Marshalling Your Art: Martial Sources for Martial Scrolls

**Introduction**

When creating award scrolls, a scribe can make them extra special by tailoring them to both the recipient and the award. This paper will examine a variety of art sources that provide inspiration for martial oriented scrolls. It will focus on scrolls for prowess in Armoured Combat and Fencing, though there will be some suggestions regarding other disciplines. This talk will focus on material from books and manuscripts, though other possible resources will be touched on.

**About Me**

I am Master Albrecht Stampfer. I’m from the Canton of Der Welfengau, which is part of the Barony of Ramshaven, in the Kingdom of Ealdormere (Guelph, Ontario, Canada). I’ve been studying historical fencing, military history and arms and armour for about 30 years, for which I was Laureled in 2016. I joined the Order of Defence in 2019. I currently serve my Canton as Marshal of Fence and Herald. I’ve also had a Compleat Anachronist published which delt with the development of sword hilts from 1450 to 1600. Though I’ve only produced one scroll of my own, I’m the husband of Patrika Asa Gormsdottir. She is the current Kingdom Signet and was also Laureled for her Calligraphy and Illumination work. I’ve assisted her in researching a number of scrolls, including a couple which turned out to be for me. Working with her has given me a great deal of insight into the process of producing award scrolls.

**Martial Awards**

All Kingdoms inn the SCA have awards for prowess in the martial arts. These disciplines currently include armoured combat, archery, thrown weapons, equestrian activities, siege weapons and fencing. There are usually Award of Arms (AOA) level Awards, followed by Grant level awards, followed by Peerages. To use Ealdormere as an example, a person can receive an AOA for martial prowess. There is also the Scarlet Banner, an AOA level Award that covers all disciplines, the Grant level Order of Thorbjorn’s Hammer, and the martial Peerages including the Order of Chivalry and the Order of Defence. As many know, there will soon be a new Peerage that covers archery, thrown weapons, and siege weapons. Some Baronies have their own martial awards, which provide further opportunities to create martial scrolls.

**Manuscript Resources**

In terms of visual resources, there are a number of things that can be used for inspiration for martial scrolls. These include illuminated manuscripts, tapestries, painted frescos, woodcuts, carvings and statuary. Due to time constraints this part of the talk will focus on illuminated manuscripts.

Hand illuminated and calligraphed manuscripts were produced through much of the Middle Ages, with the earliest examples found around the 2nd century CE. They were created throughout Western and Eastern Europe. These manuscripts cover a variety of subjects, including: philosophy, medicine, the Bible, history, military tactics, literature, siege warfare and many more.

On their pages can be found depictions of mass battles (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5793/22150>), skirmishes (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4905/14547>), single combats (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5182/16344>) and individuals (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5758/21538>). There are also images of siege warfare (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4203/13390>), naval warfare (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4053/11462>) and the less savory aspects of warfare, like looting (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4163/7832>) and massacres (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4480/11969>) . You can even find images of warriors fighting with creatures less than human (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5826/22600>) or who are not quite human themselves (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/3984/10986>).

It must also be noted that many of these manuscript pages include images of extreme violence (<https://ica.themorgan.org/manuscript/page/68/158530>), which some people may find less suitable for an award scroll. Then again, some may not.

Many of these images would be suitable as source material for an award for an armoured combatant, though images for archers (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4928/14706>), equestrians (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5182/16319>) and siege weapon users (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4485/11614>) can also be found. Thrown weapons are a bit more challenging though not impossible (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4953/14967>) and something may be found for earlier period fencers, especially those who use sword and buckler (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4548/11193>).

The preceding images, obtained mostly from manuscriptminiatures.com, were from manuscripts created between 800 CE and 1450 CE. As can bee seen, there is quite a bit of variation in the style of artwork, from the fairly simple to the very complex. This is a trend that would continue into the Renaissance, though there were increasing numbers of elaborately illuminated manuscripts. There were also printed books with illustrations produced by woodcut techniques and engraving, a famous example of which is the Triumph of Maximillian I, a fictional triumphal procession published in 1526, with 137 images of various types of soldiers as well as captured enemies, and carts that could only be described as parade floats (<https://thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk/exhibition/the-triumph-of-maximilian-i/>) (<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O675656/triumph-of-the-emperor-maximilian-woodcut-maximilian-i-holy/>).

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triumphal_Procession#/media/File:Brief_History_of_Wood-engraving_Burgkmair_Horsemen.png>

One point of caution in using images from manuscripts, especially in terms of arms and armour. Often the arms and armour depicted are not representative of the events illustrated. For instance a manuscript of the Chroniques de Froissart showing the Battle of Beverhoutsveld (1386) was created in the 15th c. and the arms and armour shown are contemporary with the manuscripts creation ([File:Chroniques de Froissart (15e eeuw) - Slag op het Beverhoutsveld.png - Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chroniques_de_Froissart_(15e_eeuw)_-_Slag_op_het_Beverhoutsveld.png)). It’s unlikely a biblical figure like Goliath wore 14th c. armour (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4665/12658>).

As noted above there are other medieval and Renaissance artworks that are suitable for basing a martial award scroll on. There are tapestries, like the Bayeux and the Pavia Tapestries. There are wall frescos and other paintings like those of the Renaissance Masters. There are carvings and statuary. There are the woodcuts of artists like Albrecht Dürer and Hans Burgkmair. For a slightly more morbid approach, there are funeral effigies. Hopefully these can be addressed when the paper that will stem from this class is completed.

**Resources:**

Manuscript Miniatures:

<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/>

Museums and Libraries with Digitized Manuscripts:

<https://www.illuminatedmanuscripts.org/pages/museums-and-libraries-with-digitized-manuscripts>

**Martial Arts/Fencing Books**

The early 14th c. into the early 17th c. saw the production of a number of works on fighting techniques with various weapons. They were produced all over Western Europe, with the main centres being in the German states of the Holy Roman Empire, Italy and Spain though they were also produced in Flanders, England and France. This talk willfocus on Germany and Italy. Most Spanish fencing manuals have a dearth of illustrations. Many were in manuscript form, hand written and illustrated, produced in very limited numbers as instructional manuals for Judicial Combats, aide memoirs for the students of a particular Master, or sometimes as a “calling card” from a Master to a potential patron. In the late 16th c. into the mid 17th c. there were printed fencing manuals produced, often with woodblock or engraved illustrations.

**Germany**

Germany saw the production of a series of works on thee martial arts known collectively as *Fechtb**üch/**Fechtbücher* One of the earliest complete treatises on fencing was produced in Germany around the end of the 13th c, or into the early 14th c. This is MS I.33, also known as the Tower Fechtbuch, the Royal Armouries Fechtbuch, or the Walpurgis Fechtbuch (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Walpurgis_Fechtbuch_(MS_I.33)#/media/File:MS_I.33_31v.jpg>). MS. I33 contains a series of illustrations of combat with the sword and buckler, with instructive text. The illustrations are very much in the tradition of contemporary Gothic manuscripts, which can make interpreting the actual techniques challenging. Like with many manuals, there is an assumption that the basics of fighting are already understood, and the treatise is for more advanced students.

There are a number of Fechtbuchs which are considered to be part of the Liechtenauer, based on the writings of an early 15th c. fencing Master, Johannes Liechtenauer. His poem or *zettle* became the basis of a number of later Master’s writings, like those of Hans Talhoffer (c. 1448 CE). Talhoffer’s works delt specifically with the fighting of Judicial dules, a violent way of settling a legal issue. His and the other 15th c. Fechtbuchs illustrated armoured combat (harnischfechten) and unarmoured combat (blossfechten). There are depictions of combat of foot and on horseback. A wide variety of techniques with many different weapons are illustrated including: longsword, short sword, sword and buckler, spear, messer, polearm, cudgel, lance, dagger, dueling shield, staff, dussack etc. There are also illustrations of unarmed combat.

Talhoffer produced a number of manuscripts:

(<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_Chart.A.558_058r.jpg>) (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_Chart.A.558_085r.jpg>) (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_78.A.15_54r.jpg>) (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_78.A.15_64v.jpg>) (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_Thott.290.2%C2%BA_073r.jpg>) (<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Hans_Talhoffer#/media/File:MS_Thott.290.2%C2%BA_079v.jpg>)

Talhoffer also had a number of near contemporaries who also produced fechtbuchs. For purposes of this talk, only those that had illustrations are included.

Paulus Kal (late 15th c.)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cgm_1507_53r.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cgm_1507_73r.jpg>

Sigmund ain Ringeck (1508)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_E.1939.65.341_007v.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_E.1939.65.341_019v.jpg>

Peter Falkner (c. 1495)

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ms._KK5012_06r.jpg>

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ms._KK5012_29v.jpg>

Jörg Wilhalm (c. 1522)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.5_20v.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.5_30v.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.I.6.2%C2%BA.2_06v.jpg>

There is also a set of fechtbuchs know by the overall name of Gladitoria, dealing primarily with combat in armour, produced in the 1430’s to 1440’s CE.

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_U860.F46_1450_10v.jpg>

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ms._KK5013_17v.jpg>

Bauman Fechtbuch/Codex Wallenstein (1420’s – 1470’s)

Three fechtbuchs combined by Paulus Hector Meir (C.F.)

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/2/2b/Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.2_011r.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Bauman_Fechtbuch_(Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.2)#/media/File:Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.2_001r.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Bauman_Fechtbuch_(Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.2)#/media/File:Cod.I.6.4%C2%BA.2_097v.jpg>

The website The Wiktenauer has a fairly comprehensive collection of fechtbucher. Many of the treatises listed include more than one fechtbucher, as they were often collected and bound together as a single book.

Over the course of the 16th c. a number of other fechtbucher were created. These books are no longer training manuals for judicial duels, but training aides that the Masters provided to their students as well as to potential patrons.

Some examples include:

The Goliath Fechtbuch (1535-1540)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Germ.Quart.2020_022r.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Germ.Quart.2020_217v.jpg>

The Rast Fechtbuch (c. 1553)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Reichsstadt_%22Sch%C3%A4tze%22_Nr._82_041r.jpg>

Joachim Meyers Fechtbuch (1561)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Bibl._2465_012r.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Bibl._2465_039v.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Bibl._2465_058v.jpg>

Joachim Meyers Fäktbok (c. 1563)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_A.4%C2%BA.2_16v.jpg>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_A.4%C2%BA.2_78r.jpg>

Künnst zu fechten vonn dem Lienhartt Sollinger (1588)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.Guelf.38.21_Aug.2%C2%BA_025v.jpg>

Das Ander Theil Des Newen Kůnstreichen Fechtbůches (1591)

<https://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=mss/83-4-aug-8f&pointer=21>

<https://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=mss/83-4-aug-8f&pointer=177>

Joachim Meyers Gruendtliche Beschreibung der Kunst des Fechtens (1570) (note: this is a printed fechtbuch)

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Meyer_1570_Sword_O.png>

<https://www.wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Meyer_1570_Rapier_E.png>

Paulus Hector Mair’s *Fechtbücher*

Mair was a collector of fencing manuals and commissioned three of his own, which were opulent to say the least. There are some unique images, like those of people fighting using farm implements like sickles, wheat threshers, and scythes. Unfortunately, his lavish lifestyle and love of fechtbucher lead to him being hung for embezzlement of funds from the city of Ausburg.

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Dresd.C.93_024v.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:MS_Dresd.C.93_236r.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.icon._393_I_184v.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/File:Cod.icon._393_I_205r.jpg>

**Italy**

In Italy the earliest manuscripts on the martial arts were produced by Fiore dei Liberi. He produced several editions of the *Flos Duellatorum* (Fior Di Battaglia/The Flower of Battle) in the early 15th c. These were followed, in the late 15th c. by the works of Filippo Vadi, with his *De Arte Gladiatoria Dimicandi*. In the 16th c. there is the rise of the Northern Italian tradition, or Bolognese tradition. Modern practitioners often refer to this style of fence as “cut and thrust” to distinguish it from the later, more thrust oriented schools that employ the rapier. It is characterized by a large number of named *Guardia*,and balance between cutting attacks and thrusting attacks. This school of fence included such masters as Achille Marozzo, Antonio Manciolino, Angelo Viggiani and Giovanni dall'Agocchie. They were active during the 1st half of the 16th c.

There was a move to a more thrust oriented style of fence, starting with Camillo Agrippa (c.1553), and was followed by such masters as Giacomo di Grassi (published 1570), and Vincenzo Saviolo (published 1595). Into the early 17th c. there are a number of other treatises, published by masters like Salvator Fabris, Ridolfo Capoferro, and Francesco Antonio Marcelli. These later fencing manuals, starting with the Bolognese school. would all be printed, using woodcuts or engravings to illustrate them.

Like the German masters, a number of weapons are used, including the longsword, dagger, various polearms, single sword, sword and buckler, and later the rapier, often in combination with secondary weapons and defensive devices like bucklers, shields (*rotella*), cloaks, daggers etc.

**Fiore dei Liberi (*Flos Duellatorum* (Fior Di Battaglia/The Flower of Battle) (c. 1409)**

Fiore dei Liberi was an Italian solider and fencing master (1381-1409 CE). Four manuscript versions of his writings survive. The *Tratt‍ato della sch‍erma* (MS M.383), *Fior di Battaglia* (MS Ludwig XV 13), *Flos Duellatorum* (Pisani Dossi MS), and the *Florius de Arte Luctandi* (MS Latin 11269).

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/9/9c/MS_M.383_11r.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/3/37/MS_M.383_14v.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Flos_Duellatorum_(Pisani_Dossi_MS)#/media/File:Pisani-Dossi_MS_07b.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/4/4e/Pisani-Dossi_MS_35b.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/f/f2/MS_Ludwig_XV_13_20v.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/c/c5/MS_Latin_11269_27v.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/d/d4/MS_Latin_11269_36v.jpg>

**Filippo Vadi (*De Arte Gladiatoria Dimicandi*) (1482-1487**)

Vadi’s work is similar to that of Fiore, very likely influenced by it, but it does add material beyond Fiore’s.

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/f/fc/Cod.1324_16r.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/5/5a/Cod.1324_23v.png>

**Bolognese School**

**Achille Marozzo (*Opera Nova*) (1536)**

Marozzo was part of the Bolognese school, and his manual was reprinted a number of times, well into the 17th c.

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Achille_Marozzo#/media/File:Marozzo_4.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/4/40/Marozzo_5.png>

**Contemporaries of Marozzo**

**Antonio Manciolino (*Opera Nova*)(1531)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/7/7a/Manciolino_4.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/images/2/2a/Manciolino_7.jpg>

**Angelo Viggiani dal Montone (*Lo Schermo*) (Published posthumously 1575)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Lo_Schermo_(Angelo_Viggiani)#/media/File:Lo_Schermo_(Angelo_Viggiani)_67r_detail.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Lo_Schermo_(Angelo_Viggiani)#/media/File:Lo_Schermo_(Angelo_Viggiani)_72v_detail.jpg>

**Other Italian Masters**

**Camillo Agrippa (*Trattato di Scientia d'Arme, con vn Dialogo di Filosofia*)(1553)**

Agrippa was a polymath and engineer who wanted to take a different approach to the Art of Defence. His was a more scientific approach, simplifying the multiple Guardia of the Bolognese school down to four, and emphasizing the thrust as the primary form of attack. Also, the figures in his treatise are nude, so they may not be for everyone. There are some clothed figures in antique costume.

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Trattato_di_Scientia_d%27Arme,_con_vn_Dialogo_di_Filosofia_(Camillo_Agrippa)#/media/File:Agrippa_1553_07.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Trattato_di_Scientia_d%27Arme,_con_vn_Dialogo_di_Filosofia_(Camillo_Agrippa)#/media/File:Agrippa_1553_34.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Trattato_di_Scientia_d%27Arme,_con_vn_Dialogo_di_Filosofia_(Camillo_Agrippa)#/media/File:Agrippa_1553_51.jpg>

**Giacomo di Grassi (*Ragione di adoprar sicuramente l'Arme*)(1570/1594)**

Translated into English and published as The True Arte of Defence (1594)

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Giacomo_di_Grassi#/media/File:Di_Grassi_10.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Giacomo_di_Grassi#/media/File:Di_Grassi_14.jpg>

**Federico Ghisliero (*Regole di molti cavagliereschi essercitii*) (1587)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Federico_Ghisliero#/media/File:Ghisliero_25.jpg>

**Vincentio Saviolo (His Practise, in Two Bookes)(1595**)

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Vincentio_Saviolo#/media/File:Saviolo_1.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Vincentio_Saviolo#/media/File:Saviolo_4.jpg>

**Early 17th Century Masters**

These masters are included, because, though the published in the early 17th c., their skills and teaching were developed during the late 16th c.

**Nicoletto Giganti (*Scola, overo teatro/ Libro secondo di Niccoletto Giganti*)(1606/1608)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Nicoletto_Giganti#/media/File:Giganti_02.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Nicoletto_Giganti#/media/File:Giganti_12.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Nicoletto_Giganti#/media/File:Giganti_1608_06.png>

**Salvator Fabris (Scienza d’Arme) (1601-06)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Salvator_Fabris#/media/File:GKS_1868_1_detail_05.jpg>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Salvator_Fabris#/media/File:Scienza_d%E2%80%99Arme_(Fabris)_002.jpg>

Camillo Palladini (*Discorso sopra l’arte della Scherma*)(c. 1609)

<https://wallacecollectionshop.org/cdn/shop/products/Middle_360x.jpg?v=1571233896>

**Ridolfo Capo Ferro da Cagli (*Gran Simulacro dell'Arte e dell'Uso della Scherma*) (1610)**

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Gran_Simulacro_dell%27Arte_e_dell%27Uso_della_Scherma_(Ridolfo_Capo_Ferro_da_Cagli)#/media/File:Capo_Ferro_08.png>

<https://wiktenauer.com/wiki/Gran_Simulacro_dell%27Arte_e_dell%27Uso_della_Scherma_(Ridolfo_Capo_Ferro_da_Cagli)#/media/File:Capo_Ferro_37.png>

Using Martial Resources

As can be seen, there a lot of resources that can be used to produce martial scrolls. When looking at creating a martial scroll it is important to have an understanding of the recipient. What is their martial discipline? What is their culture and time period? The production of award scrolls is a secretive one in the SCA, as for the most part, we don’t want the recipient to know they are getting an award. A scribe may be familiar with the recipient, but there are other resources available, especially through things like social media feeds. The Crown may also have some insights into the recipient.

There are a variety of styles used in both the manuscripts and the fencing books, from the fairly simple, to the quite complex. When selecting a source as an inspiration for an award scroll, a scribe has a lot of options, and can choose a style that matches with their artistic talents.

In reproducing these images, the scribe can use various techniques. The images can be modified, colour schemes can be changed to incorporate those of the recipient. Heraldic devices can be incorporated into the scroll, on shields and banners. Tracing an image using transfer paper or a light box is perfectly acceptable, and something in all likelihood that was done in period.

Again, this talk has focused on book sources, but there are many more sources of art in period that portray martial images. Tapestries, frescos, paintings, woodcuts, carvings, and statuary all have potential for use is martial scrolls. Then there are extant objects, like the weapons used during a particular time period. Things like sword, shields, axes, polearms, rapiers, daggers can be used in the creation of award scrolls.

It is hoped that an expanded version of this talk will be completed as a research paper, exploring not on book sources, but the other sources mentioned above.