



The *Congestorium Artificiose Memorie*  
by Johannes Host Von Romberch:  
Study and Critical Edition

**COLECCIÓN BIBLIOTHECA SALMANTICENSIS**

*Serie Humanidades 3*

DIRECCIÓN – COORDINACIÓN EDITOR-IN-CHEF

*Rosa M.<sup>a</sup> Herrera García.* Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca

CONSEJO ACADÉMICO – ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

*César Chaparro Gómez.* Universidad de Extremadura

*Inmaculada Delgado Jara.* Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca

*Santiago García-Jalón de la Lama.* Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca

*Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala.* Universidad de Córdoba

*Francisco José Udaondo Puerto.* Universidad de Salamanca

BIBLIOTHECA SALMANTICENSIS

Serie Humanidades 3

---

THE *CONGESTORIVM ARTIFICIOSE MEMORIE*  
BY JOHANNES HOST VON ROMBERCH:  
STUDY AND CRITICAL EDITION

MARTA RAMOS GRANÉ

COEDICIÓN

UPSA EDICIONES

EDITORIAL SINDÉRESIS

SALAMANCA

2024

Esta Editorial es miembro de la Unión de Editoriales Universitarias Españolas (UNE), lo que garantiza la difusión y comercialización nacional e internacional de sus publicaciones.



RAMOS GRANÉ, Marta

The Congestorium artificiose memorie by Johannes Host von Romberch : study and critical edition / Marta Ramos Grané. – 1ª. ed. – Salamanca : UPSA Ediciones ; Madrid : Editorial Sínderesis, 2024.

456 p. ; 21 cm. – (Bibliotheca Salmanticensis. Serie Humanidades ; 3)

D.L. S 362-2024. -- ISBN 978-84-17601-91-1

1. Host von Romberch, Johann-Crítica textual . 2. Memoria-Obras anteriores a 1800-Crítica e interpretación. 3. Mnemotecnia-Obras anteriores a 1800-Crítica e interpretación. 4. Retórica -Obras anteriores a 1800-Crítica e interpretación I. Serie.

159.953°15''

808°15''

© UPSA Ediciones

Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca  
Compañía, 5 • Teléf. 923 27 71 28

publicaciones@upsa.es • www.publicaciones.upsa.es

Cualquier forma de reproducción, distribución, comunicación pública o transformación de esta obra solo puede ser realizada con la autorización de sus titulares, salvo excepción prevista por la ley. Diríjase a CEDRO (Centro Español de Derechos Reprográficos) si necesita fotocopiar o escanear algún fragmento de esta obra ([www.conlicencia.com](http://www.conlicencia.com) <<http://www.conlicencia.com>>; 91 702 19 70 / 93 272 04 47)

Imagen portada:

I.S.B.N.: 978-84-17601-91-1

Depósito Legal: S 362-2024

© 2024, Editorial Sínderesis

Calle Princesa, 31, planta 2, puerta 2 – 28008 Madrid, España  
[info@editorialsinderesis.com](mailto:info@editorialsinderesis.com)  
[www.editorialsinderesis.com](http://www.editorialsinderesis.com)  
ISBN: 978-84-10120-63-1



Financiado por  
la Unión Europea

JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

Consejería de Economía, Ciencia y Agenda Digital

Obra financiada por el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional y la Junta de Extremadura (Consejería de Economía, Ciencia y Agenda Digital) mediante la ayuda IB20180.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of illustrations.....	9
Author’s preface .....	13
Acknowledgments .....	15
I. Romberch and his <i>Congestorium</i> .....	17
1. Johannes Host von Romberch: Biographical Approach.....	17
2. Romberch and the <i>Congestorium</i> in Modern Studies.....	30
3. Romberch in the History of the Arts of Memory .....	31
3.1. First Studies on Romberch and his <i>Congestorium</i> .....	38
4. The Context of Composition of the <i>Congestorium</i> .....	45
5. The Sources of the <i>Congestorium</i> .....	57
5.1. Theoretical Sources .....	59
5.2. Romberch’s Sources for Mnemonic Doctrine.....	63
5.3. Sources Used as Examples of the System.....	78
6. The Structure of the <i>Congestorium</i> .....	84
7. Analysis of the <i>Congestorium</i> .....	92
7.1. The <i>Ars Memorativa</i> in the Preliminaries of the <i>Congestorium</i> : the Epistle to Cardinal Grimani .....	93
7.2. The Epistemological Foundation of the System.....	95
7.2.1. In Defence of the Art of Memory .....	96
7.2.2. The Foundation of the <i>Ars Memorativa</i> .....	103
7.3. <i>De Locorum Natura et Fabricatione</i> .....	118
7.3.1. The Nature of Mental Places.....	119
7.3.2. The Characteristics of <i>Loci</i> .....	125

7.3.3. The Configuration of Mental Places .....	141
7.3.4. Emptying the Mental Places.....	152
7.4. <i>De Imaginibus</i> .....	155
7.4.1. The Nature of Mental Images .....	156
7.4.2. The Properties of Images .....	164
7.4.3. The Choice of Images .....	168
7.4.4. The Formation of Images.....	171
7.5. <i>De Applicatione Artis</i> .....	208
7.5.1. Applications of the <i>Ars Memorativa</i> to Simple Realities.....	209
7.5.2. <i>Ars Memoriae</i> and Types of Discourse.....	227
7.5.3. <i>Ars Memorativa</i> and Profanity .....	238
7.5.4. Studying and <i>Ars Memorativa</i> .....	245
7.6. The Conclusion of the <i>Congestorium</i> .....	247
8. Continuity of the <i>Congestorium</i> in Subsequent <i>Artes Memorativae</i> .....	254
9. Romberch's Use of Latin Language.....	262
10. Our Edition.....	265
11. Conclusions .....	267
II. <i>Congestorium Artificiose Memoriae</i> .....	271
III. Bibliography .....	429
1. Romberch's Works.....	429
2. Primary Sources .....	430
3. Modern Studies.....	435
IV. Index.....	451

## List of illustrations

### Figures

1. Figure 1: External senses and Powers of the soul (*Congestorium*, f. 9v)
2. Figure 2: Measures of places (*Congestorium*, f. 22v)
3. Figure 3: Measures of man (Leonardo da Vinci)
4. Figure 4: Measures of man (Francesco di Giorgio Martini)
5. Figure 5: Measures of man (Giacomo Andrea de Ferrara)
6. Figure 6: Spheres of the Universe (*Cogestorium*, f. 25v)
7. Figure 7: Spheres of the Universe (Publicius; f. G vii-r)
8. Figure 8: Spheres of the Universe (Reisch, f. dd iii-r)
9. Figure 9: Romberch's city (*Congestorium*, f. 28r)
10. Figure 10: Romberch's rooms (*Congestorium*, f. 29r)
11. Figure 11: Quadrangle (*Congestorium*, f. 48v)
12. Figure 12: Lady Grammar (*Congestorium*, f. 69v)
13. Figure 13: Material Letters A-C (*Congestorium*, f. 38v)
14. Figure 14: Material Letters C-E (*Congestorium*, f. 39r)
15. Figure 15: Material Letters F-I (*Congestorium*, f. 39v)
16. Figure 16: Material Letters I-N (*Congestorium*, f. 40r)
17. Figure 17: Material Letters N-P (*Congestorium*, f. 40v)
18. Figure 18: Material Letters R-T (*Congestorium*, f. 41r)
19. Figure 19: Material Letters V-Y (*Congestorium*, f. 41v)
20. Figure 20: Whole alphabet of material letters (*Congestorium*, f. 43r)
21. Figure 21: Alphabet of material birds (*Congestorium*, f. 44r)
22. Figure 22: Signs of numbers (*Congestorium*, f. 45r)
23. Figure 23: Full alphabet 1-11 (*Congestorium*, f. 45v)

24. Figure 24: Full alphabet 12-22 (*Congestorium*, f. 46r)
25. Figure 25: Romberch's combinatorial system (*Congestorium*, f. 49v)
26. Figure 26: Singular and plural (*Congestorium*, f. 50v)
27. Figure 27: Verbal flexion (Publicius, Biblioteca Nacional, MMS 009309; 100r)
28. Figure 28: *Hortus Philosophiae* (*Congestorium*, f. 66v)
29. Figure 29: Example of Law (*Congestorium*, f. 79v)
30. Figure 30: Alphabets and numerical systems by Robert Fludd, *Ars memoriae*, p. 61
31. Figure 31: Tetragram (*Congestorium*, f. 61r)

### Schemas

1. Schema 1: First Treatise Summary
2. Schema 2: Second Treatise Summary
3. Schema 3: Third Treatise Summary
4. Schema 4: Forth Treatise Summary
5. Schema 5: Types of similitudines
6. Schema 6: Types of realities
7. Schema 7: *Ens*
8. Schema 8: Real *ens*
- Schema 8b: Discourses
9. Schema 9: On questions
10. Schema 10: First printing option
11. Schema 11: First printing option 2
12. Schema 12: Second printing option
13. Schema 13: Second printing option 2

14. Schema 14: Third printing option
15. Schema 15: Third printing option 2
16. Schema 16: Fourth printing option
17. Schema 17: Fourth printing option 2

## **Tables**

1. Table 1: Comparison (Cicero-*Rhet. Her.*-Romberch)
2. Table 2: Comparison (Albert the Great-Damascenus-Thomas Aquinas)
3. Table 3: Comparison (Aristotle- *Rhet. Her.*)
4. Table 4: Comparison (Aristotle-Thomas Aquinas)
5. Table 5: Comparison (Metrodorus in Quintilian and Romberch's texts)
6. Table 6: Comparison (Albertus Carrara-Romberch)
7. Table 7: Alabrum, alvearium... Alphabetical list
8. Table 8: Alphabetical animals
9. Table 9: Alphabetical small animals
10. Table 10: Alphabetical constellations
11. Table 11: Professions
12. Table 12: Names of the figures
13. Table 13: Alphabet of professions
14. Table 14: Alphabetical plants
15. Table 15: Movement of the body
16. Table 16: Attributes
17. Table 17: Oh superbe
18. Table 18: Vive lete
19. Table 19: Communis/Specialis
20. Table 20: Grammatica communis/ Grammatica specialis

21. Table 21: Theology
22. Table 2: Metaphysics
23. Table 23: Moral
24. Table 24: Law
25. Table 25: Health
26. Table 26: Astronomy
27. Table 27: Geometry
28. Table 28: Arithmetics
29. Table 29: Music
30. Table 30: Rhetoric, Logic, and Grammar
31. Table 31: Division of the ens
32. Table 32: Second division of the ens
33. Table 33: Division of the real ens
34. Table 34: Division of substance
35. Table 35: Accidents
36. Table 36: Quantitas
37. Table 37: Ens rationis
38. Table 38: Division for law books
39. Table 39: Law books
40. Table 40: On questions
41. Table 41: Logical possibilities
42. Table 42: Logical modes
43. Table 43: Days of the week
44. Table 44: Months
45. Table 45: Distribution around a table

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The objective of this work, born from our doctoral thesis, is to offer the first critical edition and study of the *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae* by the Dominican Johannes Host von Romberch.<sup>1</sup> The *editio princeps* of this treatise was published in Venice in 1520, and its second edition also appeared in Venice in 1533, probably after the author's death. Both Johannes Romberch and his work played a prominent role in the development of the arts of memory, as its publication marked a turning point in the evolution of the discipline. Due to its encyclopedic nature, the *Congestorium* served as both a culmination of the earlier tradition and a reference for the composition of later treatises. However, despite its importance being acknowledged in various works, the textual study of the work has remained a pending task in modern research.

Furthermore, the renewed interest generated nowadays in the arts of memory in all its manifestations can be closely related to the importance of significant images, which are prevalent today in multiple areas: mobile applications, avatars, social networks, video games, marketing, and advertising. Memory, on the other hand, remains a commendable quality, although its cultivation in educational environments is deeply underrated, and it is no longer believed that the acquisition of knowledge is linked to the capacity to remember. In any case, the conjunction of the visual material with memory has been sufficiently proven, hence this discipline has so much to offer. This is evidenced by the numerous meetings and publications that focus today on the arts of memory and their relationship with other studies,<sup>2</sup> such as emblematics, pictorial arts, or literature.

To unravel the relationship between Romberch's treatise and other previous and subsequent arts of memory, while at the same time elucidating the importance of the *Congestorium* on its own, our study begins with a preliminary bibliographic

---

<sup>1</sup> Soon, a translation of the *Congestorium* into Spanish will also be published. The whole research was funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Junta de Extremadura (Consejería de Educación, Ciencia y Formación Profesional), through the research project grant IB20180.

<sup>2</sup> Take, for example, the monographs *Ágora: Estudios clásicos em debate. Ars memorativa*, 24.1 (2022) and *Daphnis. Neighbours in the Landscape of Memory. Encounters – Juxtapositions – Mutual Influences* (2022); and meetings such as 'Neighbours in the Landscape of Memory' (Prague, 27–28/09/19), 'Texts and Images of Memory' (Cáceres, 13–16/09/21), or 'The Reception of the Art of Memory' (Cáceres, 28-30/09/23).

investigation, which we present in the first part of this work.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently, through exegetical techniques and resources typical of textual criticism, we developed the study of the doctrine of the work and its critical edition. With regard to the edition, we have created a sources apparatus and a positive critical apparatus, in which we have attempted to resolve the various textual problems posed by a work as complex as the *Congestorium*.

Therefore, from this study, it can be concluded that the *Congestorium* is not merely a link in the development of the discipline; it is a complete and complex work with scholastic solutions in the theoretical apparatus, but at the same time, it gives special relevance to humanistic currents in the more practical sections of the text.

---

<sup>3</sup> The bibliographic research is particularly reflected in the first four sections of this work, which deal with Romberch's biography, the state of the art regarding the *Congestorium*, and the context of the work and its sources, but also in the section concerning the tradition of the treatise. We provide a thorough account of all this research in the bibliography.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is one of the main outcomes of my PhD dissertation. For that reason, this research owes a lot to many people who have contributed greatly to me both academically and personally over the years I have dedicated to it.

Without the unconditional support of my friends who have endured ruined plans and constant speeches about the arts of memory, this would not have come to fruition. Thank you, Guillermo, Elena, José Antonio, Lucia, Denis, Irene. In the last few months, the most difficult ones, the support of my partner, Iván, has been indispensable. His infinite patience endured all my tears and sighs; and also the happiness of finally seeing this work published. I also owe my parents everything I have, not just this work. Without their education and support through the years, it would have been impossible for me to even undertake the study of the *Congestorium*.

In the academic sphere, this work could not have had better companions than the members of the Department of Ciencias de la Antigüedad at the University of Extremadura, who have also become my family in some way. From all of them, I have learned techniques, methods, resources, and, above all, I have discovered the soul of philology and research.

My relationship with the *Congestorium* began with the sentence 'don't be scared'. And I never was scared, as I was fortunate to have by my side the person who helped me face fears, insecurities, and doubts the most. I am proud to say that what I know, I learned from you, Luis Merino.

