

RAPTOR AND RAPTURE: KING JAMES IV OF SCOTLAND WITH A PEREGRINE
FALCON

By

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Abstract

During the 1400s and 1500s, noblemen and noblewoman were expected to participate in falconry. Therefore, I was surprised to discover that there was hardly anything written about the ca. 1500 portrait of James IV of Scotland with a Peregrine falcon, extant only in a copy by Daniel Mytens in 1620-1636. What was written was limited to issues of style and attribution of the copy painted by Mytens. There was nothing at all about the falcon or falconry implements represented in the portrait. To understand the function of this portrait, I considered the material culture and physical practices of falconry, the specific habits and characteristics of the falcon, symbolism of falconry in courtly love poetry, the history and culture of animals, the history and economic state of Scotland, and the actual expenses of the practice as recorded in court documents. I argue that the original watercolor portrait of James IV of Scotland with a Peregrine falcon functioned as a marriage portrait. Specifically, the relationship between James and his female falcon in the portrait served to promise a relationship of mutual trust, respect and loyalty between James and his bride-to-be in the future.

Since my second semester into my Bachelor's Degree in Art History at the University of Arizona, it has been my objective to answer the question: what was Scotland's role in the history of art? I noticed that Scotland was a country oftentimes absent from being recognized in the study of early modern art history as contributing to European art. When I began researching Scotland's connection to European works of art, I came across a portrait of King James IV of Scotland (1473-1513) with a falcon (fig.1). Not only did this portrait inspire me to continue researching works of art commissioned by the Scottish aristocracy, it also led me to research falconry and the social and political meanings it communicated in works of art. Both of these subjects have been given very little consideration in art historical scholarship. This fact is puzzling because during the early modern period, nobility was expected to participate in falconry and historians are well aware of the important role falconry played for the nobility. However, for scholarship on early modern art history interpreting the significance of falconry within works of art is still a new concept. There are many reasons why scholars have avoided discussing the representation of falconry in works of art, and more particularly this portrait. Firstly, this painting is a copy of an original and exists only in the version painted by Daniel Mytens in ca. 1620-1636. Generally speaking, art historians are more interested in researching original works of art rather than copies. Daniel Mytens (1590-1647), also spelled Mijtens, was known as the court painter for James VI of Scotland and I of England (1566-1625) and for his son Charles I of England (1600-1649).¹ Secondly, besides being the painter of this portrait, the references give no further information on Mytens. In fact, due to the dates that Daniel Mytens could have painted this portrait, it is uncertain which King of England commissioned it. I have yet to discover an English source on Daniel Mytens that provides this information. Thirdly, this portrait is in a private collection. Therefore, access to this portrait is not easily obtained. When I first began

¹ C. Stopes, "Daniel Mytens in England." *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 17:87 (1910): 160-163.

researching this portrait a year ago, I was able to locate it on the United Kingdom's National Gallery website while they were having an exhibition of art from private collections. It mentioned just the very general details of the portrait such as; the approximate date, and the names of the artist, and the sitter. I have not seen this portrait in the National Gallery's online collection since. Lastly, the subject of falconry and falconry symbolism is problematic. Even though most of the implements, practices, and ideas are similar if not the same today as they were 600 years ago, the fact is that in modern society people who participate in falconry make up a very small and close-knit group. The resources and knowledge about this practice and its implements are not widely recognizable to many scholars. Therefore, not being able to identify the items within this portrait might lead scholars to choose to discuss paintings containing references and displaying content that they and modern audiences could recognize. The lack of discussion of this portrait has made me all the more intrigued with how this painting would have been perceived when it was originally painted. Thus, I will connect history, politics, visual imagery, symbolism, and falconry together in this portrait of King James.

The portrait of James IV with a Peregrine falcon was originally a watercolor painting completed in ca. 1500.² The portrait's original artist and placement, the circumstances of the commission, production and reception are all unknown. In the portrait, James is painted in lavish attire with his fur lined doublet over his red robe with slit puffed sleeves lined with gold fabric. His white under-garment has a jewel encrusted collar and gold lace around the wrists. Perched on his ungloved left hand is a young Peregrine falcon with brown and black-grey plumage. This portrait also depicts some tools used for falconry. A leash is draped through James' fingers on his left hand and is looped around the ankle of the Peregrine falcon. Held between James' arm

² A. MacDonald, "Princely Culture in Scotland Under James III and James IV," *Princes and Princely Culture: 1450-1650 Vol. 1*. (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 165.

and body is a rest or more commonly called a block for his falcon. A block is made of wood which tapers from the top to the bottom (fig. 2).³ At the end of the tapered block is a metal peg that would be used to place the block into the ground so that the falcon has a resting place prior to or after a hunt. These rests were made to be mobile so that the falcons and hawks could rest without being inside their mews. These blocks were often covered with a softer material so that the falcons would not end up with bumble-foot. This is a condition in which an abscess develops in the ball of the falcon's foot and becomes infected and inflamed resulting in the bird's incapacity to perform in the practice of falconry.⁴ James' block is covered with a lilac fabric with green ribbon woven around the edge of the covering and tapers to a point below his left index finger where the remaining position of the block is hidden behind his left hand and arm.⁵ In his right hand, James holds a round circular item in between his right thumb and index finger. This item is not identified in any source on the portrait. However, due to its shape and size, I suspect that this item might be the hood for James' falcon.

Unfortunately, there is little scholarship on this portrait. The earliest source that describes it is a passage in John Pinkerton's *Iconographia Scotica or Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland* published in 1797.⁶ Pinkerton was the only source who mentioned that the falcon represented was a Peregrine. Due to the size of the falcon in relation to James and the coloring of the plumage, I concur with Pinkerton's identification of the bird. Juvenile Peregrine falcons tend to have dark brown plumage on the head, back, and top of the wings while under the beak, breast

³ The following information on block rests is from C. De Chamerlat, *Falconry and Art* (New York: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 47-48.

⁴ For a more detailed account and images on bumblefoot please see "Bumblefoot in Raptors," *Falconers.Com*. <http://falconers.com/bumblefoot>.

⁵ J. Pinkerton, *Iconographia Scotica or Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland Engraved from the Most Authentic Paintings &c with Short Biographical Notices* (London: I. Herbert, 1797), 30.

⁶ Pinkerton, *Iconographia*, 30.

and underside of the wings are lighter brown with dark brown to grey patterning.⁷ Ten years later, the portrait was mentioned again by Sylvanus Urban in *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle*.⁸ However, in both of these documents the information provided on the portrait is placed in quotes. Therefore, I suspect that there is an earlier, perhaps even a primary source that provides this general description of the portrait that I am unfortunately unable to locate. From 1807 to 2003 there are no further references regarding this portrait other than the general date, and the name of the artist, and sitter.

More recently, Alasdair MacDonald briefly discussed the portrait in his essay the “Princely Culture in Scotland Under James III and James IV.”⁹ According to MacDonald, both King James IV and his father King James III (1451-1488), wanted their own status as Scottish Kings as well as the status of the Scottish crown in general recognized throughout Europe. One of the ways in which this was accomplished was through portraiture.¹⁰ MacDonald mentions the portrait of James IV with a falcon and briefly suggests that the purpose of this portrait may have been to present James IV as a highly regarded marriageable King: “The *significatio* may be that he is being shown as ripe for marriage.”¹¹ Although MacDonald does not develop this suggestion any further or provide any information to support it, I believe that MacDonald’s idea makes sense. In my thesis, I will use this idea as a springboard to develop my argument about the portrait’s possible function. Therefore, I argue that the painting of James IV with a Peregrine falcon originally functioned as a marriage portrait and that this specific falcon was meant to symbolize the relationship between bride and groom. Visual evidence within the portrait in

⁷ For details on the coloring of the Peregrine falcons at different ages please see “Peregrine Falcon,” Arizona Game and Fish, <https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/viewing/webcamlist/peregrine/>.

⁸ S. Urban, *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle* (London: J. Nichols and Son, 1807), 123.

⁹ A. MacDonald, “Princely Culture in Scotland,” 147-172.

¹⁰ The following information is from A. MacDonald, 164-165.

¹¹ A. MacDonald, 165.

conjunction with cultural traditions and historical events support this argument. I will analyze the portrait and the significance of the items represented, specifically the falcon and the practice's accoutrement. But first I will discuss a brief history of falconry and James IV's objective of raising the status of the Scottish crown through marriage into the highest possible political circles. Then, I will discuss what message this image would convey to the potential wife and her family viewing the portrait.

Before I begin discussing the history and texts written about falconry, there are two terms that I would like to clarify: hawking and falconry. The term hawking is defined as the act of using birds of prey to hunt, whereas, the term falconry is an all-inclusive word that encompasses the training of birds of prey, hawking, and the creation and use of the implements needed for training and hawking.¹² In Europe, humans have participated in the practice of falconry as early as 300 BCE.¹³ During the early modern era, men and women of nobility were expected to participate in falconry, and this practice was represented in art of all different media.¹⁴ Many major books about falconry were written in the Middle Ages and early modern period. People purchased these books to read about raptors and about the techniques of falconry to be able to participate in this practice. To understand and appreciate the impact these books had on the nobility I will discuss a few of these works. Hawking was acknowledged to be and practiced as a prestigious activity specific to the nobility. In 1241, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250, reigned 1220-1250) wrote a treatise in Latin: *The Art of Falconry*.¹⁵ This treatise

¹² H. MacDonald, *Falcon* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 76.

¹³ D. Ratcliffe, *The Peregrine Falcon* (London: T and A D Poyser Ltd, 1993), 12. For a summarized outline of the history of falconry from 300 B.C. to 1900's A.D see Glasier, *Falconry and Hawking* (London: Batsford, 1978), 10-18.

¹⁴ R. Almond, "A Huntsman's Home," *History Today* 61 (2011), 6-7.

¹⁵ For the information on Frederick II please see F. Fyfe and C. Wood, trans. *The Art of Falconry: Being the De Arte Venandi cum Avibus of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen 1* (New York: Ishi Press, 2010), 1-9. I would also like to note how complicated the life of Frederick II was. He was very powerful and intelligent but was never able to achieve his main goal which was to unite Sicily and Italy into one kingdom. His father was Holy Roman Emperor and King of Germany and his mother was the daughter of the King of Sicily. He inherited land and power through his birth

presents his argument that falconry is the noblest form of hunting because of the intelligence required and the technical challenges of the practice.¹⁶ The emperor believed that the needed skills of falconry were not easy to acquire. He stated that if the raptors were handled by an ‘ignorant’ handler, the birds became unmanageable. According to Frederick, to train a falcon took patience, frequent practice, and money. Therefore, this noblest art of hunting was for only the noblest people. In his treatise, he describes a large range of native birds of prey, treatments for their ailments, their housing, implements used in falconry, the qualities of a good falconer, and various techniques for training. Frederick included detailed information about the regions in which raptors built their nests, and about their migration patterns. This treatise was significant because it provided crucial information for the nobility who themselves participated in falconry and who would hire falconers also of noble birth but lesser ranking to look after and train their birds of prey.

To comprehend the impact this treatise on falconry had among nobility, I must provide the history of its production. Frederick II’s son compiled the emperor’s advice on falconry into a treatise after his father’s death.¹⁷ This original Latin manuscript has been located in the Vatican. The distribution and importance of this written work is indicated by its translation into other languages and by its availability in later printed editions. In 1300, *The Art of Falconry* was translated into French. The emperor’s treatise on falconry was still in demand during the early modern period.¹⁸ The Latin version of the book was first printed in Augsburg by Velser in 1596.

right. However, his goal was thwarted by the papacy and he was excommunicated more than once. This information is from R. Cassady, *The Emperor and the Saint: Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, Francis of Assisi, and Journeys to Medieval Places* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), xiii, 20, 240-41.

¹⁶ The following sentences about Falconry being the noblest form of hunting are from Fyfe and Wood, *The Art of Falconry*, vol.1, 5-7.

¹⁷ The following information is from the unpaginated introduction from Fyfe and Wood, vol.1.

¹⁸ The following information is from C. H. Haskins, “The ‘De Arte Venandi cum Avibus’ of the Emperor Frederick II,” *The English Historical Review*, 36:143 (1921), 335-337 and Fyfe and Wood, vol.1, lvii.

Sixteen manuscripts and printed editions survive today produced between 1290 and the 18th century. Some examples of these dates and locations are as follows: Vienna's National Bibilothek has a copy dated from the 16th century; Paris has two partial copies dating from 1290 and 1296, a complete copy dating from early 15th century; Geneva has a copy dating from 15th century; and Valencia has a copy dating from 18th century. These multiple hand-written and printed copies indicate that nobility had access to the information provided by Frederick II in the centuries following the emperor's death.¹⁹

The Book of St. Albans is another text produced multiple times during the early modern period.²⁰ This book was written by the English noblewoman Juliana Berners (1388-1460). Prior to becoming a nun, she actively participated in hawking and fishing. While she adapted to her monastic life she wrote about the field practices that she loved. The first two copies were produced by unknown publishers within ten years of each other, the first one being in 1486 and the second in 1496. Not only was her work copied in multiple editions but other authors wrote about Berners and discussed her information in the following century.²¹ The portion of her treatise written about hawking included the care of ill birds, details of feeding, and a hierarchy of birds, topics all similar to those discussed by Frederick II. However, Berner's text is different from Frederick's treatise in that she includes a list which instructed what type of raptor a person of a certain status should use while participating in hawking. It is interesting to note that modern day books of falconry still refer to the list in the *Book of St. Albans*, which means there was and

¹⁹ The English translation was not translated until 1931 by a Canadian ophthalmologist, Dr. Casey Wood and Marjorie Fyfe.

²⁰ Berner's text is also referred to as the book containing the *Treatises of Hawking, Hunting, Coat-Armour, Fishing and Blasing of Arms*. The following information is from J. Haslewood, *The Book Containing the Treatises of Hawking, Hunting, Coat-Armour, Fishing and Blasing of Arms* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2009), 5-10, 68. The author of *The Book of St. Albans* has also been known as Juliana Barnes, or Juliana Bernes. I must also note that because the compilation was found after her death there have been some people who have challenged the idea that this book was written by a female.

²¹ She was written about in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, ed. 1577, vol. II, page 1355 according to Haslewood, *The Book*, 6.

still is an awareness of both of these written works and of the relationship between social status and falconry.²² For example, according to Berners' list, an emperor would use an eagle, vulture, and Merloun; a king would use a Gyrfalcon, and a Tercel of the Gyrfalcon; a lady would use a Marlyon; and a priest would use a Sparrow Hawk. In addition to these, several other ranks are listed in the *Book of Albans*.

While researching written texts from the early modern period, I have discovered that the practice of falconry was international, influential, and that it also served to create social identity. The book written by George Turberville (ca. 1540-1610/1) and published in 1611 emphatically demonstrates these points.²³ Along with his own words, he compiles the works on falconry written by noblemen of France, Italy, and England. Turberville lists the names and regions of these noblemen and gives recognition to their contributions and works throughout. The book contains information about individual birds of prey, accurately drawn prints, the skills of falconry, and ailments of and cures for raptors. Turberville mentions that falconry must be conducted daily and that it is a "curious and cunning art" that all nobility should participate in.

Since my thesis focuses on references to falconry in James' portrait, and because the practice of falconry is so unfamiliar today, it will be helpful to discuss the various techniques and accoutrement of this practice.²⁴ The hawking bag was made of leather and sometimes decorated with embroidery and or tassels (*fig. 3*).²⁵ In this pouch a falconer would keep the essential implements that would be needed while on a hunt. The falconer would wear a glove so that the

²² For the following information see Glasier, *Falconry and Hawking*, 19. Glasier discusses the list in *The Book of St. Albans* which can be read in Haslewood, *Treatises*, 25.

²³ The following information is from G. Turberville, *The Booke of Falconrie or Hauking: For the onely delight and Pleasure of all Noblemen and Gentlemen: Collected out of the Best Authors, as well Italians as Frenchmen, and Some English Practises Withall Concerning Falconrie* (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1611), 1-20.

²⁴ I have reviewed a few books about implements used in hawking and I have found that the following reference to be the best due to the detailed information given, Glasier, 67-102.

²⁵ I wanted to provide an idea of what some hawking items might have looked like. The oldest images I could find are from the later 1500's to the early 1600's. These items give an idea of how elaborately made they were. This early modern falconer equipment is located in the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, Scotland.

raptor could rest upon his wrist without the talons puncturing the falconer's skin. The thickness of the glove the hawk handler would wear depended on the type of bird and its size. For small hawks and falcons a trainer would have a simple leather glove but for large birds such as eagles a trainer would need a glove made of extra thick leather to protect his skin from the bird's talons. The birds of prey would wear a leather anklet and when the bird was sitting on the glove of the handler a leash would be tied to the anklet. The falconer would then hold the leash to ensure that the raptor would not fly away. This leash can be seen in the portrait draped through James IV's left fingers. Sometimes bells are placed above the anklet to assist with locating the birds. Figure 4 is a detail of a raptor's ankle showing where the anklet, bells, and leash would be placed. The hood (fig. 5) is a cap that fits onto the raptor's head and covers its eyes, keeping the bird calm by tricking it into thinking that it is night instead of day. This allows the falconer to have control over the bird until it is time for the hunt. As I have described earlier, rests or blocks were also used and appear in the portrait, held by James against his torso with his right arm (fig. 6). All these objects are depicted in the Portrait of James IV with a Peregrine falcon.

Turning to the life of James IV and the history of his crown and court, we can readily see how important falconry was to the Scottish king. Already during his lifetime, James IV was known as the Master of Hawks because of his evident delight in and appreciation for raptors and falconry.²⁶ For example, he was known to give raptors as diplomatic gifts. How James IV regarded falconry can be fully understood by a brief explanation of the economic state of Scotland and the amount of money he spent on falconry. Scotland's economy was based on domestic and international trade.²⁷ In the late 1400's and early 1500's, Scotland's wool trade

²⁶ See J. Paul, ed., *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland: 1500-1504* (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1900), c-ci.

²⁷ Information about Scotland's economy is from J. Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community: Scotland 1470-1625* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), 40-55.

declined so James IV leased his lands to gain income to support courtly life in as lavish a way as possible. As the *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* prove, falconry was a very expensive hobby.²⁸ James IV paid fourteen shillings to anyone who brought him a hawk. Today this amount would equal about 342 British pounds or 556 US dollars.²⁹ This was more than one week worth of pay for a highly respected musician who was employed by the king. At James IV's court, four Italian musicians received a quarterly salary of 17 pounds 10 shillings. If I divide the converted quarterly value of 8,506 pounds by four, since there are four musicians, and then divide that by thirteen weeks, each musician received about 163 British pounds per week or 255 US dollars. Not only was there a difference of income for a person to sell a raptor versus a musician, but it was very costly to maintain the birds of prey. James IV housed his birds of prey in at least four of his residences: Falkland Palace, Holyrood Castle in Edinburgh, Craig Forth just north of the royal Stirling Castle, and Dunfermline.³⁰ He employed a Master Falconer, around ten assistant falconers, and a few staff members to assist with the hunting dog kennels. James had a "gallery for halkis" built at Holy rood Castle, which was a large wooden framed Avery house.³¹ Adjacent to Holyrood was the Royal Park, the prime location for James IV to participate in the sport of falconry. The Royal Park's cages held game birds year round so that James could enjoy hawking whenever he wanted. Besides the expense of employing falconers, the King had to pay for food and sporting equipment for his birds of prey. For example, it cost 14 pence, or 46

²⁸ The following information is from J. Paul, ed., *Accounts 1500-1504*, xcix-ci, 99, 149, 340, 368, 446, 456 and J. Paul ed., *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer: 1506-1507* (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1901), li-liiii, 156, 171-173, 337.

²⁹ These conversion amounts are possible due to the converter on the Unites Kingdom's government website, <http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/default0.asp#mid>. These values are as of 2005 and do not reflect 2016 values.

³⁰ The following information is from J. Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces: The Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 189-191.

³¹ Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 190.

US dollars a day for the meat to feed the hawks at Stirling Castle.³² He imported leather from Portugal to make the hoods and leashes for the falcons. Some falconers participated in the sport by riding horseback or walking. James IV purchased new shoes for his falconers when their old ones became worn. Falconers and raptors even accompanied him on his frequent pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Ninian.³³ When looking at the Peregrine in James' portrait it is necessary to keep all those assistants, structures, prices and expenses in mind. They constitute the economic, material and cultural bases of falconry that would be recognized and understood by viewers of the portrait familiar with the practice as signifiers of wealth and prestige.

In addition to his passion for falconry, James was also passionate about elevating the status of the Scottish crown. James sought to achieve this goal by embracing new ideas and new technologies, and by making as politically advantageous a marriage as possible.³⁴ For example, James sent men to foreign countries to learn how to make the latest weapons and ammunition. He funded new navy ships to be built for battle and he added on to three royal palaces; Linlithgow, Holyrood, and Stirling. He encouraged surgeons to continue their study by establishing a surgeon's college in Edinburgh. He had an interest in endodontics and the royal accounting books list payments made by the crown to people who allowed James to extract their teeth.³⁵ He knew multiple languages such as, Gaelic, Latin, German, French, Spanish, and others. Furthermore, he introduced the printing process to Scotland and supported experiments conducted on man-made objects.³⁶ For example, in 1503, he supported the Abbot of Tonglant's

³² The following information is from J. Paul, *Accounts 1500-1504*, xcix-ci, 99, 149, 340, 368, 446, 456 and J. Paul, *Accounts 1506-1507*, li-lilii, 156, 171-173, 337.

³³ Paul, *Accounts 1500-1504*, xcix.

³⁴ The following paragraph contains information from Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community*, 56-72 and MacDougall, 112-117, and P. H. Buchanan, *Margaret Tudor: Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1985): 42-46.

³⁵ J. Paul, *Accounts 1500-1504*, 73-79.

³⁶ D. MacMillan, *Scottish Art: 1460-1990* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1990), 24.

attempt to fly from the walls of Stirling Castle with his man-made wings.³⁷ He was also a great promoter of writers and poets, and kept his favorite poet William Dunbar employed at his court.

James IV promoted diplomatic relations with other countries in Europe and sought potential marriage contracts to advance his own status and that of his crown. For example, in 1491, Perkin Warbeck (1474-1499) asserted that he was the true heir to the English crown claiming he was the duke of York, the son of King Edward IV.³⁸ Warbeck found favor from many powerful people throughout Europe such as Margaret of Burgundy (1446-1503), Queen Isabella of Spain (1451-1504), and King Charles VIII of France (1470-1498). James took up contact with and supported Warbeck because of the potential advantages this connection might deliver. Seeing the threat that such a connection could potentially pose, King Henry VII of England (1457-1509) decided to bargain a truce with Scotland through a contract of marriage. Between 1493 and 1494, Henry tried to negotiate a marriage contract between James IV and the daughter of a countess named Katherine.³⁹ However, James rejected these negotiations and continued his communications with Warbeck, hoping to use these connections for a more advantageous marriage. During this time, James IV sent ambassadors to negotiate marriage contracts with major rulers. For example, in June of 1495, he sent ambassadors to Warbeck's patron, the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I (1459-1519), who stated that James was assisting Warbeck against England and that he hoped to gain a "treaty of friendship and alliance" through a marriage contract between James and Maximilian's daughter, Margaret.⁴⁰ In August of 1495, James sent Archbishop Blacader to Spain to inquire about a potential marriage match

³⁷ J. Paul, *Accounts 1500-1504*, lxxvii-lxxviii. Fortunately, Abbot Tonglant survived with only a broken thigh.

³⁸ The following information is from MacDougall, 117-119.

³⁹ MacDougall, 118.

⁴⁰ MacDougall, 119.

with the *Infanta*, the Spanish daughter of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.⁴¹ However, none of these negotiations secured a contract. Finally in 1502, James's effort to forge highly advantageous connections to powerful circles succeeded in the proxy marriage to Margaret Tudor. Scotland's continuous attacks on and plots against England and the harboring of Warbeck made Henry VII finally decide to negotiate a marriage between James IV and his daughter in the hopes of creating peace between the two countries.

The marriage contract of James IV and Margaret Tudor stipulated the amount of Margaret's dowry, the identity of the heirs, and the manner in which Margaret was to be treated.⁴² James was to receive thirty thousand gold nobles, the first English gold coin produced in quantity which equated to about ten thousand pounds sterling, to be paid over the span of three years. If James were to die before he had an heir then Scotland was to come under the reign of England. However, if James and Margaret had a son and the King of England was to die without an heir then Scotland would reign over England. The contract also stated that Margaret was to marry by proxy in 1502, at the age of twelve, but continue to stay in England an additional year.⁴³ Even with the unfortunate chance of relinquishing the Scottish crown to the English if there were no heirs, James IV knew that this was still a very advantageous marriage.⁴⁴ On January 24, 1502, the marriage contract was signed and blessed by the Pope.

⁴¹ R. Mackie, *King James IV of Scotland: A Brief Survey of His Life and Times* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1976), 81-82.

⁴² The following sentences contain information from Chapman, 25-28. The following paragraph contains information from Paul, *Accounts: 1500-1504*, 56, and Buchanan, 9-29.

⁴³ Chapman, 27 and 29. It is interesting to note that King James IV wanted the proxy to take places as soon as possible before the alliance could be stopped. Also, at the proxy wedding the King of England has portraits made of Margaret, Prince Henry who was the future King Henry VIII, and King Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth. These portraits were sent to James and he had to pay for them.

⁴⁴ King Henry VII was very specific about the care for his daughter. Not only did this marriage contract stipulate the joining of Scotland and England in the event of no male heirs, it was very specific with how James IV was to provide for Margaret's income and luxuries. Henry VII was very specific in making sure that his daughter was going to be treated as a proper queen. The detailed contract includes specifics such as lands that should belong to Margaret,

During 1491 to 1502, when James IV was trying to secure a marriage contract to a princess, it is quite possible that James sent a portrait of himself to accompany the Scottish ambassadors to European rulers. Therefore, this original watercolor portrait of James IV with a Peregrine falcon and how it would have been read by the viewer could have been a way to persuade other rulers including Henry VII of England and his daughter Margaret Tudor into a favorable marriage contract. During the early modern era, portraits had very specific functions. One of these functions was for diplomats to use them to secure marriage alliances.⁴⁵ During the 15th century, it was expected that artists express both the real and the idealized nature of the ruler they portrayed. In other words, the artist had to find a balance between portraying the likeness of the sitter with his/her character.⁴⁶ Portraits were often exchanged between different courts as part of marital negotiations.⁴⁷ Some royal courts would have their court artist paint a portrait to send to another court, and some royal courts would send their court artist to other courts to paint portraits of the potential bride for a groom to choose.⁴⁸ This was a well-established tradition prior to the reign of James IV. For example, in 1390 King Charles VI of France, and in 1396 King Richard II of England both used portraiture to find a suitable wife. They sent their court artists to paint portraits of the potential. In 1442, the English court painter, Hans, was sent to the count of Armagnac to paint portraits of the count's daughters in order for Henry VI, King of England, to select a future bride.⁴⁹ In 1489, King Henry VII of England sent an artist to Spain to paint a

how her residences should be decorated, what furniture she should have, and how she should appear in her dress. Chapman, 25-28.

⁴⁵ J. Fletcher, "The Renaissance Portrait: functions, Uses and Display," *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian* (London: National Gallery Company, 2008), 49.

⁴⁶ The following information is from M. Falomir, "The Court Portrait," *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian* (London: National Gallery Company, 2008), 68-69.

⁴⁷ Falomir, "The Court Portrait," 67.

⁴⁸ The following information is from Falomir, 66-70.

⁴⁹ L. Campbell, "The Making of Portraits," *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian* (London: National Gallery Company, 2008), 35.

portrait of Catherine of Aragon when he was negotiating a marriage for his eldest son Arthur.⁵⁰ The tradition of producing and presenting marriage portraits of and to an intended spouse is also referenced in works of art.⁵¹ In figure 7, a detail of *The Coronation of the Virgin* tapestry created in ca. 1502-1550 by Pieter van Aelst, shows the portrait of Prince John, the son of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, being presented to Margaret of Austria his future bride. Portraits played an important role in marriage negotiations and their use in these negotiations was a well-established tradition.⁵²

Because of this tradition, James IV would surely have been familiar with the function of marriage portraits. Therefore, it is probable that the King of Scotland participated in this tradition and commissioned a portrait of himself in order to present himself as a highly eligible and desirable future husband and ally to powerful rulers in Europe. More specifically, it is possible that he commissioned this portrait to present himself as a desirable husband to Princess Margaret Tudor. In fact, at the time of the proxy wedding in 1502, Henry VII commissioned Maynard Wewych to paint portraits of himself and his family for James IV.⁵³ Upon receiving these portraits, James IV kept Wewych in his employment for a year before allowing him to return to England. Therefore, it is quite plausible that Wewych produced a portrait of James IV to be presented to Margaret Tudor prior to her official arrival in Scotland and that this is the original portrait, ca. 1500, that Mytens later copied around 1620 to 1636. For the purposes of my thesis, I

⁵⁰ Falomir, 70.

⁵¹ The following information is from Falomir, 67.

⁵² The following information is from Falomir, 67-70.

⁵³ The following information is from Falomir, 70. Unfortunately, I am unable to determine the medium for these portraits of Henry VII and his family. I do not know if they were painted with watercolor or oil. I was not able to locate these portraits in the online databases of the collections of the National Gallery of Scotland, the National Gallery in London, and the Royal Collection Trust. These portraits may belong to the Queen's personal collection and might be why I am unable to locate these images and their mediums.

will focus on Margaret and her family as the portrait's audience as she does becomes his bride first by proxy in 1502 and then physically a year later in 1503.

I have argued that this portrait functioned as a means to facilitate James IV's goal of obtaining the most advantageous marriage as possible and that it may have been painted by an artist from the English court employed by James IV who then returned to England a year later. Now, I will discuss what this image conveyed about James when viewed by a potential wife and more particularly how Margaret Tudor might have read this portrait. Since nobility was expected to participate in falconry as I have argued earlier, Margaret Tudor was certainly trained in this practice. There is very little scholarship on Margaret Tudor but, what is written about her states that she was an avid hunter.⁵⁴ In fact, she shared a love of music and hunting with her father Henry VII and her brother Henry VIII.⁵⁵ To welcome his bride to Scotland, James IV had prepared a hunting party for her to participate in and to showcase her hunting skills.⁵⁶ Hunting within the Tudor household was an important activity which included hawking with hounds while on horseback.⁵⁷ Participating in hawking with a collection of birds of prey was a way for King Henry VII to impress friends and foreign diplomats.⁵⁸ Henry passed laws protecting the nests of birds of prey and forbidding anyone, with the exception of himself, to practice falconry near Westminster Palace. Even though Henry actively participated in falconry, he was still conservative with his money and did not spend exuberant funds on the practice. However, Margaret's brother, who later becomes King Henry VIII, was known as an "obsessive falconer-king" and spent a great deal on falconry.⁵⁹ Every wife of King Henry VIII knew and participated

⁵⁴ Chapman, 24.

⁵⁵ Chapman, 22.

⁵⁶ Buchanan, 26.

⁵⁷ A. and H. Stewart, *Historical Falconry: An Illustrated Guide* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2015), 57.

⁵⁸ The following information is A. and H. Stewart, *Historical Falconry*, 57-70.

⁵⁹ A. and H. Stewart, 62.

in hawking. When Catherine of Aragon arrived in England from Spain, she was already well-trained in the practice of falconry. Henry VIII met his third wife, Jane Seymour (1508-1537), while he was staying at a hunting lodge belonging to her family. At one location in Charing Cross, Henry VIII housed 300 birds of prey. These raptors were heavily guarded by iron fences and Bull Mastiffs. Due to the expectation to participate in falconry and to Henry VIII's enthusiasm for the practice, his daughter, the future Queen Elizabeth I of England (1533-1603), was an ardent falconer. Falconry was an important part of life and culture of the nobility and the Tudors exemplified this ideal. Therefore, when King James IV of Scotland sent his portrait with a Peregrine falcon, King Henry VII and his daughter Margaret Tudor, would have recognized what this marriage portrait was meant to communicate to his future bride.

Portraiture was a way to express power and individualize rulers.⁶⁰ The portrait of James IV with a falcon functioned in this manner. In this portrait, James IV displays wealth and prestige which is conveyed through the gold and red fabric of his outfit, his fur-lined doublet and his jewel encrusted collar. That wealth and prestige is also communicated by references to falconry in the portrait. When Henry VII offered his daughter Margaret in marriage, and James IV accepted, James spent a large portion of the treasury accounts in order to create a lavish lifestyle that made Scotland seem very prosperous to Henry VII and England.⁶¹ In one year's time, from the proxy marriage to the actual marriage in Scotland, James IV bought new wardrobes for Margaret, his courtiers, and himself. These wardrobes were made of velvet imported from France. He had new jewels and a crown of gold made for Margaret. He spent so much money that by the time Margaret arrived in Scotland, James only had one hundred pounds in his accounts. The portrait's function to portray James as a wealthy nobleman is typical for

⁶⁰ Falomir, 70.

⁶¹ The following paragraph contains information from Paul, *Accounts: 1500-1504*, 56, Buchanan, 9-29, and Chapman, 28-43.

such images. However, what is highly unusual about this portrait is the smile on James's face. For example, in the portrait of King Henry VIII of England, the man who becomes James' brother-in-law, painted by Hans Holbein in 1537 (fig.8), Henry is depicted with no smile on his face. In fact, Henry is shown with a stern almost severe expression which suggests a message opposite to that of the portrait of James IV: a message of distant and harsh majesty. James' kind and gentle smile intimates that he is an approachable and friendly man. Also unusual is the fact that he is portrayed as a falconer. As a falconer, James signals that he has the skill and the wealth to successfully pursue this most noble of practices. As we have seen these specifically articulated associations between skill, wealth, nobility and falconry go all the way back to Frederick II's 13th-century treatise and were reiterated in the centuries that followed. In addition, portraying James as a falconer in a marriage portrait is consistent with courtly love poetry. In some of these texts, a raptor carried on the hand of a knight functions as the "attribute of the lover."⁶²

More specifically, and especially through the representation of the king and his falcon, the portrait of James also suggests that James would be a powerful, respectful and trustworthy husband.⁶³ The bird specifically chosen for depiction in this portrait is a Peregrine, a very strong and powerful raptor. The name Peregrine stems from the Latin word *peregrinus* which was first applied to the falcon by Frederick II.⁶⁴ The emperor chose this name for the falcon because of its long "wandering" flights over the ocean.⁶⁵ These falcons could fly great distances and for long periods of time when hunting for their food. Later, the term Peregrine falcon came to designate the female of the species while the male became known as the Peregrine tercel.⁶⁶ The male

⁶² Smets and van der Abeele, "Medieval Hunting," 71-73.

⁶³ Smets and van der Abeele, 60, 71-72.

⁶⁴ D. Ratcliffe, *The Peregrine Falcon*, 16.

⁶⁵ Ratcliffe, 16.

⁶⁶ Ratcliffe, 16.

inherited this name because he is one third, or a “terce,” smaller than the female.⁶⁷ According to *The Book of St. Albans* by Juliana Berners in 1489, the Peregrine was typically designated as the bird of prey for an earl and the Gyrfalcon, “gerefacon,” was designated as the falcon that a king should use while participating in hawking.⁶⁸ So, why wasn’t James portrayed with the Gyrfalcon, a bird fit for a king? I believe we can explain this in a number of ways. First, in his book on falconry, Frederick gave the Peregrine equal praise to the Gyrfalcon. He stated that although Peregrines are smaller than some of the other falcons, they have hunting qualities that give them a ranking equal to the Gyrfalcon.⁶⁹ Peregrine falcons are very powerful birds of prey. They hunt in open areas such as, coastlines or grasslands, and their diet consists mostly of bats and birds.⁷⁰ These falcons attack by diving from above, hitting their prey in the air with their talons.⁷¹ A Peregrine’s dive can easily reach the speed of over 240 hundred miles per hour which allows the bird of prey to deliver a fatal blow.⁷² The falcon would then land to retrieve its kill.⁷³ The wing span of a Peregrine ranges from three and a half feet to four feet and their body length ranges from one and a half to two feet.⁷⁴ When I viewed the Peregrine’s hunting abilities at a demonstration at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, I was in awe of the strength and agility this bird of prey displays.

Secondly, according to traditions of courtly love poetry, representing James with a Gyrfalcon in a marriage portrait may even have been highly inappropriate. The French poet and

⁶⁷ Ratcliffe, 16.

⁶⁸ J. Berners, *The Book containing the Treatises of Hawking, Hunting, Coat-Armour, Fishing and Blasing of Arms*, ed. Joseph Haslewood (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2009), 25 and Ratcliffe, 12.

⁶⁹ Fyfe and Wood, vol. 1, 122.

⁷⁰ “Peregrine Falcon-Species Information,” https://www.desertmuseum.org/visit/rff_peregrine.php. (Nov. 23, 2015).

⁷¹ R. Oggins, *Kings and Their Hawks: Falconry in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 11.

⁷² Oggins, *Kings and Their Hawks*, 11 and this was also relayed to me while observing the “Raptors in Flight” demonstration at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum on 11/30/2015.

⁷³ Oggins, 11.

⁷⁴ “Peregrine Falcon-Species Information,” https://www.desertmuseum.org/visit/rff_peregrine.php, (Nov 23, 2015).

musician, Guillaume de Machaut (ca. 1300-1377) wrote a poem called “The Tale of the Alerion” which related falconry to courtly love.⁷⁵ Written between 1342 and 1357, the 4, 814 verse poem was widely disseminated and influential, and was available to noble audience during the early modern period.⁷⁶ The author was influenced by bestiaries and falconry manuals that had been circulating around the time that this poem was written.⁷⁷ According to the translators of this French poem, ideas from Frederick II’s treatise were reflected in de Machaut’s work. This poem was copied, translated and printed many times during the early modern era and it influenced other writers such as poets from England and France who also reference falconry in their works.⁷⁸ De Machaut applies the practice of falconry, terminology, and birds of prey to reference the ideally perfect woman.⁷⁹ In this tale, the Gyrfalcon is a female who deceives and is disloyal to the lover: “...wholly by her own misdeeds, for which cause she is soiled and shamed and rightly punished with disgrace.”⁸⁰ Therefore, portraying James IV holding a Gyrfalcon the symbol of a dishonest and shameful woman in a marriage portrait would have been inappropriate. Because of James’ education, fluency in multiple languages, his interest in books and poetry, and his love for the practice of falconry, it is most likely that James IV was familiar

⁷⁵ Smets and van der Abeele, 73.

⁷⁶ G. De Machaut, *The Tale of the Alerion*. Trans. Minnette Gaudet and Constance B. Heat (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 5.

⁷⁷ De Machaut, *The Tale of the Alerion*, 12.

⁷⁸ The following information is from De Machaut, 19-22. Unfortunately, I have yet to come across a poem by James IV’s court poet that references falconry. However, this is an area where I would like to continue my research. The translators list several of other poets who were highly influenced by De Machaut and his poem such as; Oton de Granson and his poem “Livre Messire Otes,” Eustache Deschamp (1340-1406) and his poem “Fiction d’oyseaux,” Jean Froissart (known to be at the English court from 1361-1367) and his poem “Espinette amoureuse,” and William Shakespeare’s “Taming of the Shrew” written between 1590-1592. However, before I record this information within my thesis, I would like to verify how these poems relate to *The Tale of Alerion* and which other early modern poets were highly influenced. This is an area of research that deserves further attention. For further information of these poets and writers see C. Rawson, *The Cambridge Companion to English Poets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 20-21.

⁷⁹ De Machaut, 3-6.

⁸⁰ De Machaut, 154.

with de Machaut and his ideas, whether from the original French poem or from its many different versions.⁸¹

Thirdly, a significant characteristic of Peregrines is their fidelity towards their mate. Once they have mated, Peregrines will keep their mates for life.⁸² When they find their spouse, they enter a courtship flight that looks like an aerial dance with dives, spirals, and acrobatic moves. When they nest, the couple will return annually to the nest that they have created.⁸³ The depiction in the portrait of the Peregrine falcon, a female bird of great power but also of life-long loyalty may very well have been specifically chosen to reference Margaret Tudor in a way that would both flatter her as well as signal to her what would be expected of her as a wife. James' role in the marital relationship is signaled by the way the man and the bird interact in the portrait.

We can see that the Peregrine is not hooded or belled and that the king's hand on which she perches is not covered by a falconer's glove. In falconry typically, a hood (fig.5) is placed over the falcon's head to cover it's eyes which has the effect of keeping the bird calm. It does this by tricking the bird into thinking that it is night instead of day.⁸⁴ This allows the falconer to

⁸¹ Prior to the proxy marriage between James IV and Margaret Tudor, Scotland had a strong alliance with France. Since James IV spoke fluent French and had strong ties with France, it is possible that James IV had read books that referenced the Gyr Falcon as a deceiving lover. The Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland document James's purchase of many books for his own library. Unfortunately, some of the book titles are not specifically referenced within the accounting records such as "other bukis" or "certaine bukis," and I do not have access to a list of the King's possessions during his reign or upon his death. Paul, *Accounts: 1500-1504*, cxi-cxvi, and Paul, *Accounts: 1506-1507*, civ-cv.

⁸² For information on mating that courtship please see, "Peregrine Falcon." Arizona Game and Fish. <https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/viewing/webcamlist/peregrine/>.

⁸³ I would like to note that typically Peregrines create their nest, also known as a clutch, on cliffs along the coast or on a side of a bridge. During the early modern era, these Peregrines and other raptors were highly sought after and it was very rare when these birds of prey had nests within human reach. Therefore, laws were often created to protect their nests and to keep the peace. For example, King James IV created a charter that prohibited monks from scaring the birds of prey from the areas where they would build their nests. King Henry VII of England declared that anyone who stole a raptor from a nest on another man's property and was convicted would be imprisoned for over a year. This information is from Ratcliffe, 36, "Peregrine Falcon-Species Information," https://www.desertmuseum.org/visit/rff_peregrine.php, (Nov 23, 2015), T. Dickson, ed. *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland: 1473-1498* (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1877), ccl, and Glasier, 14, 48-49.

⁸⁴ Glasier, 94-96.

have control over the bird until it is time to hunt.⁸⁵ But James' Peregrine is not hooded, she is not being tricked into being passive and controlled. Instead, she perches calmly and trustingly on the king's hand, her talons in contact with his uncovered skin. In James' portrait, I find the lack of a glove fascinating. In all of my reference I have read and in all of the portraits painted with falcons, I have yet to come across another painting that depicts the handler without a glove. Even the most experienced of falconers would wear a glove to avoid the talons of the bird of prey. The portrait of Robert Cheseman (1485-1547), the Royal Falconer for King Henry VIII of England (fig.9), with a hooded Gyrfalcon with bells on his leash resting on the gloved hand of Cheseman is a good example of a typical portrait of a falconer and his bird. Note the extremely serious expression of Cheseman's face in contrast to James' winning smile.

Another aspect that displays an affectionate and loyal relationship between man and bird is the lack of bells. Bells provide a way for the falconer to locate his bird of prey while hunting in case the raptor decides to fly away. Due to the speed and height that a Peregrine can reach, it would be very easy for this bird of prey to escape from the falconer. Therefore, bells would have been ideal to assist with locating the bird once it had flown away. The fact that no bell is attached to James' Peregrine indicates a confidence in the relationship he has with his raptor. He is confident that the falcon will always return to his hand even after she has soared through the skies. Together, man and falcon demonstrate a relationship based on mutual trust and respect. Likewise, the relationship between James and Margaret would be based on similar values. The portrait intimates that Margaret was meant to understand the Peregrine falcon as a reference to herself, and was meant to identify with her as indicated by the fact that the falcon looks directly out at the viewer, which would have been Margaret.

⁸⁵ Glasier, 94-96.

Considering Margaret Tudor's practical knowledge of falconry and familiarity with, the natural characteristics of the Peregrine, and widely known assumptions about falcons and falconry both in practice and in poetry, we can interrupt this portrait as communicating a message meant for James' future bride which both she and her father would have recognized. Margaret was expected to be a loyal and faithful wife who would be treated with the utmost respect, kindness and trust by her husband, King James IV of Scotland. That such a relationship was also spelled out in great detail by the marriage contract drawn up between the kings of England and Scotland.

Applying the historical contexts of falconry, James's marriage diplomacy, and the function of early modern marriage portraiture, I have argued that the painting of James IV with a Peregrine falcon originally functioned as a marriage portrait that communicated a specific message to his bride-to-be. The raptor in this painting would have evoked feelings of rapture for the viewer. Margaret Tudor would have been enchanted by James' depiction of kindness and respect. She would have gazed upon this painting of James and the Peregrine falcon in rapture over her potential future as James' wife. Henry VII would have been elated that his daughter was marrying a powerful king who would treat his daughter with affection and respect. This portrait with King James IV, the Peregrine falcon, and accoutrement of falconry depicts a strong and specific message to its viewer. I am fortunate that I had the opportunity to research this beautiful and unique early 16th-century portrait of James IV with a Peregrine falcon.



Figure 1- A lost watercolor of King James IV with a falcon, extant only by a copy ca. 1620-36 painted by Daniel Mytens.



Figure 2- A miniature from *The Art of Falconry* manuscript written by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen in 1241.



Figure 3-17th century falconer's bag belonging to King James VI of Scotland and I of England.

This is one of the earliest falconer's bag I came across in my research.



Figure 4- Bells, anklet (bewit), and leash on a hawk.

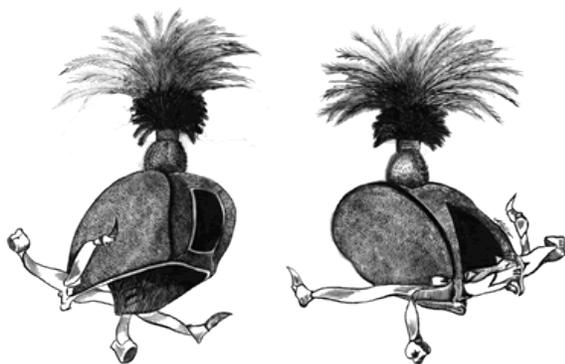


Figure 5-Front and back of a hood for a raptor.

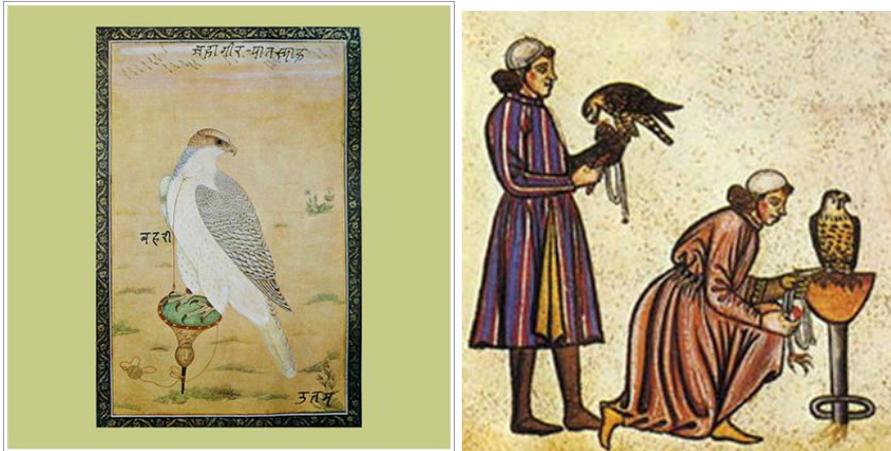


Figure 6- Image on the left is “Falcon on a Bird-Rest” by Asr Jahangirshahi ca.1618-1619. Image on the right is a miniature from *The Art of Falconry* manuscript written by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen in 1241. Both images are displaying a rest, also known as a block.



Figure 7- A detail of *The Coronation of the Virgin* tapestry, ca. 1502-1550 by Pieter van Aelst



Figure 8-Portrait of King Henry VIII of England painted by Hans Holbein the Younger in 1537.



Figure 9-The portrait of Henry VIII of England's Royal Falconer, Robert Cheseman, painted by Hans Holbein the Younger in 1533.

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