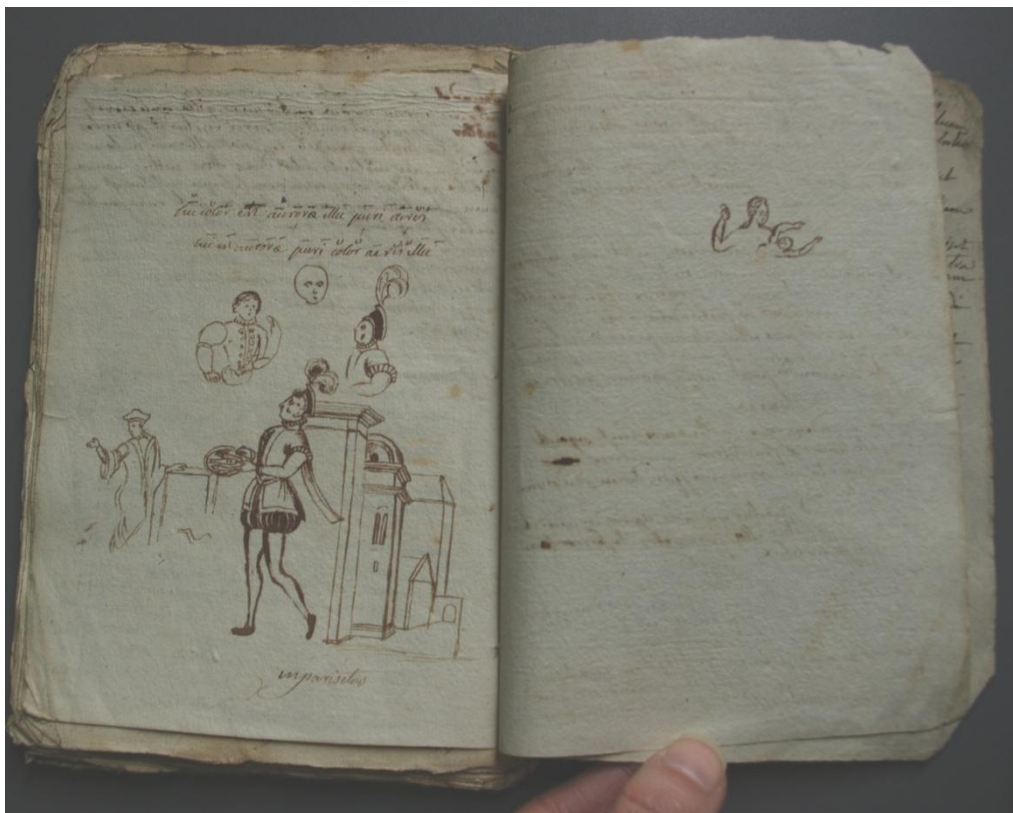


Ephemeral *pensée figurée* in the Celebrations for the Canonization of the First Jesuit Saints into the Assistancy of France (1622-1623): Toward a typology, beyond the function.

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It is well known that the Jesuit colleges of the *Ancien Régime* were “emblem factories” for pedagogical purposes and that Jesuit festivals were the frequent opportunities for mass production of emblems and all comparable genres of word-image amalgams composed by students [Fig. 1].



1. Student's drawings from a notebook, Jesuit College of Bordeaux, XVIIth-XVIIIth (Archives Départementales de la Gironde, Série H). Three emblems *picturae* from the 1584 edition of Alciatus' *Emblemata*, Paris, Jean Richer: Emblema XCII, *In Parasitos*; Emblema XCVI, *Doctorum agnomina*; Emblema LIII, *Ei qui semel sua prodegerit, aliena credi non oportere*.

Following the generic use of the term “emblem” or “devise” in festival books, in my paper “emblem” will refer to every word-image amalgam and symbolic images (but I shall focus later on these lexicographical problems). Emblems were the essential element of any festival. These compositions were exhibited on classroom walls, in the school yard, in the church, on the exterior walls of the college; in the theater scenery (indeed in summer theater was built in the courtyard, in winter a classroom was reserved to the pedagogical activities, la *Salle des Actes*). The compositions were carried in procession, and sometimes they were engraved, collected and offered as a gift to important patrons of the Society of Jesus.

I changed the title of my paper slightly because indeed I realized that it is impossible and maybe reductive to try to classify an infinite variety of combinations of text and image described in the festival books. Moreover, textual ambiguity about the type of symbolic composition does not readily establish a typology; furthermore descriptions are often incomplete and selective. Thus, in my paper, in order to expose the emblematic strategies in the canonization solemnities of 1622, I will mainly discuss the role of this varied mass of emblematic compositions from three points of view: the *functioning* of emblematic compositions, their *inventio* and finally their textual recording in the published account. Through these three dimensions I would like to highlight the symbolic mentality that governs the intention of the festival.

The first part of the survey based on 15 festival books is to understand how emblematic compositions were used by students and the public during the celebrations of 1622 that were held for eight days in every Jesuit institution of the Assistancy. What is the functioning of the various symbolic compositions in the pattern of festival? I would suggest that the 1622 festival is an *emblematic system in action*, and that this idea helps us to understand the characteristics of the Jesuit festival and the contribution of Jesuit thought to the festival culture of the seventeenth century.

As to the *inventio* of emblems, I will not dwell on the sources, limiting myself to identifying the general repertory employed for *motto* and *pictura*: sacred, mystical or symbolic literature, Latin classics, fables, history, etc.

Textual description is the only way to help us visualize the festival decoration and the subjects of emblems; indeed, only one book is illustrated, the one on Pont-à-Mousson¹. I will finish my paper by some considerations on the description of emblems and the limits imposed

¹ See P. Choné, *Emblèmes et pensée symbolique en Lorraine, 1525-1633. Comme un jardin au cœur de la chrétienté*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1991.

by the text in the establishment of a typology. These stages that I distinguish between should not be considered as separate and isolated. Each of them is an educational moment in the larger sense. Indeed, all men, from the most Christian king to the Calvinist woman who takes her children to see the shows are, from the point of view of a missionary, souls to be converted and educated in the Catholic spirit.

The Invention and Functioning of Emblems in Jesuit Festivals

According to Judi Loach, the emblem is a genre which is – she wrote – “primarily enacted, or at least designed to complement a performance: the *pictura* is to be found on stage, and the *lemma* is delivered orally”². This statement is crucial to comprehend the function, and the functioning of emblems in the public celebrations like the solemnities for the canonization of 1622. So, to study the functioning of emblems I have discerned three moments in the festivities where the emblem is *in action*, and it unveils its final aim: the playful pedagogical moment, the pastoral moment and the political and apologetic one. Today, I will especially discuss the former two cases.

During the time of festivities, or only for a few days, many emblems, symbolic images and painted enigmas were usually left on display to attract people and invite any one to offer an interpretation of the compositions. Indeed the last days of celebration were assigned for the explanation of emblematic compositions in front of the audience. Therefore we could image an interactive performance where the best students, sometimes with their teachers, challenged the intellectual and rhetorical prowess of the audience and allowed the “gens d’esprit”, the most cultured participants, to give their interpretations. The performances took place in the college courtyard (*cour des classes*), where the *affiches*, any kind of composition, were on temporary display in a gallery shared by the classes and on the exterior wall of the gallery³.

In the courtyard other ephemeral structures could be built like pyramids or triumphal arches. Each space of ephemeral architecture assigned to the classes was a set characterized by different composition genres related to the *curriculum* of the classes. There were also objects, like for example the mathematical and optical instruments. For the decoration of a

² J. Loach « Jesuit Emblematics and the Opening of the School Year at the Collège Louis-le-Grand », *Emblematica*, vol. 1, n°1, 1995, p. 133-176.

³ “[...] à chaque arcade était pendu un emblesme, & à chaque Pilastre un Enigme au dessous desquelles estoient diverses sortes de Compositions, Epigrammes, Acrostiches, Croix, Arbres, Autels, Pyramides, Eschelles, Colomnes, Cercles, Aigles, Estendards, Temples, Noms de IESUS, qui contenoit toutes sortes de vers, escrits partie en or, partie en vermillon”. Bourges, 1622.

Pyramid erected in the Poitiers college courtyard, the Class of Humanities had placed two mirrors on the face assigned to them. Owing to an optical effect these mirrors reflected Christ's face and the face of St. Ignatius; they were accompanied by inscriptions which are not transcribed in the book. The explanation of this image (which is a natural enacted image) was offered by a student on the day of the explanations. Today, the intention of my paper is not to explore their meaning, but to show how tridimensional instruments are often incorporated into the image-text amalgam.

To show this emblematic set of images, objects, texts as well as their functioning in the festival, I have chosen two examples of the decoration in the Poitiers and Bourges colleges [Fig. 2-3].

		Procession		Cour des Classes			
				Faces de la Pyramide de saint Ignace		Faces de la Pyramide de saint Fr.-Xav.	
Ville	Classe	Sujet Étendard principal Recto/Verso	Inscriptions Recto/Verso	Décoration principale	Sujet(s) général (aux)	Décoration principale	Sujet(s) général (aux)
Poitiers	V	Vie saint Ignace/ Vie saint François-Xavier	Non précisées			Prosopopée des 4 Parties du Monde	Les bienfaits de la Compagnie dans les 4 parties du monde
	IV	Allégorie: saint Ignace/ Allégorie : saint François-Xavier	Distique pour le roi/ Inscription				
	III	Vie saint Ignace/ Vie saint François-Xavier	Inscription Inscription	Armoiries et inscriptions	Dédicaces au roi, au pape, etc.		
	II	Vie saint Ignace/ Vie saint François-Xavier	Sentence d'Ignace de Loyola/ Sentence de François-Xavier	2 Miroirs/2 inscriptions n.p.	Humanité de Jésus-Christ		
	Rhétorique	Allégorie : Renouveau des Lettres grâce aux saints	Non précisée	Thèses en forme de paradoxes	Non précisé		
	Philosophes	Allégorie : Renouveau des Sciences grâce aux saints	Inscription	Allégorie : saint Ignace + inscript.	Mission de la Compagnie de Jésus		

2. Emblematic set in Poitiers.

In the decoration of the pyramids in the courtyard of Poitiers college, we can notice the difference in ornament proposed by classes: notably, the first two Grammar classes present thematic inscriptions without images. This is not the rule; indeed, in Bourges, each class had

been trying to combine verbal and visual elements. In the emblematic sets the composition of their elements was systematic and hierarchical. This is illustrated by the example of decoration in Bourges [fig. 3].

		1 ^{ère} Cour des classes		
Ville	Classe	Sujet	Compositions	
Bourges	V	Triomphe de saint Ignace	34 Emblèmes, dont : - 12 <i>chars vers le ciel</i> / vers français, latins, grec (n.p.) - 6 <i>Couronnes triomphales</i> /vers français, latins, grec (n.p.)	
			7 peintures	
	IV	Vertus de saint Ignace (comparées aux vertus de la nature)	Titre général de la galerie	
			Peintures	
			Emblèmes (titre de la série+ <i>picturae</i> + <i>lemmae</i>) : I série. <i>Pierres précieuses de la terre et de la mer</i> II série. <i>Fleurs</i> III série. <i>Arbres</i> IV série. <i>Bêtes farouches</i> V série. <i>Oiseaux</i>	
			2 ^{ème} Cour des classes	
			III	
	Tableaux, emblèmes, énigmes + inscriptions sur des soleils dorés en bois			
	II		Théâtre	
			Portraits « emblématiques » des personnages de l'action. Emblèmes, énigmes, Pyramides, inscriptions grecques, latines, françaises	
Rhétorique		Façade de l'Arc de triomphe qui divise les deux cours		
			Titre général Portraits des saints+devises	
			Statues des saints et du roi+ inscription	
			Tableau : 9 muses et Apollon + devises 8 tableaux : Allégories des vertus de saint Ignace Emblèmes : Villes d'Europe + devises+poésies	
			(Allégorie : Asie) ⁴	
Logique (Philosophie)		Façade de l'Arc de triomphe devant la classe de Logique		
		Intérieur de la classe		
			Machines optique et mécanique	

3. Emblematic set in Bourges college.

We can distinguish in the diagram the emblematic series composed by Grammar classes. The second set of emblems in particular (*Vertus de saint Ignace*), reminds us the theme of a book of Pierre Dinet, *Cinq livres des Hiéroglyphiques, où sont contenus les plus rares secrets de la nature, & proprieté de toutes choses* (Paris, 1614), a hieroglyphic explanation that gives a global inventory of the world. So, this gallery decorated by the Class of Grammar, displays a principal title (*Titre galerie*), then the title of each series (*sujets*) of

emblems which was composed by the *picturae* with motto, like it's shown into the diagram

Classe	Thème	Titre galerie	Sujets	Titre des séries
IV	Vertus de saint Ignace	<i>Sanctissime Europae nostrae cultor Ignati, quid quid fulgoris in gemmis, odoris in floribus, viriditatis in arboribus, suavitatis in avibus, virium in brutis, totum illud tibi, tuis accomodatum laudibus, secunda Grammatica schola Apotheosi, tuae gratulabunda dat, dicat, consecrat.</i>	I série. Pierres précieuses	<i>Ditissimo gratiarum omnium possessori Ignatio corona gemmea</i>
			II série. Fleurs	<i>Florentissimo virtutum omnium amatori Ignatio florum messis lectissima</i>
			III série. Verger d'arbres les plus célèbres	<i>Studiosissimo tenellarum arborum, hoc est inventutis exultori Ignatio vernans alboretum</i>
			IV série. Bêtes farouches	<i>Fortissimo vitiorum omnium domitori Ignatio ferae cicures</i>
			V série. Oiseaux	<i>Piissimo divinarum rerum contemplatori cantus avium suavissimi</i>

[Fig. 4].

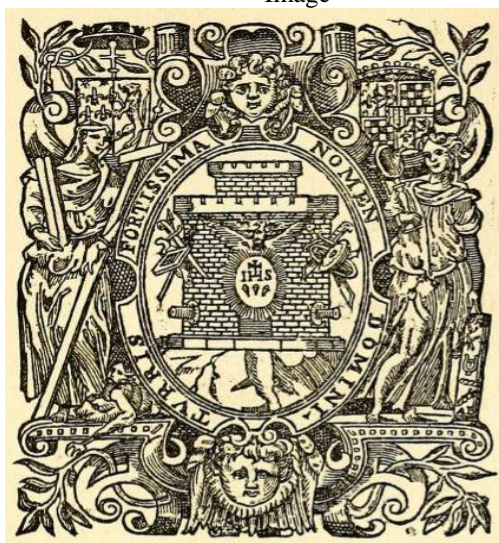
The verbal exercise combined with the emblems was to compare the virtues of the saints with natural virtues of the elements of nature (precious stones, flowers, trees, animals, birds). We can assume that the performances were greatly varied, but it is sometimes difficult to understand the rules of the game. Anyway, the comparison between objects of the real with abstract concepts was the most common pedagogical game.

Regarding the sources of the compositions, I will show some examples to demonstrate their unpredictable variety. The image of a standard carried in procession in Bourges seems to have been copied from a publisher's mark!

Text

huiet Anges tout couverts de pierrieres: Ce Guidon estoit d'un taffetas bleu bordé de frange d'argent, en l'un des costez estoit peint S. Ignace environné de rayons, tenant d'une main un bouclier, dans lequel estoit représenté une tour avec un Nom de IESVS au milieu, & au sommet un mouton portant une petite enseigne avec ceste inscription tout au tour du bouclier, *Nomen Domini turris fortissima*: de l'autre main il tenoit un Heliotrope contemplant le Soleil avec ceste devise

Image



Déclaration de ce qui s'est fait à Bourges touchant la Solemnité de la Canonisation de Saint Ignace de Loyola..., Bourges : Maurice Levez, 1622, p. 10

In addition, the association between two sources of a diverse repertoire was almost the norm: for example, inscriptions from pagan authors may accompany a sacred image, and vice versa. The compositions were not engraved, but they were oil paintings, which would sometimes cause problems of interpretation when these pictures were not made by professional painters. I will show you the example of the description of an emblem where the author confuses something probably representing strings with mountain slopes!

Au costé droiten l'intercolonne vne statuë de Mars Gaulois , en bronze , avec son escu sur la cuisse ; à vn parterre synople parsemé de fleurs , duquel s'esleue vn lyon d'or , armé & langpassé degueulles , en la table de son pieddestail , le neud Gordien sur le feste d'un mont , & vn bras armé sortant d'une nuée qu'il coupe d'un reuers , & ce mot **VIRTUTE RESOLVO.**

Le triomphe des saints Ignace de Loyola, Fondateur de la Compagnie de Jésus, et François Xavier apostre des Indes. Au collège royale de la mesme compagnie à la Flèche..., La Flèche : Louys Hebert, 1622, p. 32.



Virtute Resolvo (C. Paradin, *Devises héroïques*, Lyon, éd. 1557)

As in the regular school festivals, but even more amplified, this time of pedagogical entertainment for students and for external people during the celebration of 1622 also had a political and apologetic purpose, because it aimed to put the spotlight on students from illustrious families, and it was above all a glorification of the pedagogical primacy of the Society of Jesus in the city. However, more importantly, this system is emblematic festival seeks anytime senses and intellectual and interpretive faculties of every man. In other words, the Jesuit festival, through emblematic expression as a hermeneutical tool, demonstrates to man the greatness of his will. In this way, optical and mathematical instruments in the symbolic system of the Jesuit festivals have a hermeneutic value that reflects the search for a physical and metaphysical or spiritual point of view to new experience, knowledge and

apprehension of the world. In this sense, Jesuit spirituality can be likened to modern thought, as illustrated by Bacon and Descartes.

For pastoral purposes, emblems provided support for preachers. The emblems displayed during the celebrations were explicated in the sermons. In this case the composition could be disconnected from the emblematic system to which it belongs; for example: an emblem detached from a series suddenly allows to illustrate another system, like the sermon of a preacher. The authors of books describe inscriptions, anagrams, emblems as “ silent preachers to whom the priest lent his voice”, recalling that they were used for the sermons of Jesuit priests, and also for the sermons of preachers of other religious orders that have come to pay tribute to the new Jesuit saints.

It is well-known that the role of pictures like *Biblia pauperum*, “Bible of the Poor”, acquired a great importance in the Catholic Reformation; furthermore, the word-image compositions were already used in the ancient practice of preaching by itinerant friars or in the decoration of churches. This tradition continued and signed the success of catholic missions; it was promoted, above all, by Jesuits. In Jesuit festivities, this particular use of emblem is in the processions. In processions, as in the courtyard, Classes were in groups and each group developed a theme expressed by emblems, inscriptions, pictures paraded in procession with *living emblems*, as Alison Saunders calls them, that are, in the case of the ceremonies I've studied, students disguised in angels, virtues, vices, accompanied by music of instrumental bands or by litanies. Paulette Choné suggested that I should I see these processions of images and of sound like a cinematic sermons. I would like to present a particular example of cinematic sermon that sheds light on how to use the figurative expression for pastoral purposes and on the type of composition effective for this purpose. This is an example of the procession of Rennes. In the diagram [Fig. 6] we see the composition of the first group of the procession, the sixteenth class. On the first banner the inscription is literally *illustrated* by his *Pictura* (*Corde*, in latin means Heart; and Mundo is the Purity which is represent by a lily)

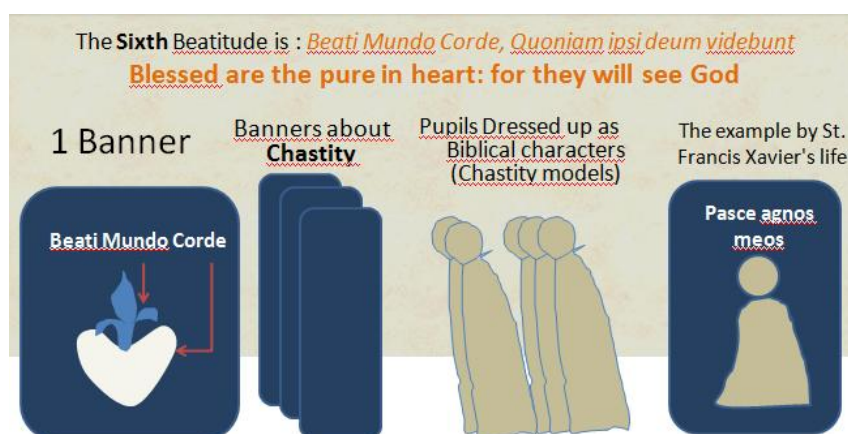


Fig. 6. Diagram of the first group in the procession (Bourges, 1622).

In the celebrations of Bourges or of Poitiers, and then, in more complex ways, in other cities, I noticed another phenomenon; some major paintings brought in procession are then exposed in the courtyard and explained by students. In other words, we can observe a visual and conceptual link welded by emblems between the procession and the decoration of the courtyard. For instance, this is the case of major paintings by the Rhetoricians and by the Philosophers in Poitiers. Here is the example of the picture carried in procession by the Class of Philosophy, of which we have found an engraved reproduction [Fig. 7].



This painting was not exposed on the face of the pyramid decorated by the Class of Philosophy, where there was another picture whose subject is perfectly in harmony with the painting of the procession. Indeed it represented, I quote the author: "Archimedes measured the earth and St. Ignatius aims even higher, at the top of the pyramid." The inscription was the *motto* of the Society of Jesus: *AMDG*.

Conclusions

This unity of compositions we can find in seventeenth century Jesuit festivals seems to confirm Daniel S. Russel's thesis about the *mens emblematica* which governs the organization and invention of solemn entries. Indeed, in a recent essay, « Les entrées royales et

l'emblématique»⁵, where he studied the festival account of the entry of Henri II into Lyon in September 1548, he demonstrated the similarity between the emblem books and solemn entries of the sixteenth century; and he noticed that like entries, emblem books of the same period do not constitute a unified and systematic assemblage, unlike thematic collections of emblems we begin to see from the seventeenth century. The celebrations for canonization of 1622, like the entries of the seventeenth century not only unveil a *mens emblematica*, but they offer main examples of *emblematic series*.

We have seen that when it comes to feasts, every emblem is an interactive element of an emblematic set connected with other sets. For instance, an emblematic set could be a triumphal arch, a pyramid, an ephemeral “machine” or a space in the courtyard of a college, defined by its material boundaries; but it could be also a procession or a part of it, where limits of “architecture” identify its components, processes of making sense. All the “emblematic sets” are in connection and give back the main concepts of the feast or the *imago/image* of the feast, like into a *fractal pattern*. In fact, for example, pyramids or triumphal arches are not only the material support for emblematic sets, but they are the enacted symbolic elements in a larger whole. Moreover, colors, music, costumes, odors, inscriptions, pictures in the feast are a gathering of distinct elements and common objects of our perception (*Anschaung*) or of our thought, which seem be charged with “emblematic energy”. “Energy”, or ἐνέργεια, in the Latin translation: *evidentia* or *demonstration*, was in the Classic Antiquity, a task of rhetoric which attempted to “place before the eyes” the discourse, to capture the audition. It must be kept in mind here that in the Early Modern Age the ἐνέργεια is a practice of the mimetic invention concerning rhetoric, poetic and visual art. The energy makes present what is absent. The emblem *in action* commits users and viewers, in one word “the souls”, to a “poly-sensory” experience which aims to trigger emotional and intellectual reaction; this is to my mind the rhetorical intention, which is to say “persuasion”, in the seventeenth-century sense. Persuasion also implies acting and converting the physical and spiritual point of view: this is the manner of proceeding of *Exercices spirituels*. Although I have not tried to conduct a rigorous classification of the types and genre of emblematic compositions I’ve found in the feast, I wanted to emphasize in my paper, through a number of examples, the variety of “emblematic manifestations” in multi-media events. This survey

⁵ D. S. Russell, « Les entrées royales et l’«emblématique», » in *Vérité et fiction dans les entrées solennelles à la Renaissance et à l’âge classique*. Ed. John Nassichuk. Laval: PUL, 2009, p. 297-306.

encourages us to continue the search from this perspective, in viewing the emblem, through the prism of the Jesuit feast, as not a rigid genre.

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