

This past week I finished reading sources about the print history of the emblem and Alciato's role in its conception (Henry Green and John Manning). I familiarized myself with the historical context of Italy during the sixteenth century in Kaborycha's *A Short History of Renaissance Italy* and Duggan's *A Concise History of Italy*. I also read Peter Daly's *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe* and began looking for classical and contemporary allusions in Alciato's *Emblemata*.

In one chapter of Daly's work, "Recent Contributions to Emblem Theory," he provides a historiography of emblem scholarship; since this work was published in 2014, his observations were helpful and recent. In his chapter on "Mnemonics and Emblems" (87), Daly questions the relationship between the art of memory and emblematics. Our approaches to this topic differ, however. Daly draws upon Frances Yates's idea of personification as a memory device; he then traces instances of personification in early modern emblems, including Alciato's work. Based on these instances of personification, Daly seems skeptical about the relationship between emblems and mnemonics. My approach differs from Daly's own understanding of mnemonics; I have been focusing on the use of space in emblems and how it relates to the architectural memory systems, which Daly does not trace throughout any of the emblems that he mentions. Daly also cites Mary Carruthers and Lina Bolzoni. As I read this chapter, I also began to question *why* mnemonics and emblematics seem related: is this relationship causal (in which case it would be necessary to prove that Alciato actually knew about and used the art of memory) or do both mnemonics and emblematics use space and spatial metaphors—perhaps unintentionally—for similar reasons? When Daly examines the relationship between emblematics and the art of memory, he places more importance upon the former idea. Even if no evidence exists to support a causal relationship between emblematics and the art of memory, I still think it is significant that both use similar rhetorical strategies.

I also finished reading John Manning's *The Emblem*. In one chapter, he discusses the use of emblems in celebrations and festivities (Chapter Six: Fame's Double Trumpet). Although these emblems were a part of material culture; he argues that they were "ephemeral" because the celebrations only lasted for a short time, and these emblems served "as a permanent record of what would have otherwise been lost" (186). I am really interested in this idea because the emblems seem to serve as memory devices, encouraging the viewer to remember the past events. Manning also argues that, since festivals often commemorated an individual—whether human or saintly—the emblems were dedicated to one "ideal reader" or "ideal spectator" (Manning, 185). Peter Daly also discusses the use of emblems in material culture. Just as Alciato originally created his emblems for his circle of educated humanists, I'm wondering who would have seen—and understood—the emblems within material culture. Were the emblems easily visible in public spaces, or were they only visible to select, privileged groups? In addition to seeing these emblems, who would have understood them? I also read an article ("Architecture and Emblematics: Issues in Interpretation," by Judi Loach) that addresses the spatial difference between printed books and three dimensional buildings.

In addition to this spatial memory, I have also been thinking more about temporal memory in *Emblemata* through the allusions to Alciato's classical education and contemporary life; these allusions certainly represent one form of temporal memory within the text. In his work on emblem theory, Peter Daly also mentions the conflict between understanding the author's intentions and the reader's response to the emblem. Readers, he claims, each approach an emblem with their own

individual memory of texts/experiences that will then their interpretation of the emblem. On one hand, the allusions suggest a form of collective memory; many educated humanists would have understood these references to classical sources and contemporary life. Each reader's individual memory, however, also influences his or her experience while reading. According to Daly's interpretation, the reader's memory influences his or her own understanding of an emblem. The emblem as a memory device reverses this role, impressing new information onto the reader.

Finally, I started looking at allusions within *Emblemata*. I am particularly interested in Emblems 1, 2, 3, 10 and the group of emblems from 142-148. The first three emblems specifically describe Alciato's life or the city of Milan, and Alciato dedicates emblems 1 and 10 to Maximilian Sforza, the Duke of Milan. The dedications as memory devices seem similar to the emblematic festivals and processions in material culture; both printed and material emblems are dedicated to one ideal reader or spectator. Emblems 142-148 also contain references to Alciato's contemporary life—Emblem 142's *inscriptio* is very blatantly titled "Albutius convincing Alciati to leave behind the chaos in Italy and to teach in France"—and several other emblems also allude to Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Emblem 144, for example, is a dialogue "About the senate of the good prince" and Emblem 143 describes "The prince who attends to the security of his subjects."

Bibliography

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