homes de Barbastre ab letra de creença a vos comanada p[er] virtut dela qual nos mana que'ls digats de part n[ost]ra que fossen d'aquest en tal mana que reparen ço que han fallit axi com dit es e nos nos tenem dells p[er] ben seruits e d'aço raho de

hauer los recomanats en lurs oportunitats e a[...] E hayats la carta que sabeys en cas que no acceptassen lo suyt que p[er] nos volra. Dada en Barç[el]ona sutz n[ost]re segell secret p[r]imer dia de abril de l'any . m.cccclxxxvii . sotsignada ab n[ost]re petit anell.

Show more

12:47 PM

Reconciled medieval manuscript transcription against HTR output and user corrections

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Thank you for those corrections — the opening and the *q*-abbreviation are very helpful. Let me work through the reconciliation systematically.

Stage 2 Reconciliation

(A) HTR Corrects Claude's Reading

Opening address: My "Oïts d'armes" was entirely wrong. The HTR's "Oficial d'armes" is also wrong. Your correction — **Mossèn en Jacme** — with the capital J overwritten on "en" is the correct reading. This is a *lletra closa* addressed to a knight.

"quan" after "membra ara": I had "un"; the HTR has "com." Based on your description of the abbreviation (qn with what looks like an open-top a and r), I read this as **quan** (when), which fits the context well: "nous membra ara quan de nos propre..."

"nos propre": I had "nos prés" — the HTR's **propre** ("our own [initiative]") is clearly superior, giving "de nos propre que féssem menció" = "from our own [will] that we made mention."

"principalment": I had "finalment." The HTR reads **principalment**, which makes better contextual sense: "principally through that act we can charge/burden them."

"per virtut de la qual": I had "per vèer de la qual," which was wrong. **Per virtut** is the standard credence-letter formula.

"que-ls digats": I had "als digats." The HTR's **que-ls digats** ("that you tell them") is grammatically correct — the enclitic pronoun is standard here.

"nos nos tenem d'ells per ben servits": I had "nos nos regam d'ells e ben fuyts," which was garbled. The HTR's reading is clearly right: **nos nos tenem d'ells per ben servits** — "we will consider ourselves well served by them." Standard formulaic language.

"**e haja rahó**": The HTR drops *haja*, reading "e d'açò rahó de haver-los recomanats." Looking at the manuscript, I believe *haja* is present: **e haja rahó de haver-los recomanats** — "and [we] will have reason to have them recommended."

"**sotsignada ab nostre petit anell**": My "subsignada ab mots petit snell" was badly garbled. The HTR's reading is correct: **sotsignada ab nostre petit anell** — "countersigned with our small ring [seal]."

(B) Claude's Reading Preferred over HTR

"**entany**": The HTR reads "enuay." I read **entany** (last year), which is the correct Catalan adverb and fits the context — Joan was in Zaragoza in 1386.

"**quina mana**": The HTR reads "quya mana." **Quina** (what kind of) is the correct Catalan form; "quya" is not a standard word.

"**promeses**": The HTR reads "prometes." **Promeses** is the correct Catalan plural.

"**sabets**": The HTR has "sabeys." Both are defensible orthographic variants, but **sabets** seems to match the manuscript better.

(C) Passages Where Both Remain Uncertain

1. "**de la esc[us]a / esc[ri]ptura de plazent**" I had "estusa de Solajent" — clearly wrong. The HTR reads "escriptura de plazent." Looking at the manuscript, the stroke count for the first word seems too short for *escriptura*; I now think **escusa** (excuse) is more likely. "De plazent" could be the adjective *plaent/plazent* merged with the preceding *de* to give **desplazent** (displeasing) — yielding "la escusa desplazent que entany nos fon feta" = "the displeasing excuse that was made to us last year." This makes strong contextual sense. But the word boundaries are ambiguous in the manuscript. **Flagged [?]**.

2. "**quan los [aempram / reebem] que fuessen [d'algó de complir / falguats de conuyt]**" This entire clause is difficult. The HTR reads "quan los reebem que fuessen falguats de conuyt" — "falguats" and "conuyt" are not recognizable Catalan words, suggesting garbled readings. My reading "d'algó de complir" is contextually possible ("to fulfill something") but paleographically uncertain. An alternative: could the manuscript read **tenguts de complir** or **calguts de complir** (obligated to fulfill)? Both are standard legal terms. The HTR's "falguats" could be a misread of *calguts*. **Flagged [?]**.

3. "mas no/ne volríem/volrem" I read "no volríem" (conditional); the HTR has "ne volrem." The difference between *no* and *ne* is minor (both are negation in medieval Catalan). The verb form is more consequential: *volríem* (conditional) vs. *volrem* (future). Looking at the manuscript, I tentatively prefer **no volríem** but this remains [?].

4. "vostres" vs. "nostres" (promeses) The HTR reads "nostres"; I read "vostres." Contextually, the king is complaining about unfulfilled promises made by the people of Barbastro, so **vostres promeses** (your promises) seems more logical. But "nostres" could work if the king is referring to mutual commitments. Needs verification against the manuscript initial stroke. **Flagged [?].**

5. "lo fal[se]s / lo fal[re] de [v/n]ostres promeses" I read "les falses"; the HTR reads "lo falre." Looking at the manuscript, I now think a possible reading is **lo fallir** (the failure) — "lo fallir de vostres promeses" = "the failure of your promises." The article *lo* (masculine singular) matches *fallir* better than *les falses*. But the exact letter forms remain uncertain. **Flagged [?].**

6. "que fuessen / fossen d'aquèst / d'aquén en tal mana" I had "fuesquen de gent"; the HTR has "fossen d'aquest." Neither is entirely clear. "Que fossen d'aquí [en avant] en tal mana" (that henceforth in such a manner...) is contextually plausible. **Flagged [?].**

7. "lo su[yt/y] que per nos volrà" I had "lo seny"; the HTR has "lo suyt." Neither is a clear word. Could this be **lo sou** (the payment) or **lo seu** (what is his/theirs)? "En cas que no acceptassen lo seu que per nos volrà" = "in case they did not accept what will be desired by us." **Flagged [?].**

(D) Reconciled Transcription

Lo Rey.

Mossèn en Jacme, nous membra ara quan de nos propre que féssem menció de la excusa desplazent [?] que entany nos fon feta a Çaragoça per los missatges de Barbastre, quan los [aempram / reebem] [?] que fuessen [calguts / tenguts] [?] de complir. E recordans-nos e en quina mana principalment per aquell fet nos podem encarregar en ells, mas no volríem [?] reduyr a memòria lo fallir [?] de vostres [?] promeses, maiorment perque per tals que poden haver reparo. Per que nos escrivim als jurats e pròhomens de Barbastre ab letra de creença a vos comanada, per virtut de la qual nos mana que·ls digats de part nostra que fossen d'aquèst [?] en tal mana que reparen ço que han fallit, axí com dit és, e nos nos tenem d'ells per ben servits e haja rahó de haver-los recomanats en lurs oportunitats. E a açò hàgats la carta que sabets en cas que no acceptassen [?] lo suy [?] que per nos volrà.

Dada en Barcelona sots nostre segell secret primer dia de abril de l'any MCCCLXXXVII.
Sotsignada ab nostre petit anell.

Ready to proceed to Stage 3 when you've reviewed this, or to revisit any of the flagged passages if you have further corrections.

To the best of my reading, the second line and into the third line, after Barbastre, reads *quan los aempram qu'ens servissen d'algun do continent*. Please proceed to Stage 3.

1:03 PM

Discerned output format requirement and streamlined approach accordingly

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Good — that correction resolves one of the hardest passages cleanly. Let me build the Stage 3 file now.

Acknowledged textual passage and advanced to requested stage

Acknowledged textual passage and advanced to requested stage

Here's the Stage 3 edition. Your correction on "*quan los aempram qu'ens servissen d'algun do continent*" was key — it transforms the whole letter from a vague complaint into a very specific fiscal demand. The *do continent* is a nice detail for your dissertation context: Joan pressing Aragonese towns for immediate financial contributions in the first weeks of his reign, using a herald as envoy with a credence letter and a notarial instrument at the ready as a stick.

Seven ambiguities remain flagged, mostly concentrated in two areas — the *escusa desplazent* compound and the closing conditional clause about *lo suy*. Let me know if you want to revisit any of those, or if you have further corrections.

Aca joani mossenjacme barbastro 1387 04 01

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