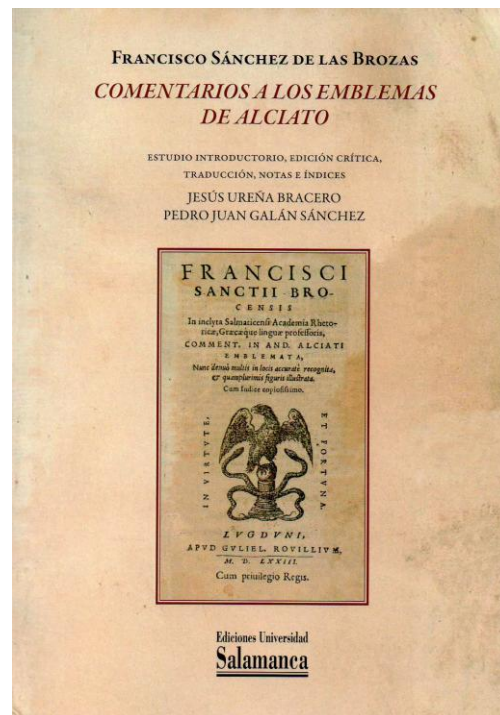


Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas. *Comentarios a los Emblemas de Alciato*. Estudio introductorio, edición crítica, traducción, notas e índices de Jesús Ureña Bracero y Pedro Juan Galán Sánchez. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2025, 1178 pp. ISBN 978-84-1091-013-3

Reviewed by: Sagrario López Poza
(University of A Coruña, Spain)



Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum liber* has one of the most interesting publishing histories since its *editio princeps* of 1531), both because it marks the beginning of a genre that is both literary and editorial, and because of the variations in the number of emblems it contains, the spatial reorganization of the contents, translations into various languages, and the addition of commentaries of various kinds (*scholia*, *commentaria*, *annotationes*) by editors, translators or scholars such as Barthélemy Aneau, Sebastian Stockhamer, Claude Mignault, Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, Lorenzo Pignoria, Diego López, and Johann Thuille.

Translations of Alciato's book were soon published in other languages: into French in 1536, and from 1542 and 1549 into several languages such as French, Spanish, Italian, and German. After Alciato's death in 1550, editions of the book intensified and commentaries appeared, and although Enenkel (2018, 233-263) argues that between 1556 and 1651 approximately sixty-one editions of Alciato's *Emblemata* were produced in Latin, and that almost 90% of them were accompanied by commentaries, criticism has devoted little study to the commentaries even though they are such interesting material for understanding the cultural universe of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries throughout Europe. It is therefore worth highlighting that two professors from the University of Extremadura (Spain), Jesús Ureña Bracero and Pedro Juan Galán Sánchez, specialists in classical languages, have undertaken the difficult task of producing a critical edition and translation into Spanish of the emblems of Alciato and of the commentaries that a humanist of international stature, Francisco Sánchez, *el Brocense*, made on them, a work published in Lyon in 1573 in the publishing house of Guillaume Rouillé: *Commentarii in Andreae Alciati Emblemata*. Ureña and Galán correct errors and misprints, illustrate the texts and commentaries with notes and provide a very complete study of one hundred and thirty-five pages, essential for any researcher interested in emblem books.

As editors, the authors have had to make many difficult decisions in order to carry out such a complex work, which has required a long period of successive preliminary research, published in previous years (much of which was due to Jesús Ureña), before the task of editing and translating could be undertaken. First of all, it was necessary to examine in great detail some thirty editions of the *Emblemata* of Alciatus and the copy of Sanchez de las Brozas commentaries BG/33510 preserved in the Library of the University of Salamanca, which contains handwritten notes by the author. This was necessary in order to determine which edition or editions *El Brocense* made his commentaries on, because a discrepancy was noted between the text of the emblems that Guillaume Rouillé chose as editor to add to *El Brocense's Commentaries* in the 1573 edition and the latter's allusions to the *lemmata* or words of the epigram. Ureña and Galán, after a meticulous analysis, consider that the *El Brocense* relied on the editions of Rouillé (1550)¹ and Stockhamer (1556), and may also have consulted those of Aneau (1549), Isengrin (1549) and Rouillé (1551).

Aneau's commentaries in his French edition of Alciato's emblems (1549) were didactic and very brief, and Stockhamer commentaries added to his various editions, showed that he was primarily interested in explaining the content to readers with a certain level of competence (since they would have to know Latin) but without too many scholarly aspirations. In contrast, *El Brocense's* comments were intended for people with a good humanistic education and were textual and philological in nature, applying to Alciato's emblems the same exegetical method that he would use for the analysis of the work of a classical author. The main objective was to locate the sources of Alciato's texts (principal and secondary) and to explain any aspect (linguistic, historical, mythological, geographical, metrical) that might impede a full understanding of each emblem. His commentaries were erudite and laid the foundations for scientific criticism, far removed from didactic or moralising tendencies. Sánchez de las Brozas provides the sources from which Alciato drew his inspiration and compares the interpretations of Italian and French authors. He must have been very disappointed to see the edition of his commentaries without having been able to intervene in the editing process, which was undertaken by the French bookseller-publisher at without consulting him at all. He would have noticed that the version of the text of the mottoes and epigrams that Rouillé decided to include as a basis and the references in his commentaries, made to the text of another edition, did not correspond perfectly.

In the study that precedes the edition and translation, Ureña and Galán justify, considering the biographical particularities of Francisco Sánchez, the reasons why it may have seemed appropriate for him to write commentaries on Alciato's book of emblems (p. 20), and raise the question of the date of writing, which was well before the date of its publication. Luis Merino and Jesús Ureña had already warned (2004) that many of the commentaries would have been ready before 1554 in the form in which they appear in the 1573 edition, since in his *Escolios a las Silvas de Poliziano* (published that year) *El Brocense* already included nine commentaries to the emblems. Ureña and Galán consider that Sánchez would have begun his commentaries around 1551-1552 and that he must have been working on them until 1566, although once published he continued to revise, add to and perfect his work until the end of his days (1582), as attested by his handwritten notes in copy BG/33510 of his Lyon edition (1573) in the Library of the University of Salamanca, which the authors incorporate in the present edition. They believe that he may have sent his work to the publisher between 1567 and 1570, and that he did so through the printer Andrea de Portonaris, Rouillé's nephew, who worked in Salamanca. Portonaris died in 1568, so this may have been the deadline for sending the work. The authors believe that publication may have been delayed due to Rouillé's commercial interests, and that he may have decided to print it in order to compete with the 1571 Paris edition of Alciato's book with commentaries by Claude Mignault. Mignault's commentaries, more light and appealing to a variety of audiences, put off those of the *El Brocense*, although Joahn Thuille retrieved them and incorporated them into his great edition published by Tozzi in 1621. Thuille extracted the *El Brocense's* and Mignault's commentaries for the commentary that accompanied the Padua edition of Alciato's emblems, which was to become the canonical edition.

The study includes interesting reflections on terminology to explain the possible reasons why the title of the book includes the term *Commentarii* when in other similar works by Sánchez de las Brozas he refers to his commentaries indistinctly as *scholia* and *annotationes*. The authors believe that

¹ Alciato was personally involved in this edition, although he died before he could see the book published, which became the standard edition of the work until the publication of Thuille's edition (Padua, Tozzi, 1621).

it was Rouillé who decided this as a commercial matter, considering it more in keeping with what his edition brought to the other commentaries by Mignault and Stockhamer that were on sale.

A long section of the study is devoted to the different types of annotations included in *El Brocense's* commentaries, which the authors classify into thirteen types as the most significant, which they explain in detail (pages 34-43).

The fourth section of the study, which is long and of great interest for an understanding of the author's work, is devoted to the structure and content of the work and ends with some of the information Sánchez left about himself, the world around him and his friends.

Section five of the study is devoted to the *El Brocense's* metrical commentaries. None of those who had commented on Alciatus' emblems had paid any attention to metre (neither Aneau, Stockhamer nor Mignault). The emblems of Alciatus, with the exception of nine, are in elegiac distichs, and Sanchez pays attention to the different metres of this formula.

The sixth section is devoted to the authorship of the "Apostillas marginales" and the "Índice de las cuestiones principales" of the edition of the *Commentaries* (Lyon, 1573). Ureña and Galán assume that the authorship of the paratexts is due to the publisher. When *El Brocense* had the book in print he intervened in these parts, correcting or completing what he considered inadequate or incomplete.

The long section seven of the study is devoted to the 119 autograph corrections by *El Brocense* of errata or errors and 164 handwritten annotations by another person that are preserved in copy BG/33510 in the Library of the University of Salamanca, which lead the authors to believe that they were intended for the production of a second edition of the work, corrected and enlarged, but which was never carried out, perhaps because the privilege granted to Mignault lasted until 1583 and at that point the publisher-bookseller was not interested in this project, given that he had Mignault's commentaries, which had been expanded in successive editions. On the other hand, *El Brocense* had problems with the Inquisition and perhaps the Frenchman thought it was risky to invest in another edition.

These manuscript annotations contain errata, some (but not all) of which were corrected by Gregorio Mayans when he produced his edition of the *El Brocense's* commentaries without *picturae* in 1766. In the present edition, our authors have corrected all the errata or errors.

Section eight analyses in detail the inconsistencies between the text of Alciato's emblems and *El Brocense's* commentaries. Ureña and Galán note textual divergences on thirty occasions; sometimes they are simple misprints, other times they are graphic variations or due to the *usus scribendi* of the author. On sixteen occasions he comments on words or expressions that do not appear in Alciato's text, which Rouillé decided to associate with the Spanish scholar's comments.

Section nine of the study is devoted to the sources of *El Brocense's* work. Ureña (2004) had already published a work on the typology of the commentaries, to the conclusions of which is now added a very complete study of all the sources and works, organising the list by thematic groups. The authors offer a series of data and percentages of the number of citations and evaluate the proportions. This section provides data of great interest for understanding the universe of *El Brocense's* readings and his method of citation.

The study devotes the following sections to the history of the copy BG/33510 of the Library of the University of Salamanca through its owners (section ten) and to the diffusion, tradition and influence of the commentaries to the emblems of Alciato by *El Brocense* until the 18th century (section eleven). Undoubtedly, Aneau's commentaries (brief and in French, for pedagogical purposes) and Mignault's (intended for schoolchildren, poets and users who used them as a repertory of commonplaces) were more widely distributed,² since Alciatus' emblems received in the 17th century the main attention of preachers and moralists who were not very interested in philological commentaries. More than through the 1573 edition, the *El Brocense's* commentaries reached the specialised public in the rest of Europe through Thuille's edition (1621), although his name is masked there among so many authors.

Interesting is the section devoted to the humanists who may have had knowledge of *El Brocense's Commentaries on the emblems of Alciato*: Juan de Mal Lara, Baltasar de Céspedes (his son-in-law and successor as professor in Salamanca) and the powerful bibliophile and politician Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado, who was able to reuse *El Brocense's* materials because he had obtained his library and manuscripts from him through his widow and heirs.

² See the work of Daniel Russell (2003).

In the last section of the study (twelve) the authors explain the particularities of their edition and translation. It is noteworthy that they include in the critical apparatus the variants of eight editions for the titles of the emblems. They have taken Rouillé's edition of 1550 as a reference for the order of the emblems. For the *El Brocense's* commentaries, they have taken into account the three editions: Rouillé 1573, Thuille 1621 and Mayans 1766.

The study part culminates with a very complete bibliography which is divided into primary and secondary sources and is very up to date.

As for the critical edition and translation into Spanish, it should be noted that this is the first translation of the *Commentaries on the emblems of Alciatus* into a modern language. There were some translations of Alciatus' emblems into Spanish: the first (versified and very free) by Bernardino Daza Pinciano (1549); that of Diego López (1615), quite literal; the manuscript translation of the mid-18th century by Gregorio Mayans (Ureña: 2024); that of Pilar Pedraza (1985) and that of Mañas (2022). The translation provided by Ureña and Galán, although the text is distributed in lines (like the verses) is without rhyme, in an elegant Spanish faithful to the original, which takes care of semantic and stylistic nuances that make it an exceptional contribution.

The parallel critical edition will have posed layout problems, as is often the case in this type of edition, since the Latin version is often more concise, and it is necessary to play with the interlinear spacing so as not to mismatch the two texts too much. The Latin original begins on the even page and the translation is arranged on the odd page. At the foot of the page are the notes, which do not begin on a line, but follow one after the other. This procedure in the notes, although understandable in the translation and edition part, which is so difficult to adjust in the layout, should have been limited to this part, and avoided in the notes of the preliminary study, as it sometimes makes it difficult to find the note one is looking for.

The edition of *El Brocense's* commentaries has refined the text and provides explanatory notes, including the Spanish translation of the commentaries as well as of the many quotations in Greek that the commentator used.

The authors offer a positive critical apparatus, reflecting all the textual variants of the eight editions used for the *Emblems* and the three editions of the *Commentaries*. In the body of these, in square brackets, the authors have included *El Brocense's* handwritten annotations in the cited copy preserved in the Library of the University of Salamanca.

The 211 emblems³ are numbered, as they appeared in the 1573 edition. The variants of the titles of the eight editions used are indicated in the critical apparatus. The woodcuts of the *picturae* have been cleaned and the lines highlighted to make them easier to read.

The book ends with two indexes and a table: the *Index of principal questions*, translated, but organised in alphabetical order, which facilitates consultation, and the *Index of authors and works cited*, which shows *El Brocense's* great erudition. With the *Table of Correspondences (Rouillé 1573 and Thuille 1621 editions)* the authors provide an important aid. Thuille's edition was the first to include 212 emblems, all with their corresponding woodcuts, and is considered definitive and canonical, as Peter Daly based his system of numbering the emblems of Alciatus on it.

Without a doubt, what Ureña and Galán have offered us is an extraordinary working tool and source of information that few people have had access to since Latin and Greek have been neglected in the curricula. They put at the service of the scientific community an arsenal of scholarly ammunition, not only for those interested in emblematics and classical culture, but also for many scholars of modern language literature and art history. They have done a great and long overdue job in honouring the work of an eminent humanist like Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, whose life touches us because of the hardships he always had to endure, and thereby preserving his memory for the present time.

³ It was not until Thuille's edition (1621) that the 212 emblems were included.

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