

BOGDAN BURLIGA

HOUND SUPPORTING THE FALCON IN HUNTING: FREDERICK II OF HOHENSTAUFEN'S  
*DE ARTE VENANDI CUM AVIBUS*, 3, 28<sup>1</sup>

Frederick II of Hohenstaufen's (1194 - 1250)<sup>2</sup> magnificent treatise on falconry is clearly the most known among the medieval hunting works,<sup>3</sup> save perhaps the later, beautifully illustrated, book by Gaston 'Phoebus'. In Frederick's *The Art of Falconry* two trends meet: the ancient tradition of composing a natural compendium<sup>4</sup> is strictly connected with the didactic aim at teaching the 'noblest art' of hunting (1, 1, 7; 1, 1, 13-16; 2, *praef.* 1).<sup>5</sup> This connection is logical enough, for a success in the venery with the use of the rapacious birds must have been preceded by the detailed knowledge of their behavior and manners (it made, according to the emperor, *a theory*: 2, *praef.* 5; also 1, 1, 2: *collectio documentorum*), what in turn influenced their proper training (*a practice*).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Professors Agnieszka Samsonowicz and Tadeusz Poklewski-Koziełł for their valuable comments after my lecture of this paper. As to the numbering of books and chapters of the treatise I follow C. A. Wood and F. M. Fyfe's edition with the translation: *The Art of Falconry Being the De arte venandi cum avibus of Frederick II. of Hohenstaufen*, Stanford (CA) 1943 (with many reprints; I rely on 1969 issue), who at p. 3 do explain their reasons for adopting such a division. As for Latin text, I use the edition of A.-L. Trombetta Budriesi e C. Zecchini (a cura di), Federico II de Svevia, *De arte venandi cum avibus. L'arte di cacciare con gli uccelli*, Roma - Bari 2001.

<sup>2</sup> E. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite*, Berlin 1931, pp. 332f.

<sup>3</sup> On other handbooks, cf. H. L. Savage, *Hunting in the Middle Ages*, "Speculum", 8 (1933), p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> To mention only the zoological writings of Aristotle; Seneca's *Natural Questions*; *Natural History* by Pliny or Aelian's *The Characteristics of Animals* (see below); and - last but not least - *Etymologies* of Isidore of Sevilla. It is difficult to agree with B. W. Ogilvie, *Science of Describing. Natural History in Renaissance Europe*, Chicago-London 2006, 1, that natural history was invented in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, even if one accepts his criterion that authors of that epoch had 'self-consciousness' in writing something different from the natural philosophy or medicine. I think medieval writers of 'encyclopedias' did exactly what Ogilvie believes to have been done by the renaissance thinkers.

<sup>5</sup> On this theme see W. H. Forsyth, *The Noblest of Sports: Falconry in the Middle Ages*, "Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin", 2, 1944, p. 254; also M. Thiebaut, *The Mediaeval Chase*, "Speculum", 42, 1967, p. 260.

<sup>6</sup> But as S. Georges acutely observes, in Frederick's interests in the falcons the scientific factor prevails over the 'Glanz, der von den Tieren ausging' ('the prestige that came from the owning of the animals). It can be seen in the long tradition of the manning

It is generally assumed that Frederick's encyclopedic knowledge of the habits of the avian raptors is the subject of the first two books. They concern the nature of birds generally in Book One and the properties of the falcons in Book Two, whilst the remainder (books Three - Six) deals with the detailed instructions in the hunting field.<sup>7</sup> As it had been said, in his interest in the inquiry of natural world, the emperor revealed an Aristotelian spirit,<sup>8</sup> as did later Albertus Magnus when composing (probably between the years 1260 - 1280)<sup>9</sup>

the falcons in the royal and aristocratic courts (*Das zweite Falkenbuch Kaiser Friedrichs II. Quellen, Entstehung, Überlieferung und Rezeption des Moamin*, Berlin 2008, p. 21; see R. K. Jansen, *De arte venandi cum avibus*, "German Quarterly", 48, 1975, p. 187, and especially J. Cummins, *The Hound and Hawk. The Art of Medieval Hunting*, London 2001, p. 223). In this respect Frederick was perhaps an exception. To be sure he often says of the prestige and superiority of falconry but it is clear that this dignity is result of the difficulties and efforts connected with training the falcons (1, 1 5 - 8). It requires best men.

<sup>7</sup> One may easily observe in the treatise the gradual specification of the theme - from the general problems to the more specific cases. So, while Book Two is devoted to the difficulties in the training of the predatory birds, Book Three mainly concentrates on the use of lure. Next books deal with the hawking of the great birds: cranes (Book Four) and herons (Books Five), or shore birds, e.g. ducks (Book Six).

<sup>8</sup> There was opinion that in his beliefs the emperor was an Epicurean and as the enemy of the papacy he is found in the Hell (Dante, *Inferno*, 10, 119). The famous label *stupor mundi* ("The Wonder of the World"), attributed to him, does indicate the contemporaries' enormous curiosity - from admiration to envy (Ch. Haskins, 'Latin Literature under Frederick II', *Speculum* 3, 1928, 129 - 130). His fascination with the falcons resembles 'thirst for classic lore' (T. L. Kington, *History of Frederick the Second I*, London 1862, p. 462), but it must be remembered that he knew Aristotle's natural writings from the Latin translation of Michael Scot, who in turn has used the Arabic translations of Aristotle (J. M. Powell, *Frederick II's Knowledge of Greek*, "Speculum", 38, 1963, p. 481; cf. Ch. Haskins, *Michael Scot and Frederick II*, "Isis", 4, 1921, p. 255-256). Accordingly, in the *Preface*, pp. 4-5, the emperor criticizes Aristotle for having no knowledge of falconry.

<sup>9</sup> The book XXIII of Albertus' zoological study had been devoted to the predatory birds: '*De falconibus, asturibus et accipitribus*' ('On falcons, goshawks and hawks') and was printed sometimes separately, see *Reliqua librorum Friderici II. Imperatoris De arte venandi cum avibus cum Manfredi Regis additionibus ex membranis vetustis nunc primum edita. Albertus Magnus de Falconibus, Asturibus & Accipitribus*, ed. M. Velsler,

his vast treatise *De animalibus*. The same remains true with the Frederick's 'Aristotelian' practice of discussing all the cases (treated with the pedantic and technical exactness)<sup>10</sup> that could happen during the training of the falcons, as the chapter 23 in the Book Three does indicate.

\*\*\*

Hunting with the birds of prey was very old eastern custom.<sup>11</sup> Although controversy remains whether it was practiced in Mesopotamia,<sup>12</sup> there is no doubt that it was known among the Hittites during the second millennium BC.<sup>13</sup> The Persians also favored it and this can be inferred from Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*, 1, 6, 39, where we do hear of the royal trained birds, unspecified however (ὄρνιθες δ' ἐπεπαιδεύοντο σοι ['birds had been so trained', tr. W. Miller, Loeb]).<sup>14</sup> The people of Far East were acquainted with it too, and thanks to the work of Claudius Aelianus (whose *floruit* falls on the second half of the II century AD) entitled *On the Characteristics of Animals (Natura animalium)* 4, 26, there is preserved information (based on the book of the India by the Greek physician Ctesias of Cnidus from IV<sup>th</sup> century BC, *FGrH* 688 F 45g), that the Indians chase hares and foxes without hounds:

"This is the way in which the Indians hunt Hares and Foxes: they have no need of hounds or the chase, but they catch the young of Eagles, Ravens and Kites also, rear them, and teach them how to hunt. This is their

---

Augustae Vindelicorum [Augsburg] 1596 (I thank Senior Librarian Jan Krzemiński and Dr. Aleksander Baliński from the Gdańsk Library of the Academy of Polish Science for enabling me to consult this extremely priceless edition). The edition of Velsler contains only two books of Frederick's treatise, supplemented by the additional remark: *Reliqua in autographo desiderantur*. ('The rest is in manuscripts'). In sum, six MSS are preserved with the division of the work into two books, see C. A. Wood and F. M. Fyfe, *Introduction* [in:] *op. cit.*, p. lvii; also Ch. Haskins, *The De arte venandi cum avibus of the Emperor Frederick II*, "English Historical Review", 36, 1921, 335.

<sup>10</sup> For instance the instructions, how to carry a falcon on the hand – 2, 42, 46 and 49; on the riding on horseback, 2, 71; or concerning the qualifications of the falconers and their types, 2, 47 - 48.

<sup>11</sup> B. Sax, *The Mythical Zoo. An Encyclopedia of Animals in World Myth, Legend & Literature*, Santa Barbara [CA]-Oxford 2001, p. 112.

<sup>12</sup> But see T. T. Allsen, *The Royal Hunt in Euroasian History*, Philadelphia 2006, p. 58 on Mesopotamia under the Assyrians.

<sup>13</sup> J. V. Canby, *Falconry (Hawking) in Hittite Lands*, "Journal of Near Eastern Studies", 61 (2002), 161ff; H. J. Epstein, *The Origins and Earliest History of Falconry*, "Isis", 34, 1943, 498 expresses the doubt if it was popular among the Egyptians, and interprets the numerous representations of the falcons in the Egyptian art and mythology as bearing mainly symbolic meanings.

<sup>14</sup> The Persian tradition of writing on falconry was everlasting and persisted until medieval times; on the royal ideology of kingship, see A. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East ca. 3000 – 330 BC II*, London-New York 2003, p. 672-673.

method of instruction: to a tame Hare or to a domesticated Fox they attach a piece of meat, and then let them run; and having sent the birds in pursuit, they allow them to pick off the meat. The birds give chase at full speed, and if they catch the Hare or the Fox, they have the meat as a reward for the capture; it is for them a highly attractive bait. When therefore they have perfected the birds' skills at hunting, the Indians let them loose after mountain Hares and wild Foxes. And the birds, in expectation of their accustomed feed, whenever one of these animals appears, fly after it, seize it in a trice, and bring it back to their masters, as Ctesias tells us" (tr. A. F. Scholfield, Loeb).<sup>15</sup>

The aforementioned remark of Xenophon concerns the royal Persian customs, but there are also indications that the practice was not quite alien to the people living near Greeks, as Aristotle proves mentioning of the Thracian manner of catching smaller birds with the help of falcons (*HA* 10, 36, 3 [620a, 32]: 'In the city of Thrace formerly called Cedrepolis men are assisted by hawks in pursuing birds in the marshes. They strike the reeds and wood with stick in order that the birds may fly up, and the hawks appearing above pursue them, the birds then fall to the earth through fear, when the men strike them with their sticks and take them, and divide the prey with the hawks, for they throw away some of the birds, and the hawks come and take them' (tr. W. Creswell)).<sup>16</sup> Besides, mentions of similar practices had been found in Pliny, *NH* 10, 10; Martial, 14, 216; Dionysius the Periegetes, *De av.* 3, 5; Oppian, *Hal.* 1, 36f.; 4; Ps. – Oppian, *Cyn.* 1, 64. To some scholars, already a passage in the Homeric poem is sometimes interpreted as depicting a form of falconry, although certainty cannot be obtained how much the pastime was popular in archaic Greece (*Od.* 22, 302 – 306):

---

<sup>15</sup> A slightly modified story appears also in the Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise *On Marvellous Tales (De mirabilibus auscultationibus)*, written ca. 260 BC but included into the *corpus Aristotelicum*, c. 118 (841b): 'In Thrace above Amphipolis they say that a thing happens, which is wonderful and incredible to those who have not seen it; for the boys, going forth from the villages and neighbouring districts to catch little birds, take the hawks to help in catching them, and they do so in this manner: When they have advanced to a suitable spot they call the hawks by name with a loud cry; and, when they hear the boys' voice, they come and frighten away the birds; these in terror of them take refuge in the bushes, where the boys strike them down with sticks and capture them. But what one would be most of all surprised at is this whenever the hawks themselves have seized any of the birds, they throw them down to the bird-catchers, while the boys return home, after giving some portion of all their booty to the hawks' (tr. L. L. Dowdall). The story was certainly popular, as the remarks of Antigonus of Carystus (*Hist. mirab.* 34), Philo (*Brut. anim.*) and Aelianus (*NA* 2, 42) prove, cf. W. G. Arnott, *Birds in the Ancient World from A to Z*, London-New York 2007, p. 101.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. D'A. W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds*, Oxford 1895, p. 65.



‘but the other men, who were like hook-clawed, beak-bend vultures (αἰγυπτιοὶ), descending from the mountains to pounce upon the lesser birds; and these on the plain, shrinking away from the clouds, speed off, but the vultures plunge on them and destroy them, nor is there any defense, nor any escape, and men are glad for the hunting (ἄγρη)’ (tr. R. Lattimore)<sup>17</sup>

In sum, when looking for traces of falconry in the classical times we have scant proofs of its popularity, and it appears to have been a curiosity, certainly very far from being common pastime. Nevertheless, the reports suffice to dismiss the erroneous opinion of the eminent British falconer Richard Blume in his influential among the English gentry book *Hawking Or Faulconry* [1686], *Praef.* 1) who believed it to be totally unknown to the ancient Greeks.<sup>18</sup>

\*\*\*

The chapter 3, 28 in Frederick’s work presents, however, a more interesting case. Concerning falconry in the court of the emperor, Professor D. Abulafia (in: *New Camb. Mediev. Hist.* V, ed. *idem*, Cambridge 1999, 506) has expressed a *communis opinio* that Frederick had a good knowledge of the Islamic sources.<sup>19</sup> Although scholars still dispute how great were the oriental influences on the popularity of this

pastime in the medieval Europe,<sup>20</sup> there can be no doubt that the emperor took advantage of acquiring falcons and bringing their masters to Europe<sup>21</sup> during the famous (sixth) crusade (ended with peaceful seizing of Jerusalem in 1229).<sup>22</sup> Thus he explicitly says that he personally witnessed some techniques of managing falcons. In 2, 77, 7-8, when describing the Muslim practice of covering the head of the bird of prey, he observes that:

“The falcon’s hood is a discovery of Oriental peoples, the Arabs having, so far as we know, first introduced it into active practice. We ourselves, when we sailed across the seas, saw it used by them and made study of manipulating his head covering. The Arabian chiefs not only presented us with many kinds of falcons (*cum multis modis falconum*) but sent with them falconers expert in the use of the hood. In addition to these sources of knowledge – from the time when we first decided to write a book, a complete treatise (on falconry) – we have imported, partly from Arabia, partly from other countries, both birds and men skilled in the art, from whom we have acquired a knowledge of all their accomplishments.”<sup>23</sup>

The passage is striking: one can safely to argue that despite of his versatility in the oriental hunting practices<sup>24</sup> and his careful examination of the zoological writings of Aristotle,

<sup>20</sup> O. Zecchini, *Introduzione*, [in:] *Federico de Suevia*, p. XXIII; see J. E. Harting, *A Catalogue of Books Ancient and Modern Relating to Falconry*, London 1891, pp. 161-181 and 197-206 (citing the Latin, Persian and Arabian treatises on the subject). We do hear of the book by Grimaldus *Liber accipitrum* (XI<sup>th</sup> century, but probably based on a Carolingian handbook), yet it must be pointed out that the popularity of such treatises begins from the XII<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>21</sup> He might have also known the Byzantine hunting practices, see A. Karpozilos, A. Cutler and J. W. Nesbit, s. v. *Hunting*, [in:] (ed.) A. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* II, Oxford 1991, p. 958; Byzantine treatises on falcons and hunting with hounds were also known: Demetrius Pepagamenus was the author a book on falcons (Περὶ τῆς τῶν ἱεράκων ἀνατροφῆς τε καὶ θεραπείας), and probably on dogs (Κυνοσόφιον). An anonymous book on birds (Ὀρνεοσόφιον) is preserved too (ed.) R. Hercher, *Aeliani varia historia* II, Leipzig 1866).

<sup>22</sup> ‘a diplomatic exercise rather than a military expedition’ – D. Nicolle, *The Crusades*, London 2001, p. 39.

<sup>23</sup> See also E. Whitney, *Medieval Science and Technology*, London 2004, p. 104. As D. Abulafia observed in his excellent monograph *Frederick II. A Medieval Emperor*, London 1988, p. 267, only in the administrative records from the years 1239 – 1240, 40 documents mention of the falcons and over 50 the imperial falconers are named; cf. E. B. Michell, *The Art and Practice of Hawking*, London 1900, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> By the Arabian falconer Moamin and the Persian huntsman Ghatrif, These two books were translated into Latin by another eminent personality at Frederick’s cosmopolitan court – master Theodore of Antioch, see Ch. Haskins, *Science at the Court of the Emperor Frederick II*, “*American Historical Review*”, 27, 1922, p. 672. The modern edition by H. Tjerneld, *Moamin and Ghatrif, Traités de fauconnerie et de chiens de chasse*, Paris-Stockholm 1945.

<sup>17</sup> Epstein, *op. cit.*, 501 denies the verses to have meant falconry, but W. B. Stanford, *The Odyssey of Homer* II, London 1948, p. 384 *ad loc.* (also 271) takes *aigyptioi* to mean sometimes ‘eagles’. The crucial point here is whether ‘hunting’ (*agre*) is to be referred to this situation or should it be understood generally.

<sup>18</sup> According to R. S. Oggins, *The Kings and Their Hawks: Falconry in Medieval England*, New Haven-London 2004, p. 1, falconry as such was unknown in antiquity’ and this is true if we understand it as a separate branch of knowledge, based on a written theory. This idea was endorsed also by Epstein, *op. cit.*, 504. It is thought (but see n. 21) that the first known Western treatises on falconry, as far as they can be reconstructed, are the veterinary writings, see G. Tilander, *Dancus rex, Guillelmus Falconarius, Gerardus Falconarius. Les plus anciens traits de fauconnerie de l’Occident publiés d’après tous les manuscrits connus*, Lund 1963 (see too C. A. Willemsen, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite, Über die Kunst mit Vögeln zu jagen. Kommentar zur lateinischen und deutschen Aufgabe*, Frankfurt am Main 1970, p. 27). Their origins were probably at the court of Roger II (1130 - 1154), cf. G. J. Brault, s. v. ‘hunting and fowling’, [in:] (ed.) J. R. Strayer, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* VI, New York 1989, p. 359.

<sup>19</sup> See too G. Canova, s. v. *Hunting*, [in:] (ed.) J. W. Meri, *Medieval Islamic Civilization. An Encyclopedia*, I, London-New York 2006, p. 337; M. Lombard, *La chasse et les produits de la chasse dans le monde Musulman (VIIIe–XIe siècle)*, *Annales ESC* 24 (1969), 572; above all, there is an excellent treatment of B. Van den Abeele, ‘Inspirations orientales et destinées occidentales du *Arte venandi cum avibus* de Frédéric II’, [in:] *Federico II e le nuove culture*, Spoleto 1995, pp. 363f.

the emperor remained above all man of the experience and observation,<sup>25</sup> to whom the written technical literature was only a source of inspiration. In many cases he must have criticized his predecessors. The following statement can in this respect be adduced as the emperor's *credo*:<sup>26</sup>

“We have investigated and studied with the greatest solicitude and in minute detail all that relates to this art, exercising both mind and body so that we might eventually be qualified to describe and interpret the fruits of knowledge acquired from our own experiences or gleaned from others. For example, we, at great expense, summoned from the four quarters of the earth masters in the practice of the art of falconry. We entertained these experts in our own domains, meantime seeking their opinions, weighting the importance of their knowledge, and endeavoring to retain in memory the more valuable of their word and deeds.” (*Praef.* 3).<sup>27</sup>

The realization of these methodological remarks can be perfectly seen in ch. 29 in the Book Three, where Frederick is at his best. Concerning the ‘ancient’ roots of the hunting with bird of prey and hound, Professor Epstein has thought that it must also have been originated in *Outremer*, rather than among the barbarian tribes in the early medieval Western Europe,<sup>28</sup> although there are also clues to this practice in the barbarian tribes, and - with some literary indications - the example from the scenes 4 and 14 in the Bayeux Tapestry can also here be adduced.<sup>29</sup> The custom did probably develop independently in various regions, where the falconry was popular.<sup>30</sup> In fact, there are interesting indications that the common hunting with falcon

and hound was also known in antiquity (in some regions, at least) – a gem dated on the IV<sup>th</sup> century BC shows a woman (probably) on horseback and chasing the stag. What’s most important, here a rider is accompanied by the hound and bird.<sup>31</sup> But despite of these scant traces which indicate an occasional perhaps knowledge of this form of venery, we have no means of telling where exactly the emperor did borrow the idea of using falcon and dog from. Be that as it may, the striking novelty in his approach is the active role of hound: it is clear from his analysis that the canine quadruped is not an ordinary assistance to the falcon but he remains the real helpful aid in hunting great birds (mostly cranes and herons<sup>32</sup>), so – I dare to argue – in the action he is described by the emperor as a necessary (and sometimes even more important) instrument in the crane hunt. To some extent, this is somewhat surprising. For, above all, it is obvious that the emperor always stresses out the priority and superiority of falconry, and it is seen by him as the highest form of the leisure. Such rhetoric pervades the whole treatise. For instance, at 1, 1, 6 the author says that neither hounds nor leopards or other quadrupeds can be estimated higher than falcons (see also 1, 1, 7), accordingly falconry is much more worth and prestigious pastime. He goes on to say that falconry, when compared to the other forms of venery, is not so popular, since training of the rapacious birds poses to the falconer a true challenge. The reason is simple - birds of prey are the most difficult instrument to learn, hence their taming is a true art (in the same vein also 2, *praef.* 1). Additionally, he argues, in falconry no ‘nets, snares, traps, hunting spears, javelins, bows, and slings, or [...] hounds or ferrets are needed’ (1, 1, 9). Moreover, falcons are more fearful of man than other beasts (1, 1, 10 – 11; 3, *Praef.* 1). Falconry is noble for it requires talented men: to learn falcon is more difficult than to, say, learn dog (1, 1, 10); its practice is in fact a mark of luxury – additionally it presupposes to have more time at disposal than other kinds of venery (1, 1, 15).<sup>33</sup> As the emperor

<sup>25</sup> See especially 3, 2 – 4 where he takes issue with the Spanish and Arabian manner of use living lure but nevertheless he is obliged to describe it.

<sup>26</sup> Ch. H. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge 1927, pp. 333-334.

<sup>27</sup> It is well known that in 1222 he settled from Sicily to Lucerna a colony of about 20 thousand Saracens, who were serving him as a military aid - a fact which mostly disturbed emperor's Christian opponents; see L. Allshorn, *Stupor mundi*, London 1912, pp. 63 – 64.

<sup>28</sup> But see e.g. Paulinus of Pella (ca. AD 460) and Sidonius Apollinaris (V<sup>th</sup> century) mention of the times when as youths they spent time with falcons and dogs.

<sup>29</sup> Dated between ca 1070 – 1077, cf. L. Musset, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, Woodbridge 2005, pp. 98 and 124. Falcon carried by Harold reminds the mention made by Adelard of Bath (12<sup>th</sup> century), the translator of the Arabian books and author of the treatise *On Birds*. On this controversy see M. Menzel, *Die Jagd als Naturkunst. Zum Falkenbuch Kaiser Friedrichs II*, [in:] *Natur in Mittelalter*, hrsg. P. Dilg, Berlin 2003, p. 344. Concerning the visual representation of falconry, highly recommended is the beautifully illustrated book of C. A. de Chamerlat, *La fauconnerie et l'art*, Paris 1986; also J. Cummins, *op. cit.*, plates 41 and 47; cf. J. & F. Gies, *Life in Medieval Castle*, London 1974, p. 272.

<sup>30</sup> see D. Makowiecki, *Remarks on the „Breeds” of Dog (Canis lupus F. familiaris) in the Polish Lowland in the Roman*

*Period, the Middle Ages and Post – Medieval Times in the Light of Archeozoological Research*, “Fasciculi Archeologiae Historicae”, 18, 2006, 63 f. on the findings of dog-bones.

<sup>31</sup> See J. Boardman, *Greek Gems and Finger Rings. Early Bronze Age to Late Classical*, London 2001, plate 680, with note at p. 297. In a personal discussion Prof. N. V. Sekunda has suggested to me that the woman could be Bendis, the Thracian goddess of the moon and hunting (and thus the custom described by Aristotle may be probably verified), and it has been taken as worth of consideration also by Sir Boardman himself (I thank N. Sekunda who kindly enabled me to get known his e-mail correspondence with J. Boardman, dated on 9. 04 2009). Another interesting case is the illustration in the MSS *Graecus* 479 of Ps.-Oppian *Cynegetica* (Bibliotheca Nazionale, Venice; XI<sup>th</sup> century), where a huntsman carries falcon on the hand while hound is assisting. This, according K. Lindner, *Beiträge zu Vogelfang und Falknerei im Altertum*, Berlin-New York 1973, undoubtedly is an example of falconry; see also de Chamerlat, *op. cit.*, 81 (the mosaics of Argos).

<sup>32</sup> H. Cox and G. Lascales, *Coursing and Falconry*, London-Bombay 1899, p. 290.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. D. Salter, *Holy and Noble Beasts*, Woodbridge 2001, pp. 105-106; B. B. Broughton, *Dictionary of Knighthood and*



openly admits, hawking is in sum a pastime of the elite (available only to a few), in this respect – it is an aristocratic form of the recreation (1, 1, 16) – nobler, more worthy, superior: *Amplius, pro eo, quod plures de nobilibus hanc artem addiscunt et diligenter exercent, pauci vero de innobilibus, satis coniecturaliter probatur, quod hec ars nobilior sit ceteris ex supradictis. Itaque palam est, quod ars venandi cum avibus et ars est, et ceteris venationibus nobilior, et ideo prior* ('Here it may again be claimed that, since, many nobles and but few of the lower rank learn carefully pursue this art, one may properly conclude that it is intrinsically an aristocratic sport; and one may once more add that it is nobler, more worthy than, and superior to other kinds of venery').<sup>34</sup>

So theory, fine as it was, but what about practice? Hunting with the falcons means hunting other animals. The question arises, then, which animals? At 3, 20 there is discussion of 'the gerfalcon's preliminary education'. At this stage of the preparation hare is considered as the lure, for she is the best quarry. In order of tracking hare two hounds must be used, and 'when the hare is found, let the falcon see it'. Why hare at all? The emperor's explanation is that she '[...] is preferable to any other animal for this purpose, since few if any falcons are unwilling to fly at a hare. It is in fact almost second nature for falcons to hunt them' (*De lepore autem dico plus quam de alio animali, quoniam pauci vel nulli erunt girofalci, qui non libenter volent ad leporem, est enim eis quasi naturale volare ad leporem*). This remark overlaps with the observation made earlier, at 3, 17, 7, where we are told that 'The hare-train, for falcons that are being instructed to fly in a cast, is better that made with a bird; for hare does not run very far from either a man or a dog' (*Trayna autem ad lepores pro falconibus, qui debent doceri consentire, melior est quam trayna ad avem, nam lepus non multum elongatur ab hominibus vel a canibus*). However, the author never does forget that this is still only training, and here one may easily observe the secondary aid of the dogs: their goal is to find out hare; they are useful, yet the emperor advises as follows: 'for a gerfalcon that does not seize a hare is thereby rendered less keen when loosed at one upon a later occasion. But after a dog has been used to capture the hare, remove it from his mouth and throw it to the gerfalcon. In doing this the dog should be held back from seizing the hare, lest the falcon be frightened and make off' (3, 20, 1). So hare, as it appears, certainly is not the main goal in falconry (cf. especially 3, 20, 3 too). Above all, there are

more worthy quarries, and Frederick names them explicitly at the beginning of the Book Six (6, 1, 1). Here he is careful in taxation – to catch cranes (the subject-matter of the Book Four), herons (discussed in the Book Five) and shore birds, mainly ducks (the theme of the Book Six) different species of falcons should be employed: gerfalcons, sakers, and the peregrine falcons respectively. To be sure, theoretically various animals could be falcons' prey, and he observes at 2, 2, 10 that: 'Men practice falconry [...] to capture [...] some particular animal; for example, large, medium-sized, or small water and land birds, such as cranes, bustards, pheasants, partridge, and ducks or, now and then, such four-footed creatures as gazelles, deer, fawns, harts, foxes, hares, or rabbits' (*Homines autem venationem exercent cum avibus rapacibus [...] capiendo aves magnas, mediocres et parvas, aquaticas et campestras, utpote grues, bistardas et his similes, fasianos, perdices, anates ey huiusmodi; et quandoque capiunt quadrupedia, sicut sunt gazelle, caprei, ynnuli capreorum, ynulli cervorum, vulpes, lepores, cunicoli et his similia*).<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, further lecture of the treatise makes reader sure that it is cranes and herons, which are to the writer the most important quarry of the falcons. This extraordinary importance of crane hawking, as it has been already mentioned (see note 7, above), can be found in the structure of the treatise itself. Moreover, explicit remarks are often made that cranes become the main object of the avian raptors: 1, 1, 12; 1, 55, 3 (the comparison of the beaks of the cranes and falcons); 3, 21, 1; 3, 20, 3 - 4. Similarly, not infrequently are found the remarks on the way the cranes attack (1, 55, 3-4), or how do they fight (1, 55, 6). Beyond doubt, all this is evident to mean that crane is regarded as the most serious adversary of falcons. The reason is simple: *Cum falco doctrinari debeat ad capiendum magnas aves, quarum magnitudo et fortitudo plurimum excedat super magnitudinem et fortitudinem falconis, convenit adhiberi omne adiutorium quod poterit falconi volanti ad huiusmodi magnas aves* (3, 28, 1). The statement that that the great bird can hurt falcon (*illa magna aves poterit ledere falconem aut repellere falconem*, 3, 28, 1) is also revealing – to put it shortly: the measure of the proper training of the falcon again is crane hawking: crane means a difficulty, that's a challenge. The entire hunting must be, then, preceded by the careful preparations. So, for instance, before falcon is entered to cranes, she should attack snipes and partridge. It may be observed that the theme of the crane hunt is introduced and developed

*Chivalry*, New York-Westport (CT) 1986, p. 233 (s. v. 'hawking, falconry').

<sup>34</sup> It should be observed that the English translation here is somewhat loose. The aristocratic nature of hawking relies, then, on the hard, long working and it requires much patience. Manning and training is a gradual process but it is this process exactly which possesses beauty. It is interesting to observe that the emperor omits the symbolic meaning of falcon and falconry in the medieval social hierarchy, seen most explicitly in the famous *The Boke of St. Alban* (1480), ascribed to Julianna Berners; on this matter the chapter 20 of Cummins, *op. cit.*, 223 - 233, is outstanding.

<sup>35</sup> The chapters 1 – 30 of the Book Two are preserved only in the MSS Palatinus Latinus 1071, and were certainly added by the king Manfred, as he himself makes it clear in ch. 18 (otherwise, an extremely interesting passage of the literary practice in composing the technical handbooks). According to the king Manfred, he inserted these chapters after realizing that there were some 'blank leaves' between the emperor's *Preface* and chapter 31. ('How to capture falcons'), which appears also in the Bologna MSS. The Italian editor (A. M. Trombetta Budriesi) puts the chapters to the Appendix (p. 1106 – 1107; see too *Introduction* by O. Zecchini, pp. LXXVII - LXXVIII).

in the treatise slowly, and sometimes even postponed. To this effect serve the passages in the Book Three concerning the use of lure; here we do have the long descriptions of the education of the gerfalcon with the crane-train (chapters 22 – 27).<sup>36</sup> To these preparations thematically chapter 28 also belongs, analyzing the long and difficult task of the accommodation of the bird with the mammal. Yet, all the preparations make a preliminary step in the proper crane hunting (4, 1, 1), which is discussed next in the Book Four. The long exercises with hound and bird, as reported in the chapter 3, 28 with the all details, must be read, then, logically as the unity with the Book Four (see e.g. 4, 5, 3 - 9 on the difficulties huntsman or hound can meet in a terrain), and they show that the role of dog was more important than the emperor was ready to admit when glorifying falconry as such. Besides, the description of training in 3, 28 certainly does testify to the long exercises in field, probably made in the Capitanata region (Apulia), of which the emperor mentions at 1, 23B, 3, and what is repeated almost literally at 4, 2, 8.

But the crane – in opposition to the hare - was too big quarry to the falcon, hence the aid of hound was necessary. In fact, then, this chapter can be called ‘a great laudatory note’ of dog. This can be seen already in the phraseology, or in the title of the chapter which says that hound is a true *adiutorium*.<sup>37</sup> His main virtue is speed, and of the various canine breeds, the most useful ones here are ‘harriers or greyhounds’ (*canes leporarii seu veltres*),<sup>38</sup> highly recommended for their velocity (*velocrior*). The second reason is dog’s ability to learn and to obey, since ‘no other domestic animal can be of such skillful assistance as our canine friend’ (3, 28, 2). It is ‘best suited to receive instructions from man’ (3, 28, 2); he has excellent judgment and an extraordinary memory (*virtus existimativa and conservativa*). In what follows, the description of an ideal dog is supplied, and his qualities and other necessary features are considered: age of dog, his sex and size. The emperor’s eye is admirably sharp, hence every possible difficulty is mentioned: dog can swim but cannot be too small (he must see ‘over long grass and shrubs’, 3, 28, 5), but not too large (because of his great weight he would be ‘a danger to the falcon if he

dashes impetuously against her or threads on her’<sup>39</sup>). Above all, the hound must be brave, and he should never ‘have been previously employed in hunting quadrupeds’, for viewing other animal the hound ‘will desert the falcon and run after the former’. This advice presupposes a long training of the hound, and in fact, it would be best if ‘the falconer himself can feed the dog while it is young and make it familiar with falcons’ (3, 28, 8). The reason is that when dogs see falcons frequently and are near them, they may recognize these birds of prey by their smell – dogs, above all recognize all objects by ‘means of their sense of smell as well as through sight’ (3, 28, 10). How careful the emperor in his precepts is, can be seen from his advices how to feed both animals: ‘Whenever the falcon is fed, the dog should be present, to make him realize that she is dear to his master and that he must not to harm her. Therefore, when the falcon is fed, the dog should be given cheese, bread, or other food that he likes. This food should be handed him from beneath the fits on which the falcon stands; i.e., he should take it in his mouth almost under the falcon’s feet’.

\*\*\*

More than hundred years after Frederick’s masterpiece two interesting French treatises on hunting have appeared. They were: Henri de Ferrières’ (ca. 1315 – 1377) work *Livres du deduis du roy Modus et de la royne Racio* (*Hunting-Book of the King Practice and Queen Theory*, written between 1350 – 1377),<sup>40</sup> and Gace de Buigne’s (1305 - 1384) *Roman de deduis* (*Tale of Delights*, before 1377). In both manuals a special attention is put on the dilemma whether falconry, or hunting with hounds is better, a question that was connected strictly with the controversy, which animal is nobler. The dilemma is presented by the (written in verses) ‘Judgment on Dogs and Birds’ (‘Le jugement de chiens et d’oisiaux’), and the metaphorical contest between ‘Love of Dogs’ and ‘Love of Birds’ (‘L’Amour de Chiens and ‘L’Amour d’Oyseaulx’).<sup>41</sup> Although the contest is artificial and literary in its character, it is possible to have reflected real disputes which could be occasionally raised. Above all, it must be seen as a testimony to popularity of falconry and dogs, so the opposition is, however, somewhat false. As Frederick’s chapter shows, appeals to the dignity and superiority of one or other form of hunting had often nothing to do with reality: in the terrain, in the field, the collaboration was at stake.

<sup>36</sup> J. Fried, *Kaiser Friedrich II. als Jäger*, [in:] *Jagd und höfische Kultur im Mittelalter*, hrsg. W. Rösener, Göttingen 1997, 151 reminds that when used as *trayna* (a kind of lure), the crane ‘mußte schlimmste Torturen erdulen’. Indeed, when the emperor attempts to say of the lure, he condemns the use of the live animals (pigeons especially) but no humanitarian reason is taken by him into consideration.

<sup>37</sup> Again, Wood and Fyfe’s translation of the Latin *sucursus*, *sucurrere* by ‘assisting’, is somewhat misleading, if suggesting the passive role of the dog.

<sup>38</sup> The breed was already known in antiquity. It was thought his origins were Celtic, see my paper ‘The Aristocratic Aspect of Hunting in Arrian’s *Cynegeticus*’ (this volume), where the literature on *veltri* is given.

<sup>39</sup> G. E. Freeman and F. H., Salvin, *Falconry. Its Claim, History, and Practice*, London 1859, p. 127, while analyzing the magpie-hunting, make warning against use of the dog which can be the real danger to the falcon.

<sup>40</sup> Ed. E. Blaze, Paris 1889.

<sup>41</sup> The same theme appear in Guillaume Crétin’s *Le debat de deux dames sur le passetemps de la chasse des chiens et oyseaulx* (end of the 14th century) and Guillaume Tardif’s *L’art de faulconnerie et des chiens de chasse* (end of the 15th century).

### Streszczenie

Traktat cesarza Fryderyka II Hohenstaufa *O sztuce sokolnictwa* uchodzi za najwybitniejsze tego typu pismo, jakie kiedykolwiek napisano. Interesujący jest tutaj rozdział 28 w księdze III, omawiający wspólny trening sokoła i psa – niezbędny podczas polowania na żurawia. Rozdział ten dobitnie pokazuje, że wbrew zapewnieniom autora o primacie sokolnictwa i sokołów nad innymi formami łowów, w praktyce współpraca jest niezbędna, szczególnie w polowaniach na większe ptactwo.

