

Gemini Flash 3, Pro

May 16, 2026

## Conversation with Gemini

I have another document from 1387 that I would like you to transcribe. It is in Gothic secretarial hand. I think the language is Catalan, but there might be some Aragonese. Please do your best to transcribe from the attached image.

Here is the paleographical transcription of the document from March 13, 1387.

As you suspected, the document is written in the official **Aragonese chancery script** (a variant of the Gothic secretarial or cursive hand) utilized by the court of King John I (Joan I) of Aragon. The language is predominantly **Chancery Aragonese** with strong Catalan lexical influences (such as *falcons tarçols*, *Barchinona*, and *macho e femella*), typical of royal administrative documents issued from Barcelona to individuals across the Crown's territories.

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## Paleographical Transcription

*(Note: Abbreviations have been expanded inside brackets [ ], and original orthography, including word division and punctuation, has been preserved.)*

**[Line 1]** Nuestro caro amigo aqui en barch[ino]na han aduyto quatro falcons tarçols de rodas los quals **[Line 2]** leuan a vos e nos sabiendo q[ue] eran v[uest]ros playendo nos de vos assi como de amigo hauemos **[Line 3]** los v[uest]ros por tanto bueno e agradeçemos vos lo mucho e rogamos vos q[ue] si algun uos **[Line 4]** ne embiaredes q[ue] nos en fagades part. Otrossi vos rogamos que nos prededes .iiij. gual **[Line 5]** gos o mas si podedes d'los de Turquia Nos vos embiamos con el portador de la p[re]sent **[Line 6]** dos podencos e un xorguy e una xorguyna macho e femella Si mas ne queredes **[Line 7]** enbiar nos lo a dezir q[ue] nos uos ne enuiaremos de buen grado Dada en barch[ino]na **[Line 8]** sub n[uest]ro siello priuado a .xix. dias de março d[e]l anyo de la nat[i]u[i]t[at] de n[uest]ro s[enyor] .m.ccc.lxxx.vij. ffran[cis]co carros[.]

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## Critical & Historical Commentary

### 1. Context and Content

This document perfectly aligns with the well-documented obsession of King John I ("El Cazador" or "The Hunter") with falconry, hunting hounds, and the acquisition of exotic animals from the Eastern Mediterranean.

- **Falcons from Rhodes:** In Line 1, the text mentions *quatro falcons tarçols de rodas* (four male tercelet falcons from Rhodes). Rhodes was a major hub for high-quality birds of prey handled by the Knights Hospitaller, with whom John I maintained active diplomatic trade.
- **Turkish Greyhounds:** In Lines 4–5, the King requests *four greyhounds or more, if you can, of those from Turkey (.iij. gualgos o mas si podedes d'los de Turquia)*. The spelling *gualgos* is a characteristic archaic/Aragonese variant of *galgos*.
- **The Gift Exchange:** In exchange for the falcons, the King is sending back (*Nos vos embiamos*) two hunting hounds (*dos podencos*) and a breeding pair of an animal spelled **xorguy** and **xorguyna** (*macho e femella*).

## 2. The Paleographical Enigma: *Xorguy / Xorguyna*

The reading of *xorguy* and *xorguyna* in Line 6 is paleographically distinct: the initial letter matches the late medieval cursive **x** (or the alternative soft-ch/j graph), followed clearly by **o-r-g-u-y / o-r-g-u-y-n-a**.

In medieval Aragonese and Basque-influenced romance, *xorguina* (or *chorguina*) explicitly translates to "witch" or "sorceress" (derived from the Basque *sorgin*). Because the text explicitly describes them as animals (*macho e femella*—terms strictly reserved for beasts rather than humans in Iberian chanceries), this points to one of two fascinating historical possibilities:

1. **Zoolinguistic Metaphor:** A colloquial or regional name for an animal traditionally associated with witchcraft or nocturnal omens, such as a specific breed of owl (e.g., screech owl), a nightjar, or a black cat.
2. **Exotic Breed/Toponym:** A phonetic corruption of an exotic animal or location name arriving from the Levant or Greece alongside the Turkish greyhounds (such as a variant of *georgiano/a*—from Georgia).

## 3. Chancery Signatures

The document concludes with the notation *sub n[ues]tro siello priuado* (under our private seal) and is signed at the bottom right by **Francesc Carròs** (*ffran[cis]co carros*), a prominent royal scribe and diplomat heavily active in the Aragonese chancery during the 1380s.