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Calabritto, Monica and Peter Daly, eds. Emblems of Death in the Early Modern Period

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traversées par la montée de l'individualisme. Le récit bref en est d'ailleurs précisément le témoignage. Dans ce dernier quart du XVI^e siècle marqué par les guerres de religion, seul l'individu, éclairé par les exemples de l'histoire, semblerait ainsi en mesure d'assurer la coexistence des valeurs antagonistes, tandis qu'au contraire, les pulsions au nom d'intérêts collectifs conduiraient inévitablement les peuples et les nations à la catastrophe.

Campagne montre bien l'importance des choix de sujets dans cette nouvelle compilation. Sachant que « l'histoire n'est d'aucun prouffit si le discours d'icelle n'est adapté à noz façons » (540), comme l'indique l'écrivain à l'entrée du dixième récit, le rôle du compilateur est celui d'un passeur et d'un moraliste. Si le volume touche d'abord aux questions de justice, de châtement et de vengeance, très prisées des lecteurs de Belleforest, cette réflexion sur les passions fait place graduellement à d'autres perspectives plus pressantes, telles la violence du pouvoir politique, la tyrannie et la nécessité d'arrimer les actions présentes aux « occurrences passées » (539). Bien plus, l'écrivain compte sur le travail de lucidité que l'« histoire tragique » est seule capable d'insuffler aux lecteurs du présent. L'œuvre de François de Belleforest est ainsi structurée par une foi inébranlable en la vertu pédagogique de l'*exemplum*. Toutes les angoisses d'une époque meurtrie et violente s'y laissent entrevoir. La nouvelle édition du *Cinquiesme tome des histoires tragiques* que nous livre ici Hervé-Thomas Campagne confirme pleinement la richesse sémiotique des procédés narratologiques et idéologiques mis en œuvre par Belleforest. Sur plus de vingt années de recherche et d'écriture, la pertinence du projet encyclopédique de cet auteur important et sa fortune auprès d'un très large public ne font plus aucun doute.

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Calabritto, Monica and Peter Daly, eds.

Emblems of Death in the Early Modern Period.

Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 120. Geneva: Droz, 2014. ISBN 978-2-600-01557-8 (paperback) US\$72.

This fine collection of scholarly articles on early modern emblems of death merits attention from diverse standpoints. This volume is fascinating for

anyone interested in early modern iconography, in the historical development of emblematics across Europe, and in representations of death—not only emblematic—and their implications for understanding contemporary Western attitudes toward mortality. For this enterprise the editors have assembled leading scholars in emblematics; and Peter Daly is the *genius loci* of international emblem studies.

While emphasizing early modernity, Monica Calabritto and Daly's wide-ranging and richly documented introduction surveys depictions of death in Western visual arts, emblematics, and material culture, including popular festivals, funerary *imprese* (symbolic personal devices involving a motto and picture), the *castrum doloris* (an ephemeral decorated catafalque honouring an eminent deceased personage), and motifs such as *ars moriendi*, *memento mori*, and *vanitas*. An emblem basically combines a symbolic image and relevant text. Printed emblems were formally tripartite or sometimes quadripartite: *inscriptio* (motto), *pictura* (a visual image), and *subscriptio* (an epigram), with an optional prose commentary. However, the distinctive early modern vogue for printed emblems, arising from Andrea Alciato's seminal *Emblemata* in the 1530s, also greatly influenced the material culture beyond print, so that emblematic combinations of images and texts were incorporated into the decorative arts, architecture, and pageantry. In other words, *Emblems of Death* addresses much more than print sources. Just as Calabritto and Daly advise that "emblems in the material culture may have been even more important than books in terms of reception and influence" (32), so this collection also provides coverage of death's emblematic depictions beyond print. Various articles especially address the particular category of the *castrum doloris*; extant accounts of the exequies of celebrated notables describe exemplars of these ephemera and their emblematic components. There are two fundamental types of emblems of death, Calabritto and Daly observe: those urging specific Christian perspectives whereby death results from sin or provides the soul access to eternal life; and those more humanistically promoting fame and high achievement as guarantees of immortality beyond death. The introduction finally summarizes and coordinates the contents and approaches of the thirteen ensuing chapters to provide an overview of the volume's general approach, central issues, and coverage.

Emblems of Death offers not only an overview of its subject but also assessments of such emblems and their particular character in the differing religious and other circumstances of specific European countries. Hence we

encounter the national as well as international developments of this emblematic subgenre and its great adaptability to diverse contexts; emblems of death in Germany, England, France, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Sweden are treated here in light of location and language. Nevertheless, all the articles are written in English except for one in French, on France. Some contributors emphasize national differences in emblems of death, especially in England and France; others also assess variations of usage by period. In any case, the topics involved persist, though with varied adaptations and renewals. For example, Tamara Goglein's article on England argues that seventeenth-century emblems of death there appeal to Protestant interiority, the reader's beholding "I," to promote spiritual insight for confronting death as a vital presence in life. Pedro Campa finds that Spanish emblems of death come to reflect secularizing and demystifying influences of the Enlightenment. On Hungary, Éva Knapp and Gábor Tüskés stress death's omnipresence in that war-ravaged region occupied at the time by the Turks, as well as successive cultural shifts whereby emblems of death in the earlier sixteenth century extoll the fame and attainments of deceased individuals, become intermixed with Lutheran and Catholic perspectives, and in the eighteenth century aim "to conceal and tame death" (33).

In accord with the volume's pan-European aspect, other articles address relevant transnational topics: "Emblems of Death in Neo-Latin," "Jesuit Emblems of Death," "Dying for One's Country: Emblems of Sacrifice and Punishment," and "Emblems of Death in the Material Culture." The volume further assists researchers in its general field by providing two selective bibliographies of relevant scholarship published after 1980: one for studies of the emblem in general, and one for studies of death in the late Middle Ages and early modernity. Unfortunately, there is an index only for names: persons, places, and colleges. Ideally, there would also have been an index of symbols and motifs; such an addition would have facilitated usage of this book as an iconographical reference work, which should be one of its main functions. However, by marshalling marvellous resources of contributors and expertise to produce a splendid account of its early modern subject, this book has achieved deathless scholarly value.

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