

*Hieroglyph, Emblem, and Renaissance Pictography*. Ludwig Volkmann.  
Ed. and trans. Robin Raybould. Brill Studies in Intellectual History 281. Leiden: Brill,  
2018. xxiv + 308 pp. €127.

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This volume is the first translation into English of the monograph *Bilderschriften der Renaissance: Hieroglyphik und Emblematik in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen*, by Ludwig Volkmann, first published in 1923. The German text was published by Brill in 1969. None of this information is provided in the present text. Volkmann's book was inspired by Karl Giehlow's *Die Hieroglyphenkunde des Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance* of 1915, and Volkmann's intention was to continue Giehlow's analysis and complete what he started. Giehlow's *Hieroglyphenkunde* was first translated into English by Robin Raybould, and published by Brill in 2015. That publication was also reviewed by this reviewer in *Renaissance Quarterly* 69.1 (Spring 2016).

In the preface and copious footnotes, Raybould describes how Volkmann focuses on two categories of the symbolic literature of the Renaissance, the hieroglyph and the emblem, which includes the device and the impresa. Texts and artworks in the Renaissance were intended to have a double meaning, literal and symbolic. Hieroglyphs were seen as a secret and universal language, communicating mystical and religious learning and divine revelation. The characters of hieroglyphs were seen as a language, particularly by Leon Battista Alberti and Francesco Colonna, but they were aware that the language could not be understood and that no explanation of them could be provided (hieroglyphs were not deciphered until 1822 by Jean-Francois Champollion).

In the author's introduction, Volkmann describes how the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of Francesco Colonna inspired his book, and how images in the Renaissance evolved out of the pictographic signs of the Egyptians. Volkmann also wishes to show how the use of hieroglyphics evolved in Northern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and in printers' and editors' marks, which are treated in the appendix. In chapter 1, "The Hieroglyphics of the Italian Humanists," Volkmann discusses literary sources by authors such as Alberti and Marsilio Ficino, and artworks by figures such as Piero Valeriano, Francesco Colonna, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Titian, Raphael, and Bernini. As Raybould says, Volkmann was a pioneer in the importance of emblems and devices in Renaissance art.

In chapter 2, "Emblematics and Its Derivatives: Imprese and Devices," Volkmann focuses on the *Emblemata* of Andrea Alciato. In chapter 3, "Hieroglyphics North of the Alps," Volkmann discusses figures such as Rabelais, Dürer, and Erasmus, and the influence of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* and Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*. In chapter 4, "Resonances from the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," figures discussed include Cesare Ripa and Athanasius Kircher, who applied his translations of the hieroglyphs to the inscriptions on reconstructed Roman obelisks, all of which were completely wrong

and worthless. The appendix on “Hieroglyphs and Emblems in Printers and Publishers Marks (Signeten)” is almost unique in the field, according to Raybould.

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*Il trattato “De interpretatione recta” di Leonardo Bruni.* Johnny L. Bertolio, ed. Fonti per la storia d’Italia medievale; Antiquitates 52. Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, 2020. clxiv + 56 pp. €20.

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This is a superb critical edition of the brief treatise on translation written by humanist-chancellor Bruni who, like many of his contemporaries, rejected the methods practiced in the Middle Ages, but who also formulated, however succinctly, a translation theory that the editor Bertolio contextualizes synchronically and diachronically, reevaluating it in the light of modern theory.

The edition, which is accompanied by an impressive apparatus, is based on a meticulous recension of the manuscripts. Examined thoroughly as to their provenance, physical features, substantive content, and the critical studies on them, the witnesses are classified into families and a stemma is provided. There is also a judicious assessment of the modern editions and translations of the Latin tract. For the text itself, Bertolio offers some new readings of single words, which he justifies convincingly, placing the variants on each page immediately below the text. In the “Nota al testo” he also resolves some questions regarding the date of composition, the completeness of the work, and the fluctuating word order in its title. The fulsome information provided on the dedicatee exemplifies the considerable archival research on which this study is based.

What stands out in the edition of this slim fifteenth-century text is the remarkably rich seventy-page introduction, fully documented with copious footnotes. Duly acknowledging previous scholarship where appropriate, Bertolio explains the intellectual context surrounding and preceding the composition of the tract, including the influence on Bruni of Chrysoloras and especially the classical tradition dating back to Cicero and Jerome. Borrowings from Cicero, whose treatise *On the Orator* had been recently rediscovered, support the similarity noted between the orator and Bruni’s translator. On the question of Bruni’s critique of literalism in translation, Bertolio cites other authors as well, including Boethius, Scotus, and Manetti, but finds far greater subtlety in Bruni, who, as he clarifies, does not simply contrast *verba* and *sententia* but actually distinguishes between word-for-word translation and incorrect translation. In order to explain the complexity of Bruni’s concept of *ornatus*, as in connection with other topics too, Bertolio provides supplementary references to other works by Bruni—namely, *De Studiis et Litteris* and *Dialogi*. For the discussion of the fundamental analogy between translation and art (*ut pictura translatio*) he demonstrates how classical sources are