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**FREEDOM, LOVE, NOBILITY: THE *FALKENMOTIV*  
IN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN GERMAN  
LITERATURE, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WERNER  
BERGENGRUEN'S "DIE DREI FALKEN"**

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**Abstract:** *Medieval literature has intensely formed modern literature through numerous dissimilar channels. Occasionally whole works were interpreted or paraphrased into contemporary tongues, ometimes medieval motifs, themes, figures, or ideas affected contemporary texts. This article examines one extraordinary example, Werner Bergengruen's highly popular novella "Die drei Falken" (1928) the basis of stimulus of which was loosely Boccaccio's story told on Day V, no. 9 in his Decameron (ca. 1350). Through time, the falcon has frequently represented courtly love, dignity, and the wish for separate freedom. After a conversation of Boccaccio's text and a assortment of medieval examples where the same reason seems, this article examines how Bergengruen distorted the symbol of the falcon into an expression of human dignity and deeply felt wish for personal liberty.*

**Keywords—** *falcons as a literary motif, Nibelungenlied, Der von Kürenberg, Werner Bergengruen*

## INTRODUCTION

Conflicting to many molds that the Middle Ages might substance little in contemporary literature the opposite often shows to be the case insofar as there are uncountable examples of poems, novels, short stories, plays, and other types of texts at least meanwhile the early nineteenth century in which medieval themes, topics, materials, ideals, motives, and elements emerge more or less meaningfully. The greatest affected examples with a global achievement were surely J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* (1937–1949), J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* (1997–2007), and David Benioff's and D. B. Weiss's *Game of Thrones* TV movie series (2011–2019) (e.g., Ridsen). Though in those the whole thing the Middle Ages

are often evoked only circuitously, mixed and joint with many features of fantasy and fancy, altogether this proved to be the faultless formula for the huge admiration of these works. However, the Middle Ages have also attracted to numerous other authors and movie creators in uncountable languages until the present day for numerous dissimilar details, such as Japanese or Indian movies. Romantic ideals, dream images, curiosity, adventures, heroism, and the wish to discovery medieval roots of the Amazon-like contemporary woman have all played a important part. At the same time, many German writers such as Robert Musil, Hermann Hesse, Peter Handke, Adolf Muschg, and, most newly, Gabrielle Alioth have twisted to medieval history, philosophy, theology, and courteous literature as bases of stimulus (Classen 1996; Classen 2000).

### THE MEDIEVAL IN WERNER BERGENGRUEN'S *DIE DREI FALKEN*

In 1928, the extremely popular writer from Riga (today, Latvia), Werner Berggruen, published a small story, *Die drei Falken* (The Three Falcons), which shadows the same tendency, though the basis of stimulus can be traced more straight to Boccaccio's *Decameron* (ca. 1350), a well-known collection of 100 stories told by ten cashiers over the retro of ten days, who poverty to seepage the horror of the Black Death. It might be arguable whether the *Decameron* still fits to the Middle Ages or previously to the initial Renaissance, but one of the stories limited in it, concentrating on the well-known falcon motif, both harkens back to the old-style medieval culture of shooting with falcons and showed to be the catalyst for a long-term effect on the modern world, such as Bergengruen's narrative. Boccaccio typically meant at erotic entertaining in the first place, but he motionless pursued deeply ethical and moral goalmouths with his literary books, and this very opinion can recognized in Bergengruen's method.

This education means to inspect chiefly Bergengruen's novella in bright of the "Falkenmotiv," as Paul Heyse had called it previously in 1871 (XIX–XX) and to classify the deep standards expressed here which clearly attracted to a wider spectators at his period. First having seemed in 1928 (not 1937, as numerous lexica authors in print and online claim), the author sketched from the principles fundamental Boccaccio's narrative and utilized the central motif of the falcon to grow a literary platform for the examination of humanoid nobility, the desire for freedom, and the disapproval of physical goods in favor of humanoid principles (Bergengruen, *Die drei Falken*). This historicizing novella was re-published in 1937, 1940, 1945, 1947, 1951, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1969, 1972, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1989, 2000, 2001, interpreted into English in 1950 and 1966, into French

in 1970, into Italian in 1962 and 1992, and into Polish in 1964. The attention in this well-known story by Bergengruen seems, though, to have stonewashed since formerly with no further re-publications or conversions after 2001, and it would be a valued study to understand the details for this main shift in public welfares.

However, this education will emphasis on the medieval or Renaissance physical in Bergengruen's narrative and means to inspect in what way the motif of the falcon helped the author to fast his principles and why they reverberated so deeply with his spectators well pending the end of the twentieth century. In instruction to challenge our task, it will be essential also to plan fleetingly Bergengruen's biography and highpoint his main mechanism, particularly because he is typically unknown in the Anglophone biosphere and now typically overlooked by the modern German-language circulation, here disregarding some of his works re-issued by actual minor niche publishers, such as his spiritual poems in *Dies irae* (Bergengruen, 2005). However, let us first become a healthier impression of what is meant with the 'Falkenmotiv.' Then I poverty to scan the past of this motif previously in Middle High German works from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and then analyze in part what Bergengruen complete available of it.

### **THE FALKENMOTIV IN BOCCACCIO'S DECAMERON**

In Boccaccio's *Decameron* (ca. 1350), we come crossways a story by the 'queen' of the business, Pampinea, who tells the account of Federigo degli Alberighi who has develop very needy due to his unsuccessful efforts to victory the love of his lady, Monna Giovanna (story 9 on Day V). This militaries him to withdraw from Florence and to give up work to a little republic house, where he has only one valued falcon as his last valuable thing in his possession. Then, Monna's husband dies, and she and her little son move away from the city to their estate outside, which happens to be near to Federigo's. Her son soon raids a relationship with Federigo, and is particularly fascinated by the falcon, then there is no means for him to obtain this bird. Formerly, though, he waterfalls harshly ill, and upon his mother's investigations, he lastly confesses that ahead that falcon would surely help him to recuperate. His mother is rather surprised about this appeal, and very indeterminate what to do since she is completely conscious that this bird of prey is one of the premium of its species and, more prominently, her lover is lone residual source of contentment. She requests herself quite movingly: "How can I perhaps go to him, or smooth send anyone, to ask him for this falcon, which to judge from all I have heard is the finest that ever flew, as well as being the lone thing that saves him active? And how can I be so unfeeling as to divest so noble

a man of his one residual preference?"

Yet, ambitious by her maternal love for her son, Monna Giovanna then goes to visit Federigo, who is delighted, not meaningful what her real drive might be. Badly he tries to make a welcome dinner for her, but there is no food in the house but for the falcon. Deprived of rational much about it, he kills the bird and makes it as a mealtime for his woman. Only when the dinner has been over, does she disclose what her appeal truly was, which is, of sequence, by then unbearable to achieve. Yet, when she understands what expense he had made for her, her heart starts to thaw, and after her son has disastrously died, she decides to marry Federigo, though her brothers at first balk at the fact that the young noble man is totally needy. She explains her decision as shadows in a well-formulated chiasm: "I am well conscious of that. But I would sooner have a nobleman deprived of resources, than riches deprived of a gentleman" (431–32). Previously before this final consequence, she had reproduced with astonishment on Federigo's noble spirit, which declined to let any physical restraints hamper his chase of love and honorable conduct: "then she developed lost in respect for his nobility of spirit, which no quantity of poverty had achieved to reduce, nor ever would" (431) (Del Puppo and Musumeci).

In modern courteous love poetry, *Minnesang*, particularly in the verses by Kurenberger (II, stanzas 6–7), we also catch of the falcon, and there usually as a symbol of inner dignity, civilization, and the taming of wild countryside inside male wooers of courteous women. The falcon might signify the lover who has left his lady, or it could represent the lady this woman, all contingent on the conditions (*Des Minnesangs Frühling*). It is quite shared in courtly luvs to hear of orientations to the falcon, such as in Wolfram von Eschenbach's famous *Parzival* (ca. 1205), where the young character comes crossways a field abruptly enclosed by snow, and this in the month of May. Soon beforehand that, Parzival had left his wife Condwiramurs to call his mother (long dead by that time, but unknown to him), had inwards at the Grail but had unsuccessful to ask the vital query, had then redeemed his preceding guilt with Jeschute, beating her violent husband Orilus, and was then observing for King Arthur's court. One of the king's falconers had inappropriate his bird, which is today next Parzival, and initial in the a.m. tries to kill a goose. The falcon, though, fails in responsibility so, yet injures one of the geese, which greeneries three drops of blood in the snowy snow. Parzival, seeing this color code, feels repeated of his wife, whom he intensely failures, and falls into a trance, though he is not far absent from the regal camp: "Condwiramurs, truly, these colours resemble you! God needs to augment me with consecrations, since I have originate your similarity here" (Wolfram von Eschenbach, Book VI, p. 119). Here are no

additional commentaries on the falcon, but its contributory purpose to retell Parzival of his deep love for this honorable woman is obvious.

### CONCLUSION

To accomplish then, Bergengruen's novella shows to be such a literary jewel since it delivers a unique literary expression for this perfect of inner dignity, the dignity of the emotion, as to be create in the falcon, in the dead falconer, and in his unlawful son Cecco. The latter lets the third falcon to reappearance to freedom since he is disgusted with the commodification of these honorable birds and somewhat sets the third one free than to be wedged up himself in this financial thinking. His creative nature sets him fundamentally apart from the silk mercantile and his wife, but also from the compulsive lawyer Albinelli, who comprehends only at the actual end how much he himself had deceived the very standards of their world, which was based on the understanding of the noble appeal of those falcons which really merited to be free.

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