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## **The Jesuit Emblem in the European Context, written by Peter M. Daly and G. Richard Dimler, S.J.**

[Walter S Melion](#), *Emory University*

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**Journal Title:** Journal of Jesuit Studies

**Volume:** Volume 4, Number 3

**Publisher:** Brill | 2017-06-01, Pages 473-483

**Type of Work:** Article | Final Publisher PDF

**Publisher DOI:** 10.1163/22141332-00403006

**Permanent URL:** <http://pid.emory.edu/ark:/25593/wb7sg>

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Final published version: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00403006>

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*Accessed April 26, 2025 2:55 AM EDT*

## *Book Review Essays*



**Peter M. Daly and G. Richard Dimler, S.J.**

*The Jesuit Emblem in the European Context.* Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 14. Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2016. Pp. 468, 23 ills. Hb, \$70.

Conceived as a supplement to the authors' magnum opus, *Corpus Librorum Emblematum: The Jesuit Series* (Part One. Montreal: McGill – Queen's University Press, 1997; Parts Two to Five. Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2000–7), this important book is largely bibliographic in form and function. It derives from that great Jesuit compendium, Augustine and Aloys de Backer, S.J. and Carlos Sommervogel, S.J.'s *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, issued in nine volumes between 1890 and 1932, and updated by Ernest Rivière, S.J., in 1960. Focusing exclusively on emblematic works, Daly and Dimler have anglicized De Backer and Sommervogel's French terminology, clarified authorship and place of publication, differentiated amongst first editions, reprints, and revisions, indicated on the basis of first-hand perusal, wherever possible, whether the works in question contain illustrations, and finally, identified books that appear in DBS but are currently untraceable or inaccessible. The six introductory chapters—on the European production of emblems as a context for Jesuit emblem-making, on the *Ratio studiorum* as a defense of emblematic usage, on Jesuit image theory as it relates to the symbolic forms and functions of the emblem, on the order's major emblematic publications, on its application of emblems in art, architecture, and pageantry, and on the chief functions of Jesuit emblems and emblem books—constitute well-informed summaries of the scholarly literature on these various topics. The thematic chapters lead to a series of seven superb appendices. The first distinguishes between two loci of production: Jesuit provinces, such as the Flemish-Belgian and the Gallo-Belgian, and Jesuit assistancies, the larger administrative groupings, such as the assistancies of Portugal and Spain, that often encompassed far-flung, indeed worldwide territories. There follow six further appendices that briefly describe, author by author and college by college, the major emblem books

and emblematic publications composed and/or produced within the assistancies of France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Spain, respectively. In every case, the authors quote the entry number from *The Jesuit Series*, wherein the items are more fully catalogued and also classified according to function. This nuanced classification system, consisting of eighty-eight categories—forty-four for individual authors, forty-four for institutional authors—underlies the discussion of emblem books throughout *The Jesuit Emblem in the European Context*.

Like other bibliographic publications, *The Jesuit Emblem* is data-driven: for example, Daly and Dimler offer several criteria for determining or, better, “calibrating” (5) the significance of the books they have examined. The total number of copies issued is one such factor: whereas one hundred to five hundred copies may have been normative, the famed Antwerp publisher Christopher Plantin and his successors Balthasar and Jan Moretus marketed print runs of about a thousand; at the other end of the scale were the first and second editions of Francis Quarles’s *Emblems*, the former numbering two thousand copies, the latter three thousand to four thousand, and the virtually innumerable Munich editions of Jeremias Drexel, S.J.’s emblem books—*Zodiacus Christianus*, *Horologium*, *Considerationes aeternitatis*, *Heliotropium*, *Trismegistus*, et alii—which Daly and Dimler estimate at well over a million and a half. By applying other sorts of criteria, more formal than circumstantial, they subdivide Jesuit emblem books into six main types: namely, books containing three-part emblems (*inscriptio*, *pictura*, *subscriptio*, viz., motto, pictorial image, and epigram); books without pictures, in which the images are evoked by purely verbal means; books with more than three parts, including corollary texts such as prose commentaries; books that argue their case with emblems—meditative treatises, for instance—but strictly speaking, are not emblem books; theoretical treatises on emblems and other kinds of symbolic image; and books that reveal how emblems were used “in the material culture” (12), such as the lavish volumes commemorating princely entries or canonization ceremonies.

Related to the systematization of types, the application of another set of criteria, more methodological than historiographical, primarily serves to impose order on the bibliographic material being catalogued. Amongst the most important such criteria are the three principal reasons given by Daly and Dimler for excluding certain kinds of emblem book from consideration: when the *picturae* (pictures) appear merely to illustrate biblical events or episodes from the lives of saints, and symbolic elements are conspicuously absent; when the book consists of poetic epigrams but contains neither pictures nor verbal descriptions of images; when the book includes no more than three emblematic images, either pictorial or verbal. Daly and Dimler frequently ruminate on these and

other criteria since their book is more taxonomic than interpretative, and consequently, the nature of their project requires them to be explicit about which works they have included and why, and what principles of organization they have applied and to what ends. The authors undoubtedly had good grounds for selecting these rules of proceeding, but they make little or no attempt to justify them, even though criterion one in particular leads to the virtual exclusion of what is arguably the order's most important "proto-emblematic" publication, Jerónimo Nadal, S.J.'s *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (ed. prin. of the 153 engravings without the accompanying annotations and meditations: Antwerp: Society of Jesus, 1593; ed. prin. of the 153 engravings with Nadal's full text: Antwerp: Martinus Nutius, 1595; and ed. ult.: Antwerp: Johannes Moretus, 1607). Nadal is mentioned at several points in the opening chapters of *The Jesuit Emblem in the European Context*, though only briefly, and the Flemish-Belgian subsection of Appendix 3 on the Assistancy of Germany begins with the following disclaimer: "The vast majority of all Jesuit publications is concerned with the religious life of Catholics. They are thus spiritual and devotional in nature. The earliest emblematic publication, 1593, by a Jesuit in this region is by a member of another province: Jerónimo Nadal" (256). The importance of Nadal's book thus barely registers, and yet its scriptural images, embedded as they are within an elaborate emblematic framework, and the book's relatively wide circulation, would have made it a touchstone for any Jesuit interested in composing or interpreting biblical emblems.

The *Adnotationes et meditationes*, as is well known, consists of 153 folio-size engravings illustrating events chronicled in the liturgical Gospels; organized as *itineraria* (itineraries), the engraved images anchor several species of corollary text—*adnotatiunculae* (captions), biblical pericopes, *adnotationes* (annotations), and *meditationes* (meditations)—that operate emblematically, in the sense that image and texts are relational, designed to be seen and read complementarily. Nadal's complex visual-verbal apparatus can be situated in a lineage from the first Catholic scriptural emblem book, Benito Arias Montano's *Humanae salutis monumenta* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1571), in which the seventy-one emblems consist of *picturae* illustrating scenes from the Old and New Testaments, each bracketed by three species of what Arias Montano calls "architectonic" texts—mottoes above, dedications and epigrammatic distichs below. In addition, each picture attaches to an Horatian ode printed on the facing page. Like the *Humanae salutis monumenta*, the *Adnotationes et meditationes* is replete with reflections on the nature of sacred images, on their meditative and exegetical functions, and on their relation to the mystery of the Incarnation—construed as the coming forth of Christ, the *imago Dei*, in a form humanly discernible and representable. Since Nadal's book was required

reading for Jesuit scholastics, and taught them to approach the Gospels in a manner jointly exegetical and emblematic, its significance in this context can hardly be overstated.

Other early Jesuit emblematisers active in the *Provincia Belgica* (subdivided into the *Provincia Flandro-Belgica* and *Provincia Gallo-Belgica* in 1612), such as the illustrious Jan David, one of the order's most astute image-theorists, could have been featured more prominently in *The Jesuit Emblem in the European Context*. Given the recent efflorescence of scholarship on David, evinced by the detailed entries in Dirk Imhof's *Jan Moretus and the Continuation of the Plantin Press: A Bibliography of the Works Published and Printed by Jan Moretus I in Antwerp (1589–1610)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), consequential articles by Ludger Lieb (1999) and Werner Waterschoot (1999 & 2007), and my own essays in three edited volumes, *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in Northern Europe, 1400–1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), *Ut pictura meditatio: The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), and *Jesuit Image Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), it seems warranted to digress on David's emblemata, thereby to argue that he deserved pride of place in Daly and Dimler's book. No fellow Jesuit produced this many emblem books at such an early date, and in fact, David may credibly be designated the order's first major emblematiser.

In the prefaces and dedications of David's four emblem books—*Veridicus Christianus* (*The True Christian*, ed. prin., 1601), *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* (*Occasion Seized, Shirked*, ed. prin., 1605), *Paradisus sponsi et sponsae et Pancarpium Marianum* (*Paradise of the Bridegroom and Bride, and Marian Garland*, ed. prin., 1607), and *Duodecim specula* (*Twelve Mirrors*, ed. prin., 1610)—as also in many of the emblems proper, David propounds a general *doctrina imaginis* that construes sacred images as key instruments of spiritual reflection, instruction, and renewal. Most explicitly, in the *Veridicus Christianus*, he characterizes meditative prayer—the process his emblems are designed to facilitate—as a method of fixing the *imago Christi* within the votary's mind, heart, and spirit. Just as a skillful painter diligently strives to express after the life (*ad vivum*) whatever he judges worthy of imitation, so a true Christian (*veridicus Christianus*) must steadfastly endeavor to portray within himself the life and teachings of Christ, thereby the better to imitate them, as if they had actually been seen, heard, and recorded *ad vivum*. Christ Jesus must be impressed so indelibly that the votary's soul is itself re-formed in the image of Christ (“donec in ipso formetur Christus”). Emblematic images, in concert with their attendant spiritual exercises, are the chief means to this end: the act of painting (or engraving) is made to stand for the act of portraying Christ by means of emblems that implicitly analogize the soul to a panel painting (or a copperplate engraving) capable of containing the image of Christ. The prevalence of this master trope

surely explains David's preference for emblematic images whose protagonists are shown interacting with painted or sculpted images of Christ: the image within the image alludes to the votary's effort to visualize his soul as a picture subsuming within itself the image of Christ.

But if this general notion or, better, doctrine of the image can be seen to operate in all four of David's emblem books, it is no less true that his emblematic images, in their specific form, function, and argument, vary from book to book. In the *Veridicus Christianus*, David utilizes the pictorial images as exact equivalents to the verbal images with which he punctuates his catechetical arguments: both types of image are meant inexpugnably to impress the key principles of the Christian life and faith. The *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* explores a different paradigm of the emblematic image: as David points out in his "Preface to the Reader," the book's twelve emblems originate in the conversion of a pagan idol—the winged and changeable goddess Occasio, famously portrayed by Phidias and described by Ausonius—into a prosopopoeic device capable of carrying a Christian meaning. Moreover, David employs the term *schemata* (figurative images) to designate the emblematic *picturae*, thus emphasizing that the personifications are being used as figures rather than idols. They are inserted into narrative situations that David likens to episodes from a theatrical *spel van sinne*, a dramatized argument enacted by allegorical characters known as *sinnekens*. The *Paradisus sponsi et sponsae et Pancarpium Marianum* introduces yet another emblematic format, the fabric of which is robustly intertextual. Fifty emblematic images of the Virgin's virtues (the *Pancarpium*) are embedded within a framing series of fifty emblematic images of the Passion (the *Messis*). David's final emblem book, the *Duodecim specula*, explores a single motif—the mirror—the form and function of which are varied as one progresses through a sequence of twelve emblems. The *picturae* that preface the book's twelve long chapters depict various kinds and degrees of specular image, starting with the Everyday Mirror ("speculum commune"), manufactured by "human artifice" ("artis opus"), the surface of which philosophers consult in their efforts to reveal human character, and ending with the Mirror of Beatific Vision ("speculum visionis beatificae"), in whose images the "cutting edge of the mind" ("acies mentis") glimpses the radiance of divinity ("divinum iubar").

Many of David's emblems are reflexive in form and function, in that they incorporate allusions to emblem-making. Take emblem 1 of the *Veridicus Christianus*: the *pictura* incorporates the image of an emblem book—symbol on the left folio, motto on the right—as if to emphasize that the *Veridicus Christianus*, if properly consulted, shall function as a source of wisdom and a hinge between the God-fearing faith it counsels us to embrace (positively exemplified

by Moses) and the obstinate passions it admonishes us to eschew (negatively exemplified by the purblind ass and fearful Israelites) [Fig. 1]. This is why it makes sense to think about David, who also wrote a defense of the Catholic cult of images, *Vry-gheleydt tot ontlastinghe van conscientie om de Cathollicke kercken beelden, ende Godtsdients te gaen bekiicken* (*Free Conduct for the Unburdening of Conscience in Observation of the Catholic Church's Images and Liturgy*, Antwerp: Ioachim Trognesium, 1609), as one of the order's most original and inventive image-theorists [Fig. 2]. His prolific output, theoretical sophistication, and exploration of the emblem's multifarious functions—catechetical, pedagogical, performative, exegetical, and spiritual—would easily justify more extensive treatment in Daly and Dimler's chapters "The Jesuit Theory of Symbology," "The Major Jesuit Emblematic Books," and "Purposes Served by Jesuits Using Emblematic Forms."

Nadal and David aside, the authors' summaries of the state of the question with regard to Jesuit symbology are consistently thorough and often acute, especially the digests of the scholarship on Silvestro Pietrasanta, Nicolas Caussin, Jacob Masen, and Claude-François Ménestrier. Although Daly and Dimler often simply rehearse, rather than attempting to reconcile, differences of opinion, they never fail expertly to distill the emblematicists' theoretical positions and to examine them in light of the major conclusions reached by the various scholars consulted. On Caussin's *De symbolica Aegyptiorum sapientia* (Paris: Romain de Beauvais, 1618), in addition to sorting out the vagaries of the book's various editions, they cite Ralph Dekoninck's important insight that Caussin construes the symbolic image as a rhetorical figure, and conversely, treats image-based rhetorical figures as if they were fully emblematic in form and function. The moral value of emblems thus resides in the truths they encode visually by means of figurative images. On Pietrasanta's *De symbolis heroicis libri IX* (Antwerp: Balthasar Moretus, 1634), they rightly point out that he accentuates the importance of the visual component and underplays that of the *inscriptiones*: the image, in both emblems and *impresae*, produces a plethora of meanings which the inscriptions serve primarily to delimit and clarify; the *similitudo*—visual analogy—generative of the emblematic argument may utilize a lemma, motto, or more extensive subscription to elaborate upon this fundamental analogy, usually by means of comparative figures such as simile and metaphor, but the burden of moral instruction is mainly carried by the "pleasing depiction of a real or imaginary subject" (63). Daly and Dimler also usefully observe that Pietrasanta tends to conflate his analyses of the emblem and the *impresa*, and that this conflation of the two species of symbolic image informs other Jesuit theoretical works written in the wake of *De symbolis heroicis*.



FIGURE 1 Antoon II Wierix after Bernardino Passeri, Sunday before Ash Wednesday: Christ Prophesies his Cross to the Apostles, Chapter xviii, Imago 80, in Jerónimo Nadal, Adnotaciones et meditationes in Evangelia (Antwerp: Martinus Nutius, 1595). Engraving, in-folio. Leiden, University Library, Special Collections.





FIGURE 2 Theodoor Galle (engraver), Emblem 1, "Initium Sapientiae Timor Domini," in Jan David, Veridicus christianus (Antwerp: Officina Plantiniana apud Ioannem Moretum, 1601). Engraving, in-4. Chicago, The Newberry Library.

On Masen's *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (Cologne: Widow and Heirs of Johann Anton Kinchius, 1650), the "fullest survey of renaissance and baroque symbol theory" (65), their account mostly derives from Dimler's classic article, "Jacob Masen's Critique of the *Imago primi saeculi*," in his *Studies in the Jesuit Emblem* (New York: AMS Press, 2007). Masen's anthropology of the emblem derives from his conviction that the emblematic *res picta*—pictorial image—posits an implicitly dialogic relation between two *res intelligentes*, that is, two intelligent beings or actions whose characteristics are referred to one another. Unlike other kinds of *imagines figuratae*, such as the hieroglyph, enigma, or symbol, the emblem requires that its protagonists be both intelligent and intelligible, and that their mutual relation be articulated syllogistically or, more precisely, in the form of an enthymeme: by this Masen means that the *res picta* or *res significans*, in bodying forth or enacting an intelligent relation, often functions as the pictorial premise or, better, protasis to a corollary textual apodosis or conclusion, which Masen designates the *res significativa*. Citing selected emblems from the *Imago primi saeculi* (Antwerp: Provincia Flandro-Belgica, 1640), the centenary volume published by the Flemish-Belgian province, Masen, as Daly and Dimler demonstrate, explores four types of possible connection between the pictorial protasis and textual apodosis, each of which he further identifies as sources of invention. (Saint Joseph University Press's splendid facsimile edition of the emblems from the *Imago primi saeculi* constitutes vol. 12 of the series *Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts*, in which Daly and Dimler's monograph is vol. 14.) When the thing signified is in a proportional relation to the signifying picture, the emblem is said to issue *ex proportione*. When the relation is oppositional, the emblem arises *ex repugnatione*; when reductive, *ex alienatione*; when anagrammatic, *ex allusione*. The *Speculum imaginum* is not only subtle, but also categorically precise, and Daly and Dimler supply a commendable summary of its main symbolological points. Their summary should be read alongside Dekoninck's thoughts on Masen in his key article, "Ars symbolica et ars meditandi. La pensée symbolique dans la spiritualité jésuite," *Littérature* 145 (2007): 105–18.

Likewise admirably clear is the subsection on Ménestrier, for the most part based on the significant corpus of articles by Judi Loach, especially her studies of the 1662 and 1684 editions of his *L'art des emblèmes* (Lyons: Benoît Coral, 1662; Paris: R.J.B. de la Caille, 1684). Although Ménestrier designates the textual components of the emblem as the prime conveyors of its *signification* or *sens moral*, his image-theory, to the extent it derives from the faculty psychology of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, privileges the pictorial image as the "matter of the emblem" (75), the principal source of the moral instruction it strives to purvey. Indeed, elsewhere in *L'art des emblèmes* Ménestrier insists that the

picture needs to be expounded textually only under certain circumstances: if it is a *figure naturelle* that seems to operate descriptively, rather than alluding explicitly to something beyond itself, or conversely, if it is a recognizably symbolic figure, such as an “eagle lion, or rock” (76), overly freighted with multiple meanings. In most other cases, the picture can stand alone, especially if it consists of a poetic fiction or fable, or illustrates a well-known story susceptible to allegorical interpretation. Moreover, Ménestrier defines the emblem as a species of symbolic image virtually indistinguishable from the material and performative forms it takes when fashioned in wood, copper, marble, or pigments, or enacted rhetorically on stage. The pithy formulation, “Emblema est aliquid ab ingeniosis ingeniose excogitatum” (The emblem is something ingeniously fashioned by ingenious men), attests his embrace of the emblem in all its contingent applications; above all, he endorses the emblematic ornaments central to civic, courtly, and ecclesiastical pageants and festivals. Daly and Dimler justly conclude that Ménestrier’s understanding of the emblem may be characterized as exegetical, in that he marshals Romans 1:20 to justify the emblemist’s reliance upon the images of visible things: “For since the creation of the world, the invisible qualities of God are seen to be known through those [material] things he has made.” This reference to the Book of Nature as the discernible trace of divine agency and intention, serves to justify Ménestrier’s emblematic project and to license his hermeneutics of the image. As such, he may be situated in a lineage from Pietrasanta and Masen (as well as Caussin and Maximilianus Sandaeus), whose symbology places a premium on the hermeneutic functions of the emblem’s pictorial elements.

The subsection on Andrés Mendo’s *Príncipe perfecto y ministros ajustados, documentos políticos y morales* (Salamanca: Diego de Cossio, 1657; illustrated ed., Lyons: Horace Boissat-George Remeus, 1662), part of the chapter on the major Jesuit emblem books, is nothing short of marvelous, with close attention paid to the manner and meaning of Mendo’s imitation of his crucial source text, Solórzano Pereira’s *Emblemata regio politica* (Madrid: Dominico García Morras, 1651). Basing their account on comparative studies of Mendo and Pereira by Karl-Ludwig Selig, Karl-Otto Mühleisen, and, most importantly, Ana María Rey Sierra, Daly and Dimler examine the format of the eighty *documentos* into which Mendo re-ordered and distilled Pereira’s hundred *Emblemata*. Mendo aimed to convert Pereira’s learned treatise into a practical handbook—an emblematic Mirror of Princes—comprised by “concrete norms and applications” (101), extending from the education of the Prince, his virtuous qualities, and his exemplary relation to his subjects, to issues of finance, the conduct of war, and ministerial governance. The final *documento* concerns the royal art of dying well. The shift in terminology—Pereira’s *emblema* becomes

Mendo's *documento*—makes all the more emphatic the didactic function of the *Principe perfecto*, since the Latin term *documentum*, from which the Spanish *documento* derives, signifies an admonitory exemplum capable of eliciting praise or blame. Mendo simplified Pereira's copious and erudite apparatus, keeping his *picturae* but deleting many of his textual exempla; when Mendo added additional epitomes, as in the case of *Documento xx* on princely eloquence, where he inserted references to the learning of François I, Charles v, and Alfonso v, comparing them to Alexander the Great, Constantine, and Trajan, this was done to update his *documentos* and make them more topical and relevant to the putative princes he was addressing. Daly and Dimler's discussion of Mendo amply demonstrates what it meant to produce an "abstract" of an earlier emblem book, recognizably retaining key features even while changing its "method, disposition, and style" (102). The *Principe perfecto*, in its relation to the *Emblemata regio politica*, reveals, as they put it, how complicated is the "question of originality" (106) and the mutual interaction of emblematic comparanda.

Much more could be added about this book's many virtues, but it must be said that the editing of chapters one to six (pages 23–175) is quite slapdash. There are numerous spelling errors—*prodosis* for *protasis*, on page 66, to cite just one example—and large blocks of text are repeated verbatim: the six pages on Ménestrier that first appear in Chapter 3, "The Jesuit Theory of Symbolology," reoccur virtually unchanged in Chapter 4, "The Major Jesuit Emblematic Books." By contrast, the appendices are by and large free of mistakes. Such errors are uncharacteristic of the series *Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts*, as witness the recently published magnum opus *Art, Controversy, and the Jesuits: The Imago primi saeculi (1640)*, which like most of its companion volumes has been fastidiously edited.

Walter S. Melion

Emory University

[wsmelio@emory.edu](mailto:wsmelio@emory.edu)

DOI 10.1163/22141332-00403006-01