

What's New in Mnemology

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And therefore Hierome prescribes Rusticus the Monk, continually to read the Scripture, and to meditate on that which he hath read; for as mastication is to meat, so is meditation on that which we read. I would for these causes wish him that is melancholy to use both human and divine Authors, voluntarily to impose some task upon himself, to divert his melancholy thoughts: to study the art of memory, Cosmus Rosselius, Pet. Ravennas, Scenkelius' Detectus, or practise Brachygraphy [shorthand] &c. that will ask a great deal of attention.

Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 2.2.4

This review-article seeks to initiate discussion about five books on early modern memory published in the new millennium and to invite comments about other recent contributions to this fertile area of study, which can be called mnemology.* Mnemology is concerned primarily with how the classical Art of Memory was figured and reconfigured during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For Burton, writing in the first half of the seventeenth century, it is associated with meditating on scripture and studying shorthand as one of several ways to focus the mind and thereby avert melancholy. As such, it spans divine and

*Reference: Barbara Keller-Dall'Asta, *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis: zur Mnemologie des 16. Jahrhunderts in Italien* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2001); Daniel Martin, *Rabelais, Mode d'emploi: avec le plan du Pantagruel suivant les jours la semaine et des saints sacrements de l'Eglise* (Tours: A.-G. Nizet, 2002); *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002); *Writing on Hands: Memory and Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* (Seattle: U of Washington P, 2000); William E. Engel, *Death and Drama in Renaissance England: Shades of Memory* (Oxford: OUP, 2002).

secular concerns. Under the heading mnemology, then, we can juxtapose and align a wide range of topics and approaches pertaining to early modern efforts to counteract the effects of sinfulness, forgetfulness, idleness. Mnemology thus encompasses sacred meditative practices and visualization techniques as well as secular pedagogical uses of mnemonic schemes, and extends also to take into account Neoplatonic and pseudo-scientific treatises on recovering and interpreting, generating and deploying symbols, ciphers, and emblems so as to make things happen in the world.

Mnemology, therefore, with respect to literary criticism and intellectual history, concerns the various ways such systems of thought have been conceived, implemented, and discussed. Such a line of inquiry thus opens the way for contemporary critical assessments of the implicit social, political, aesthetic, and scientific ramifications of mnemonics, mnemotechnics, and the Memory Arts at particular times and in specific places. As a result, mnemologically oriented analysis complements and counter-balances some of the main myths and explanatory narratives that have come down to us, whether regarding assumed continuities in literary history, projected contiguities in cultural poetics, or source hunting in the visual arts. Mnemology, then, embraces all manner of mnemonics—those time-tried techniques used to aid, and perhaps to improve, the natural memory and leading to the creation of something new. As Frances Yates argued somewhat presciently in her still indispensable *The Art of Memory*, renewed attention to the memory arts is a prerequisite for advances in Renaissance scholarship. She was convinced that the history of the organization of memory touches at vital points on the history of religion and ethics, of philosophy and psychology, of art and literature, of scientific method. As the five books reviewed here make clear, Yates was spot on.

This comes into focus in a rudimentary way when we reduce specific aspects of cultural memory to their most elementary components, called "mnememes"—a term used to great effect by Daniel Martin in his groundbreaking mnemocritical study of image and place in Mon-

taigne and which, as we shall see in what follows, he has now applied to Rabelais (57). Both *imagines agentes* and *loci* are to be thought of as signs, pointing beyond themselves to, among other things, the relationship thus being forged between the two. These signs at the same time reflect a special kind of knowledge associated with a highly developed sense of visualization, like that required when using topical or artificial memory systems. Conceived of as mnememes, then, such fundamental units of expression in traditional disciplines, such as the *exemplum* of history and the *sententia* of philosophy—both of which are at home in the domain of rhetoric—, encapsulate and indicate something deemed worthy of being culled and recalled so it can be transferred and used in another context. Therefore, in order to be generally useful and ready-at-hand, such mnememes need to be stored and preserved in some sort of a repository. Finally, then, mnemology concerns the conceptualization and use of just such repositories, frameworks, and structures, as well as the specific ends to which they were put.

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The five books discussed here make it clear that mnemology, as a field of study in its own right, is an international and transnational phenomenon, transcending political and even religious boundaries, and combining many traditional areas of inquiry. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that these studies were published in Germany, France, America, and England, and that they reflect different disciplinary approaches according to the subjects under investigation, and take into account a broad range of texts, images, and forms of cultural expression. Specifically, the first book, associated with the "Gedächtniskunst" network of Jörg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber, is a detailed analysis of the most influential of the early modern Italian memory treatises. The second, which builds on Guy Demerson's insights into mythology and those of Renaissance polymaths like Colonna and Cartari, resolutely demonstrates Rabelais's debt to the

Memory Arts. The third is a most welcomed anthology and translation of important and representative mnemological texts from the twelfth through fifteenth centuries, some of which have never before been rendered into English. The fourth, based on an exhibition, emphasizes the extent to which images of the hand played a vital role in interpreting the search for achieving knowledge of the self and interpreting universal human experience up through about 1700. The last book offers a novel way to understand, in their original contexts, aspects of English Renaissance mental life and letters by using the Memory Arts to explore issues of death and decline in exemplary dramas, dictionaries, and histories. Disparate as these studies may seem at first glance, they have at least one fundamental feature in common: they all assume the importance of Memory as a branch of rhetoric concerned, at least initially, with composition.

(1) But even beyond the strictly rhetorical focus, as Barbara Keller-Dall'Asta observes, memory studies are at the foundation of natural philosophy in the Renaissance, especially with respect to the doctrine of correspondences and what once was conceptualized as "the great chain of being." Moreover "Memoria" in particular overlaps with, and is at the very foundation of, many other areas, especially the pseudosciences, including alchemy, astrology, physiognomy, numerology and much of the mythographic writing and allegorical analyses of the day (15). Accordingly, it is with her book that we begin our itinerary of what's new in mnemology.

Heilsplan und Gedächtnis: zur Mnemologie des 16. Jahrhunderts in Italien grew out of her 1999 Heidelberg dissertation. It is an invaluable resource, bringing forward a vast array of citations regarding important work in mnemological studies, as well as carrying out a subtle and sustained analysis of three of the most significant mnemotechnical Italian treatises of the Renaissance, by Gesualdo, Rossellius, and Camillo. While primarily citing German sources, this work also brings together and critically mediates discussions that have been conducted in English, Spanish, French, and Italian. Indeed the easy dialogue impli-

plicitly carried on in the text with writers such as Isadore of Seville, Dante, Ficino, and Della Porta continues in the notes with respect to contemporary memory specialists such as Bolzoni, Blum, Rossi, and Carruthers.

I mention the notes because, as Anthony Grafton has pointed out, while they usually do not explain the precise course the scholar's interpretation of these texts has taken, they often give the reader who is both critical and open-minded enough hints to make it possible to work this out. Indeed, Keller-Dall'Asta's work demonstrates the secondary story told by footnotes; for in documenting the thought and research that underpin the narrative above them, footnotes prove that it is a historically contingent product, dependent on the forms of research, opportunities, and states of particular questions that existed when she began her work. In particular this study benefits immeasurably from the author's access to Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel and of course the world-renowned resources at Heidelberg.

Access to the former brought to the author's attention, and thus to my own by virtue of having read her account, the importance of the 1624 *Cryptomenytices et cryptographiae* with respect to the larger story of secret writing in the Renaissance. Additionally this book puts to new uses the anonymous *Steganographia nova* (1602), and, much to her credit as a meticulous scholar, with due reference and thanks to Gerhard Strasser who first brought out the importance of this book as pertains to the quest for a universal language (67). But perhaps the most exciting of her many references to archival materials is her eighteen-page photo-reproduction and discussion of a manuscript of Camillo's *Theatro della sapientia* (at the John Rylands Library, Manchester). The most important feature of the book by far though is the detailed and accurate analysis of Filippo Gesualdo's *Plutosophia* (1592), Cosmas Rossellius's *Thesaurus artificiosae memoriae* (1579), and Giulio Camillo's *Idea del teatro* (1550). For although I have worked with all three of these works and refer to them in *Mapping Mortality*, if Keller-Dall'Asta's work had been available to me a decade ago, I am sure I would have been able to make broader and less cautious claims re-

garding the persistence of memory and melancholy in the early modern period.

But to return for a moment to the notes, which reflect the author's wide reading and scrupulous sleuthing, *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* brings together in one place many important studies being carried out as dissertations. The theses mentioned all are of the kind that show old texts in a new light. Her nearly fifty-page bibliography is worth the price of the volume. And while there is only a five-page index of people mentioned, this is a slight matter given the clarity, directness, and tight organization of the volume as a whole. What is more, the historical narrative is furthered by questions that exceed the bounds of being merely rhetorical. At important junctures she wonders about the relation of narrative discursivity and more foundational matters with respect to the uncovering of hidden knowledge in works such as Camillo's (223-24). Why a theatre and what can one do with it that cannot otherwise be accomplished? What lack is being addressed in and by virtue of such a construct? Along these lines, it is her careful attention to, and partitioning off of, the place of mystical matters that makes her project a significant advance beyond Yates's treatment of some of the same themes and texts. *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* will set the agenda for how the main issues raised by Yates with respect to these three chief Italian writers hereafter will be framed and discussed in scholarly circles. Her extensive analysis of these three books, and of the related literature, brings forward in clear and distinct terms information that puts them justifiably at the forefront of Renaissance scholarship at a time when literary critics and historians of culture alike are coming to see the merit in applying mnemotechnical analysis to their own areas of study.

(2) At the lead of just such an initiative is Daniel Martin, whose new book *Rabelais: Mode d'emploi* sets out to clear up many "mysteries" in *Pantagruel* by way of what he calls *mnémocritique*. This book covers material from the century preceding Keller-Dall'Asta's study, most notably Colonna's *Hypnerotomachie ou discours du songe de Poliphile*

(1499) and the *Kalendrier des Bergiers* (1491). What links it to *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis* though is the detailed attention given to Camillo, especially his seven-sectioned Memory Theatre divided according to the seven planetary deities and cross-coded by related mnemonic figures taken from classical mythology.

To be sure, mythology, the allegorization of the pagan deities, and attributes of the Olympian gods have long been staples of Renaissance studies, especially in the light of the groundbreaking work carried out by Wind, Sez nec, and Panofsky. But what Martin shows is the extent to which, heretofore largely unrecognized, the planetary deities also corresponded to and were understood to govern not only the days of the week but also the hours of the day. It is this later point, one brought up by Rabelais among others, which Martin clarifies with a chart, concerning a question that has baffled thinkers from Plutarch on regarding the astrological and numerical ordering of the days (41-44, 189).

Many critics have suspected there was some plan at work in *Pantagruel* and proposed various models (65), but, until now, none has satisfactorily accounted for the many mythological references. By using the order of the planets, as outlined in the Shepherd's Calendar, and their correspondent sacraments of the Church as specific *loci* in a vast Theatre of Memory, Martin makes a compelling case that Rabelais used this method for ordering his text (112-13). This is not to say that other plans cannot be in place as well, but simply that like all mnemonic schemes, this one, grounded as it is in rhetorical practices, concerns invention *and* composition. The *locus* comes before the text; it is dictated by the planetary program which would have been well known in the period—especially to someone with Rabelais's learning and sense of literary gamesmanship. Put simply: the plan precedes the text (50).

Among the boons that accrue from entertaining Martin's mnemocritical interpretation is that "The Fable of the Lion" in Chapter XV at last makes perfect sense. Once the simple layout of what chapters correspond to what *loci*, we learn that this chapter comes un-

der the heading of the sign of the Lion, the fifth sign, which enters the House of the Sun-Apollo in July; and taking into account that the Sun was the device of Pope Clement VII, Giulio de' Medici, each character in the fable corresponds to a specific person, group, or event relevant to the Church and politics of the day. This method of reading the fable is meticulously detailed in Martin's Chapter Eight, the final page of which gives us the code sheet to recover Rabelais's cleverly obscured message (119-30).

Because the validity of such a mode of interpretation involving chapter numbers hinges on identifying and using the source-text as Rabelais wrote it and wanted it published, Martin scrupulously provides, in Appendix "D," a rationale for choosing the Yale edition, and gives an account of the exemplars of Paris and of Lyon. And so even the reader who may not have a principal interest in Rabelais nonetheless will be delightfully instructed by the sections leading up to his compelling reading of *Pantagruel* along mnemotechnical lines. The book itself is based on a pattern [5 (5 + 5) 5] which thus reflects the main matter being discussed.

Specifically Martin begins by presenting five images that, in effect, tell the story he would narrate about Rabelais's reliance on a pentad structure for his book. Five, of course, from Cicero on, is a number historically valued in mnemonics; moreover, there is good reason to believe, following Luigi De Poli's analysis, duly cited by Martin (85), that the number five figures prominently in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Moreover, there are five main planets in the old system, and, as we shall see in the fourth book of our itinerary, the hand's five fingers were used to organize many works during the time of *Pantagruel*. In line with this, Martin's appendix "C," on the mnemonic hand, is perhaps the best finding in the volume, for here he explains convincingly how seven hands, seven sets of five, mark the *loci*-chapters, thus governing and directing the organization of the text, as well as calling for certain kinds of inserted bits of information to mark them as such—like the Sun in conjunction with the Lion. The ten chapters of *Rabelais: Mode d'emploi* are followed by four appendices plus the bibliography

(an appendix in its own right) to make up the final set of five. The whole book thus has a symmetry, along the lines of what Martin discusses in his analysis and which Rabelais speaks about as well (120).

But the book is performative in other ways as well. Take for example the first five chapters, which are required reading for anyone wanting to learn the rudiments of the Memory Arts in the Renaissance and also to become acquainted with the critical debates surrounding its use. Martin begins by pointing out that there are two kinds of "à-propos," that of time and that of place, which find parallels in both artificial memory systems (that involve active or moving images and stable places) and also in astral-allegoresis (where time is sacred to Saturn, and place overruled by Mercury) (33). And so he gives us two chapters: "Avant-propos" and "De l'à-propos des images." As a further mirroring of this theme, in the "Avant-propos" there are two divisions as well, concerning time and place; the first for the reader in a hurry (15), and the other for the reader reticent about entering the world of "mnémocritique" (21). After reading this book though, whether or not you are convinced at every point by Martin's interpretation of the mnemotechnic chapter-heading schema of *Pantagruel*, there can be no question that this method must be taken seriously. Martin's endeavor, if nothing else, will inspire a new generation of scholars to recognize and rediscover similar such schemes that inform and animate involved works of authors other than Rabelais. For example, Isidoro Arén Janeiro has been collaborating with Martin to recover the astral-mnemonic plan of Book I of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

(3) Along these lines, scholars will welcome the fact that so many important books and treatises are resurfacing nowadays as facsimile-reprints, or are being translated for the first time. And this brings us to our third stop, the peak in our survey of the new trails blazed in mnemological terrain today: an anthology of texts and images edited by Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*. This collection brings together the most important Latin texts on memory and presents them in a fresh and new form—and in English.

lish. Even Mary Carruthers's previous translation of Bradwardine presented here is updated and improved (207-14). Moreover, the wise editorial guidelines informing this volume allow for the occasional note about the trickiness of translation. For example, John Burchill clarifies several terms that historically have been central to mnemotechnical treatises: *phantasm* (which Thomas Aquinas takes from the Latin Aristotle), *motus*, and *passio* (160). Carruthers likewise acknowledges at one point that no English word captures the double and simultaneous meaning of the Latin *ornatus* and *ornamentum*, "equipment, adornment" (40).

The sparse five-page bibliography (like the six-page index) is extremely useful, covering only twenty-five texts and major surveys, and fifteen examples of methodological applications to different disciplines (including the next book to be discussed in our itinerary, *Writing on Hands*). For this reason the bibliography can be taken as definitive for anyone interested in recent trends in mnemology. It is noteworthy that, given the magisterial nature of this anthology, the translators span the academic spectrum. At the time of publication, of the eleven contributors, three were PhD students at Harvard, four endowed chair professors, one professor emeritus of classical studies, and an itinerant preacher.

Again, as was mentioned regarding my familiarity with the main books treated by Keller-Dall'Asta, while I have worked closely with two of the texts translated in *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, I would have very much welcomed this version of Publicius's *Art of Memory* when I was writing my dissertation. And while it was a good exercise for me to struggle with the idiosyncratic Latin typography of Anselm's *Ars memorandi* a decade ago when I was writing *Mapping Mortality*, my project surely would have benefited from consulting James Halporn's new, crisp translation of the anonymous *Method for Recollecting the Gospels*. I mention this because I suspect the same will hold for those who likewise have logged in long hours working on texts that, although existing in many forms, have yet to be translated. There is no reason to reinvent the wheel, and this anthology will allow many

to travel faster and farther along the road of mnemological studies than otherwise would have been possible.

The Medieval Craft of Memory is a truly representative anthology in that it concludes with the two books just mentioned, the last being a sixteenth century blockbook, and it begins with Hugh of St. Victor's *Three Best Memory Aids for Learning History* and his *Little Book about Constructing Noah's Ark* from the first half of the twelfth century. Among the schemes represented in this volume are architectural plans, the feathers on the six wings of a seraphic angel, a five-storied five-room section of a house, a columnar diagram, the stones in the wall of an urban tower, rungs of a ladder, rows of seats in an amphitheatre, and a world map. Whether discussing Albertus Magnus's commentary on Aristotle or Aquinas's treatment of the same (both of which are translated in the anthology), all of these mnemonic schemes can be thought of as tools that were deemed useful in the Middle Ages for "memory-making."

The General Introduction stresses that such "memory-making was regarded as active; it was even a craft with techniques and tools, all designed to make an ethical, useful product" (2). As an art, then, memory was most importantly associated in the Middle Ages with composition, not simply with retention. Accordingly the primary goals in preparing material for memory were flexibility, security, and ease of recombining matter into patterns and forms. What follows in the General Introduction is perhaps the best brief and thorough preface to the classical Art of Memory in the Middle Ages to date, especially as pertains to monastic traditions (17-23).

Specifically, as the editors explain, the materials in the collection, for the most part written down in the twelfth century, originally were designed to help people compose oral presentations such as sermons and prayers, school lectures and homilies. An account of the basic principles of *Memoria*, stressing its compositional aspects, is followed by an outline of what is meant by locational memory. There is an account of emotion and memory, and an appropriately short section explaining what is meant by "memory delights in brevity." Next, the

two kinds of remembering recognized by ancient rhetorical textbooks are outlined: *memoria verborum*, "remembering every word of a segment of text by associating each syllable with a particular visual cue," and *memoria rerum*, "remembering the chief subject matter of a sermon (for example) by associating each one with a summary image" (9-10). The ensuing section on memory and the visual reiterates that memories were thought to be carried in intense images and that memory depended on imagination, which is to say the image-making power of the soul. A discussion of the gaze clarifies that no memory picture should exceed what can be seen and kept easily in mind by virtue of a single "look" or *conspectus*. Sections are then devoted to *Memoria* in the Trivium and in the Quadrivium, and to mnemotechnic in the classical and monastic traditions. The General Introduction concludes by explaining the nature of the anthology and the drawings, again emphasizing that *memoria* is the craft of recollective composition (24). We are given the sound parting advice that, as students of these texts, we should strive to do what their original readers were asked to do—to draw and to paint and fashion the textual pictures in *one's own mind*. After all the pictures were intended by their authors to be literally "translated," carried over into the ruminating minds of their viewers and readers. This anthology thus provides a viable way to consider how each of these texts (with occasional pictures) fits into the history of *memoria*.

(4) While *The Medieval Craft of Memory* is concerned primarily with materials produced in learned, even academic circles for the purposes of reading and new compositions, the over eighty images in *Writing on Hands* "reacquaint the twenty-first century viewer with the role of the hand in early modern methods of calculation, anatomical nomenclature, solmization (sight singing), memorization of saint's days and feasts" (7). This anthology is based on an exhibition presented first at the Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, and then at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Werner Gundersheimer, then Director of the Folger,

praised Claire Richter Sherman for "the deftness with which she has picked ideas and images from a vast universe of possibilities, as well as for the clarity of her explanations and analyses." I would concur, and not only with respect to the images chosen, but also the contributors: Brian P. Copenhaver, Martin Kemp, Schiko Kusakawa, and Susan Forscher Weiss; and her co-editor, noted historian of art historians and Director of the Trout, Peter M. Lukehart.

The book has six major parts, which I shall treat in reverse order, for with any good mnemonic—like an exhibition—one should be able to revisit and consider the matter irrespective of the point of departure. Also, as Claire Richter Sherman points out, the "thematic organization should not obscure the overlapping nature of certain basic concepts. Teaching, learning, and remembering are functions common to all sections, but they differ in language, audience, patronage, popularity, and time frame" (18).

The works displayed in Part Six, "Guiding Hands," all concern religious and moral instruction; the last section, appropriately, focusing on the emblem book (a topic discussed at greater length at the final stop of our tour of what's new in mnemology, *Death and Drama*). Part Five initially investigates the traditional analogy of "The Body as Microcosm" to illustrate the principles underlying the harmony and order the universe. The brilliant section on theories and practices of divining character and fate in chiromancy (palmistry) contributed by Brian P. Copenhaver, along with the ensuing section on alchemy, bears out Keller-Dall'Asta's contention that these ancient and always popular arts are all part of the larger story of mnemonics in the West. Also reminiscent of Keller-Dall'Asta's book is the interest in cryptography and the mystical mnemotechnical traditions, for the works making up Part Four of *Writing on Hands* all employ coded systems of gesture as instruments of visual communication. The hand is shown to have been used as a teaching device, embracing arithmetic, calendrical calculation, instruction in music theory and practice with special reference to the Guidonian Hand. Part Three, "Messengers of the World," concerns the relationship of the hand to the brain, senses, and

memory. Part Two focuses on anatomical representations of the whole body as the highest invention of God or nature.

While the anthology contains many fields of culture, there is a pronounced affinity for the mnemological, especially in Part One, "Reading the Writing on Hands," beginning with the opening entries, "The Hand as a Mirror of Salvation" and "The Hands as Bodily Mnemonics." Other overtly mnemonic images, familiar to those who have worked with memory treatises, appear at the end of Part Three. For example, Petrus von Rosenheim's mnemonic figure from the Gospel of Saint John (an earlier version of which is featured in the blockbook treated in *Medieval Craft of Memory*, 263), Romberch's "Memory Tour of a City Street" (discussed in *Mapping Mortality*, 50-53), a visual alphabet following Rossellius (known to Burton) and "The Body as a Series of Memory Places" from Gesualdo (discussed also by Keller-Dall'Asta). The section concludes with Marafioti's extremely popular and much reprinted manual mnemonic yielding 92 places. And while Karol Berger provides a detailed account of the "Guidonian Hand" in *The Medieval Craft of Memory* (71-82), Susan Weiss presents a French version in *Writing on Hands* (182-83), with its ancient system of tetrachords and symbols and rhythmic durations in the surrounding borders.

The richness of such intertextual overlapping between these two new books indicates how the same sorts of images can be treated differently and how these mnemonic works appeared in many different forms during the period. The unique contribution that *Writing on Hands* makes to the field of mnemology however is the way the various renderings of the hand—metaphoric, emblematic, symbolic, pedagogic—illuminate early modern conceptual frame-works for learning, remembering, and recalling practical and abstract ideas. As a result the anthology illustrates the vital role of the hand, "as a meeting place of matter, mind, and spirit" (21), in the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge from such diverse realms as anatomy, psychology, mathematics, music, rhetoric, religion, palmistry, astrology and alchemy.

(5) My own recent contribution to the field of mnemology is more modest in scope than either of the two anthologies, though more inclusive than either Martin's book or Keller-Dall'Asta's three-author study. *Death and Drama in Renaissance England: Shades of Memory* uses the classical Art of Memory as an interpretive key to show how a great range of texts, from stage-plays to dictionaries and histories, deployed the emblematic to communicate special meanings. These various forms of cultural expression all shared a common principle of organization: each was decidedly at odds with oblivion, and each drew from reservoirs of the culture's collective memory—namely from emblems, proverbs, and *exempla*. These repositories of accrued commonplaces and perennial wisdom were staples of the classical Memory Arts, which enjoyed a revival during the period. This was especially the case with respect to theatre and its metaphors, as expressed through tragedies, foreign-language phrase books, and histories.

Part One of *Death and Drama*, with its main concern being emblems, demonstrates the instrumentality of the Memory Arts for reconstructing the aesthetic and affective conditions giving rise to certain framing mechanisms in English Tragedy that self-consciously extended the limits of theatre's magic. Special attention is given to scenes from *Friar Bacon*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Spanish Tragedy*, *Revenger's Tragedy*, *Bussy D'Ambois*, *Hamlet*, *White Devil*, and *Broken Heart*, which used cunning, initially mute, staged spectacles that evoked mnemonic images of fatal destiny. This part of the book establishes the extent to which dumb shows shared formal and aesthetic affinities with visual emblems, which were themselves part of the visual shorthand typically used in Renaissance Memory Theatres. For emblems, like their verbal counterpart, *sententiae*, together with other related mnemonically encoded devices, readily were transferred to the Renaissance stage. Such devices, by virtue of their underlying structural and aesthetic principles, conjured into being a special space from within the dramatic spectacle that enabled them to refer beyond what they were put in place simply, mimetically, to signify.

Part Two, whose main concern is proverbs, examines the mnemological and philological links forged by the Memory Arts. The focus is on John Florio, whose language books dramatized the double truth of simulated, mimetic, speech through highly mannered vignettes of a traveler's everyday routine abroad. He caters to, and further buttresses, a special kind of "artificial memory" popular during the day. The notebook method, of accumulating common-places, championed by Florio is characteristic of Renaissance attitudes toward the translation not only of words and ideas in everyday commerce, but also, of the body and soul on a journey toward death—and beyond.

Part Three, whose main concern is *exempla*, looks at how memorable metaphors of the stage were translated into a body of work which sought to characterize and record the soul of history. The focus here is on Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* and on Alexander Ross's efforts—using well known mnemonic principles such as the "decade" and architectural metaphors for organizing information—to digest and correct, and then to continue and complete, Raleigh's monumental project. The works discussed all contain resonant messages that would remain obscure were it not for the critical approach to encoded mnemonic designs that is developed and applied in this book. With the Art of Memory as our interpretive key, we can gain access anew to these exemplary works of Renaissance drama, the language arts, and history.

Death and Drama concludes with a parting glance at the monument scene in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* and at English translations of the classics concerning the restless dead, namely those who are apparently beyond life though not yet beyond the reach of art and language. This crystallizes how Renaissance memory images came to store and disclose, and to translate and revive, their symbolic contents and backlog of meanings. They did so, finally, I argue, with respect to an overarching Aesthetic of Decline. Seen in this way, we can recover, in their original contexts, certain shades of memory, from just this side of oblivion, and attend to what they have to tell us about living artfully in the face of death.

With works like the five just mentioned now in the academic mainstream, the future of early modern memory studies seems wide-open. Where will mnemology go from here? Let me close by offering three speculative, if hopeful, predictions.

First, it is probable we will be seeing more translations of neo-Latin texts, unique manuscripts, and incunabula recently brought out into the market—and this is a good thing. There are still many works waiting to be rediscovered and made more widely known and available, along the lines of the noble spadework carried out by *The Medieval Craft of Memory* and the imaginative juxtaposing of rare images in *Writing on Hands*. Archival visits may well become more difficult for scholars in these days of shrinking travel budgets and diminishing grant opportunities. Likewise the new and perhaps long-term restrictions on air-travel are already beginning to take their toll. In this regard though the Internet, with its ready-access to vast and distant treasure houses of information and new possibilities for databases, may well prove the best tool for furthering mnemological studies. For example, the Index Emblematicus, a series which aims to collect and edit important works of emblem literature, spearheaded by Peter Daly; Alciato on the web (with source material from among other works, the *Greek Anthology* and Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* [1586]—a site that has been receiving around 3,000 visitors a month); and the various interdisciplinary research projects with which Peter Matussek is associated, most notably "Kulturen des Performativen," and especially "Computers as Theatre of Memory."

Second, and more topically oriented, the next decade will be ripe for a fresh study of talismans, commemorative tokens, and other aspects of what is now termed material culture, along the lines of the recent work of Sabine Mödersheim. Likewise studies of collections and collectors are taking on fresh life in the recent work by Ernest Gilman, and the editorial efforts of Simon Hunt and Patricia Fumerton are opening up new avenues of inquiry with respect to "vagrant aspects" of memorial aesthetics in everyday life. The groundwork has been prepared for similar studies in the future, and mnemology may well

be a reliable indicator of the shifting emphases in scholarly trends away from the referential dimension of culture to foreground the performative aspects.

Finally, and more conceptually, as the work of Harald Weinrich has shown, the time is ripe to remember forgetting. The aesthetics of loss has a rich history in the West, and, it will be meeting up soon with mnemology. I say this based on some of the recent conferences worldwide. For example the organizing rubric for the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies in February 2003 was "Memory and Commemoration." Papers reflected on topics involving forms of commemoration and ways of remembering across time and space. Likewise the 2002 meeting of the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies held in Tampa was given over to "Memory and Ritual"; sessions concerned such topics as theatre and culture, death rites, memory and legacy in the personal narratives of early modern women. The 2002 World Congress of the International Federation for Theatre Research met in Amsterdam to explore whether and the extent to which the performing arts can engage in a dialogue with cultural memory, and whether the mediatization of theatrical events can lead to performances becoming part of the collective consciousness and that, vice versa, the media can use dramatic techniques to stage our cultural memories. The prominence of the *Ars Memorativa* in meetings such as these, owes much to the foresight of Jörg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber, who, in 1995, organized "Gattungstraditionen, Funktionen und Leistungsgrenzen der Mnemotechniken des 14. bis 17. Jahrhunderts" in Vienna.

The need to remember forgetting was hinted at two decades ago in a clever piece by Umberto Eco. In his excursus on the "ars oblivionalis" he argued that when one wants to forget something, it happens not by cancellation but by superimposition, and not by producing absence but by multiplying presences. The creation of, and impetus to use, artificial memory "places" goes hand in hand with acknowledging—whether tacitly or as a conscious resolve—our mortal limitations, and recognizing the need to aid, strengthen, or extend our natural memo-

ries. Oblivion, as a memorable shade of near-forgetting, motivates our creation of Memory, both as a character and as a method. Memory, after all, is subject to the metaphoric processes that are part and parcel of how the rhetorical tradition has enabled—and taught—us to think through images. As I plan to argue more conclusively in the year to come, oblivion plays a necessary role in the dynamic depiction of memory by the seventeenth-century. Memory and oblivion exist in what can be thought of as a dialectical relation, allegorically as well as ontologically. Memory depends on Oblivion, and the allegorical presence, or absence, of either one does not diminish or compromise the status of the other. No simple set of binary opposites can be deduced from this nest of associations, for the story of memory and forgetting in the early modern era is subtler than that by far.

There is still much work to be done. In particular, as I have suggested tentatively, opportunities await, regarding translations and editions, online and in print; studies that bring back into memory's purview material artifacts such as coins, commemorative medals, currency, and other tokens signaling "the performance of culture"; and philosophically oriented efforts to remember forgetting. These things in mind, the future of mnemological studies seems bright.

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