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### **The idea of imitation to the heroes in the XVI century European armor decoration**

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*It is considered the XVI century European armor decoration reflecting the tendency of the knights to imitate their ancient predecessors. Imitation was one of the essential parts of knights' life. The armor, being the second body of its owner, allowed creating an ideal image of a hero of the past ages. The cult of heroes is reflected in the decoration of Brunswick armor of the middle of the XVI century. The image of Nine Worthies appearing in the armor decoration represents the legend that is the brightest embodiment of heroes' veneration in Medieval and Renaissance culture. The symbolism of the Italian heroic armor of the XVI century contains, in most cases, an allusion to a mythological hero or represents a more complicated and elaborated image inspired by inscriptions of the protagonist's armor in the chivalric novels. The Italian armor simulated an antic one and evoked allusion to the Roman emperors, creating a heroic image of its owner.*

**Keywords:** XVI century armor decoration, XVI century Italian armor, XVI century German armor, Nine Worthies, heroic armor, Brunswick armor

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