

The Memory Arts in Renaissance England

This is the first critical anthology of writings about memory in Renaissance England. Drawing together excerpts from more than seventy writers, poets, physicians, philosophers and preachers, and with over twenty illustrations, the anthology offers the reader a guided exploration of the arts of memory. The introduction outlines the context for the tradition of the memory arts from classical times to the Renaissance and is followed by extracts from writers on the art of memory in general, then by thematically arranged sections on rhetoric and poetry, education and science, history and philosophy, religion, and literature, featuring texts from canonical, non-canonical and little-known sources. Each excerpt is supported with notes about the author and about the text's relationship to the memory arts, and includes suggestions for further reading. The book will appeal to students of the memory arts, Renaissance literature, the history of ideas, book history and art history.

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THE
MEMORY ARTS IN
RENAISSANCE ENGLAND
A Critical Anthology



Edited by
WILLIAM E. ENGEL, RORY LOUGHNANE,
and GRANT WILLIAMS



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or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
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The arts of memory were found by Simonides in Thassaly: for what time he was boden to a banquet at a nobleman's house called Scopas. It chanced that he was sent for to speak with two young men at the gate and straight way the banqueting house fell and destroyed all the guests. Then he, because he remembered in what order and place every man sat, delivered every man his friend to be buried. By that fact, both he perceived the order of the art of memory and what commodity came to the remembrance of man by such places and images as be contained in that feat.

Polydore Vergil, *De inventoribus rerum*, II.6, trans.
 Thomas Langley (1546), xlvi^{r-v}

Memory is the ledger-book of the brain; the Janus that hath an eye behind; the storehouse of the mind.

Sampson Price, *London's Remembrancer* (1626), B4^{r-v}

Memory. The eye's true register. The peasant's book. Time's wealthy treasurer. Warder of the brain. The soul's stomach. Treasure-house of the mind. Mother of the Muses. Mother of experience. The soul's exchequer.

Joshua Poole, *The English Parnassus* (1677), Ee8^v

CONTENTS

<i>List of figures</i>	page x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>A note on abbreviations</i>	xiv

Introduction	I
--------------	---

PART I *The art of memory*

Introduction to Part I	35
I.1 Stephen Hawes, <i>The Pastime of Pleasure</i> (1509)	39
I.2 [Laurence Andrewe], <i>The Mirror of the World</i> (1527)	41
I.3 Peter of Ravenna, <i>The Phoenix</i> (1548)	44
I.4 Guglielmo Gratarolo, <i>The Castle of Memory</i> (1562)	51
I.5 Hugh Plat, <i>The Jewel House of Art and Nature</i> (1594)	65
I.6 William Basse, <i>A Help to Memory and Discourse</i> (1620)	69
I.7 John Willis, <i>The Art of Memory</i> (1621, 1661)	73
I.8 Henry Herdson, <i>Ars memoriae; the Art of Memory Made Plain</i> (1651)	84
I.9 Richard Saunders, <i>Art of Memory</i> (1671)	88
I.10 Marius D'Assigny, <i>The Art of Memory</i> (1697)	94

PART II *Rhetoric and poetics*

Introduction to Part II	103
II.1 Anon., <i>Table of Cebes</i> (1531)	109
II.2 Thomas Wilson, <i>The Art of Rhetoric</i> (1553)	113
II.3 George Puttenham, <i>The Art of English Poesy</i> (1589)	116
II.4 Henry Peacham, <i>The Garden of Eloquence</i> (1593)	120
II.5 Philip Sidney, <i>The Defence of Poesy</i> (1595)	123
II.6 Francis Meres, <i>Palladis tamia</i> (1598)	125
II.7 Samuel Daniel, <i>Musophilus</i> (1599)	127
II.8 Miles Sandys, <i>Prudence</i> (1634)	131
II.9 Ben Jonson, <i>Timber, or, Discoveries</i> (1641)	135
II.10 Alexander Ross, <i>Mystagogus poeticus</i> (1648)	138

PART III *Education and science*

Introduction to Part III	143
III.1 Thomas Elyot, <i>The Governor</i> (1531)	149
III.2 Roger Ascham, <i>The Schoolmaster</i> (1570)	153
III.3 Levinus Lemnius, <i>The Touchstone of Complexions</i> (1576)	156
III.4 William Kempe, <i>The Education of Children</i> (1588)	159
III.5 John Brinsley, <i>Ludus literarius</i> (1612)	163
III.6 Robert Burton, <i>The Anatomy of Melancholy</i> (1621)	166
III.7 Thomas Sprat, <i>The History of the Royal Society</i> (1667)	168
III.8 John Wilkins, <i>An Essay towards a Real Character</i> (1668)	171
III.9 Obadiah Walker, <i>Of Education</i> (1673)	176
III.10 Robert Hooke, 'An Hypothetical Explication of Memory' (1682)	179

PART IV *History and philosophy*

Introduction to Part IV	185
IV.1 Lodowick Lloyd, <i>The Pilgrimage of Princes</i> (1573)	191
IV.2 William Camden, <i>Remains Concerning Britain</i> (1605)	194
IV.3 Francis Bacon, <i>The Advancement of Learning</i> (1605)	197
IV.4 Pierre Charron, <i>Of Wisdom</i> (1608)	201
IV.5 John Weever, <i>Ancient Funeral Monuments</i> (1631)	205
IV.6 Edward Reynolds, <i>A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties</i> (1640)	208
IV.7 Thomas Fuller, selected works	211
IV.8 Kenelm Digby, <i>Two Treatises</i> (1644)	215
IV.9 Thomas Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> (1651)	218
IV.10 William Dugdale, <i>Baronage of England</i> (1675–1676)	221

PART V *Religion and devotion*

Introduction to Part V	227
V.1 Thomas More, <i>A Treatise (Unfinished) upon these Words of Holy Scripture</i> (1522)	233
V.2 John Foxe, <i>Acts and Monuments</i> (1563)	235
V.3 Thomas Playfere, <i>The Pathway to Perfection</i> (1593)	238
V.4 Joseph Hall, selected works	242
V.5 Richard Day, <i>A Book of Christian Prayers</i> (1608)	246
V.6 Daniel Featley, 'Four Rows of Precious Stones' (1610)	254

CONTENTS

ix

v.7	Lewis Bayly, <i>The Practice of Piety</i> (1613)	257
v.8	John Donne, 'Sermon, preached at Lincoln's Inn' (1649)	260
v.9	Stephen Jerome, <i>A Minister's Mite</i> (1650)	264
v.10	E.M., <i>Ashrea</i> (1665)	269

PART VI *Literature*

Introduction to Part vi	275	
POETRY	279	
vi.1	John Skelton, 'Upon a Dead Man's Head' (1527)	279
vi.2	Edmund Spenser, <i>The Faerie Queene</i> (1590)	283
vi.3	Anthony Sherley, <i>Wit's New Dial</i> (1604)	291
vi.4	Richard Niccols, <i>Mirror for Magistrates</i> (1610)	293
vi.5	Abraham Holland, 'A Funeral Elegy' (1626)	296
vi.6	George Herbert, <i>The Temple</i> (1633)	299
vi.7	Francis Quarles, <i>Emblems</i> (1635)	305
vi.8	Mary Fage, <i>Fame's Rule</i> (1637)	309
vi.9	Margaret Cavendish, selected works	311
vi.10	John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (1674)	316
PLAYS AND PROSE	320	
vi.11	Thomas Nashe, <i>The Unfortunate Traveller</i> (1594)	320
vi.12	William Shakespeare, selected works	323
vi.13	John Webster, selected works	330
vi.14	Thomas Tomkis, <i>Lingua: or the Combat of the Tongue</i> (1607)	335
vi.15	Mary Wroth, <i>Urania</i> (1621)	340
vi.16	John Earle, <i>Microcosmography</i> (1628)	343
vi.17	John Jones, <i>Adrasta</i> (1635)	346
vi.18	Thomas Browne, <i>Hydriotaphia, Urn-Burial</i> (1658)	349
vi.19	Anon., <i>Crackfart and Tony; or, Knave and Fool</i> (1680)	352
vi.20	John Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> (1681)	356
<i>Index</i>	360	

FIGURES

o.1	References to the ‘art of memory’ in early English printed texts, 1500–1699	<i>page 3</i>
o.2	Hermes delivers the ‘ars memoriae’. Marius D’Assigny, <i>The Art of Memory</i> (London, 1699), frontispiece, leaf A ^v [p. ii]. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	18
o.3	City of Memory. Johann Romberch, <i>Congestorium artificiosae memoriae</i> (Venice, 1533), sig. E3 ^v [p. 35 ^v]. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	20
o.4	Memory theatre. Robert Fludd, ‘Theatrum orbi[s] terrarum’ in <i>Utriusque cosmi majoris scilicet et minoris metaphysica, physica, atque technica historia</i> (Frankfurt, 1617), sig. G4 ^r [p. 55]. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	21
o.5	Zodiacal houses of memory. Robert Fludd, <i>Utriusque cosmi majoris scilicet et minoris metaphysica, physica, atque technica historia</i> (Frankfurt, 1617), sig. G3 ^v [p. 54]. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	22
o.6	Human body as mnemonic backdrop. Filippo Gesualdo, <i>Plutosofia, nella quale si spiega l’arte della memoria</i> (1600), sig. D3 ^r [p. 27 ^r]. By permission of the Newberry Library	24
o.7	Visual catalogue of chapter highlights. George Sandys, <i>Ovid’s Metamorphoses Englished, Mythologized, and Represented in Figures</i> (London, 1640), book 3, plate between 80 and 81 [K2 and K3]. By permission of the Newberry Library	26
o.8	Emblem as mirror of the human condition. Claude Paradin, <i>Heroical Devices</i> (London, 1591), sig. V8 ^v [p. 320], ‘Spes altera vitae’. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	28
o.9	Emblem of Death and Love. Andrea Alciati [Alciato], <i>Emblematum libellus</i> (Lyon, 1544), sig. E3 ^r [p. 69], ‘de morte et amore’. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	30
o.10	Emblem of Occasion (or <i>Fortuna</i>). Andrea Alciati, <i>Emblematum libellus</i> (Lyon, 1544), sig. B2 ^v [p. 20], ‘In occasionem’. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	31

LIST OF FIGURES

xi

I.1	Memory theatre diagram. John Willis, <i>Mnemonica; or, the Art of Memory</i> (London, 1661), p. 55. Private collection	79
I.2	Hand mnemonic. Richard Saunders, <i>Physiognomie and Chiromancie . . . whereunto is added The Art of Memory</i> (London, 1671), p. 372. Private collection	90
I.3	Chart of Raymond Lull's schema expanded	92
II.1	'Artes sermonis' mnemonic diagram. Johann Amos Comenius, <i>Orbis sensualium pictus</i> , trans. Charles Hoole, <i>Visible World, or, a Picture and Nomenclature of all the Chief Things that Are in the World</i> (London, 1685), pp. 202–3 (facing pages). By permission of the Newberry Library	105
II.2	Visual itinerary of Cebe's <i>Table</i> . Strabo, <i>Geography</i> (Basel, 1523); title page by Hans Holbein the Younger. By permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University	109
III.1	Mnemonic bestiary. Johann Amos Comenius, <i>Orbis sensualium pictus</i> , trans. Charles Hoole, <i>Visible World, or, a Picture and Nomenclature of all the Chief Things that Are in the World</i> (London, 1685), sigs. B2 ^v –B3 ^r (facing pages). By permission of the Newberry Library	144
III.2	Wilkins's 'General Scheme'. John Wilkins, <i>An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language</i> (London, 1668), sig. D5 ^r , [p. 23]. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	172
IV.1	Architectural mnemonic of key themes. Thomas Lodge, <i>Works of . . . Seneca</i> (London, 1614), frontispiece. Private collection	188
V.1	Mnemonic <i>loci</i> for the Gospels. Petrus von Rosenheim, <i>Rationarium evangelistarum</i> (Pforzheim, 1507), sig. A4 ^r . Second Image Book of John. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library	230
V.2	Memory as recorder. Richard Day, <i>A Book of Christian Prayers</i> (London, 1608), sig. Gg4 ^v . Private collection	249
V.3	<i>Biblia pauperum</i> . Richard Day, <i>A Book of Christian Prayers</i> (London, 1608), sig. Ll ^v . Private collection	250
V.4	Dance of Death. Richard Day, <i>A Book of Christian Prayers</i> (London, 1608), sig. S4 ^r . Private collection	252

- | | | |
|------|---|-----|
| VI.1 | <i>Memento mori</i> . Henry Peacham, <i>Minerva Britannia</i> (1612), sig. C4 ^r . Private collection | 279 |
| VI.2 | Body and soul. Francis Quarles, <i>Emblems</i> (London, 1635), sig. S6 ^v [p. 272], ‘Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death?’ By permission of the Newberry Library | 307 |

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A NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviated references are used:

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