

# Heraldic Studies

Edited by Torsten Hiltmann and Laurent Hablot

Vol. 1



**THORBECKE**

Torsten Hiltmann/Laurent Hablot (eds.)

# Heraldic Artists and Painters

In the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times



**THORBECKE**

This publication has been funded by the Volkswagen Foundation as part of the Dilthey Fellowship project »Die Performanz der Wappen« (Coats of Arms in Practice), by the 4th section of the Ecole pratique des hautes études-Paris Sciences et Lettres (EA SAPRAT) and by the Centre d'études supérieures de civilisation médiévale de Poitiers (CESCM).



Für die Verlagsgruppe Patmos ist Nachhaltigkeit ein wichtiger Maßstab ihres Handelns. Wir achten daher auf den Einsatz umweltschonender Ressourcen und Materialien.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek  
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Alle Rechte vorbehalten  
© 2018 Jan Thorbecke Verlag,  
ein Unternehmen der Verlagsgruppe Patmos  
in der Schwabenverlag AG, Ostfildern  
[www.thorbecke.de](http://www.thorbecke.de)

Umschlaggestaltung: Finken & Bumiller, Stuttgart  
Umschlagabbildung: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 24920, fol. 42v.  
Satz und Repro: Schwabenverlag AG, Ostfildern  
Druck: CPI books GmbH, Leck  
Hergestellt in Deutschland  
ISBN 978-3-7995-1253-4

# Contents

Preface .....	7
<b>Introduction</b>	
Arms and Art in the Middle Ages Approaching the Social and Cultural Impact of Heraldry by its Artisans and Artists.....	11
<i>Torsten Hiltmann (Münster)</i>	
Art, esthétique et productions héraldiques au Moyen Âge Considération générales .....	24
<i>Laurent Hablot (Paris)</i>	
<b>The Artists</b>	
Peinture d'armoiries, une activité parmi d'autres du peintre médiéval? .....	43
<i>Marc Gil (Lille)</i>	
Au service de la Commune Identité et culture des peintres héraldistes dans les villes italiennes aux XIIIème–XIVème siècles .....	56
<i>Matteo Ferrari (Poitiers)</i>	
Artistes, hérauts et héraldique de part et d'autre des Alpes Occidentales.....	76
<i>Luisa Gentile (Turin)</i>	
<b>Conception</b>	
>As Yt Ys Made< Gender and Description in Plans for Armorial Displays by the English Gentry c. 1460–1500 .....	97
<i>Oliver Fearon (York)</i>	
The Influence of Beneficiaries on the Artistic Make-up of Imperial Grants of Arms or: How Do Heraldic Images Get into Late Medieval Charters? .....	113
<i>Andreas H. Zajic (Vienna)</i>	

## Specific Supports and Contexts

Medieval Grants of Arms and their Illuminators.....	135
<i>Martin Roland (Vienna)</i>	
Armorial as Commercial Ventures?.....	156
<i>Steen Clemmensen (Farum)</i>	
Heraldic Commissions in an Architectural Context	
Case Studies from Transylvania.....	167
<i>Radu Lupescu (Cluj-Napoca)</i>	
Les auteurs des pompes funèbres héraldiques à la Renaissance	
Artistes de renom, associations de peintres et ateliers spécialisés .....	179
<i>Anne-Sophie Bessero-Lagarde (Paris)</i>	

## Individual Artists and their Work

Vivified Heraldry	
On Pisanello's Medallic Imagery .....	193
<i>Tanja Jones (Tuscaloosa)</i>	
L'héraldique des Della Robbia à Florence entre abstraction et naturalisme .....	207
<i>Alessandro Savorelli (Florence)</i>	
Georges Gresset, peintre et héraut d'armes des ducs de Lorraine (1523–1559).....	222
<i>Jean-Christophe Blanchard (Nancy)</i>	

# Preface

The origins of the present collection lay in a conference held at the University of Poitiers in April 2014. It was part of a series titled »Journées héraldiques de Poitiers« that has been organised by Laurent Hablot and various other partners since 2011. As the organisers of this event and editors of the present volume, we want to thank all of the conference participants, amongst them such eminent scholars as Michel Pastoureau, Nigel Ramsay and Christian de Mérindol, for their contribution to the pleasant and productive atmosphere of the event, and for the many inspiring and insightful discussions which arose from it. In this collection you will find the many fruits of the conference, alongside an additional article written by Oliver Fearon, which deals with the conception of heraldic programmes by noblemen and noblewomen. His contribution successfully complements this collection, aligning well with the purpose and central argument of the rest of the papers presented.

We must offer our thanks to the Centre d'études supérieures de civilisation médiévale (CESCM), the programme DHPC, and the University of Poitiers for their hospitality and their support, as well as the Volkswagen-Foundation – sponsor of the »Coats of Arms in Practice« research project – for its most generous funding. This collection of papers couldn't have been published without the valuable help and redactional work of Charlotte Feidicker, Liselore Durousset and Sophie Spiegler, to all of whom we owe a great debt.

We are also happy to present this volume as the first publication of our new book series »Heraldic Studies: Medieval and Early Modern Heraldry from the Perspective of Cultural History«. The series is innovative and original in several ways, both due of its planned content and because of the way it will be published. Focusing on heraldic sources and studying them from the perspective of cultural history, *Heraldic Studies* will break new ground. Hitherto barely touched by scholars not only in history, but also in art-historical and literary scholarship, heraldic sources are commonly perceived as a matter for a limited number of interested specialists, and their usefulness has been largely underrated. This series aims to change these perceptions. Strongly convinced that heraldic sources and heraldic communication in general have many insights and benefits to offer, opening new and different perspectives on a large scope of questions, the contributions to this series will show how to analyse and utilise these sources in concrete situations, and explore their meaning and significance for historical research.

In undertaking the work stated above, this series is not focusing on heraldry as such. It will not strive to collect works dealing with heraldic rules and symbolism, armorial style or the identification of coats of arms for their own sake. The perspective of *Heraldic Studies* is a distinctively historical one. We wish to promote further understanding of heraldry as a source of historical research, in order to expand essential knowledge of the past. This series shall deal with heraldry as a means of representation and communication, asking exactly what can be learned

about societies and cultures through this particular lens. In short, it is essentially about a better understanding of the past itself.

Further though, the way in which this book series is published will strike out on new paths. In order to reach wider audience – including those who work digitally as well as those who prefer the feel of a book in their hands – and more importantly, in order to make scientific research and its results freely accessible to everyone interested, the volumes of *Heraldic Studies* will be issued simultaneously in traditional print and through the digitally accessible Open Access web platform [www.openedition.org](http://www.openedition.org). Here, we have to thank our publisher, the Jan Thorbecke Verlag, and in particular their publishing manager Jürgen Weis, for their openness and willingness to explore these new avenues with us.

Finally, please let us express our profound hope that the *Heraldic Studies* series, and this its first volume, will contribute to an increased interest in heraldic sources, to promote new perspectives on medieval and early modern culture and society, and to remind scholars and everyone interested in these subjects of the exceptional and sometimes also surprising and unexpected potential of these sources for historical research. May it enhance our understanding of the past and, consequently, in some way also the understanding of our visually saturated present.

Torsten Hiltmann  
Münster, July 2017

Laurent Hablot  
Paris, July 2017

# Introduction





# Arms and Art in the Middle Ages

Approaching the Social and Cultural Impact of Heraldry by its Artisans  
and Artists

Torsten Hiltmann (Münster)

**Abstract:** *To most scholars, heraldry still tends to be considered a marginal aspect of medieval and Early Modern culture. This article analyses the reasons behind this widespread notion, and contrasts it with the role heraldry actually played in the medieval and Early Modern periods. It emphasises that heraldic communication was by no means a marginal phenomenon. Considering the current scholarly field, this article argues that in order to come to a better understanding of heraldry as a social and cultural phenomenon, it is important to understand how and by whom heraldic art was conceived, and also who produced it. This approach is exemplified through a synthesis of the results of the studies collected in the volume »Heraldic Artists and Painters«.*

To most scholars, medieval heraldry still tends to be a marginal aspect of medieval culture; a passion of connoisseurs which is of historical interest only to a handful of specialists. However, even the most cursory look at the extant heraldic evidence from the middle ages demonstrates that this limited view of heraldry is not appropriate.

## THE PLACE OF HERALDRY IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN SOCIETY

For the most part, this disregard for heraldry as an object of study is fuelled by three major misunderstandings perpetuated by older, yet still somewhat influential literature. Firstly, coats of arms are often presented as a mere means of identification, whose predominant purpose was to identify its bearer in battle. This restricted view has consequently lowered the interest in such sources for historical research to a considerable degree. Secondly, interest in heraldry further reduced because of the contention that it was almost exclusively a sign of the nobility, a contention that was sparked by theoretical texts appearing from the fifteenth century onwards as well

as by a certain influence of English heraldry in the field of academic heraldry<sup>1</sup>. Thirdly, there is the prevalent idea that the proper handling of heraldry was the business of a small group of specialists, namely the heralds. According to widespread opinion, only the heralds were able to identify and construe coats of arms, acting as experts responsible for all kinds of heraldic communication who had to be consulted to decipher or create any heraldic device. As a matter of fact, none of these points is accurate.

In the middle ages, heraldry was a widespread means of communication, whose use was far from being limited to the nobility or to matters of warfare. Of course, princes and noblemen did use coats of arms as part of their military equipment, and armorial bearings were closely linked to the field of warfare and tournaments, as the major elements of heraldic display – shield and helmet – demonstrate. At the same time, however, heraldry was also used by women and clerics, by townspeople and peasants, as well as by institutions such as cities, churches and abbeys, and corporations such as guilds and brotherhoods<sup>2</sup>.

To all these users, coats of arms were by no means a unidimensional method of communication that merely referred to and identified their armigers. Rather, heraldry was a device that lent itself to a wide variety of different communicative purposes. Coats of arms could communicate kinship and allegiance, indicate political and social status, and convey political and social aspirations<sup>3</sup>. They could establish the immediate presence of their bearers, and ensured the *memoria* of a person as well as of a family. They could represent honour and express degradation, provide protection and proclaim authority<sup>4</sup>. Arranged alongside each other, coats of arms could display and specify relations and hierarchies within social groups, and in such spatial arrangements express political concepts and complex ideas about social order<sup>5</sup>.

In order to grasp the whole extent of the role heraldry played in the middle ages, it is important to bear in mind that it was not only people, institutions, and offices that represented themselves by means of coats of arms. Historical and even mythical figures such as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table were attributed with coats of arms. The same was the case for biblical figures and saints, Jesus Christ, God, and the Trinity. Abstract concepts such as the virtues, and sins, too, were portrayed in the form of coats of arms<sup>6</sup>.

---

1 The fact that in England the College of Arms still exists and governs the use of heraldry in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as the existence of the Court of Lord Lyon in Scotland, where heraldry is reserved to the nobility, may have contributed to this particular situation in Great Britain, which eventually may also have influenced the perception of European heraldry as a whole. However, when it comes to the social place of heraldry, it must always be taken into account that the situation in Great Britain is quite different from the continent, especially in modern times.

2 Donald Lindsay GALBREATH, Léon JÉQUIER, Manuel du blason, Lausanne 1977, pp. 43–52.

3 Laurent HABLOT, Les armoiries, un marqueur du rang dans les sociétés médiévales?, in: Jörg PELTZER (ed.), Rank and Order. The Formation of Aristocratic Elites in Western and Central Europe, 500–1500, Ostfildern 2015, pp. 245–270.

4 Werner PARAVICINI, Gruppe und Person. Repräsentation durch Wappen im späteren Mittelalter, in: Otto Gerhard OEXLE, Andrea von HÜLSEN-ESCH (eds.), Die Repräsentation der Gruppen. Texte – Bilder – Objekte, Göttingen 1998, pp. 327–389, pp. 339–342.

5 Torsten HILTMANN, Potentialities and Limitations of Medieval Armorial as Historical Source. The Representation of Hierarchy and Princely Rank in Late Medieval Collections of Arms in France and Germany, in: Thorsten HUTHWELKER, Jörg PELTZER, Maximilian WEMHÖNER (eds.), Princely Rank in late Medieval Europe, Ostfildern 2011, pp. 159–200.

6 Michel PASTOUREAU, L'art héraldique au Moyen Âge, Paris 2009, pp. 192–200. On imaginary coats of arms, see also the ongoing PhD project by Aaron Jochim at the University of Heidelberg under the supervision of Nikolas Jaspert. For more



Fig. 1: Albrecht Dürer, »Coat of Arms of Death« (engraving), 1503 (photo: Wikimedia).





Fig. 2: Lucas Cranach the Elder, »Four Saints adoring Christ crucified on the sacred heart, depicted on a heraldic shield« (engraving), 1505 (photo: New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

A well-known example of this is Albrecht Dürer's work »Coat of Arms of Death« from 1503, which apparently represents Death by attributing it a coat of arms (fig. 1)<sup>7</sup>. Even more curious and puzzling is another artwork from about the same time, namely the »Adoration of the Sacred Heart« by Lucas Cranach the Elder. Completed in 1505 for Frederick the Wise, the Elector of Saxony, it depicts, borne by four angels above the heads of patrons and saints, a shield charged with the crowned heart of Jesus featuring the depiction of Christ crucified (fig. 2)<sup>8</sup>. For what reason or purpose the Sacred Heart is depicted on a coat of arms is not quite clear<sup>9</sup>. However, the introduction of heraldic devices into religious iconography demonstrates the extent to which coats of arms and heraldic communication must have penetrated all social spheres of late medieval society.

An important key to the success of coats of arms as a means of communication was their ability to be displayed on almost every kind of medium, be it glass, wood, stone, brass, ceramics or fabric. They could be painted on parchment and paper, walls, beams, panels, windows, and indeed objects of all kinds. From armour and livery, banners and pennons, to seals and coins, badges and jewellery. We even know of moulds made to produce waffles with coats of arms on them<sup>10</sup>. In short, coats of arms could be found in all kinds of places; both inside and outside

---

details see: Aaron JOCHIM, *Imaginäre Wappen im deutsch- und französischsprachigen Raum, 13.–16. Jahrhundert / Les armoiries imaginaires dans l'espace germanophone et francophone, XIII<sup>e</sup>–XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles*, in: *Heraldica nova. Medieval Heraldry in social and cultural-historical perspectives* (blog on Hypotheses.org), published: 20/10/2016, Internet: <http://heraldica.hypotheses.org/5058> [accessed 23/06/2017].

7 Adam BARTSCH, *Le peintre graveur*, 21 vols., Vienna 1808, vol. 7, no. 101; Rainer SCHOCH, Matthias MENDE, Anna SCHERBAUM (eds.), *Albrecht Dürer. Das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 1: *Kupferstiche, Eisenradierungen und Kaltnadelblätter*, Munich 2001, no. 37. In the different catalogues and essays this engraving is sometimes called »The coat of arms of Death«, sometimes »The coat of arms with a skull«, depending on whether the respective author interpreted the coats of arms as belonging to Death or not. The male person has been identified sometimes as a »wild man«, sometimes as »Death«, or as Death in the person of a wild man. For an overview of the different interpretations of this depiction, see Tobias LEUKER, *Totengedächtnis und Memento Mori. Dürers Wappen des Todes*, in: *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 62 (2001), pp. 325–328, who places this representation of imaginary coats of arms in a concrete context, although a more careful analysis of the heraldic setting may lead to different results.

8 BARTSCH, *Le peintre graveur* (as in no. 7), vol. 7, no. 76; Friedrich W. H. HOLLSTEIN, *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700, Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 1959*, vol. 6, p. 44, no. 69. For more details see Bodo BRINKMANN (ed.), *Cranach der Ältere. Anlässlich der Ausstellung Cranach der Ältere, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, 23. November 2007 bis 17. Februar 2008, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 8. März bis 8. Juni 2008, Ostfildern 2007*, p. 162.

9 As a matter of fact, the various catalogues and authors deal very differently with the fact that the Sacred heart is depicted here on a coat of arms, as it is already shown by the titles given to this engraving, ranging from: »La Vierge, Saint Jean, Saint Laurent, et Saint Roch adorant à genoux le crucifix représenté dans un écusson d'armes que quatre anges soutiennent en l'air« (BARTSCH, *Le peintre graveur* [as in no. 7], vol. 7, no. 76), »The Virgin, St. John, St. Lawrence, and St. Roch with the Arms of the Sacred Heart« (Walter STRAUSS [ed.], *The illustrated Bartsch*, New York 1980, vol. 11, no. 76), to »Four Saints Adoring Christ Crucified on the Sacred Heart« (HOLLSTEIN, *German Engravings* [as in no. 8], vol. 6, no. 69), leaving out the coats of arms altogether. Others, on the other hand, did understand this iconographical arrangement completely differently, i.e. in a very concrete manner, describing it as »Wappen der Bruderschaft des Herzens Jesu, verehrt von Maria, Johannes und den Heiligen Sebastian und Rochus«, thus reading the depicted shield as an actual coat of arms of a supposed confraternity dedicated to the sacred heart, without giving any more details on this (e.g. Heino MAEDEBACH, *Minni GEBHARDT, Lucas Cranach der Ältere 1472–1553. Graphik aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg*, Bielefeld 1972, p. 29, no. 52).

10 Ronald SALZER, *Des Kaisers süße Propaganda. Ein Habsburgerwappenmodell für Festbäckerei aus der Burg Grafendorf in Stockerau, Niederösterreich*, in: Sabine FELGENHAUER-SCHMIEDT et al. (eds.), *Keramik und Technik. Internationale Fachtagung des ÖMG. 43. Internationales Symposium Keramikforschung, Mautern an der Donau, September 2010, Vienna 2011*, pp. 135–144.

princely residences and burgher houses, town halls and taverns as well as churches and abbeys. Finally, as part of the ephemeral decorations, coats of arms also featured in events and rituals such as funerals, joyous entries, tournaments, and feasts<sup>11</sup>. Coats of arms, thus, surrounded medieval and early modern people in almost every aspect of their daily lives.

Considering this omnipresence of heraldry in the late medieval and early modern period, and the multitude of concepts and ideas that were expressed by it, it becomes clear that we are by no means dealing with a marginal phenomenon. To the contrary, in fact, we are confronted with one of the most important and most insightful elements of late medieval communication, the study of which promises to reveal new perspectives and insights into late medieval and early modern culture and society.

## THE STATE OF THE ART

In view of the role played by heraldry in medieval and early modern communication, it is astonishing how little attention historians and art historians have paid to heraldry so far. This is particularly true when it comes to the question of who produced all these heraldic representations and in which way. To historians, coats of arms seem to be a matter best left to the auxiliary sciences and their experts, the heraldists<sup>12</sup>. To art historians, heraldry in any kind of artwork was often, if at all, regarded as a secondary, decorative element which did not seem to warrant any attention in isolation. As a result, both objects of daily use and extraordinary artworks by celebrated artists have been studied only scantily in terms of their heraldic display<sup>13</sup>.

Yet there is much to gain from an emphasis on heraldic depictions in medieval and early modern art and craftsmanship. From the perspective of history, we could learn much more about the functioning of visual communication in different contexts, and its importance in medieval and early modern society. For art history, coats of arms may offer another perspective on artistic production, developments in style, processes of influence, of transfer and entanglement in medieval and early modern art. From the perspective of traditional heraldry, finally, the

---

11 Sometimes even the dessert at royal banquets was decorated with heraldry, see for example Nicolas HARRIS, *A Chronicle of London, from 1089 to 1483*, London 1827, pp. 169–70.

12 Fortunately, this situation is recently about to change, as it is demonstrated also by this very collection of papers. For early examples of these new approaches to medieval heraldry in the perspective of cultural and social history, see the work of Michel Pastoureaux as well as the different contributions made by Werner Paravicini.

13 For the rare efforts taken in this direction, see Ottfried NEUBECKER, *Heraldik zwischen Waffenpraxis und Wappengraphik. Wappenkunst bei Dürer und zu Dürers Zeit*, in: Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg (ed.), *Albrecht Dürers Umwelt. Festschrift zum 500. Geburtstag Albrecht Dürers am 21. Mai 1971*, Nuremberg 1971, pp. 193–219; Robert PARSONS, *The Herald Painters and their Work*, in: *Coat of arms 146* (1989), pp. 34–46, who is taking the perspective of a practitioner but who is also dealing with the situation in the seventeenth century, or the catalogue Edouard BOUYÉ (ed.), *L'art du blason. Exposition du Louvre des antiquaires, 20 octobre 1994–28 février 1995*, Paris 1994. However, that things are changing in art history has recently been demonstrated by the presumably first collection of papers dealing with heraldry from the perspective of art history by Matteo FERRARI (ed.), *L'arme segreta. Araldica e storia dell'arte nel Medioevo (secoli XIII–XV)*, Florence 2015. See also the recent PhD thesis of Anne-Laure CONNESSON, *L'héraldique sculptée à Florence 1400–1530*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Amiens, 2016, as well as the ongoing PhD thesis of Oliver FEARON on »Littering Beasts. The Patronage and Craft Culture of Heraldic Stained Glass in England c. 1300–1540« at the University of York.

evidence of heraldic art and the circumstances of its production can offer new insights into the ways in which heraldic rules developed and how they were acquired, understood and used by different agents at different times.

## THE QUESTION OF »WHO«

At the moment we know little about heraldry and heraldic art, and the ways in which it was used to communicate identity, status, authority, political and social claims and so on; we know even less about how heraldic art was conceived and by whom it was produced. If we want to understand heraldry as a social and cultural phenomenon, it is important to address this topic, since it becomes fundamental to another central question, namely *how* heraldic communication was used and understood. So, the question of *who* was in possession of sufficient heraldic knowledge to incorporate heraldry into art and to communicate by coats of arms, will also expand our insight into the significance of heraldry in medieval and early modern culture and society.

With regard to the more general use and understanding of heraldry in medieval and early modern society, it was demonstrated that it was by no means a matter left entirely to specialists, namely the heralds<sup>14</sup>. Although they may have had particular expertise when it came to heraldry, basic heraldic awareness and heraldic knowledge appears to have been available to large parts of medieval society including, for example, women and townspeople.

The question is now whether this is also true for the conception and production of heraldic art. Who was commissioned with the production of such art? Was it a matter left to a few specialists, or was it an everyday business that any artisan and artist could execute? Was there any particular knowledge that had to be acquired in terms of heraldic depiction? Finally, and most importantly, who was able to conceive of such depictions and arrangements? What did commissions for heraldic display look like, and how were they communicated to the artists?

Such questions have never been addressed before on a broad scale, although they are crucial when it comes to determining the place and importance of heraldic communication in medieval and early modern society. Depending on whether the conception and production of heraldic art was restricted to a small group of specialists, or instead an element of common culture and general knowledge of artists, artisans, and their workshops, we also can gauge the size of the audience of heraldic communication. This information will have a considerable influence on our understanding of the impact of heraldry in medieval and early modern society, and its significance for historical research.

---

14 See the forthcoming article by Torsten HILTMANN. The place of heraldry and heraldic knowledge in medieval and early modern society.



## HERALDS AND HERALDIC WORKS OF ART

In the past, discussions about the abovementioned questions tended to be dominated by an oversimplification of ideas and concepts. The most influential was that heralds must have been involved in all matters of heraldry, and therefore also in the production of heraldic art.

In fact, it still seems to be largely accepted among heraldists – but also among historians – that heraldry almost exclusively was the business of heralds. In introductions to the subject of heraldry it often has been repeated that it was the heralds who were responsible for creating, executing, and granting new coats of arms, and that they jealously guarded these prerogatives and skills<sup>15</sup>.

This notion has been uncritically adopted, for instance, by a large proportion of scholars about armorials and rolls of arms. Many such manuscripts, regardless of whether there is any actual evidence, are believed to have been authored or, at least, supervised by heralds. A famous example is the *Armorial equestre* of the Order of the Golden Fleece, whose authorship has been attributed to a group of heralds under Toison d'or, king of arms of the same order, notwithstanding the fact that there is no evidence whatsoever for this assumption in the manuscript itself<sup>16</sup>. Based on the fact that *some* well-known armorials have been produced by or for heralds – and the erroneous contention that heralds were the sole experts on heraldry – *all* armorials tended to be attributed to heralds.

Admittedly, there are instances in which heralds did indeed hire artists to execute heraldic paintings in manuscripts. An example of this is the sixteenth-century armorial of the imperial herald Hartman Teutschold, who explicitly indicated that he had commissioned someone to copy the coats of arms into the armorial<sup>17</sup>. The reason for a herald to do so might have been quite trivial indeed, as the famous Pierre Choque, known as the Brittany Herald responsible for several accounts of the voyage of Anne de Foix to Hungary and the funeral of Anne de Bretagne, openly admitted. He believed himself to be an *assez mauvais painctre*, that is, quite a bad painter<sup>18</sup>.

However, there are also instances in which armorials or rolls of arms have been conceived by non-heralds, without consulting any herald at all. Their authors or compilers may have been

---

15 See, for instance, Thomas WOODCOCK, John Martin ROBINSON, *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry*, Oxford 1990, p. 14: »Gradually all the leading ruling houses came to have officers of arms or heralds, whose job it was to regulate heraldry and to record arms, [...] they came to exercise supervision over arms, and were called upon to adjudicate in cases of dispute.« In German introductions to heraldry, too, one usually find a chapter dedicated to heralds and their role in heraldry, see for the most recent example Georg SCHEIBELREITER, *Wappen im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 2014, pp. 131–152. Sometimes French introductions are more cautious. They also feature particular chapters on heralds, but with a more careful wording, see for instance GALBREATH, JÉQUIER, *Manuel du blason* (as in no. 2), pp. 57–63, or Michel PASTOUREAU, *Traité d'héraldique*, Paris 2008, pp. 61–62, although the latter limits the influence of heralds on heraldry to the fourteenth and fifteenth century.

16 For this particular case, see Torsten HILTMANN, Who authored the famous Armorial Toison d'Or? Some remarks on the authorship of medieval heraldic texts and collections, in: *Armas e Troféus* 18 (2016), pp. 69–85.

17 *Damit jr aber inn die fußstapffen ewr Voreltern zu tretten / und jren Adlichen Heldenthaten / nach zufolgen / destmer vrsach unnd lust tragen mügend / So hab ich ewr eines yeden / und des gantzen Teutschen Reichs Wappen / Schilt und Helm / vom höchsten an / biß zum nidersten / mit fleiß abmalen lassen* (Hartman TEUTSCHOLD, *Ursprung des rechten löblichen Adels und des Heyligen Römischen Reichs Teütscher Nation*, Nuremberg 1545, fol. B IIIv).

18 Laurent HÉRY, Pierre Choque, héraut et roi d'armes d'Anne de Bretagne, voyageur et écrivain, in: *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Finistère* 141 (2013), pp. 399–414, p. 406.

clerics like Konrad von Mure, Matthew Paris or Gallus Öhem<sup>19</sup>, or members of the urban patriciate such as Conrad Grünenberg<sup>20</sup> and André Ryneck<sup>21</sup>. As a matter of fact, of more than 300 armorials Steen Clemmensen mentions in his »Ordinary of Medieval Armorials«<sup>22</sup> there is evidence for only seventeen that suggests they were actually conceived or executed by heralds. For most of them we have to admit that we have no information about their originators at all. The same holds true for most of the heraldic representations on other kinds of media.

The sheer amount of heraldic artwork alone makes it unlikely that there was always a herald involved in the conception, verification and authorization of such artwork. Furthermore, many heraldic artworks can be found in regions and social contexts where heralds were scarcely known, as for instance in Italian city states, where we find an astonishing number of heraldic artworks – and a remarkable heraldic culture – although heralds did not exist there<sup>23</sup>.

The same holds true for the German cities of the fifteenth century, where there was an abundance of heraldic display but few heralds. Yet, in this urban context, too, we find armorials such as the one by Hans Gossembrot, a patrician of the city of Augsburg, at the end of the fifteenth century. In this armorial, Gossembrot depicted and blazoned the coats of arms of the city's most important patrician and guild families as well as a genealogy of the Gossembrot family. In addition, he also inserted a short treatise into this manuscript, in which Hans Gossembrot explains how heraldry has to be depicted, and how the colour–metal rule should be applied properly<sup>24</sup>. Thus men who were neither heralds nor painters were not only sufficiently skilled to produce an armorial, but also intrigued and knowledgeable enough to write on the subject of heraldry, or at least to copy heraldic texts into their heraldic collections.

That there were also many artists and artisans who conceived of and executed coats of arms without any supervision by heralds is suggested by a comment made by the imperial herald Johannes Francolin. In the foreword to an armorial containing the coats of arms of the house of Austria (c. 1560), Francolin complains about the many faults committed by painters, engravers and other craftsmen in depicting the coats of arms of the emperor and his estates<sup>25</sup>. This malpractice, he complains, brought shame to his office, since the emperor had empowered him and his colleagues to supervise not only royal but any coats of arms. Admittedly we have not found

---

19 Theodor VON LIEBENAU (ed.), Conrad's von Mure *Clipearius Teutonicorum*, in: *Anzeiger für Schweizerische Geschichte* 11 (1880), pp. 229–243. For Matthew Paris as a »heraldist« see Richard VAUGHAN, *Matthew Paris*, London – New York – Melbourne 1979, pp. 250–253, for Gallus Öhem see Harald DRÖS, *Das Wappenbuch des Gallus Öhem*. Neu herausgegeben nach der Handschrift 15 der Universitätsbibliothek Freiburg, Sigmaringen 1994, p. 15.

20 Christof ROLKER, *Konrad Grünenbergs Wappenbuch*. *Acta et agenda*, in: *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 162 (2014), pp. 191–207.

21 Jean-Christophe BLANCHARD, *L'armorial d'André de Rineck* (Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3336), Paris 2008.

22 Steen CLEMMENSEN, *Ordinary of Medieval Armorials*, v. 2.0, published: June 2017, Internet: <http://www.armorial.dk> [accessed 23/06/2017].

23 For examples see the collection of papers by Torsten HILTMANN and Laurent HABLLOT (eds.), *Heraldry in the medieval city. The case of Italy in the European context*, Ostfildern 2018 (forthcoming).

24 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, Cgm. 98, fols. 20r–21v. On the author see Peter GEFFECKEN, *Wappen- und Familienbuch des Hans Gossembrot*, in: Christoph EMMENDÖRFFER, Helmut ZÄH (eds.), *Bürgermacht und Bücherpracht. Augsburger Ehren- und Familienbücher der Renaissance*, Katalogband zur Ausstellung im Maximilianmuseum Augsburg vom 18. März bis 19. Juni 2011, Lucerne 2011, pp. 164–165.

25 Johann VON FRANCOLIN, *Weyland Kayzers Ferdinandi säligster und hochloblichster gedächtnuß unnd dem gantzen hochberühmbten Hauß von Osterreich angehörig Wappen*, Augsburg 1560, fol. 2r.

any evidence so far to the claims he made being founded. Even if, as he said, he and his colleagues may have had some kind of monopoly on the artistic depiction of coats of arms, Francolin's statement does not imply that such an authority of heralds would have been respected at all.

To complete this picture it is worth noting that only a couple of years later a book entitled *Le blason des armoiries* was published in France, which was written by a certain Jérôme de Bara, a stained-glass painter<sup>26</sup> and thus one of the artisans criticised by Johannes Francolin. Yet de Bara, too, felt confident enough in his heraldic expertise to instruct others in the art of blazonry.

## THE ARTISTS AND ARTISANS OF HERALDIC DEPICTIONS

The studies gathered in this collection of papers offer a much more detailed answer to the questions raised above than these few remarks. They confirm what was – until now – nothing more than an assumption; namely that the conception and production of heraldic display was indeed by no means restricted to a select few specialists, but to the contrary it was knowledge available throughout all strata of medieval and early modern society.

In French and Flemish towns we see painters, illuminators, mirror-makers, goldsmiths, and saddlers dealing with heraldic depictions<sup>27</sup>. In some towns, a third of all resident painters can be linked to heraldic work, and in others the number increases to up to three quarters. Sometimes the production of heraldic depictions was left to the apprentice, and sometimes the execution of such works was reserved for the master craftsmen<sup>28</sup>. In any case, heraldic depiction was a skill practiced by a large number of artisans and artists on different levels.

In Italy, there were freelance painters as well as painters in the service of the city that were charged with the production of heraldic depictions. Here we also find quite a few »part-time« painters such as carpenters, butchers, tailors, and, most of all, notaries able to execute heraldic depictions<sup>29</sup>. Notaries in particular had a professional interest and considerable expertise in heraldry<sup>30</sup> which complements the fact that most of treatises on heraldry were written by lawyers<sup>31</sup>. Among these groups of part-time painters, however, we can even find a painter's spouse, herself a chambermaid responsible for the dressing of her lady, who assisted her husband in the making

---

26 Jérôme BARA, *Le blason des armoiries, auquel est monstrée la manière de laquelle les Anciens & Modernes ont vsé en icelles. Traicté, contenant plusieurs Escus différens, par le moyen desquels ont peur discerner les autres, & dresser ou blasonner les Armoiries*, Lyon 1579.

27 See the contribution of Marc GIL, *Peinture d'armoiries, une activité parmi d'autres du peintre médiéval?*, in this volume.

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 48 and 53.

29 See the contribution of Matteo FERRARI, *Au service de la Commune. Identité et culture des peintres héraldistes dans les villes italiennes aux XIIIème–XIVème siècles*, in this volume, p. 69.

30 On notaries, not only as authors of heraldic descriptions but also of heraldic depictions, see also Ruth WOLFF, *Le immagini del potere: Visualizzazioni giuridiche su pergamena e in pietra. Gli stemmi dei podestà di Firenze*, in: FERRARI, *L'arme segreta* (as in no. 13), pp. 207–220.

31 HILTMANN, *The place of heraldry* (as in no. 14).

of heraldic standards and surcoats<sup>32</sup>. There were also distinguished artists like Simone Martini and the della Robbia family who were engaged in the production of heraldic art work<sup>33</sup>.

Whether in England, Flanders, France, Lorraine, Savoy, or Italy, heraldic artwork was carried out by a wide variety of artisans and artists. For some of them it was part of their daily business, for others the execution of heraldic depictions may have provided extra income. Later on, from the fourteenth century onwards, dedicated workshops and companies grew specialised in this line of work, be it as painters, stonemasons, or illuminators for grants of arms<sup>34</sup>.

What did not occur in the contributions made by individuals with skills as varied as that was any kind of restriction concerning the production of heraldic depictions in favour of a certain group of artisans and artists. Nor is there any evidence that such artisans and artists had to obey any kind of authority when carrying out heraldic works – which thoroughly contradicts the claims made by Johannes Francolin above.

Admittedly, not all artists and artisans had the same level of knowledge and expertise in matters of heraldry, and mistakes were inevitable<sup>35</sup>. Nevertheless, there were means to collecting the necessary information. Some of the artists, at least in later times, had armorial manuscripts in their possession<sup>36</sup>, which on some occasions even seemed to be a »must-have« for any »serious« painter<sup>37</sup>. This opens new ways of thinking about the ownership and use of late medieval armorials and their potential function as an intermediary, linking manuscripts with mural paintings as well as other kinds of heraldic depictions. Other artists seem to have used coins as models for their work<sup>38</sup>. When necessary, it was also possible to simply send someone to the next town to get the missing design of an ordered coat of arms<sup>39</sup>.

This brings us to the question of the conception of heraldic depictions and programmes. In late fifteenth-century England, ordinary men and women alike seemed to be capable of conceiving eloquent heraldic programmes, whether by drawing a sketch of the required artwork, or by verbally describing it, for instance in a will<sup>40</sup>. In Italy, we see notaries doing preliminary draw-

---

32 See the contribution of Luisa GENTILE, *Artistes, hérauts et héraldique de part et d'autre des Alpes Occidentales*, in this volume, p. 85.

33 See the contributions of Tanja JONES, *Vivified Heraldry: On Pisanello's Medallion Imagery*, and Alessandro SAVORELLI, *L'héraldique des Della Robbia à Florence entre abstraction gothique et naturalisme de la Renaissance*, in this volume.

34 See the contributions of Anne-Sophie BESSERO-LAGARDE, *Les auteurs des pompes funèbres héraldiques à la Renaissance. Artistes de renom, associations de peintres et ateliers spécialisés*, and Radu LUPESCU, *Heraldic Commissions in an Architectural Context. Case Studies from Transylvania*, and Martin ROLAND, *Medieval Grants of Arms and their Illuminators*, in this volume.

35 FERRARI, *Au service de la Commune* (as in no. 29), p. 73, and GENTILE, *Artistes* (as in no. 32).

36 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

37 BESSERO-LAGARDE, *Les auteurs des pompes* (as in no. 34), p. 188.

38 LUPESCU, *Heraldic Commissions* (as in no. 34), p. 172.

39 Jean-Christophe BLANCHARD, *Georges Gresset, peintre et héraut d'armes des ducs de Lorraine (1523–1559)*, in this volume, p. 223.

40 See the contributions of Andreas ZAJIC, *The Influence of Beneficiaries on the Artistic Make-up of Imperial Grants of Arms or: How Do Heraldic Images Get into Late Medieval Charters?*, and Oliver FEARON, *»As Yt Ys Made«: Gender and Description in Plans for Armorial Displays by the English Gentry c. 1460–1500*, in this volume. For another kind of model for a heraldic representation, this time apparently for the production of a heraldic cushion, see Otfried KRAFFT, *An Armorial Cushion for Count John of Nassau-Saarbrücken as a Knight of the »Ordre du Croissant« of King René of Anjou*, in: *Heraldica nova. Medieval Heraldry in social and cultural-historical perspectives* (blog on Hypotheses.org), published: 16/11/2016, Internet: <https://heraldica.hypotheses.org/5158> [accessed 23/06/2017].

ings with detailed instructions about the colours to be used by professional painters<sup>41</sup>. When it came to the creation of new coats of arms, at least in the Empire, members of the chancellery or even the recipients of grants of arms themselves came up with the heraldic design<sup>42</sup>. There was no such thing as a governing authority regulating heraldry and the way it was depicted. To the contrary, we witness an eventual influence of the artists on the concrete forms of heraldic expression<sup>43</sup>. In some cases, their preoccupation with heraldry may even have provided the artists with new ways of artistic expression<sup>44</sup>.

What becomes evident when reading the essays in this volume is the variety of ways in which heraldry could be used, and the different (and sheer number of) occasions on which to do so. As a study of the account books reveals, about 3,500 coats of arms were painted for the decoration of Louis XII's funeral festivities in 1515<sup>45</sup>, which suggests that heraldry was ubiquitously present at this special occasion and, on a more general level, indicates that heraldry was more important at this time than the already extant evidence that has been preserved materially may insinuate. It seems that heraldry was first of all an ephemeral means of communication used to communicate in a given situation, and it is only the account books and the payments to artisans and artists that allow us to grasp the real prevalence of heraldic communication.

By depicting coats of arms, professional painters and artisans, but also notaries and other part-time heraldic craftspersons, certainly contributed to the development of heraldry. There were many occasions on which heraldic artisans were employed to convey heraldic messages: after a change in power or the reconquest of a city, for instance, when the coat of arms on the city gate had to be changed<sup>46</sup>; before a ducal visit, when it might have been appropriate to purchase new livery<sup>47</sup>; or when it seemed fitting to give the city's town hall a quick heraldic make-over in order to seize a political opportunity<sup>48</sup>. Heraldic communication was an important means of communication and part of daily life, so it needed to rely on a wide range of artisans and artists that could execute heraldic depictions in a wide variety of media for different occasions.

## CONCLUSION

This collection of papers aims to shed light on the conditions and circumstances of the production of heraldic depictions and heraldic artwork for the first time. Who produced artistic representations of heraldry? Who conceived them, who executed them? Did heraldic artwork need dedicated specialists, or was its production part of the everyday business of artists, arti-

---

41 FERRARI, *Au service de la Commune* (as in no. 35), p. 70.

42 ROLAND, *Medieval Grants of Arms* (as in no. 34), and ZAJIC, *On the Influence* (as in no. 40).

43 SAVORELLI, *L'héraldique des Della Robbia* (as in no. 33).

44 JONES, *Vivified Heraldry* (as in no. 33).

45 BESSERO-LAGARDE, *Les auteurs des pompes* (as in no. 34), p. 180.

46 GENTILE, *Artistes* (as in no. 32), p. 85.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

48 FERRARI, *Au service de la Commune* (as in no. 35), p. 68.

sans, and painters? What importance was assigned to these productions, and what heraldic knowledge and culture was necessary to do so?

Covering a wide geographical perspective, spanning from England and France, The Holy Roman Empire and Italy to Transylvania, the contributions to this collection do not only rely on actual works of art such as illuminated manuscripts and charters, stained glass windows, sculptures, medals, and all kinds of paintings to answer these questions. They also include archival documents such as account books and guild statutes, which are even more revealing with regards to those questions than the magnificent products of the artists.

Of course, the findings still need to be placed in their wider contexts, and we ought to be careful when it comes to making generalisations. However, this collection provides an initial enquiry from the joint perspective of history, art history and heraldry into a field of study that has hitherto scarcely been touched upon by scholarship. We are convinced that its initial findings, the analyses of the artists producing heraldic artwork, and the circumstances of these productions have the potential to change our perspective on heraldry and its role in medieval and early modern culture. One can only hope that this will contribute to a change in the perception of heraldry and heraldic sources as a field of research, and unhinge it from outdated beliefs and misconceptions that have, for far too long, restricted the study of heraldry as a medieval and early modern means of communication.