Visual Languages of the Renaissance: Emblems, Dreams, Hieroglyphs.

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ITAL-UA 760/MEDI-UA 760/
Spring 2015 - Thur 12:30PM-3:00PM
Casa Italiana, Library (2nd floor).

Office and office hours: Casa Italiana, 4th floor, Tue 3:30-4:30 or by appt.
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Making knowledge visible was one of the great Renaissance endeavors. Some of the period's most characteristic products were born out of the conviction that concepts could be systematically turned into images — and that such images could be organized into a visual language, more profound and universal than discursive logic. Egyptian hieroglyphs and dream visions, in their mysterious graphic exuberance, were considered typical vehicles of this advanced mode of communication. The desire to emulate their symbolic density is reflected both in literature and in art, often in ways that challenge common distinctions between visual and verbal communication. In this course you will be introduced to an assortment of works representative of such interplay between text and image: emblem books, dream books and dream-centered works, hieroglyphic inventions and studies, collections of proverbs, iconology manuals, etc. Among the books examined are some widely considered as the finest examples of design in the history of printing. Early modern and recent theory of emblems will also be discussed. As a present-day counterpart of Renaissance emblems, the course will conclude with a survey of corporate logos and Russian criminal tattoos.

Course materials
- Required course readings are either posted on nyu classes in advance of due date or accessible online through nyu libraries (links are provided in the bibliography below).

Additional notes
- Grade: response papers 20%, midterm exam 25%, final 8pp. paper 35%, class participation 20%.
- Attendance at every lecture and section is mandatory. More than two missed lectures will result in a decreased participation grade.
- Papers must include a bibliography and at least parenthetical citation to any author cited or used as a source of argument and/or information. Please review the university's policy on plagiarism, as it will be strictly enforced.
- Students must submit their paper draft by Tuesday, April 22 and their final paper by Tuesday, May 6. Late submissions will negatively impact the grade.
Week 1  Introduction - Hieroglyphs and the rediscovery of Horapollo
Horapollo, Hieroglypica
Boas 1993 (Hieroglyphics of Horapollo)
Weiss 1969 (The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity)
Allen 1970 (Mysteriously Meant)

Week 2  The Myth of Egypt in the Renaissance
Andrea Mantegna, Triumphs of Caesar
Albrecht Dürer, Ehrenpforte
Lorenzo Lotto, Choir of S. Maria Maggiore in Bergamo
Dempsey 2000 (Renaissance Hieroglyphic Studies: an Overview)
Iversen 1993 (The myth of Egypt and its hieroglyphs in European tradition)

Week 3  Andrea Alciato's Book of Emblems
Andrea Alciato, Emblematum Liber
Daly 1989 (Andrea Alciato and the Emblem Tradition)
Russel 1986 (Emblems and Hieroglyphics)
Tung 2012 (Alciato's Practices of Imitation)

Week 4  XVIIIth Century Emblem Books
Geoffroy Tory, Chantfleury
Geoffrey Withney, Choice of Emblems
Girolamo Ruscelli, Le Imprese Illustri
Daly 2000 (Sixteenth-Century Emblems and Imprese as Indicators of Cultural Change)
Calabritto 2007 (Women's Imprese in Girolamo Ruscelli)

Week 5  Ancient and Early Modern Dream Theory
Synesius of Cyrene, On Dreams
Marsilio Ficino, Platonic Theology.
Schreier-Rupprecht 1993 (A Renaissance Contribution to the History of Dream)
Schmidt-Biggemann 2007 (A Short History of Imagination)

Week 6  Dream Interpretation / Dream Representation
Artemidorus, Oneirocritica
Leo Helbraeus, Dialogues of Love
Gerolamo Cardano, The Book of my Life
Ruvoldt 2004 (The Sleep of Reason)
MacPhail 1995 (Prophecy and Memory in Renaissance Dream Vision)

Week 7  A Venetian Dream-Hieroglyph: Colonna's Hypnerotomachia
Greenhalg 1974 (The Monument in the Hypnerotomachia and the Pyramids of Egypt)
Curran 1998 (The Hypnerotomachia Poliphili and Renaissance Egyptology)
De Girolami Cheney 2007 (Colonna's Hypnerotomachia: A Garden of Neoplatonic Love)
Midterm Exam

Week 8  March 16- March 23 Spring Recess

Week 9  Hieroglyphic Erudition: Valeriano and Kircher
Pierio Valeriano, Hieroglyphica
Athanasius Kirchner, Oedipus Aegyptiacus
Curran 2007 (Hieroglyphic Studies in the High Renaissance)
Stolzenberg 2013 (Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity)

**Week 10**  
**XVIIth Century Imprese**  
Paolo Giovio, Dialogo delle Imprese  
Daly 1998 (Literature in the Light of the Emblem)  
Maffei 2007 (Giovio's Dialogo and the Museum)  
Caldwell 2007 (The Sixteenth-Century Italian Impresa in Theory and Practice)

**Week 11**  
**Handbooks of Allegories**  
Cesare Ripa, Iconologia  
Achille Bocchi, Symbolicarum Quaestionum De Universo Genere  
Seznec 1995 (Chapter V: The Influence of the Manuals)  
Watson 1996 (Achille Bocchi and the Emblem Book As Symbolic Form)

**Week 12**  
**Devotional Emblem Books**  
Jacob Bosch, Symbolographia  
Hermann Hugo, Pia Desideria  
Jeremias Drexel, Aeternitatis Prodromus  
Dimler 2007 (Studies in the Jesuit Emblem)  
Daly 2014 (Jesuit Emblems)  
**Final paper draft due**

**Week 13**  
**The Proverb as Hieroglyph: Erasmus**  
Desiderius Erasmus, Adagia  
Callahan 1995 (Erasmus's Adages)  
Margolin 1995 (Alciato, a Champion of Humanism in the Eyes of Erasmus)

**Week 14**  
**Literature in the Age of Emblems: Bruno and Marino**  
Bruno, Heroic Frenzies  
Marino, Adonis  
Yates 1982 (The Emblematic Conceit in Bruno's De Gli Eroici Furori)  
Maggi 2007 ('L'uomo astratto'. Philosophy and Emblematic Rhetoric in the Furori)  
Caruso 2013 (Marino's Adone: From Pastoral to Epic Poem)

**Week 15**  
**Logos and Tattoos as Emblems.**  
Russian Criminal Tattoo Encyclopedia  
Daly 2008 (The Nachleben of the Emblem in Some Modern Logos)  
Möderheim 2001 (Emblematics and Modern Tattoos)  
**Final paper due in class**

**Bibliography**


Daly, Peter M. *Emblem Theory: Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem-Genre*. Nendeln (Liechtenstein), 1979.


**Web Resources / Digitization Projects**

*OpenEmblem* initiative (University of Illinois): [http://media.library.uiuc.edu/projects/oebp/](http://media.library.uiuc.edu/projects/oebp/)

Memorial University of Newfoundland Alciato: [http://www.mun.ca/alciato/](http://www.mun.ca/alciato/)

Glasgow University Emblem Website: [http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/](http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/)

Glasgow Centre for Emblem digitisation: [http://www.ces.arts.gla.ac.uk/html/AHRBProject.htm](http://www.ces.arts.gla.ac.uk/html/AHRBProject.htm)


University of Bergamo, Biblioteca Emblematica: [http://dinamico.unibg.it/cav/emblematica/login.htm](http://dinamico.unibg.it/cav/emblematica/login.htm)