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ON THE PRESENCE OF ALCIATO'S EMBLEMS IN THE WORK OF BALTASAR DE VITORIA, DISCIPLE OF FRANCISCO SÁNCHEZ DE LAS BROZAS

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Introduction

Among the multitude of changes that occurred in Europe during the long period of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries, was one that proved of crucial importance to the academic world: the entry of the Greek language into the school curriculum. The interest in Greek had begun some time before, for the Italian city-states had close trade ties with the decadent Byzantine Empire. However, not until the fall of Constantinople (1453) and the subsequent disappearance of the Empire did the arrival of Byzantine scholars in the European West (especially the Italian city-states) increase. Those scholars brought with them original works that until then either were unknown or had only been known through indirect references and / or through Latin translations. The *Planudean Anthology*, a collection of Greek epigrams and occasional poems collected in seven books of different length, was among them.¹ The compilation written by Planudes

¹ Sagrario López Poza, "La difusión y recepción de la *Antología Griega* en el Siglo de Oro", in ed. Begoña López Bueno, *En torno al canon: aproximaciones y estrategias (VII Encuentro Internacional sobre Poesía del Siglo de Oro)* (Sevilla: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad-Grupo PASO, 2005), pp. 15-68 (pp. 17-18): "Así como muchos estudiosos identifican *Antología Griega* con *Antología Palatina*, para quienes nos interesamos en el Siglo de Oro es muy importante precisar que los autores con los que trabajamos sólo pudieron conocer la versión

in 1303 was saved from Constantinople by Janus Lascaris who printed it in Florence in 1494. Thanks to the moralizing and miscellaneous nature of these short poems and epigrams, the collection was soon used as a handbook in the classroom, for which it was perfectly suited.² But the educational interest of the anthology was not limited to the exposition of moral values, as it offered additional advantages to the young pupil, particularly its use both as a tool for the acquisition of the Greek language, and as a translation tool to improve the Greek and Latin languages.³

Among the Latin translators of the *Planudean Anthology* a major figure was Andrea Alciato (1492–1550), an Italian humanist who by 1522 had already composed a little book titled *Emblemata* in which he presented some Greek adages in his translation.⁴ These so-called emblems lacked the picture, which was to be added some years later:⁵ they were mere epigrams—although they could assume some other forms such as the sonnet, the *octava real* and even prose in the modern languages—, that is, a brief poem, mostly composed of elegiac distichs, of varied themes and of established literary tradition.⁶ Alciato, an enthusiast of the Horatian statement “*ut pictura poesis*”,⁷ took advantage of the symbolic thinking and of the characteristic epigrammatic role of the epigrams to offer painters models from which to create drawings and engravings.⁸ And thus the idea

planudea, pues el manuscrito palatino, aunque fue hallado en 1606 o 1607 por Salmasius, no llegó a ser impreso hasta finales del siglo XVIII”.

² The *Planudean Anthology* was compiled to serve as an educational text, and it has been used as such; see López Poza, “La difusión y recepción”, p. 35.

³ López Poza, “La difusión y recepción”, p. 36.

⁴ As early as 1522 Alciato had finished an anthology of poems called *Emblemata* and had it in mind to publish a second one the next year. Neither of them has survived, perhaps because they never passed from manuscript to print; see Mino Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato. Il Libro degli Emblemi secondo le edizioni del 1531 e del 1534* (Milan: Adelphi Edizioni, 2009), p. xx.

⁵ Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, pp. xvi–xvii; José Pascual Buxó, “El resplandor intelectual de las imágenes: jeroglífica y emblemática”, in AA.VV., *Juegos de Ingenio y Agudeza. La pintura emblemática de la Nueva España* (Mexico: Ediciones del Equilibrista, S. A. de C. V. y Turner Libros, 1994), pp. 30–54 (p. 33).

⁶ See Pascual Buxó, “El resplandor intelectual de las imágenes”, p. 32 and Jesús Ureña Bracero, “Alciato y el poder de la palabra: Poesía, Retórica y Jeroglíficos”, *Anuario de Estudios Filológicos*, XXIV (2001), 437–51 (p. 439).

⁷ On the *topos* see Antonio García Berrio, *Ut poesis pictura. Poética del arte visual* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1988); on Alciato’s interpretation see Gabriele *Andrea Alciato*, p. xxvi; Ureña Bracero, “Alciato y el poder de la palabra”, p. 438.

⁸ See Ureña Bracero, “Alciato y el poder de la palabra”, p. 439, and Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, pp. xvi–xvii.

of their being used as models for subsequent drawings influenced the composition of Alciato's emblems.⁹ Several years later (1529), Alciato published the *Selecta Epigrammata Graeca*, a volume which contains a collection of 30 adages to which he added many of his translations of others Greek epigrams.¹⁰

Alciato, convinced that the visual or descriptive nature of the epigrams and their concise and sententious character would be very helpful in the educational process—an idea which shared with his friend Erasmus—¹¹, followed the model of the latter's *Adagia* when he composed an additional 75 adages to join the first 30. So, with these 105 emblems, he published what came to be considered the first edition of his *Emblemata* (Augsburg, 1531).¹² The book would have consisted only of written poems and would have lacked pictures, if Heinrich Steyner, the German editor of the first edition, had not come up with the idea of embedding an illustration in each of the poems, an inspiration that changed the history of both the book and the emblem.¹³ As a result of the adding of pictures, the book became an instant best-seller, to the point that it was reprinted four times between 1531—the first edition—, and 1551—the last authorized one—and to the point that the concept of what an emblem was changed also forever.¹⁴ From that moment on an emblem was to be the coining of a unique concept in a triple structure—the *forma triplex*—combining an image, a title and a text.¹⁵

⁹ Pascual Buxó, “El resplandor intelectual de las imágenes”, p. 33: “Si los epigramas publicados en la edición príncipe de 1531 hubieran sido realmente concebidos por Alciato como parte integrante del emblema *triplex*, entonces su editor no tenía por qué tomar la iniciativa de hacerlos ilustrar, ya que tales ilustraciones no podían tener el carácter de imágenes virtuales o subsidiarias, sino el de ser un componente insuprimible del complejo texto icónico-verbal”.

¹⁰ Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, p. xiii.

¹¹ López Poza, “La difusión y recepción”, p. 56.

¹² Thanks to the success of this first edition he kept adding emblems up to the number of 210 in the 1551 edition. The book's many editions and reprints during the author's life are evidence of its great success in sixteenth-century Europe; see Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, pp. xiii–xxv.

¹³ For the different versions of this phenomenon, see Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, pp. xxv–xxxvii.

¹⁴ For a brief explanation of all of them, see <https://www.mun.ca/Alciato/bib11.html>.

¹⁵ See Peter Maurice Daly, *Emblem Theory. Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre* (Nendeln/Liechtenstein: KTO Press, 1979), p. 22. Though the quantity and diversity of works that are called “emblem books” is such that it is very difficult to give a satisfactory definition [José Julio García Arranz, *Symbola et emblemata avium. Las aves y los libros de emblemas y*

The success was such that, from his very death in 1550, Alciato was regarded a classic and his work considered worthy of commentaries by humanists, notable among them Claude Mignault (1574) and Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, el Brocense (1554).¹⁶

Both commentaries by Mignault and El Brocense were a very rich source for poets, orators, priests, teachers and educated people in general, as was Alciato's work in its own right.¹⁷ They provided the reader with a collection of epigrams in Latin and Greek, and versions and explanations by ancient and/or modern authorities of the *topoi* used by Alciato. And thus they had certain advantages over the original work, because they provided more information that could be used to translate, imitate, comment, and exercise *aemulatio* and *contaminatio*.¹⁸

One of the readers of Alciato via Mignault's and El Brocense's commentaries was the Franciscan friar Baltasar de Vitoria, who studied at the University of Salamanca where he attended the lectures of El Brocense, Professor of Rethoric and Greek: "[...] y oyendo yo Retórica en Salamanca al más insigne hombre que en aquellos tiempos uvo en aquella facultad, que fue el Maestro Francisco Sánchez, Catedrático de propiedad de aquella Universidad [...]" (Vitoria 1620, p. 806). Furthermore, Vitoria regarded El Brocense as his "magister" for he calls him several times either "mi gran maestro" (Vitoria 1623, p. 15), "mi maestro" (Vitoria 1620, pp. 280 and 566; 1623, pp. 50 and 352) or "el maestro Sánchez Brocense" (Vitoria 1620, pp. 115, 389, 397, 414; 1623, pp. 3, 36, 50, 103, 119).¹⁹ He learned of the existence of Alciato's *Emblemata* in El

empresas de los siglos XVI y XVII (A Coruña: SIELAE, 2010), pp. 17–23], up to this moment, by emblem was understood the expression of an idea through an iconographical poem, as used by Alciato (Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, pp. xvi–xvii).

¹⁶ López Poza, "La difusión y recepción", pp. 57–58. On the date of composition see Luis Merino Jeréz and Jesús Ureña Bracero, "On the Date of Composition of *El Brocense's Commentaria in Alciati Emblemata*", *Emblematica*, 13 (2003), 73–96.

¹⁷ Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, p. xxvi; Ureña Bracero, "Alciato y el poder de la palabra", p. 438; López Poza, "La difusión y recepción", pp. 56 and 60.

¹⁸ See López Poza, "La difusión y recepción", p. 60.

¹⁹ Very little is known of Vitoria's life apart from the data provided by himself in the *Theatro* and by some others (for example, Jacobo de Castro in his *Primera parte de el Árbol Chronológico de la Santa Provincia de Santiago* of 1722, 115, *Segunda parte de el Árbol Chronológico de esta Santa Provincia de Santiago* of 1727, *Rmo. P. N., s. p., "al lector", s. p.*, pp. 211, 258, 453–4, 464, 565, 614). For further details see Belén Tejerina, "Los 'Cincuenta y nueve Emblemas' de Baltasar de Vitoria que no se llegaron a publicar", *Cuadernos Bibliográficos*, 31 (1974), 253–8 (pp. 253–5), and Belén Tejerina, "El 'De Genealogia Deorum Gentilium' en

Brocense's lectures²⁰, and later used the latter's commentary when composing the two volumes of his mythographic collection the *Theatro de los dioses de la gentilidad*.²¹ This work, published in two parts (1620 and 1623), is formed of thirteen books where he explains everything known by him about the pagan divinities. The first part (books I–VI) focuses on Saturn, Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto, Apollo and Mars; the second (books VII–XIII), covers Mercury, Hercules, Juno, Minerva, Diana, Venus, and minor gods such as Fortune, Fame and Hope.

In the writing of this catalogue, addressed to fellow friars, Vitoria used every resource available to him, specially polyantheas, school commentaries on the authors, books of emblems and/or comments on them, among which undoubtedly was the commentary on Alciato by El Brocense. Thus Vitoria was linked in a chain of transmission to Alciato

una mitografía española del s.^o XVII: 'El Teatro de los Dioses de la Gentilidad' de Baltasar de Vitoria", *Filología Moderna*, 55, n. 1 (1975), 591-601; Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, "Baltasar de Vitoria y su interpretación de la mitología", in *Actas de las VI Jornadas de Arte: La visión del mundo clásico en el arte español, Madrid, 1–18 de diciembre de 1992* (Madrid: Alpuerto, 1993), pp. 213–22 (p. 215); and Cirilo García Román, "Los amores de Marte y Venus en el *Theatro de los Dioses de la Gentilidad* de Fray Baltasar de Vitoria: I", in Mădălina Strehie, coord., *Războiul, Arta Zeilor și a Eroilor. Lucrările colocviului internațional "Receptarea antichității Greco-Latine în culturile europene. Ediția a VIII-a"*, Craiova, 28 mai 2016 (Craiova: Editura Universitaria Craiova, 2016), pp. 169-92 (pp. 169–73). Throughout our work we will quote from the following editions: *Primera Parte. Theatro de los Dioses de la Gentilidad* (Salamanca: en casa de Antonia Ramirez, 1620), in [https://goo. gl/JtF2yR](https://goo.gl/JtF2yR), and *Segunda Parte del Theatro de los Dioses de la Gentilidad* (Salamanca: en casa de Diego Cussio, 1623), in [https://goo. gl/z8H7ip](https://goo.gl/z8H7ip)

²⁰ López Poza, "La difusión y recepción", p. 58: "El libro se convirtió en texto universitario, como reza en la licencia de la siguiente edición, de 1596: *es libro que se lee en las Universidades*".

²¹ Under the name of Treasure or Theatre many authors collected all knowledge at hand about a subject. Together with the polyantheas, they were the form of the encyclopedic knowledge of the time: see Sagrario López Poza, "Los libros de emblemas como "tesoros" de erudición auxiliares de la *inventio*", in eds. Rafael Zafra y José Javier Azanza, *Emblemata aurea. La emblemática en el Arte y la Literatura del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Akal, 2000), pp. 236-79; and Carmen Galán Rodríguez and María Isabel Rodríguez Ponce, "Emblemas y arte de memoria en el *Tesoro* de Covarrubias: perspectivas semióticas", *Signa*, 22 (2013), 291–316. For an overview on commentaries see Jean Céard, "De l'encyclopédie au commentaire, du commentaire à l'encyclopédie: le temps de la Renaissance", in ed. Roland Schaer, *Tous les savoirs du monde: encyclopédies et bibliothèques de Sumer au XX^e siècle* (Paris: BNF, 1996), pp. 164–9.

and El Brocense, thanks to the fact that the emblems of the Italian and the explanations of the Spaniard complied perfectly with the encyclopaedic nature of the *Theatro*. And so he would turn to the authority of one or both, either individually or together. In the case of Alciato alone, the Franciscan cites him 133 times and, in El Brocense's twenty times on his own, and both together only eight times (for the emblems numbered 8, 14, 69, 76, 98, 137, 141 and 210). This last category is the most interesting because, although their connection was that of teacher and pupil, their different personalities and the dissimilar nature of their works create some curious links between several of the common topics.²² And so, an issue explained by Alciato, with an exclusive goal in mind, via what Juan Luis Vives calls a "commentarius in aliud" would acquire a new interpretation thanks to its being explained by El Brocense's humanistic commentary.²³ Explanations which were fitted to a different kind of work were used by Vitoria in order to assert several characteristics of the pagan gods in his *Theatro*. And thus, they could be used (i) to give cultural continuity to the reference (emblems 14, 210, 69 and 76), (ii) to restrict the information (emblem 141), (iii) to display the knowledge acquired through wide reading (emblem 137), and (iv) to highlight the place in the cultural history of Alciato (emblems 98 and 8).²⁴

²² The simple act of quoting creates a complex system of relationships between the two texts; see Antoine Compagnon, *La Seconde main or la travail de la citation* (Paris: Sevil, 1979), p. 56.

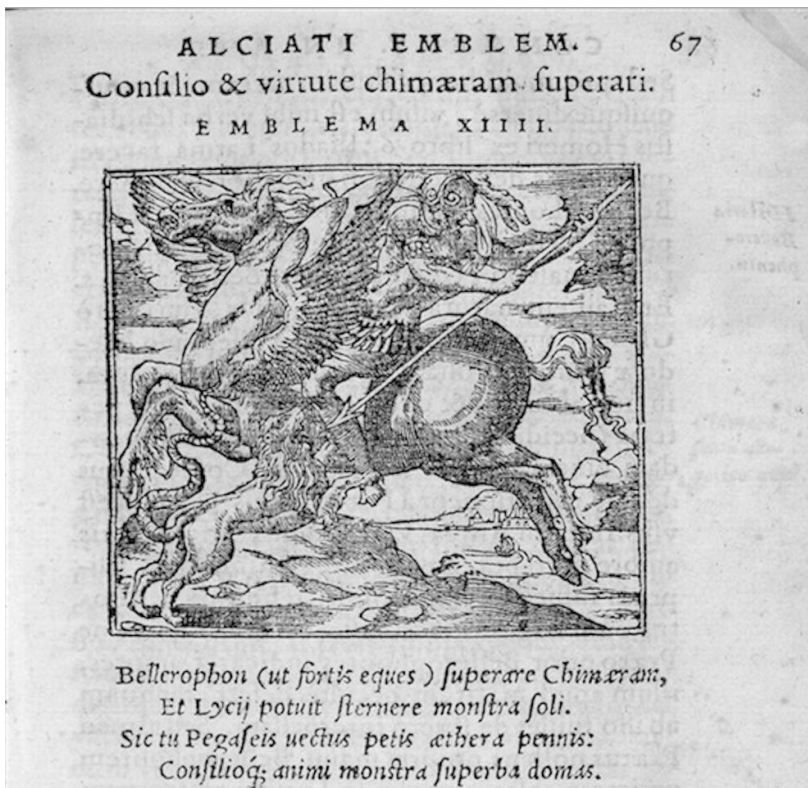
²³ See Jesús Ureña Bracero, "Tipología de los comentarios del Brocense a los *Emblemas* de Alciato", in ed. Sagrario López Poza, *Florilegio de Estudios de Emblemática. A florilegium of studies on Emblematics. Actas del VI Congreso Internacional de Emblemática de The Society for Emblem Studies. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on The Society for Emblem Studies* (Ferrol: Sociedad de Cultura Valle Inclán, 2004), pp. 53–660 (p. 655).

²⁴ We do not respect the numerical order of the emblems established by Alciato, since the criteria followed in this paper refer to the role they play in Vitoria's text; the importance of the reference lies not so much in whose the quote is, but on what basis and in what way it is used (see Stefan Morawski, "The basic functions of quotation", in ed. Julien Greimass Algirdas *et al.*, *Sign, Language, Culture, Signe, Langage, Culture, Znak, Język, Kultura, Знак, Язык, Квильтура* (The Hague/Paris: Mouton, 1970), pp. 690–705 (p. 690). Though, according to Juan Manuel Díaz Lavado, "Tipología y función de las citas homéricas en el *De audiendis poetis* de Plutarco", in ed. Manuela García Valdés, *Actas del III Simposio Español sobre Plutarco: Oviedo 30 de abril a 2 de mayo de 1992* (Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 1994), pp. 681–96 (p. 691), it is not always easy to establish the type of value that a reference has because it can perform more than one function at a time.

(i) Cultural continuity

On the 14th emblem²⁵:

Fig. 1: *Emblema XIII*



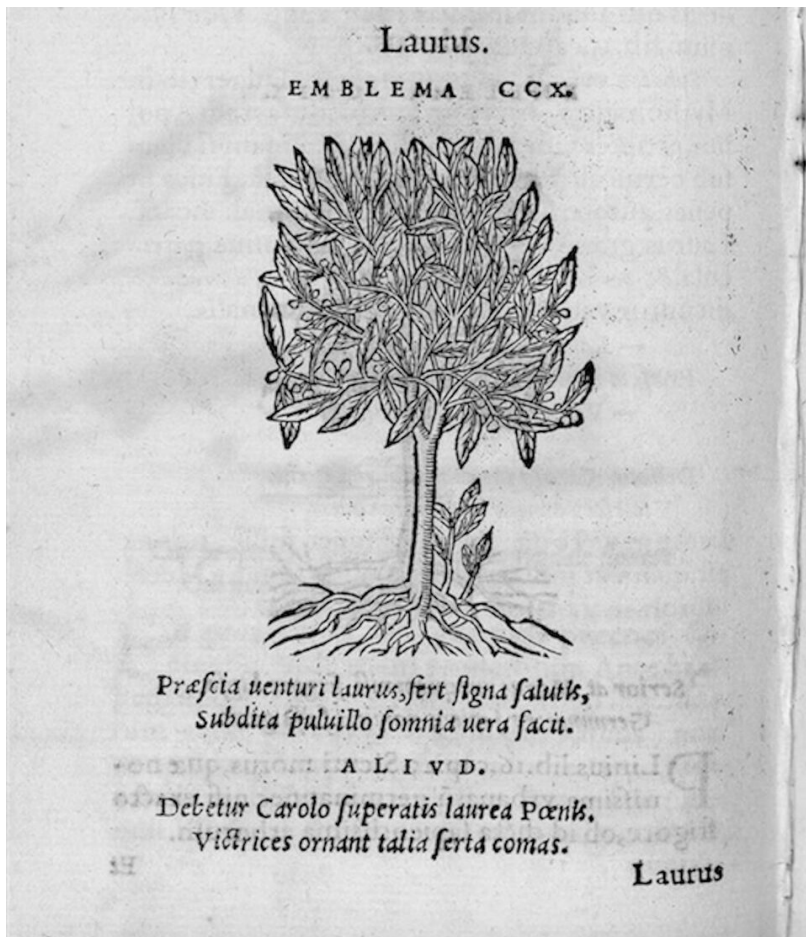
²⁵ INSCRIPTIO VEL TITULUS: *Consilio & virtute Chimæram superari*. EPIGRAMMA: *Bellerophon ut fortis eques / superare Chimaeram / Et Lycii potuit sternere monstra soli: / Sic tu Pegaseis vectus petis aethera pennis, / consilioque animi monstra superba domas.*

Vitoria, in Book III, dedicated to Neptune, in Chapter xi (*De Medusa, y de Tyro, amigas de Neptuno*), refers to Alciato and El Brocense to confirm the truth of the myth of Bellerophon. So he first offers El Brocense's version in his commentary on the *Emblems* to research that the Medusa was the mother of Pegasus (“Cum autem [Bellerophon] accepisset a Neptuno Medusae Gorgonis filiae Pegasus alatum equum, in hoc aufugit” [Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 68]): “Esto trata muy bien el Maestro Francisco Sanchez, sobre las Emblemas de Alciato” (Vitoria 1620, p. 397); and a few lines further down he presents Alciato's account to certify the accuracy of the Bellerophon myth: “Lo que toca al cauallo, digo que estando beuiendo en la fuente Pirene, le cogio Belerofonte, y fue con el à matar la Chimera, como lo dize Andreas Alciato” (Vitoria 1620, p. 397).²⁶

²⁶ The edition of El Brocense's commentary we quote from is *Francisci Sanctii Brocensis commentaria in Andreae Alciati Emblemata* (Lugduni: apud Gulielmum Rouillium, 1573).

On the 210th emblem²⁷:

Fig. 2: *Emblema CCX*



²⁷ INSCRIPTIO VEL TITULUS: LAURUS. EPIGRAMMA: *Praescia venturi Laurus, fert signa salutis / Subdita puluillo somnia vera facit. || Aliud || Debetur Carolo superatis laurea Poenis: / Victrices ornant taliaserta comas.*

Vitoria uses this emblem of the bay tree in Book V on Apollo (Vitoria 1620, p. 828) to maintain, through the direct quoting of Alciato, the cultural continuity of the reference that the laurel is the image of health and/or salvation, as was maintained by tradition: “Y assi Alciato en la Emblema del Laurel, le pone por título: *Emblema salutis*”. For its part, the quotation of El Brocense, explaining both whence and for what purpose Vitoria has taken the Latin sentence: “*Laurum baculum gesto*. Y el Brocense lo trae en la emblema 210 de Alciato [...]”, demonstrates his many readings and how he brings them into play, that is, its function is more ornamental than effective.²⁸

On the 69th emblem:

Vitoria refers twice to this emblem in Chapter ix of the book of Mercury (Vitoria 1623, p. 50), in which he speaks of the loves of Pan with Echo and Syrinx. The second uses a quotation from El Brocense to tell the myth of Narcissus: “Mi Maestro Sanchez Brocense sobre la Emblema sesenta y nueue de Alciato, reduce a historia los amores de Narciso, enamorandose de sí mesmo”; while the first, through El Brocense’s authority, certifies that the name “Narcissus” is related to “narce” (Gr. *νάρκη*) which means “stupor, dizziness”:

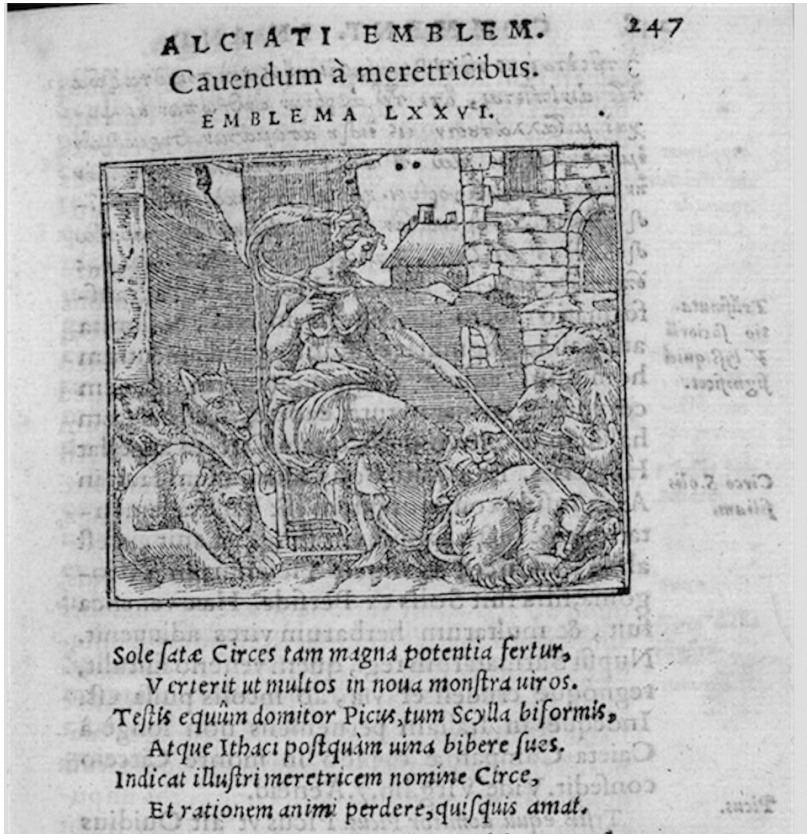
Es palabra griega, segun dize Plinio, y refierelo Ruelio, Claudio Minoe [*sic*], y el Maestro Sanchez sobre la Emblema sesenta y nueue de Alciato (Vitoria 1623, p. 50).

[Emblema autem sumptum est ex ipsa nominis estymologia. Siquidem Narcissus dictus est a Narce, teste Plino, li. 21. cap. 19. Est autem Narce, *νάρκη* sive *νάρκησις*, stupor, torpor, dissolutioque membrorum (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 231)].

²⁸ See Morawski, “The basic functions”, p. 692.

On the 76th emblem:

Fig. 3: *Emblema LXXVI*



Vitoria mentions this emblem three times in Book V in the chapter entitled *De Circe, hija del Sol* (Vitoria 1620, pp. 883, 890 and 892). In the third citation, Vitoria just lists El Brocense among those authors that explain the myth of Circe: “La fabula de Circe cuentan Landino, San Fulgencio, Natal Comite, San Augustin, Diodoro Siculo, Claudio Minoe [*sic*], y el Brocense sobre la Emblema setenta y seys de Alciato” (Vitoria 1620, p. 892).

Of greater interest are, however, the previous two quotations. The first (Vitoria 1620, p. 883) begins the chapter with the first verse of Alciato's emblem: “Andreas Alciato en la emblema setenta y seys llama a Circe hija

del Sol: *Sole satae Circes tam magna potentia fertur*". Although it does not serve to draw attention to the divine nature of Circe, but to her aspect as a prostitute, which is incidentally the image transmitted by Alciato and whose origin goes back to Servius in his commentary on the *Aeneid*.²⁹ The second reference (Vitoria 1620, p. 890) insists on this idea; Vitoria uses the third verse of the epigram—"Y Alciato en la Emblema setenta y seys: *Testis equum domitor, [Picus]*"—to speak of the love of Medea for Picus.

(ii) To restrict the information

On the 141th emblem:

When Vitoria cites the beings protected by Diana in Book VII, Chapter iii, entitled *De cómo el mulo es consagrado a la luna y sus propiedades*, he mentions that Alciato has dedicated the 141th emblem to the mullet and that his *magister* in his commentary explains the characteristics of the fish and its relationships to the bream:

La diferencia, que he conocido en la Orthographia deste nombre es, que quando mulo, se escriue con vna L, significa el mulo, animal terrestre, y quando con dos, significa el pece de quien haze vn Emblema Alciato, y la comenta Claudio Minoe [*sic*], y el Brocense, mi Maestro, y entrambos tratan de su propiedad. Y entre otras tiene esta, que cogiendo en la boca cantidad de peces, y con los que le sobran se sustenta el Sargo que va en su seguimiento, aprouechandose, y sustentandose de sus sobras. Y assi lo trae Alciato a consecuencia de aquellos que se aprouechan de trabajos y sudor agenos [...]. (Vitoria 1623, p. 352)

[Mullum prosequitur. Arist. li. 8. cap. 2. *de nat. ani.* Sargus nulli reliquias sequitur. Nam ubi ille luto excitato abiit (fodere enim potest) hic descendit & pascitur, imbecillioresque, ne eodem adnatent, arcet. Ordo est, Sargus, id est, piscis ille ignavus prosequitur mullum, id est, alium piscem marinum (quem non credas esse barbum, ut vocant Hispani, sed alium maximi precii) qui, sup. Sargus avidus devorat ore spretas praeteritasque dapes ab illo, sup. mullo (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 412)].

It is quite interesting—although this is not the only place where it happens—that Vitoria does not exploit better his teacher's text. In this

²⁹ Servius, *In Aeneid.*, VII, 19: "*Dea saeva*] Aut per se, aut herbis potentibus saeva. Circe autem ideo Solis fingitur filia, quia clarissima meretrix fuit: et nihil est Sole clarius. Haec libidine sua et blandimentis homines in ferinam vitam ab humanam deducebat, ut libidini et voluptatibus operam darent".

example Vitoria explains that Alciato uses this metaphor with the moral intention of broadly criticizing those who take advantage of the labour of others, but he does not point out that his teacher considers the emblem an autobiographical anecdote of Alciato:

Erat quidam Leguleius trivialis (quem tecto nomine Oenocratem, eo quod a vino vinceretur. Nam οἶνος vinum est et κρᾶτέω vinco) qui illa tradebat discipulis, quae Alciatus tamquam vilia spernebat. (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 411).

(iii) To display the knowledge acquired through wide reading

On the 137th emblem:

The following example differs in its logical function from the previous ones. Vitoria, when talking about Hercules's fifth labour in Book VII, Chapter vi (Vitoria 1623, p. 100 and ff.), refers to the 137th emblem of Alciato to point out that El Brocense corrects the traditional and erroneous idea received from the poets of the Ceryneian hind armed with golden antlers, confronting it with reality since the hinds actually do not have horns, a reason for their natural fearfulness:

El no tener cuernos las cieras las haze tambien ser cobardes, y assi se tiene por fabuloso lo que toca a esta materia, de tener cuernos de Oro, y lo aduirtio esto el Maestro Sanchez Brocense, sobre la Emblema 137 de Alciato, y lo defiende Celio Rhodigino, en sus lectiones antiguas. (Vitoria 1623, p. 103)

[Quartus, cerva aëri pes, id est, velocissima in monte Maenalo, quae, quia cornibus aureis erat insigni, divitiarum est emblema. Hanc cursu superavit Hercules. Sunt tamen qui dicant inepte fictum a poetis cervas aurea cornua habere, cum omnino cornibus careant. Sed contra hos disputat Caelius Rhodigino (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, pp. 403–4)].

So the reference to his “magister” plays more the role of an appeal to authorities, since the validity of the truth of the quotation is accepted by both writer and reader as self-evident, and so needless of any other support.³⁰ A little further, as a closure of Chapter ix, devoted to Hercules's cleansing of the Augean stables, Vitoria again mentions his “magister”:

³⁰ See Morawski, “The basic functions”, p. 692.

Plinio dize que esta fabula tuuo fundamento, en que el Rey Augias fue el que en Grecia inuento el estercar [sic] las tierras, para que con mas fortaleza, y pujança fertilizassen, y diessen el fructo desseado; y Hércules lleuo esta inuencion à Italia, y dio noticia della al hijo de Fauno, y por el prouecho que desto sintio la gente le celebraron por su Dios Estercuciio, o Estercadador. Lo qual toca Seruio en el comento que hace sobre el libro sexto de la *Eneyda* de Virgilio. Tambien toca esta fabula Natal Comite, Claudio Minoe [sic], y el Maestro Sanchez sobre la Emblema ciento y treynta y siete (Vitoria 1623, p. 119).

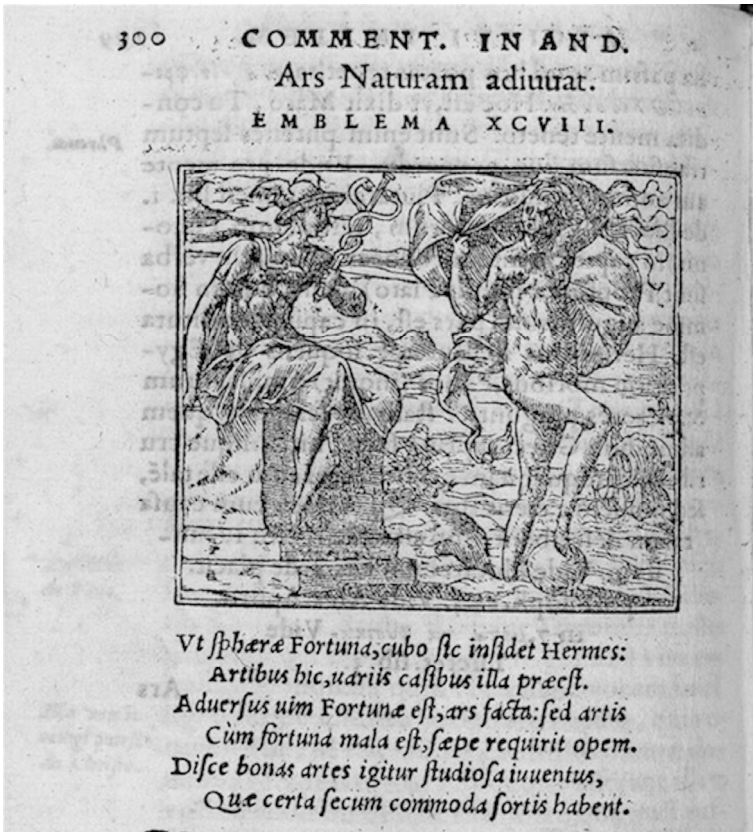
The reference in Vitoria leads one to expect a further development of the story quoted from his “magister”. El Brocense on this point merely states: “Septimus, Augiae stabulam repurgatum. Nihil est enim tam sordidum, quod non eloquentia excolatur” (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 404). But such development is not in itself necessary because it occurs in Natal Comite and Claude Mignault. So the reader can complete the story by reference to the work of the latter. On the other hand, Vitoria uses “tocar” in the sense “Tratar o hablar leve o superficialmente de una materia sin hacer asunto principal de ella”.³¹ Which is just what happens in the text of El Brocense, so further explanation may be seen superfluous.

³¹ *Diccionario de Autoridades* – Tomo VI (1739): TOCAR. Vale tambien tratar, ò hablar de alguna matéria leve, ò superficialmente, sin hacer assunto principal de ella. Lat. *Leviter disserere, tractare*. FR. L. DE LEON, Nombr. de Christ. en el de Esposo. *Tocando* tan solamente las cosas, y como señalandolas desde lexos, porque decirlas enteramente, sería negocio mui largo. NUÑ. Empr. 19. No tratará en un Sermón de materias varias, que es desflorarlas inutilmente, *tocarlas* solo de passo.

(iv) To highlight the place in the cultural history of Alciato

On the 98th emblem:

Fig. 4: *Emblema XCVIII*



The following example which appears in Chapter four of the book dedicated to Mercury has an importance beyond that of all the previous ones. By it Vitoria both highlights the way in which Alciato's 98th emblem portrays the god, and affirms that is different from the others.

No pienso que ay Dios en toda la falsa Diuinidad, que con mayor variedad de figuras fuesse representado, que Mercurio. Y assi no las pondremos aqui todas, sino las mas notables, y de mas consideracion, remitiendo a los

curiosos que quisieren saber mas a Pierio Valeriano, en los *Geroglyphicos*, a Vicencio Cartario, lib. *de Imaginibus Deor.*, à Natal Comite, y a San Fulgencio en sus *Mitologias*. Bien notable es la pintura con que le figuro a Mercurio Andreas Alciato en la Emblema nouenta y ocho, que le pone sentado en vn pedestal, y en compañía de la fortuna. Y este Emblema fue sacado de Galeno en la *Oratio parenetica ad bonas artes*, que esta al principio de sus obras (Vitoria 1623, p. 15).

However, Vitoria, rather than stopping at this detail, adds that the emblem has its origin in a text of Galen—a reference taken from El Brocense that offers a comprehensive, continuous description of the emblem. Thus he notes that Alciato figures Fortune, the supreme symbol of volatility, as a woman, an image that, as his “magister” El Brocense has it, would have more than sufficed to faithfully portray it:

Figura a la Fortuna hecha vn simulacro de inconstancia; y como dize mi gran Maestro el Brocense, basta pintarla en figura de mujer (Vitoria 1623, p. 15)

[...cuius indicare nequitiam cum veteres constituissent, in foemineam speciem exprimere non contenti (quanquam hoc satis aptum erat amentiae signum) (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 300)].

But, says Vitoria, Alciato, not happy with this, adds more attributes that intensify the erratic character of the goddess. And so, the Franciscan continues with the description of the emblem and explains its meaning:

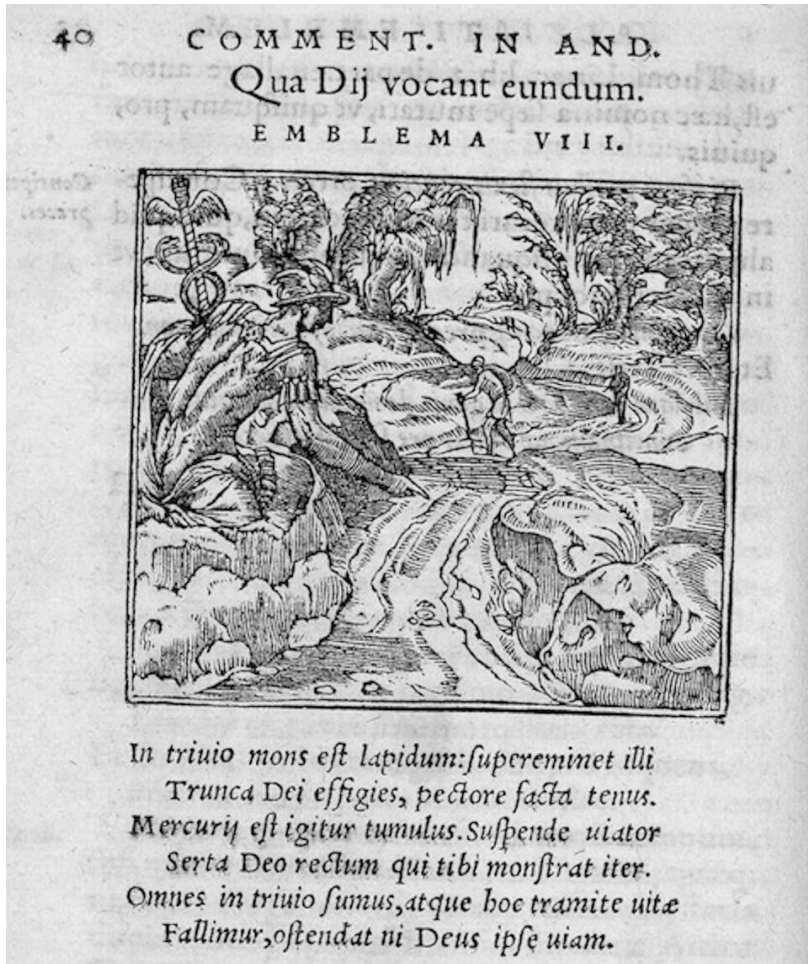
Ponele vn pie sobre vn globo redondo; y la figura espherica, si bien es redonda, no puede, segun reglas de mathematica, asentar mas que sobre un punto; por el mesmo caso no puede tener constancia ni firmeza. Y para menos consistencia, tiene otro pie en la mar, que nunca esta segura, ni firme en un estado, sino yr y venir olas, sin estar queda ni sosegada un momento. Y para ayudar mas a esta inconstancia, le ponen vna vela de nauio en las manos, dandole el viento en popa, que es otro simbolo de la mutabilidad, y poca constancia: pues para tanta variedad, y mutabilidad, pongase vn Mercurio, que con su prudencia, y cordura lo vença todo, vn inuentor de las ciencias, humanas, no en pie sino sentado, para mas firmeza: y el asiento vna peana quadrada, que en ley de Geometria es la figura mas firme y mas estable; y todas estas condiciones de firmeza son opuestas à la mutabilidad de la varia Fortuna, y para vencer todas sus mudanças y variedades (Vitoria 1623, pp. 15–16).

The explanation of the uniqueness of the representation by Alciato is interesting because in a way its novelty is a change in the classic representations of both figures, or at least so thinks Vitoria. And it is important to point it because “la pintura—sostenía Lessing—no es apta para expresar toda la variedad de acciones, emociones y pensamientos humanos, pues sus medios no le permiten más que la representación de *abstracciones personificadas*, esto es, de figuras que para ser reconocidas necesitan conservar de un modo estable los mismos atributos”.³²

³² Pascual Buxó, “El resplandor intelectual de las imágenes”, p. 30.

On the 8th emblem:

Fig. 5: *Emblema VIII*



This last example, also taken from the book of Mercury, is another sample of double citation of an emblem by Alciato via El Brocense. The first reference by Vitoria, in the chapter *De quien fue Mercurio*, just points out that there were many Mercuries as his “magister” had taught him:

Pues dando principio a las cosas del prudente, y sabio Mercurio, digo, que vuo tantos deste nombre, que casi son innumerables, como lo dixo Ciceron, y lo aduirtio el Maestro Sanchez sobre la Emblema 8 de Alciato; pero al que se le atribuyen todas las cosas de los demás es al hijo de Júpiter y Maya (Vitoria 1623, p. 3)

[Mercurii est igitur tumulus. Fuerunt multi Mercurii, sicuti multi Hercules: sed poetae unum faciunt eloquentiae praesidem, Deorum nuntium, mercatorum et furum Deum (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, p. 46)].

The second, in Chapter iii of the same book, *De las varias pinturas del dios Mercurio*, reproduces the text of Alciato *verbatim* with its translation into Spanish³³:

Y la más notable de todas, es la que pone Andreas Alciato, en la Emblema ocho. Y es la figura, no mas que de medio cuerpo arriba, y puesta sobe vn pedazo de columna, quadrada, y al pie della un gran monton de piedras. Y en medio de vna encrucijada de Caminos.

Los versos con que adorno el Emblema son estos:

*In trivio mons est lapidum; supereminet illi
Trunca Dei effigies, pectore facta tenus,
Mercurii est igitur tumulus, suspende viator,
Serta Deo rectum, qui tibi monstrat iter.
Omnes in trivio sumus, atque hoc tramite vitae
Fallimur, ostendat ni Deus ipse viam.*

En vna encrucijada esta una altura,
De piedras, en la qual, aunque desierta,
Asiste de Mercurio vna figura,
De medio cuerpo arriba descubierta:
Tu que passas, guirnalda hazer procura,
A quien te muestra passo y senda cierta:
Todos vamos camino en este valle,
Guienos Dios por la derecha calle.
(Vitoria 1623, pp. 9–10)

The interest of this fragment lies in the way Vitoria describes the image of Mercury. In the chapter dedicated to the different representations

³³ This is a regular feature of Vitoria's and it indicates that his main goal is to be helpful for those who could not read Latin—something quite usual at the time; see Guillermo Serés, "El enciclopedismo mitográfico de Baltasar de Vitoria", *La Perinola*, 7 (2003), 397–421 (p. 398).

of the Roman god as a bust supported on a column at a crossroads, the friar, following his “magister”, though not expressly naming him, establishes that Alciato’s depiction is “la pintura más notable de todas”

Mittebant enim viatores lapides ad pedes Mercurii religionis gratia: atque inde erat, quod simulachrum illud effingebatur pectore tenus, ne opera et sumptus frustra consumeretur in partibus inferioribus elaborandis, quae mox lapidibus essent obruendae. Unde male depicta circumfertur imago in *Emblematibus*. (Sánchez de las Brozas 1573, pp. 45–46)

Curiously Vitoria does not pay attention to El Brocense’s comment on the erroneous depiction of Mercury as a statue in the engravings of the emblems showing the god, while, in this and the previous example, he uses the term “picture” in the same meaning as Alciato as a “descripción o representación viva y animada de personas o cosas por medio de la palabra”.³⁴

In this same fragment, the statement “los versos con que adorno el Emblema son estos” shows that already in this period or, at least, for these two authors, the term “emblem” was understood as consisting in a *inscriptio* (*titulus* or motto) plus a poem and a picture, i.e. the *forma triplex* which became the standard. Despite the fact that the way in which Vitoria provides the original emblem recovers, paradoxically, the pristine model created by Alciato, that is, a title and an epigram with moral value, at the same time he uses the term “pintura”, in this and in the previous example, in the same sense as the Italian humanist.³⁵

And so, though unintentionally, Vitoria recovers the primary meaning of the emblem: a text of iconic character and moral sense which is not accompanied by any *pictura* whatsoever. However, unlike Alciato, he uses the emblem as a descriptive and authoritative element, and not as a creative one, since the description does not constitute, for him, a verbal

³⁴ *Diccionario de Autoridades* – Tomo V (1737) PINTURA. Translaticiamente se toma por la descripción o narración que se hace por escrito o de palabra de alguna cosa, refiriendo menudamente sus circunstancias y calidades: como la pintura de una Ciudad, de una dama, &c. Latín. *Descriptio*. LOP. Peregr. lib. 4. En esta pintura no hai caballo con alas, chimera de Belerophonte, dragones de Medea, manzanas de oro, ni Palacios encantados.

³⁵ Ureña Bracero, “Alciato y el poder de la palabra”, p. 439: “cui titulum feci Emblemata unde pictores, aurifices, fusores id genus conficere possint quae scuta appellamus et petasis figimus vel pro insignibus gestamus qualis anchora Aldi, Columba Frobenii et Calui elephas tam diu parturiens nihil parturiens.”

base that makes possible an iconic product, as in Alciato,³⁶ but serves both as the confirmation of a traditional image collected by the Italian humanist, and as the inspiration for the creation of new discourses.³⁷

As can be seen from the examples above, the use of authority by Vitoria in his *Theatro de los dioses de la gentilidad*, derived from the *Emblemata* of Alciato and El Brocense's commentary, seeks the maintenance of a cultural continuity whose main objective is to provide potential readers with the maximum amount of information. They, therefore, are for the most part references of the ornamental type.³⁸ However, the fact that Vitoria sometimes uses sources extracted from an author to whom he has access via a third party, whom he also cites with respect to the first one, produces a higher number of semiotic and semantic distortions than those which arise from the mere fact of quotation, as can be seen in the last two examples where the references reveal certain paradoxes or contradictions in the Franciscan's understanding of the emblem and the relationship of image and word.³⁹

³⁶ Gabriele, *Andrea Alciato*, p. xlii: "[...] l'ékphrasis o *descriptio* devono costituire la base verbale utile alla realizzazione iconica di un tangibile segno 'geroglifico', di un manufatto artistico materialmente dipinto o forgiato in metallo. In questo modo l'ecfrasi alciatea si trasforma da letterario strumento *descrittivo* a originale congegno *creativo*".

³⁷ See Serés, "El enciclopedismo litográfico", p. 400.

³⁸ See Morawski, "The basic functions", p. 695.

³⁹ See Morawski, "The basic functions", p. 692.