

**Johann Anselm Steiger: Emblematis in Sakralbauten des Ostseeraums.** Bd. 6: Woiwodschaften Westpommern und Pommern (Polen): Kamien Pomorski (Cammin), Szczecin (Stettin), Gdańsk (Danzig), Pelplin, Pruszcz Gdąński (Praust); Bd. 7: Woiwodschaft Ermland-Masuren (Polen) und Oblast Kaliningrad (Russische Föderation): Dabrowno (Gilgenburg), Jaroslawskoje (Schönwalde), Kaliningrad (Königsberg) und Gwardeskoje (Mühlhausen) (Geistliche Intermedialität in der Frühen Neuzeit, Bd. 7–8.) Verlag Schnell & Steiner, Regensburg 2023. 160 S., Ill.; 224 S., Ill. ISBN 978-3-7954-3752-7. (je € 25,–.)

In his critical examination of ancient allegory and its “emblematic shadow of later times,” Johann Gottfried Herder noted: “I wanted us to have a history of these German *Bildersprüche*, with their strangest products.”<sup>1</sup> Now, emblem art has been very well researched, at least since the large exhibition *SinnbilderWelten* in the Bavarian State Library in Munich in 1999.<sup>2</sup> There is a whole series of fundamental works, with regard to their intermedial references<sup>3</sup> as well as detailed individual presentations, which, on one hand, concentrate on thematic and historical contexts, while, on the other, also dealing with “image programs” (*Bildprogrammen*) of individual (printed) works and places.<sup>4</sup>

Spiritual emblematics, especially in its forms and iconographic contexts outside the book, has been considered a desideratum until now. With this two-volume work, Johann Anselm Steiger, a professor of church history at Hamburg University, now presents the results of his research, which was decisively supported by a fellowship from the Alfred Krupp Fellows program for a project entitled “Ars baltico-emblematica. On the Multiformity of Spiritual Emblematics in the Early Modern Baltic Region.” While outstanding allegorical programs in church interiors in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, northern Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast have been intensively studied and historically contextualized, St. deals specifically with examples in the area of the voivodeships of Western Pomerania, Warmia-Masuria, and the Kaliningrad Oblast.

In the first part, volume 6, St. presents his study on the “pulpit as emblematic preacher” using the example of the cathedral at Cammin and its printed models. This is followed by an overview of the losses and the analysis of the only surviving artefact in Stettin, the emblematic commemorative coin of 1617. A somewhat larger space is taken up by the

<sup>1</sup> ARTHUR HENKEL, ALBRECHT SCHÖNE (eds.): *Emblemata: Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart et al. 1996, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> WOLFGANG HARMS, GILBERT HESS et al. (eds.): *SinnbilderWelten: Emblematische Medien in der Frühen Neuzeit. Katalog der Ausstellung in der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, 11.8.–1.10.1999, München 1999.

<sup>3</sup> WOLFGANG HARMS, DIETMAR PEIL (eds.): *Polyvalenz und Multifunktionalität der Emblematis*, 2 Bde., Frankfurt am Main 2002; GERHARD F. STRASSER, MARA R. WADE (eds.): *Die Domänen des Emblems: Außerliterarische Anwendungen der Emblematis*, Wiesbaden 2004; CARSTEN-PETER WARNCKE: *Symbol, Emblem, Allegorie: Die zweite Sprache der Bilder*, Köln 2005; JOHANNES KÖHLER, WOLFGANG CHRISTIAN SCHNEIDER (eds.): *Das Emblem im Widerspiel von Intermedialität und Synmedialität: Symposium an der Universität Hildesheim* (30. April – 1. Mai 2004), Hildesheim 2007; PETER M. DALY: *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem*, Farnham 2014; INGRID HOEPFEL, SIMON MCKEOWN (eds.): *Emblems and Impact: Von Zentrum und Peripherie der Emblematis. Selected Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Society for Emblem Studies*, 27 July – 1 August 2014, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Newcastle upon Tyne 2017.

<sup>4</sup> JOACHIM CAMERARIUS: *Symbola et emblemata tam moralia quam sacra: Die handschriftlichen Embleme von 1587*, ed. by WOLFGANG HARMS and GILBERT HESS, Tübingen 2009; DIETMAR PEIL: *Ausgewählte Beiträge zur Emblematis*, Hamburg 2014; PETER M. DALY: *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem*, Farnham 2014; HANS WESTPHAL: *Sehnsucht nach dem himmlischen Jerusalem: Das Emblemprogramm der Stettener Schlosskapelle (1682)*, Stuttgart 2017.

reconstruction and analysis of the four no-longer-preserved emblem cycles in St. Mary's in Danzig, especially in view of their interconfessional orientation. This reconstruction is based on historical findings and comparisons of its images with their printed templates, which can be grasped in the works of Daniel Cramer, Erasmus Francisci, Jeremias Drexel, and Georgette de Montenay. The extraordinarily well preserved and restored confessional in Pelplin Cathedral provide an excellent case study of ecclesiastical symbolism, thematically focused on the exploration and purification of the heart. The preservation of the allegories on the pulpit and pews in the church at Praust in the ancient West Prussian district of Danziger Höhe is due to the good fortune that the church and its furnishings were not destroyed in the Second World War like Danzig's larger city churches. While the designs on the pews can be traced back to Georg Phillip Harsdörffer's *Stamm- und Stechbüchlein*, the volume reviewed here concludes with an overview of some other known emblematic paintings, such as those on the pulpit and their printed models, which are to be found in the works of Daniel Cramer and Heinrich Müller.

The second part, volume 7, opens with the extremely interesting emblem cycle in the church of Gilgenburg, the former patronage church of the von Finckenstein family, in the former district of Osterode (Warmian-Masurian voivodship). This is followed by an analysis of the emblemata in the lost church at Schönwalde as a "highly impressive concretization of the symbolic art outside the book [culture] in the Baltic region" (p. 68), the content of whose images is oriented towards the concepts of "prayer, divine guidance, spiritual escape from the world, death, and resurrection" (p. 68). This is followed by the reconstruction of the Prince's Chair in Königsberg Cathedral, an extremely prominent example of political emblematics, which is placed in the context of other emblem cycles in Königsberg's sacred and secular buildings, such as Neuroßgarten Church in Königsberg, which burned completely in the bombing raid in November 1944 (300 years after its construction). The volume also presents the "Pious desire for closeness to God, angelic music and eternity" in detail in the context of an analytical reconstruction of the paintings in the church at Mühlhausen, Natangen in the former district of Preußisch-Eylau. It is interesting to see in this example how important intermedial comparisons are, especially for the reconstruction of pictorial programs, of which, as in Königsberg, there are often only indistinct photographs (p. 138). The volume concludes with a discussion of the ceiling painting of the church in Gilgenburg as a distinctly sacrament-theological pictorial program.

Using his selected examples, St. easily succeeds in explaining not only emblem-historical and iconographical aspects, but also relevant historical contexts regarding biblical exegesis, piety, and preaching. The example of emblematics in sacred buildings within the range of this study impressively illustrates the way in which spiritual intermediality "works" at all, how combinations of images and inscriptions structure the respective church spaces and could also mediate and shape liturgical processes, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

All in all, however, the present publication need not be reserved for a specialist audience alone. St. has mastered the art of conveying sometimes complicated facts in an extremely sympathetic language that can also be understood by laypersons fluent in German. The brilliant color photographs and reproductions included do the rest. To put it briefly: it is a pleasure to take this book in hand, to immerse oneself, as it were, in the world of the symbolic art of the early modern period and familiarize oneself with these rich testimonies to the faith of that time.

I personally wish this book a wide distribution and look forward to an equally excellent result from the associated DFG research project "Spiritual Intermediality in the Early Modern Period"—initiated and led, once again, by St., who plans to edit a series of books under the project title.

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