

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910780573403321
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Titolo	Literature in the light of the emblem : structural parallels between the emblem and literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries // Peter M. Daly
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Toronto, [Ontario] ; ; Buffalo, [New York] ; ; London, [England] : , : University of Toronto Press, , 1998 ©1998
ISBN	1-282-00850-1 9786612008504 1-4426-7673-6
Edizione	[2nd ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (300 p.)
Disciplina	809.915
Soggetti	Emblems - History - 16th century Emblems - History - 17th century German literature - Early modern, 1500-1700 - History and criticism English literature - Early modern, 1500-1700 - History and criticism Livres numeriques. Criticism, interpretation, etc. e-books. Electronic books. Deutschland England
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	""CONTENTS""; ""PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION""; ""PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION""; ""ABBREVIATIONS""; ""1 The Emblem ""; ""Definitions and Descriptions of Emblem-Books""; ""Forerunners of the Emblem""; ""Emblem Theory in German Studies during the 1970s""; ""The Relation of the Emblem to Fact and Truth""; ""Recent Developments in Emblem Studies""; ""2 The Word-Emblem""; ""The Emblem-Book as a Source of Poetic Imagery""; ""The Emblem-Book as a Parallel for the Word-Emblem""; ""Towards a Phenomenology and

Typology of the Word-Emblem"; "The Forms of the Word-Emblem";  
 "3 Emblematic Poetry"  
 "Copies or Imitations of Emblems in Poetry""The Word-Emblem as the  
 Foundation of a Poem"; "The Word-Emblem as a Controlling or  
 Unifying Element in Poetry"; "The Emblematic Poem"; "The Pattern  
 Poem"; "4 Emblematic Drama"; "The Emblematic Word in Drama";  
 "The Emblematic Character"; "The Emblematic Stage"; "Drama as  
 Extended Emblem"; "5 Emblematic Narrative Prose"; "The Emblematic  
 World-View of the Novel"; "Emblematic Imagery"; "The Emblematic  
 Episode"; "Emblematic Narrative Structure"; "The Emblematic  
 Frontispiece"; "6 Conclusion"; "NOTES"  
 "SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY""Bibliographies, Lists, and Catalogues of  
 Emblem-books"; "Critical Studies"; "Selection of Works in English on  
 German Baroque Literature"; "Recent Comparative Studies of European  
 Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries"; "Translations  
 of European Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries";  
 "INDEX OF NAMES"; "A"; "B"; "C"; "D"; "E"; "F"; "G"; "H"; "I";  
 "J"; "K"; "L"; "M"; "N"; "O"; "P"; "Q"; "R"; "S"; "T"; "V";  
 "W"; "Y"; "Z"; "INDEX OF EMBLEM MOTIFS"; "A"; "B"; "C"; "D";  
 "E"  
 "F"; "g"; "h"; "i"; "j"; "k"; "l"; "m"; "n"; "o"; "p"; "r"; "s";  
 "t"; "u"; "v"; "w"; "y"

## Sommario/riassunto

The symbolic mode of thought and expression that produced the mixed art form of the emblem also informs and shapes much of the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This study explores the relationship between the emblem proper and the literature of England and Germany during the period. The book proceeds from a definition of the emblem, based on a critical theory which has received little attention among English and Romance scholars, to a detailed analysis of the form and function of emblematic imagery in a variety of literary forms. The chapters following move into specific discussions of the structural affinities between emblems and poetry, drama, and fiction. The emblem-books are important as a cross-reference for the meaning of motifs in literature. They indicate what educated men knew about nature, history, and mythology and, furthermore, how they interpreted this knowledge. It is not only as a mode of thought but also as an art form that the emblem offers a valuable perspective on the purely verbal art of literature. Emblematic structure and imagery function as a formal, shaping principle in literature in all its genres and forms. Imaginatively conceived, carefully researched, and clearly presented, this book makes connections which will enrich the field of comparative studies.