

# The great theatre of creative thought

The *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi* ... (1565) by Samuel von Quiccheberg

Koji Kuwakino

Samuel von Quiccheberg's *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi* (1565) is a manual that describes an ideal museum, with instructions on how to assemble an encyclopaedic collection. *Inscriptiones* is the first theoretical text in museology. On close examination it reveals itself to be a vast repository of cinquecento culture, reflecting many contemporary intellectual currents. This essay analyzes the text and shows how certain cultural elements, such as Ramism, the art of rhetoric and memory influenced Quiccheberg. It further studies how he incorporated these cultural elements in the arrangement of the objects and in the spatial composition of his museum-theatre.

It is widely accepted that the second half of the sixteenth century coincided with the most crucial phase in the transition of the Western world toward modern civilization. This period saw a radical transformation in the intellectual climate and in the arts, partly as a consequence of revolutionary events taking place during the preceding century such as the critical re-evaluation of classical culture, the discovery of the New World, and the invention of moveable type. Faced with the chaotic mass of information produced by these developments, the phenomenon of encyclopaedic collecting emerged, while in the theoretical sphere a number of innovative thought models were proposed such as the scientific classification of plants and animals and the 'Ramist method', all of which were designed to impose order on the confused *congeries* of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

In the search for schemas and models that would provide a framework for this unwieldy mass of information and ideas, the use of metaphors based on architecture, and on physical spaces in general, presents points of considerable interest. One of the most popular *topoi* likened the disordered heap of notions to a chaotic *sylva*, while knowledge perfectly governed was compared to the geometric garden.<sup>2</sup> That this was a favourite metaphor among intellectuals is demonstrated by the many encyclopaedic works of the period in which references to well-ordered structures such as the theatre, the temple, and the piazza appear.<sup>3</sup>

The implication was that orderly physical spaces could form the basis for the organization of knowledge. It is pertinent to recall in this connection the art of memory, the ingenious mental technique based on the ordering of spaces that would enjoy extraordinary popularity during the sixteenth century and would become in itself a universal key to knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

If this was indeed how things stood, then we must not underestimate the role played by architecture in the complete reorganization of knowledge undertaken at the dawn of the modern age. In short, it was realized that certain architectonic spaces could be used to construct the foundations for a systematic approach to the management of knowledge. In this regard *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi* ... (1565) (hereafter referred to as *Inscriptiones*) by the physician and bibliographer Samuel von Quiccheberg (1529–67) emerges as a work of particular interest.<sup>5</sup> The extended title evokes the complex cultural and intellectual backdrop against which *Inscriptiones* – considered to be the first theoretical text in the history of museology – must be viewed:

The inscriptions or titles of a vast theatre, containing the individual subjects and excellent images of the things of the universe, such that one may with reason also call this a repository of artificial and extraordinary things, of every rare treasure and precious furnishing, of buildings and pictures, that are examined and collected together here in this theatre, in order that through the repeated inspection and study of them, one may obtain in rapid, easy and certain

fashion singular knowledge and a marvellous practical experience of all things.

Quiccheberg therefore presents the project for an encyclopaedic museum built in the form of a theatre, in which various objects and images from the universe are arranged, whose study would allow one to acquire wondrous knowledge in a ‘rapid, easy and certain’ manner. It may be noted that the concept of the theatre loomed quite large in the cinquecento notion of collecting.<sup>6</sup> The originality of Quiccheberg’s idea, however, lay in the fact that he designed a real building in the form of a theatre, rather than using the concept metaphorically in the way of so many other authors. Here we will attempt to shed light on the hitherto neglected, but surprisingly rich and fruitful relationship that existed between the classification of knowledge and the spatial structure of the theatre, by recreating Quiccheberg’s ideal museum.

### The life, intellectual profile and *Inscriptiones* of Quiccheberg

Very little information on the life of Samuel von Quiccheberg has come down to us.<sup>7</sup> He was born in Antwerp in 1529 and at the age of eighteen took himself to one of Europe’s centres of humanist learning, Basel, where he followed courses in philosophy and medicine. Some time around 1550 Quiccheberg moved to Augsburg, where he worked for a wealthy banking family, the Fuggers, as a legal adviser, librarian, and curator of their private collections. In 1559 he entered the service of Albert V, Duke of Bavaria (1528–79), probably in the capacity of court physician, although he also acted as librarian and curator of the Duke’s collections.<sup>8</sup>

Immersed in the traditionally Italophile ambience of the Bavarian court, Quiccheberg himself travelled to Italy at least twice. During his second journey (datable to 1543), perhaps as an official envoy of the Duke, he crossed the whole peninsula acquiring works of art and antiquities, and visiting the most celebrated collections of the period, including those of the botanist Ulisse Aldrovandi. The Flemish physician was also in contact with many intellectuals in other parts of Europe, such as the naturalist and bibliographer Conrad Gessner (1516–65) and the physician and collector Felix Platter

(1536–1614), who designed the botanical garden and the first anatomical theatre for the university of Basel. Quiccheberg died prematurely in 1567 and was buried at the expense of his patron, Albert V, a mark of the esteem in which he was held.

*Inscriptiones*, published in 1565, represented the fruit of a lifetime of study. Although unillustrated and a mere sixty-two pages in length, it is a most singular work whose museological approach was pioneering in its day, and it provides us with significant information on the intellectual ambience of the period. Because the text was written in Latin by an author with a somewhat intractable (not to say eccentric) style, for centuries no one ventured to translate *Inscriptiones* into a modern language and scholars have tended to limit their analysis to the first section with its inventory of objects. As a result the most innovative aspects of Quiccheberg’s project, which are presented in the subsequent chapters and involve the construction of an ideal museum, have been neglected.<sup>9</sup> An eagerly awaited German translation<sup>10</sup> has not resolved this problem, since it employs many terms inappropriate to the historical and intellectual context of the original work and contains numerous errors of interpretation, not only on the textual level but also in terms of grammar and syntax.<sup>11</sup>

As we have said, the first part of *Inscriptiones* provides a brief enumeration of the objects to be collected, which the author has divided into five classes.<sup>12</sup> Each class is further subdivided into ten or eleven categories, amounting to a total of fifty-three, to which the author has given the suggestive denomination of *inscriptiones*. To avoid dwelling overlong on the definition of these sub-categories, the author has marked those requiring further explanation with the symbol of Mercury (☿) (Fig. 1), and provides further analysis for them in the second part of his work.

This inventory is followed by a chapter entitled ‘*Musea et officinae*’, in which facilities designed to complement the activities of the museum-theatre are described, such as a library, printing press, and workshops.<sup>13</sup> The next chapter, ‘*Admonitio seu consilium atque item digressiones*’, offers advice on collecting and further commentary on those *inscriptiones* from the first chapter marked with the sign ☿.<sup>14</sup> ‘*Admonitio seu consilium ...*’ in fact constitutes the most important section of the work, for it explains the architecture of the museum-theatre, the principles underlying the classification of the objects, and the

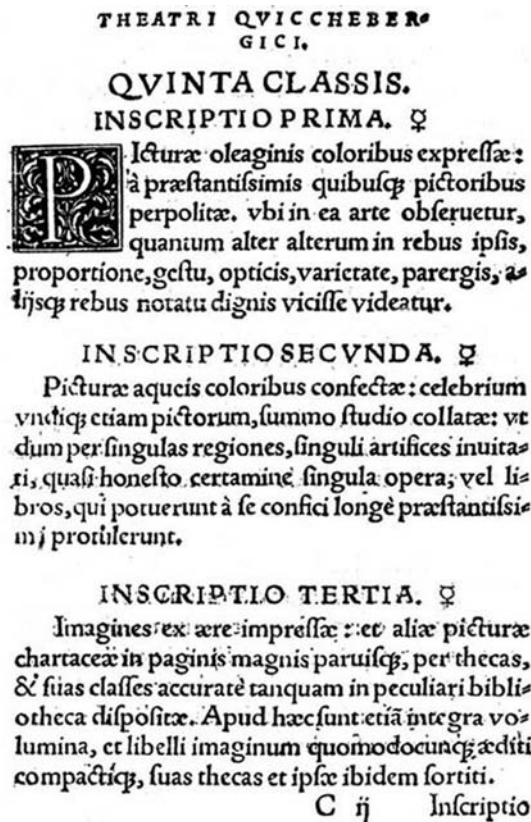


Fig. 1. S. von Quiccheberg, *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*, sig. C.II.r: the symbol of Mercury. © Pisa, Biblioteca Universitaria, su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e le Attività culturali. Misc.612.10.

purpose of the author in constructing his theatre. In the last chapter, 168 collectors are listed, mainly from the German-speaking region of Europe,<sup>15</sup> providing useful documentation on collecting in Germany and on the author's extensive network of friends and colleagues.

### Objects collected and architecture of the 'museum-theatre' complex

We may begin by reviewing the objects in the fifty-three *inscriptions* that make up the collection of the museum-theatre (for a list, see Appendix). Each class will be designated by a Roman numeral and each *inscriptio* by an Arabic number (for example, the second *inscriptio* in the fifth class will be referred to as v/2).

The first class is dedicated to sacred history and the genealogy and dominions of Quiccheberg's

well-born readers, eventual creators of their own museum-theatres, and the collection consists of portraits, family trees, maps, various images, and paintings. The second class contains a variety of objects from the applied arts such as statues, jewellery, textiles, furnishings, vases, coins and – although they are not physical objects – units of weights and measures (*inscriptio* II/6). The third class covers natural history from plants, animals and minerals to raw materials such as clay and wax. The fourth class represents different realms of endeavour in the arts, sciences, and technology in the form of tools, musical instruments, weapons, clothing and so on. Here one may glimpse items that fall outside the conventional taste of the period and reflect the intense personal interest of the author in the culture and customs of foreign lands. The last class presents other paintings, genealogical trees, portraits, and handicrafts. There is a particularly significant *inscriptio* (v/9), which brings together the phrases inscribed in various places around the theatre – in a sense an *inscriptio* that embraces the entire amphitheatre. We shall return later to this theme.

It appears clear from the composition of the fifty-three *inscriptions* that the author's intention was to construct a model of the universe that harmonized with the ideals and strictures of a Christian philosophy, embracing all of creation – nature, man, and history – and paying homage to the reader who might undertake the heroic project of founding such a museum-theatre. Rather than seeking for evidence of a mystical doctrine of numerology in these *inscriptions*,<sup>16</sup> we may instead examine why these particular objects were selected and how they have been arranged for display inside Quiccheberg's theatre.

The architecture of the building containing Quiccheberg's collection is described, albeit in somewhat fragmentary manner, in the third chapter, 'Admonitio seu consilium atque item digressiones'. The theatre takes the form of a large oval amphitheatre, with an ambulatory running around its periphery<sup>17</sup> and in the centre a large open space intended for use as a courtyard (*cavedia*) whose four sides are oriented toward the four regions of heaven.<sup>18</sup> To clarify this concept, Quiccheberg cites the famous *Kunstammer* at the Bavarian court (*Bavaricum theatrum artificiosarum rerum*); constructed between 1563 and 1567 by the architect Wilhelm Egkl, it consisted of a square courtyard surrounded by three stories of arcaded porticoes oriented more or less with the four cardinal points.<sup>19</sup>

From his choice of the Bavarian *Kunstkammer* as the model for his theatre, we can deduce that Quiccheberg was familiar with classical architecture and its terminology. Moreover, the centripetal arrangement of the museum around a large courtyard allows us to hypothesize that Quiccheberg was also inspired by Vitruvius' description of the ideal city in *De architectura*. When explaining how to choose the best site for an open-air theatre, the Roman architect refers to the principles set forth in Book 1 regarding the layout of a city, according to which the orientation of the main avenues should be determined in harmony with the regions of heaven.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, the word *cavedia* used by Quiccheberg seems to echo the *cavum aedium*, which in Vitruvius is synonymous with *atrium*, the term for the courtyard with a skylight in a private villa.<sup>21</sup> Such spaces were associated with the display of works of art; when describing the *tablinum* and *atrium* of a Roman villa, Vitruvius notes that they were decorated with the portraits of family ancestors.<sup>22</sup> It was indeed the custom in ancient Rome to decorate the atrium of one's villa with the death masks in wax of illustrious ancestors, accompanied by a tablet inscribed with their names and exploits (*tituli*). This practice evidently made a certain impression on cinquecento humanists, antiquaries and numismatists,<sup>23</sup> for when the historiographer Paolo Giovio built a villa in Como to house his collection of portraits of eminent men, he decorated it with mottos and devices and called the central courtyard a *cavaedium*.<sup>24</sup> The theatre of Quiccheberg conformed to this architectural typology.

The sixteenth century also saw the appearance of the first anatomical theatres. Since Quiccheberg himself was a physician, it is possible that he was influenced by this new tool for the study of medicine; in fact such a theatre was constructed in Basel by his colleague Felix Platter. These classrooms were commonly designed in the form of an amphitheatre, with raised tiers allowing the students an unobstructed view of the dissecting table in the centre. It may be noted that the room also served the function of a museum of natural history, where skeletons and stuffed specimens bearing erudite mottos in Latin were placed on display.<sup>25</sup>

But what is of even greater interest to us is the fact that, in the context of his discussion of the form of his museum, Quiccheberg mentions Giulio Camillo (c.1480–1544), whose famous memory theatre – 'Iulij

Camilli museum' – he praises as being worthy of the designation *teatrum* because of its semicircular form.<sup>26</sup> In addition, it is important to note that Quiccheberg referred to Camillo's theatre as a *museo*.<sup>27</sup> As Marcin Fabiański has demonstrated, the ideal form of the museum was traditionally considered to be circular or round, thus linking it to the temple of memory and of knowledge.<sup>28</sup>

Other notable examples of museums in the form of amphitheatres may be cited, such as the *Wunderkammer* of Marco Mantova Benavides of Padua (1489–1582), which Quiccheberg cites with admiration.<sup>29</sup> It took up three entire rooms, in one of which could be found the so-called 'Anfi Theatro', an ornate cabinet in the form of a Roman stage, with seven semicircular niches containing the statues of classical deities representing the seven planets.<sup>30</sup> As Massimiliano Rossi has suggested, its design may have been inspired by the memory theatre of Giulio Camillo.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, based on what we have discussed so far, it may be concluded that Quiccheberg's idea of designing his museum in the shape of a theatre was inspired variously by the theories of Vitruvius and Camillo, and by the collections that he had visited.

As far as the organization of the museum itself was concerned, the author provides only some general instructions, leaving the reader free to adjust the size and contents of his collection as a function of his means. In principle, each class and all of the more important *inscripciones* would be assigned separate rooms (*conclave*),<sup>32</sup> but Quiccheberg notes that it did not matter if the amount of space at one's disposal was limited because it was possible to arrange a large number of objects, carefully wrapped or folded, in cabinets.<sup>33</sup> Nor does he specify how the various rooms should be laid out within the theatre. Hence the internal arrangement of the museum depended entirely on the personal preferences of the collector (Fig. 2).

As we have already noted, Quiccheberg intended his theatre to function as a universal museum and therefore provided it with a series of auxiliary facilities including a library, printing press, woodworking shop, foundry, and a laboratory for preparing medicines. It is worth pausing to examine the library, for the author explains in detail how the collection of books should be classified and arranged. There are ten subject-headings and the parallels between the subjects covered by the books and the objects on display in the theatre make it plain that the library was

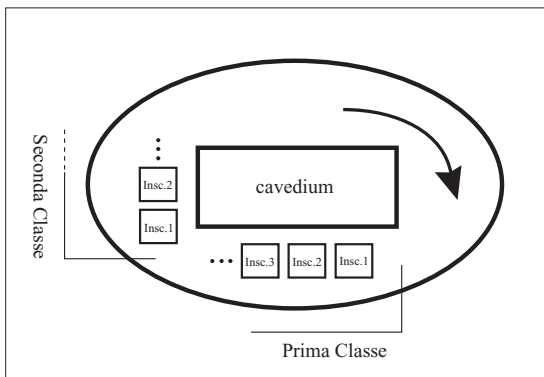


Fig. 2. Diagram of Quiccheberg's theatre. Second Class / First Class.

intended to serve a complementary function within the museum-theatre complex.

- I Theology
- II Jurisprudence
- III Medicine
- IV History
- V Philosophy (subclasses: Dialectics, Magic, etc.)
- VI Mathematics (subclasses: Astronomy, Arithmetic, Geometry, etc.)
- VII Philology (subclasses: The authors of *Loci communes* and of specific subjects such as Military Affairs, Architecture, Agronomy, etc.)
- VIII Sacred and profane poetry
- IX Music
- X Grammar, subdivided into the lexicons of the various languages and philological commentary

Once again it is important to note the author's methodology as reflected in the carefully planned, hierarchical arrangement of the library's furnishings and contents. There are three types of bookshelves of varying size that have been designated *Regiones* (taking up an entire wall), *Stationes* (the width of a pillar), and smaller *Coloniae* and *Appendices*, which were appended to the *Regiones*. The books placed on them have been numbered and every tenth volume is marked with a specific colour so that each series can be easily identified, even from a distance.<sup>34</sup> This method of labelling every tenth book constitutes a direct link to the art of memory, which will be discussed more specifically below.

The explicit directions provided by Quiccheberg with regard to the composition and furnishing of his

theatre have now been reviewed. In our view, however, the inclusion of a printing press 'in qua typi omnis generis ad quaslibet linguas, artes, disciplinas in promptu sunt excudendas'<sup>35</sup> is of special significance, for it appears to denote the faith that the author placed in the production of new knowledge and its transmission through the medium of the printed word. It is useful to remind ourselves that in the title to his work Quiccheberg stated that the study of the objects in his museum-theatre would facilitate the acquisition of wondrous knowledge.

We may ask, then, just what kind of knowledge was being produced, and how was the visitor supposed to pursue this knowledge? To clarify these points, the philosophical and cognitive aspects of Quiccheberg's theatre may now be analysed.

### ***Loci communes* as organizing principle of Quiccheberg's museum-theatre**

At the beginning of the chapter 'Admonitio seu consilium . . .', Quiccheberg discusses at some length his objectives in constructing the theatre and the benefits that could be derived from it. In our analysis of Quiccheberg's work, the comparison he draws between collecting and the art of oratory takes on a striking significance. The author cites the Roman orator Cicero when he explains why his work opens with a detailed enumeration of no less than fifty-three *inscriptioes*. 'Not because I think that it would actually be possible to gather together all of the objects listed,' he says,

. . . sed quod vulerim, tanquam Cicero perfectum oratorem ita haec universa absolutissima enumeratione hominum cogitationibus infundi: quibus magnitudinem cognitionis rerum omnium metirentur atque res iterum alias animo concipiendas et pervestigandas excitarentur . . .<sup>36</sup>

While admitting the impossibility of its full realization, therefore, Quiccheberg presents an ideal list of the objects that should be included in a universal museum. In this passage he reflects on the immense body of knowledge represented by these objects, which he has organized using a binary system of *classis* and *inscriptio*. The reference to Cicero would appear to be an allusion to a statement contained in his discourse *De oratore*: 'Whatever science or accomplishment is under examination, it is customary to examine a finished and perfect specimen of it'.<sup>37</sup>

Quiccheberg's views on the relationship between the activity of collecting and the art of rhetoric are delineated even more clearly in the passage immediately following that cited above:

Censeo enim etiam nullius hominis facundia edici posse, quanta prudentia, et usus administrandae reipublicae, tam civilis et militaris, quam ecclesiasticae et litteratae, ex inspectione et studio imaginum et rerum, quas praescribimus, comparari possit . . .<sup>38</sup>

Cicero explains that the ideal orator (*doctus orator*) must acquire an encyclopaedic knowledge of the things of the universe in order to be able to debate any subject with competence.<sup>39</sup> Quiccheberg believed that his theatre provided the perfect instrument to attain this objective and that by studying its collections the visitor could acquire knowledge superior to that possessed by the Ciceronian orator in every field – political, civic, military, ecclesiastic and literary.

It must be remembered that during the sixteenth century rhetoric came to be considered 'a first way to gather, organize and fix in a simple and systematic framework the enormous mass of knowledge that was growing every day'.<sup>40</sup> In the classical tradition the five canons of rhetoric are *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *pronuntiatio* or *actio*.<sup>41</sup> Among these, one in particular is linked to the production of knowledge – *inventio*, which is in fact a technique for the retrieval of information: when preparing a speech the first step is to find the necessary arguments in the mass of knowledge that a professional orator will have accumulated during years of study and practice. In order to be able to retrieve those arguments most adapted to a given discourse it is important first of all to prepare and perfect a system of *topoi*. The so-called *topica* was in fact the technique or discipline that had been developed to make it possible for the orator to organize and classify his material and arguments by theme.

If a connection can indeed be drawn between the *ars rhetorica* and collecting, in that the purpose of each is to organize information effectively, then it may be argued that there are many components of rhetorical *inventio* in Quiccheberg's theatre. Furthermore, we can hypothesize that in the passage 'res iterum alias animo concipiendas et peruestigandas excitarentur', the author is alluding to a cognitive process of *invenzione* that is activated in the mind of the spectator.

We find corroboration for this hypothesis in the way the objects are displayed in the theatre. While most of the *inscriptions* bracket together objects that

are similar or of the same type, others highlight differences or even oppositions. For example, in his comment on *inscriptio* II/6, which pertains to the category of metrics, the author notes that it is very useful to place various weights and measures in a single drawer, thus allowing the visitor to compare the units of measurement between his own and other countries, and between antique and modern systems.<sup>42</sup> In the same way, *inscriptio* IV/9 gathers together a large collection of armour both antique and new, locally made and foreign.<sup>43</sup> Similar comparisons can be found in *inscriptio* II/7 (antique and modern coins) and *inscriptions* IV/10 and IV/11 (various types of clothing). In *inscriptions* II/3 and III/8, following the example of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*, the author compares raw materials and the artefacts made from these materials.

Concerning the differences between objects, for Quiccheberg it was important to highlight the diversity of form in things; for example, in *inscriptio* III/5 he explains that an assortment of seeds and fruits has been selected 'based on the variety offered by nature or differences in their names'.<sup>44</sup> In the same way, in *inscriptio* II/5 (antique and imported vases) the visitor is invited to examine their 'Forma Differentia',<sup>45</sup> and in III/3 animals were chosen 'that could furnish some variety'.<sup>46</sup> Other *inscriptions* in which the qualities of variety and diversity are underlined include I/3 (portraits), I/6 (battle scenes), II/11 (copperplate engravings), and V/1 (oil paintings).

Given the comparison made by Quiccheberg between rhetorical techniques and collecting, we may view this approach to the classification of objects based on the criteria of 'similarity, difference, and opposition' as an application of the classical rhetorical *topica* to the field of collecting. In this light, the concept of *loci communes* or 'commonplaces', which was elaborated during the cinquecento in close connection with the rhetorical *topica*, takes on fresh significance.

We have already seen that in Quiccheberg's library 'the authors of *loci communes*' (*Scriptores locorum communium*) appear as a sub-category under the seventh subject-heading, Philology. That the conception of *loci communes* influenced his thought is indirectly suggested by the fact that Quiccheberg mentions two humanists, Conrad Lycosthenes (Conrad Wolffhart) (1518–61) and Theodor Zwinger (1533–88), as writers who utilized the term *teatrum* in some of their works.<sup>47</sup> Lycosthenes and Zwinger were the authors of one of the 'best-sellers' of the period,

*Theatrum vitae humanae*, which was actually a vast collection of *loci communes*, extending to some 1,400 pages in its first edition, published in 1565.<sup>48</sup>

Recently there has been growing interest in the role played by *loci communes* in early modern thought,<sup>49</sup> in the methods elaborated by cinquecento humanists to organize the great number of texts that made up the literary legacy of Antiquity. Building on studies conducted over the past two decades, the concept of *loci communes* and its history up to the sixteenth century may be briefly reviewed, firstly in order to understand why Quiccheberg included books on this topic in his library, and secondly to shed light on the relationship between rhetoric and collecting.<sup>50</sup>

The notion of *loci communes* grew out of the Greek concept of *topoi*, which were the dialectical and rhetorical places originally defined by Aristotle in his works *Topica* and *Rhetorica*, respectively. The dialectical *topoi* can be defined as ‘analytical’, because they indicate a type of mental process or schema that is useful in the development of a chain of reasoning and in the analysis of propositions, such as Aristotle’s concepts of definition, nature, genus, condition and so on.<sup>51</sup> The rhetorical *topoi* are instead cumulative and function as ‘the seats of arguments’, offering a repertoire of models already prepared and formulated for use in the composition of a discourse.<sup>52</sup> Among these, models suitable for any argument were denominated *koinoi topoi* (in Latin, *loci communes*); examples include etymology, difference, contrary, and contradiction. Instead, those appropriate for specific subjects, such as medicine, architecture, politics and so on, were considered to be specific *topoi*.

During the epoch of the Roman Empire, which witnessed the most splendid flowering of the *ars rhetorica*, the hitherto purely mental concept of *topos* acquired a spatial dimension.<sup>53</sup> The ancient Romans, faced with the problem of cataloguing a superabundance of oratorical and literary texts, began to compare rhetorical and dialectical *topoi* with physical spaces such as niches, *sedes*, *domicilium*, hunting parks, and even the dens of animals, in which the arguments might be hidden.<sup>54</sup> In this way the idea of *topos* was transformed into the image of a storehouse of arguments ready for use in the writing of a discourse, and in time came to be identified with the arguments themselves.

Medieval scholars inherited the notion of *topos* (*locus*) from the antique world and applied it in their turn to the field of literature.<sup>55</sup> Themes, subjects and

arguments typical of specific literary genres were classified as literary *topoi*. At the same time, Latin was being studied as a foreign language and consequently there was a flowering of volumes of Latin phrases known as *florilegi*.<sup>56</sup> It followed from these that another signification was added to the traditional idea of *topos* – that of a ‘common topic’ or ‘commonplace’ in the modern sense of the word, i.e. a stereotyped, reusable expression. From this the notion of *topos* evolved and became synonymous with the bibliographical term *locus*, a subject heading that indicated where to find specific topics in the books in a library.<sup>57</sup>

During the course of this complicated process, in the early modern age the multiple significations of *topos* began to overlap, and this polyvalent concept ended up playing an important role in the intellectual activity of the period. One of the most influential figures in the reform of the arts of discourse was Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466–1536), whose work contributed to the elaboration of the humanist system of *loci*. In *De copia verborum ac rerum* he advised readers to methodically select and copy examples from the classical texts that could serve to educate the soul and foster virtue.<sup>58</sup> Passages worth recording included definitions, comparisons, etymologies, maxims, fables, narratives and so on, which readers were supposed to classify under set headings (*tituli*) in a sort of registry; these *tituli* were divided into subgroups denoted by ‘commonplaces’ that identified their contents. The material under each *titulo* was arranged according to a system of affinities (*adfinis*) and oppositions (*pugnans/contrarius*),<sup>59</sup> which allowed readers to amplify their discourse as needed. The collection of phrases stored in this way could easily be consulted when one was composing a text in Latin, and at this point the collecting and reuse of commonplaces became a quintessential practice in Renaissance culture.

Simultaneously with the spread of this exercise, which was recommended by other influential humanists such as Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540) and Philipp Melancthon (1497–1560), complete collections of citations began to appear. These offered numerous commonplaces drawn from antique texts, classified by subject or *tituli*, and arranged according to the principles of oppositions and affinities. The author usually included a detailed index at the end to help the reader navigate through the sea of information provided. Such books became indispensable tools for the

composition of new Latin passages and, being in tune with the encyclopaedic approach of scholars in the cinquecento and seicento, enjoyed enormous popularity.

One of the most celebrated works in this literary genre was the *Officina* (1520) by Johann Ravisius Textor (1470–1524).<sup>60</sup> A veritable mine of material for cinquecento thinkers and writers, the *Officina* (Workshop) offered a selection of classical quotations arranged under 350 *tituli*, which the author further divided into numerous sub-groups whose titles reflect the notions of affinity and opposition. For example, under the *titulo* ‘Mulieres bellicosae et masculae virtutis’ one finds the names and stories of male and female warriors such as the Amazons, while ‘Viri mulierum habitum mentiti’ presents various episodes involving men dressed as women.

Even after completing their education, scholars would consult such works when they wished to embellish their writings with apt *loci communes*, which leads us to speculate that these collections may have influenced the very mental structure and thought-processes of their users to the point that, when presented with an objective fact or phenomenon, they would automatically filter it through the interpretive grid provided by books of *loci communes*. According to Walter J. Ong’s perceptive analysis, the humanist *topoi* (*loci*) were arranged through the act of printing and fixed on the page, so taking on material and visual form. These pages, with their ordered lines of text, synoptic tables and geometric diagrams, in turn would have exercised a profound influence on the thought-processes of the scholar who regularly consulted them.<sup>61</sup> The mental *topoi* transmitted by the printed word came to be perceived as an entity that possessed a spatial dimension and the act of thinking was likened to physical movement. It is in this intellectual context that Quiccheberg’s project for a universal theatre must be considered. If a system of *loci communes* was being widely used to arrange large amounts of literary knowledge, is it not possible that this same system could have influenced the architectural spaces conceived to store an enormous number of objects in an encyclopaedic museum?

The notion that Quiccheberg may have been influenced by the practice of *loci communes* in the creation of his theatre has already been suggested in a study by Patricia Falguières, with whose conclusions I find myself in full agreement.<sup>62</sup> Taking up where she left off, however, an attempt may be made to explore this

theme and its links with gnosiological issues and the question of the use of architectural spaces.

First of all, it should be noted that Quiccheberg himself mentions Textor’s *Officina*; when expressing his regret that, for reasons of space, he is not able to provide a more complete commentary on the *inscriptiones*, he advises readers to consult the ‘officina Ioan Ravisij Textoris’.<sup>63</sup> It may be suggested that Quiccheberg’s reference to the *Officina* in his discussion of the classificatory index may be retraced to the perceived conceptual equivalence between his collection of objects and Textor’s *loci communes*.

In fact, some of the *tituli* in the *Officina* bear close parallels to the *inscriptiones* of Quiccheberg; for example, Textor’s ‘Armorum varia genera et bellorum instrumenta’ corresponds to *inscriptio* IV/9, where various types of rare and useful weapons have been collected,<sup>64</sup> while ‘Gentium insignia’ is reminiscent of *inscriptio* V/7 on the devices of aristocratic families.<sup>65</sup> Other titles from *Officina* that can be similarly linked include: ‘Repositoria diversarum rerum’ (corresponding to *inscriptio* V/10), ‘Ludi et Spectacula’ (IV/8), ‘Machinae quaedam bellicae et tormenta’ (IV/4), ‘Vasorum genera’ (II/5), ‘Gentium vestes propriae’ (IV/10), ‘Mensurae quaedam’ (II/6), ‘Pigmenta’ (III/10), and ‘Arbores diversae’ (III/6).<sup>66</sup> From such analogies it becomes clear that Quiccheberg’s fifty-three *inscriptiones*, like Textor’s 350 *tituli*, were meant to function like the titles of *loci communes*. Assembling a collection of ‘the most excellent things of the universe’ and arranging them in a theatre therefore was conceptually equivalent to extracting exemplary passages from texts and copying them into a notebook. If we accept this comparison, then the entire space of Quiccheberg’s theatre could be regarded as the metaphor for a monumental volume of *loci communes*.

In this connection the other book to which Quiccheberg refers – Theodor Zwinger’s *Theatrum vitae humanae* – assumes greater significance as well. Defined by the author himself as a historical archive (*historiae promptuarium*), *Theatrum vitae humanae* presents *loci communes* drawn from classical texts that pertain to every aspect of human life. These *exempla* are classified and arranged on pages that have themselves been organized in a hierarchical system of *libri*, *tituli* and *loci* that seem to point to an almost Manichaean contrast between good and evil, in such a way as to reflect the intrinsic order of nature and the cumulative history of man’s moral experience.

In the title to his work, Quiccheberg uses the words *theatrum* and *promptuarium* interchangeably when referring to his museum, and – through the conjunction *vel* – the terms *inscriptiones* and *tituli* become synonymous designations for the categories of the collection. As we noted above, in books of common-places *titulus* was generally used to denote the title or indexing term under which phrases were classified by subject. Therefore, based on a shared terminology and a similar approach to the organization of their information, close similarities can be drawn between Zwinger's *theatrum* and that of Quiccheberg.<sup>67</sup> Both begin by defining the *topoi* or interpretative grid that will serve as their organizing framework and then classify and arrange all of the material within this conceptual scaffolding.

Ong has interpreted Zwinger's *Theatrum vitae humanae* as an emblematic example of the transformation of notional *topoi* into physical *loci* on the printed page.<sup>68</sup> I believe that an analogous process can be identified in Quiccheberg's theatre – that of the materialization of mental *loci*, in this case within the physical spaces of a building. Here the *inscriptiones* and *tituli* serve as containers or physical spaces for the display of the objects in the collection, which therefore become the three-dimensional equivalents of *loci communes*.

In this context *inscriptio* v/9 takes on particular significance. It presents moral and sacred *sententiae et gnomae* that could be 'inscribed in certain places in the theatre' in such a way that they would conform to 'nearly any type of furnishing in any of the classes.' In addition, these phrases were painted in gold or bright colours either directly on the walls or on panels hung from the ceilings.<sup>69</sup> This series of sentences and maxims is very similar to a collection of *loci communes*, but what stands out most strikingly is the fact that Quiccheberg describes the theatre and its furnishings as places destined for inscriptions, or even as pages in a book. Furthermore, if we consider the author's observation that these phrases were supposed to conform to the classes of the collection, it can be hypothesized that their function was to help the visitor find his way around the theatre, or to serve as captions for the objects.

In his commentary the author cites some examples to illustrate the notion underlying *inscriptio* v/9. One may, he says, imitate the practice in monasteries of inscribing phrases over the door frames, or that of teachers in Bohemia who decorated the walls and pilasters of their schools with beautifully lettered

admonitions and mottoes.<sup>70</sup> We can find other examples from this period of words being used to decorate the interiors of buildings, beginning with Erasmus. In *De ratione studii*, to memorize passages he recommends that one take pithy phrases such as maxims, proverbs or epigrams, and paint, write or inscribe them on panels hung on the walls or on any surface in the house that may present itself, whether it be a windowpane, door, or even a ring or drinking glass.<sup>71</sup> Other instances include the villa of Paolo Giovio, who decorated every room with mottoes and devices,<sup>72</sup> and the library of Michel de Montaigne (1533–92), whose pilasters and beams were inscribed with mottoes.<sup>73</sup>

The originality of Quiccheberg's work therefore lay in the integration of the physical space of his museum with the practice of *loci communes*. We can imagine a theatre inscribed with sentences and maxims on every surface from the pillars and rafters to the furniture, rather like the alchemist's workshop depicted in Heinrich Khunrath's (1560–1605) *Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae* (1595) (Fig. 3).

Based on our analysis thus far, it seems clear that Quiccheberg used, either directly or indirectly, the system of rhetorical invention and *loci communes* – tools originally developed to manage linguistic information – to arrange the objects in his museum. Information – whether in the form of a collection of phrases or a collection of objects – that is not gathered and stored in an orderly manner will in the end be unusable. One of the *raison d'être* – indeed the most important – for the volumes of *loci communes* was to provide a repertoire of words and phrases ready for use under different circumstances. We can analyse Quiccheberg's model for a museum-theatre in the same light. The collecting of objects was not in itself the final objective; it represented a means to attain 'knowledge of individual things and admirable wisdom', as the title declares.

### Application of the humanist *methodus* in Quiccheberg's theatre

In what manner were these objects – gathered and classified according to the system of *loci communes* – used to generate knowledge and, furthermore, what type of cognitive effects could they produce? Here great importance must be ascribed to a concept that Quiccheberg introduces most suggestively in the discussion of his



Fig. 3. Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae* (Hamburg, 1595): the alchemist's laboratory. © Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence. Magl.1.2.206.

classification system – the humanist *methodus*, with its close links to the practice of *loci communes*.

In his commentary on the first classification category in his theatre (*inscriptio* 1/1), Quiccheberg takes the opportunity to explain the general philosophy underlying the arrangement of his collection. According to his advice to the well-born

reader, objects should be collected strictly for the aesthetic and intellectual pleasure that they afford, to be displayed in museums in a simple manner, avoiding the use of complicated systems ‘comprehensible only to philosophers’.<sup>74</sup> For this reason, although he approved the classical form of Camillo’s memory theatre, Quiccheberg criticized both the Italian

philosopher and the Roman architect Vitruvius for incorporating mystical and astrological criteria based on the seven planets into their classification systems.<sup>75</sup> Objects should be categorized, he repeated, in a straightforward manner based on their form ('ordo facilius secundum formas rerum').<sup>76</sup>

The author then announces that he is preparing two books for publication – 'de insignibus apud colores' and 'de facilibus methodis' – although unfortunately no traces of these works survive.<sup>77</sup> Nothing more is said about the first volume, but based on the brief summary that he provides of its contents the second was addressed to publishers and would have explained how to create a set of 'clear and useful' indexes on any subject (*methodicos indices*).<sup>78</sup> It is worth noting that in this book on methodology Quiccheberg planned to discuss the classification of the objects in his theatre.<sup>79</sup> Hence we may deduce that in his eyes the *methodus*, which facilitated the consultation of books by providing analytical indexes, could also be applied to the arrangement of the objects in a museum. This allows us to place his thought within the broader intellectual context of the cinquecento.

To arrive at a full understanding of the concept of the *methodus* from a historical-cultural perspective, it is necessary to consider the long and fertile humanist tradition dedicated to the reform of the classical legacy of logic-rhetoric and pedagogy that culminated in the work of Pierre de la Ramée (Petrus Ramus) (1515–72). This is not the place to embark on a reconstruction of the complicated process that led to the formation of the humanist concept of *methodus*,<sup>80</sup> but we may review here some of the most important points in its evolution.

In the classical literature, *methodus* was a rarely used technical term and it was not until the Renaissance that it acquired a more general and abstract meaning as the shortest and most effective path to the acquisition of knowledge. This usage began to spread during the second decade of the sixteenth century, especially after the publication of two works, *Dialectices libri quattuor* (1537) by the Lutheran theologian Philipp Melanchthon, born Philipp Schwartzerd (1497–1560), and *In partitiones oratorias Ciceronis dialogi quattuor* (1539) by the pedagogue Johannes Sturm (1507–89).<sup>81</sup> According to both of these authors the *methodus* was 'a short, simple, and compendious approach to teaching, a method for facilitating the transmission and learning of knowledge through the appropriate ordering of

notions and discourses.'<sup>82</sup> To arrange one's ideas, as we have seen, it is helpful to elaborate a set of *topoi* that can be used to classify various types of knowledge. Indeed, both Melanchthon and Sturm were advocates of *loci communes* as a didactic tool and proposed the use of commonplaces, borrowed from the authorities of antiquity and arranged by affinities and oppositions, as an interpretive grid to analyse both classical texts and the structure of the physical world. They were convinced that there should be a close connection between the real order of things and the order of the words in a text. It was therefore necessary that the *tituli* to the collection of *loci communes* be based on a system that was easy for anyone to understand.<sup>83</sup> If one applied their *methodus*, both teaching and study became 'easier, quicker and more effective', and in fact this feature was used as an advertising slogan to promote the many works of pedagogy written by humanists during the middle of the sixteenth century.

Advances in printing technology kept pace with these developments and contributed to the diffusion of the new *methodus*, which reached its highest form under the humanist, logician and educational reformer Ramée. Taking as his departure point a critical review of the Aristotelian syllogism, which had led to a scholasticism that was clearly outdated and insufficient for the modern age, Ramée set out to devise a universal method of learning whose criteria would be applicable to any discipline. The *methodus* that he developed was a simple and direct procedure for acquiring knowledge and could also serve as a teaching tool since it allowed one to transmit notions on any subject quickly and easily.

The principal characteristic of Ramée's method was the ordering of all forms of knowledge based on a rational progression from the universal to the particular using a system of dichotomous branching. This approach sprang from Ramée's conviction that the mind was capable of mirroring the hierarchical structure of the world and that consequently man's mental processes should reflect the order of nature and proceed from the general to the specific. This methodical ordering of knowledge was represented on the printed page by means of elaborate dendrograms whose system of bifurcating branches corresponded to the hierarchy of knowledge. Through this process of visualization, words were in effect transformed into objects arranged in space, things that one could see, analyse and even touch.<sup>84</sup>

Ramée's *methodus* exerted a considerable influence beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century on the organization of the material in volumes of *loci communes*. For example, all the subjects in Zwinger's *Theatrum vitae humanae* have been arranged in meticulously detailed sequences of categories and subcategories, and the inter-relationships between them are elucidated at the beginning of each book in a series of illustrations that upon closer examination turn out to be Ramist diagrams (Fig. 4).<sup>85</sup> We have already mentioned the probable influence of Zwinger's work on Quiccheberg, and I would propose that the latter's museum, like Zwinger's *Theatrum vitae humanae*, contains many features that can be retraced to the humanist *methodus*, in particular the philosophy of Ramée.

Quiccheberg emphasized in the title to *Inscriptiones* that his theatre offered a rapid, simple and effective method of learning, the very same assurance that was being made in sixteenth-century texts on the didactic *methodus*. It is therefore striking to read in *inscriptio* v/4 'tabulae ramosae, et aliae singularum adeo disciplinarum partitionem et principalia capita ample ob oculos ponentia'.<sup>86</sup> It does not seem rash to suggest that these *tabulae ramosae*, which translate into visual form the arrangement of the material within a given discipline, may be regarded as Ramist charts, each one illustrating the hierarchical structure of a specific field of knowledge.

Furthermore, if one considers the humanists' emphasis on the didactic aspect of their *methodus*, the fact that Quiccheberg repeatedly emphasizes the educational benefits of his theatre is suggestive. At the beginning of the third chapter he vaunts the universality of his theatre, which made it a useful instrument for the study of any discipline or practice under the sun,<sup>87</sup> although he does note that such an all-inclusive museum could only be realized with the help of 'a divine genius':

Iam ergo divino opus esset ingenio, quod haec omnia sic undique componeret et ordinaret, ut succincte et componidose conquista cuiusvis non impoliti animus, in innumeris instruere possent.<sup>88</sup>

From these words it is clear that Quiccheberg's aim was to educate the *animus*, to allow any person with the least amount of culture to gain knowledge in countless fields by means of objects gathered and arranged in a comprehensive and incisive manner. Theoreticians stressed that in the application of the

didactic *methodus*, the classification of notions should reflect the natural order of the world. Therefore it seems to me plausible to suggest that the ordering of Quiccheberg's theatre 'secundum formas rerum' – as he intended to explain in greater detail in his next book 'de facilibus methodis' – represented a novel application of the *methodus*, in this case to the arrangement of a collection of objects designed to educate men's souls.

While Quiccheberg makes no mention of either Ramée or his predecessors, in the light of what has been discussed thus far, it appears difficult to exclude the possibility that his didactic *methodus* may in some way have influenced the structure of Quiccheberg's theatre. All the same, since it is generally agreed that the French philosopher's system began to spread into the Germanic regions of Europe only after 1568, the year in which Ramée moved to Basel,<sup>89</sup> it would be unwise to limit ourselves exclusively to a search for Ramist influences in *Inscriptiones*, which was published in 1565.<sup>90</sup>

Quiccheberg's views on the *methodus* are delineated even more clearly in the final part of the third chapter of his work, where he reminds readers once again of the universality of his theatre and informs them of the necessary conditions for a visit. His museum might contain all the things and all the knowledge in the world, but the visitor could not assimilate this information if his mind were not properly equipped with the instruments (*sua fundamenta*) provided by Quiccheberg in his theatre – the *inscriptiones*, diagrams, phrases inscribed on the walls, and so on.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the author draws a connection between cognitive processes and architectonic spaces, and to clarify this idea offers some instructions on how to obtain the best results from his museum-theatre. This is one of the most telling passages in *Inscriptiones*, but also one of the most complex and abstruse, and deserves to be cited in its entirety:

Ei igitur candidato cui in eiusmodi theatro quale utiliter fundari iam consului, versari aliquandiu concedetur, si rebus praesentibus omnibus ascripta sua nomina (loco et linguis ubi versandum erit necessaria) intuebitur, si ad quas delegerit classes recte intelligendas non venerit plane rudis, sed quandam discendi methodo i(n)structus, hic quae cognata, differentia, contraria, aut in reliquo subiecto considerata examinarit, abesse non poterit, quin brevissimo tempore sine magno labore, et periculis molestiisque, quae alioqui in pervestigatione rerum tollerandae forent, incredibilem omnium rerum peritiam, et divinam plane prudentiam acquirat.<sup>92</sup>

## PROSCENIA.

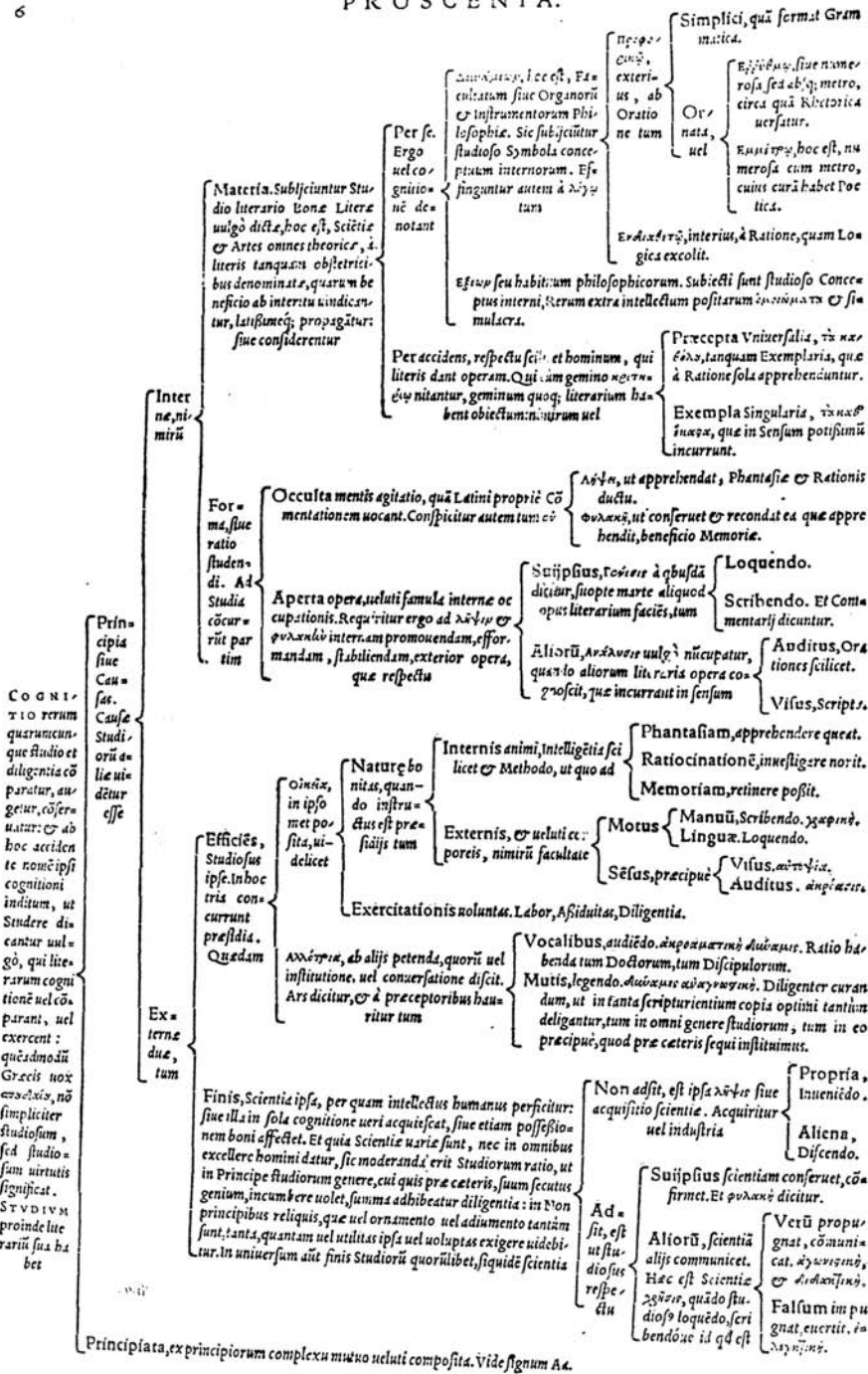


Fig. 4. Theodor Zwinger, *Theatrum vitae humanae* (Basel, 1571), p. 6: a Ramist diagram. © Pisa, Biblioteca Universitaria, su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e le Attività culturali. Leg.E.28.

Because of the involved construction and unusual phraseology of this passage, not to mention possible errors in grammar and orthography, my translation must be considered as one of many conceivable interpretations and therefore hypothetical. Nevertheless, we can say with some certainty that the principal notions conveyed in the passage are: (1) in the museum one should designate names for all the objects in the collection based on language and location (i.e., their proper names and their place in the museum); (2) assign each object to an appropriate class; (3) teach the visitor using a certain method; and (4) examine the objects based on their affinities, differences, oppositions, and other *topoi*. By following these guidelines, one could in the end acquire a vast amount of knowledge without excessive effort.

After describing how his museum-theatre has been arranged, Quiccheberg explains its *mode d'emploi*, vaunting the effectiveness of learning based on the visualization of knowledge:

... hic ex obtutu picturarum, ex inspectione materialium, et apparatu instrumentorum universitatis, quibus mox partitoriae tabulae, verae synopses habendae, subserviunt, omnia fiunt apertiora atque dilucidiora.<sup>93</sup>

Thus – Quiccheberg concludes – looking at images, studying objects, and using classification and synoptic tables made it a simple matter to grasp any subject. Helped by tables that he refers to as *partitoriae* (tree-tables or branching diagrams), which gave visible form to knowledge and illustrated the relationships between different objects, visitors could acquire admirable wisdom in a simple, rapid and effective manner by studying in person the objects that have been collected and noting the names assigned to them. Quiccheberg's *Inscriptiones* is therefore an invaluable text that documents an intensely creative moment in the cultural history of Europe, when collecting and the humanist *methodus* came together to produce new knowledge.

### Visual education and the art of memory in Quiccheberg's theatre

As we have seen, Quiccheberg underscores more than once the importance of directly studying objects and images and the names that have been assigned to them. It is clear that the author is well satisfied with the results of bringing together images and words in his

theatre. For example, he declares how pleasing it is to contemplate the various names of the jewels collected under *inscriptio* III/8,<sup>94</sup> while in IV/5 he describes the joy of exploring the German and Latin terms for different craftsmen's tools.<sup>95</sup> Walking around his theatre, visitors can admire the mottoes inscribed in various places and view precious objects and splendid pictures arranged side by side in an orderly manner, with each assigned a classificatory name. This mode of organizing objects and information is reminiscent of the *ars memoria*, whose three fundamental components were place, order, and image.

Confirmation of the influence of the art of memory can be found in the library where, as Manuela Kahle has pointed out,<sup>96</sup> in arranging his books Quiccheberg marked every tenth volume with a specific colour. This brings to mind the suggestion in mnemonic treatises that one should identify every set of five or ten memory images with a different colour or with an object to serve as an aide-memoire (Fig. 5).<sup>97</sup>

Nonetheless, rather than looking for specific dictates of the *ars memoria* in Quiccheberg's work, it may be more fruitful to explore various gnosiological aspects that seem to spring, either directly or indirectly, from his incorporation of mnemonic techniques in his theatre. In this period the art of memory was closely tied to the cognitive sciences, in which vision and visual images played a primary role. Indeed, in his commentary on *inscriptio* V/3 Quiccheberg explains that it is important to give priority to visual images in the process of learning because of their unique interactivity with memory. As he wrote: 'It is better for memorization to look at a handful of pictures than to read with great toil many pages from books.'<sup>98</sup>

Thus objects, images and words were pressed into service to manage efficiently the large amounts of information produced by the theatre's encyclopaedic collection. If we consider the fact that Quiccheberg's museum-theatre was a real building and not simply a metaphor, could we not add the element of architecture to the powerful synergy present between his words and images? Let us proceed then to an examination of the relationship between the architectural spaces of the museum-theatre – Quiccheberg's physical container of knowledge – and the cognitive act, i.e. the mental process that it elicited in its visitors.

First of all, we must attempt to clarify the acceptability of the words *inscriptio* and *inscribere* – important

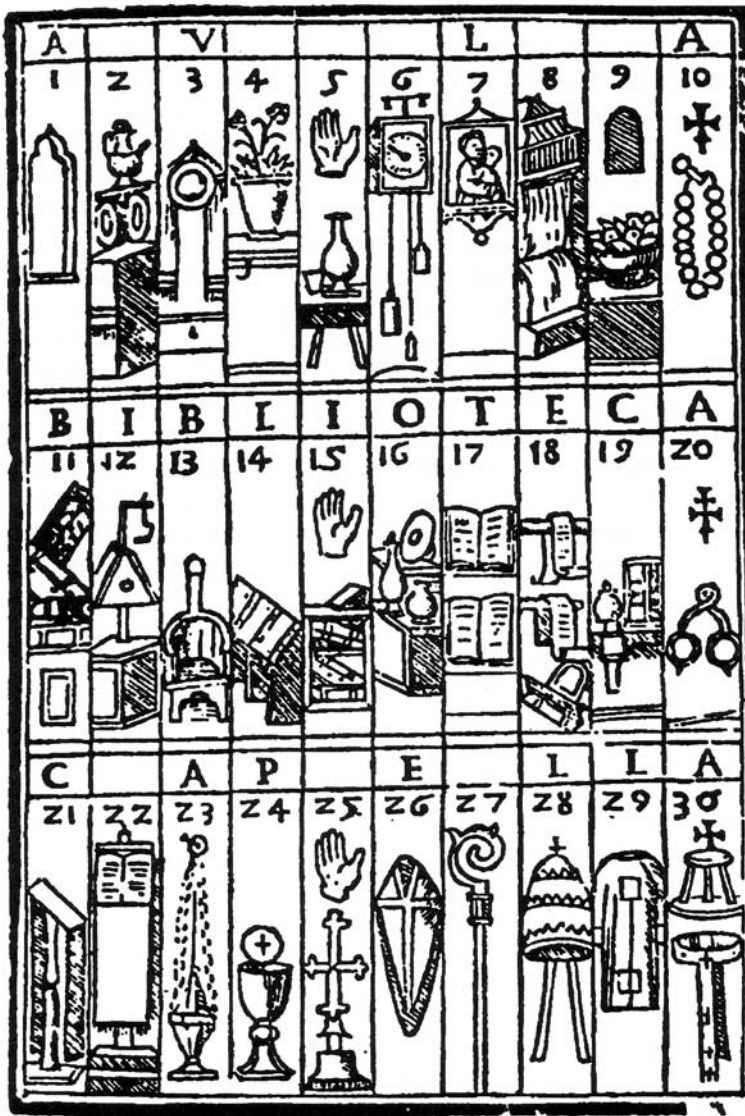


Fig. 5. J. Host von Romberch,  
*Congestorium artificiosae memoriae*  
 (Venice, 1533): numbered memory images.  
 © Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence.  
 Magl.21.8.63.

terms if we wish to arrive at a more profound interpretation of Quiccheberg's work. The Latin verb *inscribo* means 'to write letters on a hard surface' or 'to entitle books', and therefore the noun *inscriptio* signifies 'inscription' or 'book title'. Quiccheberg explains, unfortunately in somewhat obscure terms, why he chose this word for his theatre:

Inscriptionis vocabulo sic in theatro nostro utimur, ac si quis forte rex, aut princeps, aut alius quispiam patronus ita res singulas collectas, ad certa loca inscripsisset, aut sic adhuc inscribere deliberasset.<sup>99</sup>

Further on he writes that certain types of visual images, such as combined images or pictures that have been rolled up or are extremely large, 'should be inscribed' (*inscribenda*) in the space of the theatre rather than being stored away in cabinets.<sup>100</sup> From these passages it emerges that the author is using the verb *inscribo* in the sense of assigning attributions or titles to objects that have been arranged in specific places in the theatre, and it is for this reason that *inscriptio*, the substantive of the verb *inscribo*, has been used to designate the categories in the collection.

What is more, the author uses the same verb when he advises the reader to ‘inscribe’ moral and sacred *sententiae et gnomae* in specific locations in the theatre, implying that for him arranging or registering objects in pre-determined *loci* in the theatre and inscribing phrases in different places on the walls are equivalent actions. Here we may detect a veiled parallel between collecting objects and writing words in Quiccheberg’s thought.

Concerning this point it is pertinent to recall the close nexus that has traditionally existed between the museum and the realm of literature. It is well known that the term *musaeum* may designate either one of two concepts – the Greek *mouseion*, which was a place dedicated to music or poetry, and more specifically the *musaeum* in Alexandria with its famed library.<sup>101</sup> The idea of the museum was revived during the humanist age, taking the form of the *studiolo* – a room dedicated to study, where beautiful objects and rare curiosities could also be displayed – arriving finally at the scholar’s room depicted in Comenius’ *Orbis sensualium pictus*, which felicitously combined the functions of the library and museum (Fig. 6).<sup>102</sup> It is in this context that the inclusion of a library in Quiccheberg’s museum-theatre complex should be regarded.

It is well known that the Muses were the daughters of Mnemosyne, the Goddess of Memory. Contrary to what is generally believed, however, the role of Mnemosyne and mnemonic techniques did not diminish with the invention of writing and in fact in the early modern age enjoyed a remarkable revival. There was a growing scholarly interest in the *ars*

*memoria*, keeping pace with developments in printing technology, and in this context Quiccheberg’s assertion that visitors should try to memorize the objects in his theatre assumes greater interest. For example, he says that the armour collected in *inscriptio* IV/9 ‘should be conserved in the memory’ (*memoria adservantur*), and the same expression can be found in *inscriptio* IV/10 on foreign dress (*in memoriam ... adservari*), as well as in *inscriptio* IV/11 on rare attire (*memoriae causa adservata*).<sup>103</sup> In other words, the theatre offered a place where collections of words could be written as if on the pages of a book, as well as a place where objects could be conserved and studied. If we accept this parallel between collecting, writing and memorizing, I believe that the author’s use of the term *inscribere* reflects in a subtle sense the theory of memory that permeated the philosophy and medical sciences of the period. To find support for this interpretation, let us analyse the links between the mental process involved in memorization and the mnemonic construction of architectural spaces.

Cicero, an author whose works were extremely influential and contributed to the development of the theory of memory in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, wrote in *De oratore* that things perceived with the aid of sight, the most acute of the five senses, were easier to remember (*‘facillime animo teneri posse’*).<sup>104</sup> Elsewhere the Latin writer drew a clear parallel between the process of memorizing a discourse and that of writing words, using an expression that appears most indicative: *‘in animo . . . inscribere’*.<sup>105</sup> According to Cicero, therefore, information was ‘inscribed’ on the soul through mental images.

The notion of ‘writing’ information in the mind or on the soul was a widespread metaphor in the antique world, one that not only orators but also philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Seneca seized upon.<sup>106</sup> According to this *topos*, memorizing an idea in the places of the soul was a process nearly identical to that of writing words or impressing images on a wax tablet. As a consequence, recalling things conserved in the mind was the same as reading the words inscribed on a tablet.<sup>107</sup> The use therefore by sixteenth-century thinkers of this Ciceronian terminology should come as no surprise given the physical dimension that was attributed – through such analogies as the wax tablet – to the *animus*, which was the seat of memory.<sup>108</sup> For example, the Venetian polygraph Lodovico Dolce employed the term *iscrizione* in his treatise on the art



Fig. 6. Johann Amos Comenius, *Orbis sensualium pictus* (Nuremberg, 1658): a scholar’s studiolo. © Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence. Magl.3.3.2.

of memory to refer to the arrangement of *imagines agentes* in mental places.<sup>109</sup>

Another equally influential metaphor was the store-room, which likened memory to a room or a large chest in which precious information could be stored in such a way that it might be easily found again.<sup>110</sup> Quiccheberg's universal museum, which consisted of rooms or cabinets filled with objects to be remembered whose arrangement bore close analogies to writing, therefore united two metaphors to create a completely new type of memory theatre.

Quiccheberg describes a system for the organization of the spaces in his theatre that is based on mental *topoi* such as similarities, differences, and opposites. Furthermore, following the cue of the metaphor 'memory=writing', the parallel between the pages of a book and the interior of the theatre prompts us to view the theatre as an extension or projection of the cognitive structure of the mind (*animus*) into the physical world. This relationship, however, could just as well be inverted, with the visitor to the theatre constructing his mental spaces in the form of an amphitheatre, i.e. following the model of a real building. Here it is pertinent to recall Quiccheberg's declaration that the mind of the spectator should base its *fundamenta* in the theatre in order to properly understand the objects on view. If in addition, as we have suggested above, the fifty-three *inscriptiones* were meant to serve a function analogous to that of the mental *topoi*, then the *animus* of the spectator who wished to draw maximum profit from his visit to the museum always had to refer to the *inscriptiones* in order to find new knowledge, just as the *animus* of Cicero's ideal orator consulted a series of mental *loci* to find the material for his discourse.<sup>111</sup>

We find support for this parallel in the same passage where Quiccheberg cites the Latin orator; he goes on to affirm that in the act of conceptualizing the model for a perfect encyclopaedic museum one engaged in creative thought. Such a thought-process allowed the visitor to gauge the extent of his knowledge of the things of the universe and conceive of new things for the *animus* to explore. In other words, it engaged him in the production of knowledge, the maximum cognitive and didactic effect that could be achieved by this theatre. Therefore Quiccheberg's museum could be regarded as a new version of the memory theatre, one that provided the material and the heuristic frameworks necessary for intellectual activity and creative thought. Instead of conserving inanimate objects in

a static and decontextualized collection, as conventional museums continue to do to this day, the theatre of the Flemish physician served as an active generator and storehouse of new knowledge.

### Conclusion: orbicular spaces symbolizing the circle of knowledge

Inscribing (*inscribere*) or registering the objects in the theatre was therefore equivalent to inscribing information in the mental places of the *animus*. The phrases written in various locations, the classificatory names of the objects on display, and the synoptic tree diagrams that could be brought along and consulted during one's visit, were all vehicles designed to mediate between the physical space of the museum and the mental framework of the visitor. I would propose that during the cinquecento and seicento classically constructed physical spaces, in symbiosis with the powerful images arranged within them, offered an idealized model of the mind's architecture and, vice versa, the cognitive structure of the mind could be projected on to the real world through architecture. Therefore, Quiccheberg's museum provides a highly focused example of the mind and architecture working together in a creative relationship.

In this context the author's choice of a circular form for his theatre takes on yet another significance. If the inside of the theatre is a reflection of the human mind, then its form could be an allusion to the notion of encyclopaedic knowledge and the orbicular conception of knowledge. It is suggestive that both Cicero and Vitruvius – Quiccheberg's principal sources – describe the encyclopaedia as a harmonious intermingling of all the disciplines.<sup>112</sup> It is also significant that in the philosophical tradition of the search for universal knowledge, particularly among the neo-Platonists, the perfect circle was the form used to symbolize the mind and mental processes.<sup>113</sup>

In point of fact, Quiccheberg's theatre is a receptacle for encyclopaedic and universal knowledge. The author does not impose a hierarchical order on the elements in his five classes and fifty-three sub-classes or *inscriptiones*; instead he presents a circle of knowledge in the form of a circular museum where every discipline lies on the same level. It was for this reason that Quiccheberg chose the amphitheatre as his architectural model; this was the only form in the classical

canon that would allow him to maximize the visual impact of his collection, providing sufficient space to display a vast number of objects and to receive a large number of visitors. The amphitheatre lent solid form to the idea of an encyclopaedia that could serve as a simple, yet all-encompassing didactic tool.

Samuel von Quiccheberg's *Inscriptiones* is a remarkable text, whose sixty-two densely written pages constitute a vast repository of cinquecento culture reflecting the many currents – philosophical, literary, scientific, encyclopaedic and artistic – that contributed to make this such a crucial period in the intellectual history of Europe. And yet, even though the *Inscriptiones* may be considered a quintessential expression of its time, it has been neglected by scholars due to the complexity of its themes and the idiosyncratic style of its author. It is hoped that this disquisition, which offers the first analysis of the entire text, will have helped to demonstrate the profound richness of the architectonic culture of the period and lead to further studies of its contribution to the humanist movement.

## Appendix 1

The contents of the *inscriptiones* in Samuel von Quiccheberg's theatre-museum.

Class and <i>inscriptio</i>	Mercury	Contents
I/1	☿	Paintings of sacred scenes, other paintings, sculptures, and <i>objets d'art</i>
I/2		Genealogy of the creator of the museum-theatre and his family
I/3		Portraits of the creator of the museum-theatre, his family, and his ancestors
I/4	☿	Maps of the world, sea charts, and maps of the dominions of the creator of the museum-theatre
I/5		<i>Vedute</i> of the cities of Europe
I/6		Images of famous battles from every historical epoch
I/7		Pictures of spectacles, processional floats, festivals, etc.
I/8		Large images of rare animals
I/9		Architectural models and other constructions
I/10		Small models of various machines
II/1		Statues of contemporary and historical personages made from different materials
II/2		Handiwork in wrought iron

Class and <i>inscriptio</i>	Mercury	Contents
II/3		Handiwork in every material: stone, precious stone, glass, textiles, etc.
II/4		Fine and rare furnishings
II/5	☿	Antique and imported vases
II/6	☿	Weights and measures (antique and modern, from different countries)
II/7		Antique and modern coins and medals
II/8		Images to be stamped on coins
II/9		Symbols and images for coins and medals
II/10		Goldsmith's work: various designs and sacred scenes
II/11		Copperplate engravings: stories, symbols, portraits, etc.
III/1	☿	Rare and mythical animals
III/2		Coloured figurines of animals cast in metal, plaster, clay, etc.
III/3		Animal parts: horns, hooves, claws, feathers, animal skins
III/4		Skeletons of humans and animals; models of various organs
III/5	☿	Seeds, fruits, pods, branches, roots
III/6		Plants, flowers, twigs, rinds, wood, roots, etc. and models and images of plants and plant parts
III/7		Various metals
III/8	☿	Gems and precious stones
III/9		Rare minerals
III/10		Colours and pigments
III/11		Elements of the earth: clay, sulphur, salt, etc.
IV/1		Various musical instruments
IV/2		Various mathematical instruments
IV/3		Various instruments for writing and painting
IV/4		Various large machines for warfare and public works
IV/5	☿	Various instruments for shopkeepers
IV/6		Various instruments for surgical and dissection procedures
IV/7		Various instruments for hunting and gardening
IV/8		Various pieces of equipment for games and sports
IV/9	☿	Foreign and rare armour
IV/10	☿	Foreign dress
IV/11		Rare attire: mantles, coats, hats
V/1	☿	Oil paintings
V/2	☿	Watercolours
V/3	☿	Copperplate engravings

Class and <i>inscriptio</i>	Mercury	Contents
v/4		Paintings on sacred and profane subjects: historical and chronological catalogues; maps
v/5	♀	Large genealogical tables of kings, noblemen, dukes, etc.
v/6		Portraits of illustrious men
v/7	♀	Coats of arms of noble families
v/8		Carpets
v/9	♀	Sentences and maxims
v/10	♀	Repositories

### Address for correspondence

Koji Kuwakino, Graduate School of Letters, Osaka University, 1–5 Machikaneyama, Toyonaka, Osaka 560–8532, Japan.  
[kuwakino@let.osaka-u.ac.jp](mailto:kuwakino@let.osaka-u.ac.jp)

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### Notes and references

- The bibliography on the history of encyclopaedic collecting in the early modern period is quite vast and we will limit ourselves to some recent works: Julius von Schlosser, *Die Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Spätrenaissance* (Leipzig, 1908); Adalgisa Lugli, *Naturalia et mirabilia. Il collezionismo enciclopedico nelle Wunderkammer d'Europa* (Milan, 1983); Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (eds), *The Origins of Museums. The Cabinet of Curiosities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe* (Oxford, 1985); Giuseppe Olmi, *L'inventario del mondo. Catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna* (Bologna, 1992); Andreas Grote (ed.), *Macrocosmos in Microcosmo. Die Welt in der Stube. Zur Geschichte des Sammelns 1450–1800* (Opladen, 1994); Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, 1994).
- Cesare Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione. Studi sulla cultura del Cinquecento e del Seicento* (Naples, 1974), p. 619.
- On the close relationship between architecture and encyclopaedism, see Annarita Angelini, *Sapienza, prudenza, eroica virtù. Il mediomondo di Daniele Barbaro* (Florence, 1999), pp. 102–52.
- I will restrict myself to some key bibliographic references: Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London, 1966); Paolo Rossi, *Clavis Universalis. Arti della memoria e logica combinatoria da Lullo a Leibniz* (Bologna, 1983); Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990); Jörg J. Berns and Wolfgang Neuber (eds), *Ars memoria. zur kulturgeschichtlichen Bedeutung der Gedachtniskunst 1400–1750* (Tübingen, 1993); Lina Bolzoni, *La stanza della memoria. Modelli letterari e iconografici nell'età della stampa* (Turin, 1995), pp. 29–78.
- Samuel von Quiccheberg, *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi, complectentis rerum universitatis singulas materias et imagines eximias, ut idem recte quoque dici possit. Promptuarium artificiosarum miraculosarumque rerum, ac omnis, rari thesauri et pretiosae suppellectis, structurae atque picturae, quae hic simul in theatro conquiri consulantur, ut eorum frequenti inspectione tractationeque singularis aliqua rerum cognitio et prudentia admiranda, cito, facile ac tuto comparari possit*, Ex officina Adami Berg typographi (Munich, 1565).
- For example, Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605) referred to his vast natural history collection as a *teatro della natura*. Cf. Sandra Tugnoli Pattaro, *Metodo e sistema delle scienze nel pensiero di Ulisse Aldrovandi* (Bologna, 1981), p. 21, n. 9. On the relationship between the concept of the theatre and encyclopaedism in the early modern age, see William N. West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002).
- Regarding Quiccheberg's biography, I have drawn primarily on Harriet Roth, 'Einleitung', in Harriet Roth, *Der Anfang der Museumslehre in Deutschland. Das Traktat 'Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri Amplissimi' von Samuel Quiccheberg* (Berlin, 2000), pp. 1–25; Manuela Kahle, *Zwischen Mnemotechnik und Sammlungstheorie. Eine Untersuchung zu Giulio Camillo's L'idea del teatro und Samuel Quiccheberg's Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*, Schriftliche Arbeit zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades Magister Artium am Seminar für Geistesgeschichte und Philosophie der Renaissance der philosophischen Fakultät der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (Munich, 2005), pp. 41–5.
- Cf. Mark A. Meadow, 'Merchants and marvels: Hans Jacob Fugger and the origins of the Wunderkammer', in Paula Findlen and Pamela H. Smith (eds), *Merchants & Marvels. Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2002), pp. 182–200.
- Among the principle studies on *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*, see Schlosser, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 70–72; Elizabeth M. Hajos, 'The concept of an engravings collection in the year 1565: Quiccheberg, *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*', *Art Bulletin* 40 (1958), pp. 151–6; idem, 'References to Giulio Camillo in Samuel Quiccheberg's "Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi"', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance: travaux et documents*, vol. xxv (Geneva, 1963), pp. 205–11; Lugli, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 84–5, 133–4; Lina Bolzoni, 'Das Sammeln und die Ars Memoria', in Grote, op. cit. (note 1), 1994, pp. 129–68; Alfred Serrai, *Storia della bibliografia 11. Le Enciclopedie rinascimentali (II). Bibliografi universali*, ed. Maria Cochetti (Rome, 1991), pp. 44–51; Patricia Falguières, 'Foundation du théâtre ou méthode de l'exposition universelle: les *Inscriptions* de Samuel Quiccheberg (1565)', *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 40 (1992), pp. 91–115; Horst Bredekamp, *Nostalgia dell'antico e fascino della macchina. La storia della Kunstkammer e il futuro della storia dell'arte* (Milan, 1996), pp. 38–41; Kahle, op. cit. (note 7).
- Roth, op. cit. (note 7).
- In his review of Roth's translation, the historian Markus Friedrich of Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität of Munich strongly criticized not only the many errors of interpretation but also the insufficient knowledge of history and shortcomings in the analysis of the text on the part of the translator. Cf.

- M. Friedrich, 'Rezension von: *Harriet Roth (Hg.): Der Anfang der Museumslehre in Deutschland. Das Traktat "Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri Amplissimi" von Samuel Quiccheberg, Akademie, Berlin, 2000*', *Schepunkte* 2 no. 9 (2002), <http://www.schepunkte.de/2002/09/3032.html>.
- 12 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sigs. Aii.r-Ciii.v. Most earlier studies have examined no more than Quiccheberg's introductory enumeration of the objects in his museum.
  - 13 'Musea et officinae reconditoria, qualia ad sapientiae et iucundi artificij supellectilem quandoque peculiaria in regijs extruuntur, quandoque vero coniunctim habentur'. Ibid., sigs. Ciii.r-Di.r.
  - 14 'Admonitio seu consilium atque item digressiones Sam. Quicchebergi de universo theatro'. Ibid., sigs. Di.v-Fiii.v.
  - 15 'Exempla ad lectorem et ad promptuariorum sapientiae exornatores, fundatoresque bibliothecarum diversa supellectile instructarum ...'. Ibid., sigs. Fiii.r-Hii.r.
  - 16 We do not wish to negate entirely the existence of such esoteric elements, but as far as I have been able to determine their influence cannot be clearly confirmed from the text. On the mystical-symbolical interpretation of Quiccheberg's theatre, see Barbara J. Balsiger, *The Kunst- und Wunderkammern. A Catalogue Raisonné of Collecting in Germany, France and England, 1565-1750*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh (1970), pp. 550 ff.; Klaus Minges, 'Die Sammlung als Medium des Weltbildes, Bemerkungen zur Rezension von Horst Bredekamps Antikensehnsucht und Maschinenglauben', *Kunstchronik* 4/47 (1994), pp. 229-35; Roth, op. cit. (note 7), p. 240; Thomas D. Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister & City. The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450-1800* (Chicago, 1995), p. 178.
  - 17 'Theatri etiam nomen hic assumitur ... pro structura grandi, vel arcuata, vel ovali, vel ad formam ambulacri'. Quiccheberg, *Inscriptiones*, op. cit. (note 5), sigs. Diii.v-Diiii.r.
  - 18 '... ad quatuor latera altis contignationibus exstructum, in quorum medio hortus, aut cavedia sit relicta (ita enim Bavaricum theatrum artificiosarum rerum spectatur) ut quatuor maximae aulae, ad quatuor coeli regiones, latissime pateant. unde et accommodari aliquo modo amphiteatri nomen ipsi posset'. Ibid., sig. Diiii.r.
  - 19 On the Duke of Bavaria's *Kunstammer*, see Lorenz Seelig, 'The Munich *Kunstammer* 1565-1807', in Impey and MacGregor, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 76-89; Kahle, op. cit. (note 7), pp. 59-63.
  - 20 Vitruvius, *De architectura*, I, vi, 1.
  - 21 Ibid., vi, iii.1. It may be noted that Alberti uses the same term when referring to the courtyard of a villa. Cf. Leon. B. Alberti, *De re aedificatoria*, Libro v, xvii, 417.
  - 22 Vitruvius, op. cit. (note 20), vi, iii, 6.
  - 23 Cf. John Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious. The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), pp. 36, 56.
  - 24 On the *cavedium* in Giovio's villa, see Paolo Giovio, *Scritti d'arte. Lessico ed ecfrafi*, ed. Sonia Maffei (Pisa, 1999), pp. 72, 114.
  - 25 On the anatomical theatre in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Giovanna Ferrari, 'Public anatomy lessons and the carnival: the anatomy theatre of Bologna', *Past & Present* 117 (1987), pp. 50-106; Cynthia Klestinec, 'Civility, comportment, and the anatomy theater: Girolamo Fabrici and his medical students in Renaissance Padua', *Renaissance Quarterly* 60 no. 2 (2007), pp. 434-63.
  - 26 'Monere hic oportet Iulij Camilli museum semicirculo suo, recte quoque theatrum dici potuisse'. Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Diiii.r.
  - 27 On Camillo and his memory theatre, the reader may consult Yates, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 135-63; Lina Bolzoni, *Il teatro della memoria. Studi su Giulio Camillo* (Padua, 1984); Lina Bolzoni (ed.), *Giulio Camillo, L'idea del teatro* (Palermo, 1991); Corrado Bologna, 'Esercizi di memoria. Dal "teatro della sapienza" di Giulio Camillo agli "Esercizi Spirituali" di Ignazio di Loyola', in Lina Bolzoni and Pietro Corsi (eds.), *La cultura della memoria* (Bologna, 1992), pp. 169-221; Barbara Keller-Dall'Asta, *Heilsplan und Gedächtnis. Zur Mnemologie des 16. Jahrhunderts in Italien* (Heidelberg, 2001), pp. 185-261.
  - 28 Marcin Fabiański, 'Iconography of the architecture of ideal musaea in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries', *Journal of the History of Collections* 2 (1990), pp. 95-134.
  - 29 'Hic optari equidem Germanis quibusdam, ut vidisset solum in Lombardia museum et raconditoria istarum rerum Marci Mantuae Benavidij professoris Patavini, esset exemplum perpetuo imitandum'. Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Giii.v.
  - 30 On the museum of Marco Mantova Benevadis, see Irene Favaretto, *Andrea Mantova Benevides Inventario delle antichità di casa Mantova Benevides* (Padua, 1978); Irene Favaretto (ed.), *Marco Mantova Benevides: il suo museo e la cultura padovana del Cinquecento* (Padua, 1984).
  - 31 Massimiliano Rossi, 'Un episodio della fortuna di Giulio Camillo a Padova: l'"anfitheatrino" di Bartolomeo Ammanati per Marco Mantova Benavides', *Bollettino del Museo Civico di Padova* 82 (1993), pp. 339-60.
  - 32 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Ciii.v.
  - 33 Ibid., sig. Dii.r.
  - 34 'Inde numerantur volumina, et decimum quodque certo colore insignitur, unde decuriae colligantur & procul conspiciantur'. Ibid., sig., Ciii.r.
  - 35 Ibid.
  - 36 '... rather because I wanted all of these things to become instilled in the thoughts of men through this universal and most perfect list, just as Cicero did with regard to the perfect orator: through thoughts one can measure the profundity of one's knowledge of all things and stimulate anew other things to conceive of and investigate in the soul'. Ibid., sig., Di.v.
  - 37 Cicero, *De oratore*, III, 84-5; the translation is from the edition by H. Rackham (London and Cambridge MA, 1960).
  - 38 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sigs. Di.v-Dii.r.
  - 39 Cicero, op. cit. (note 37), I, 13, 59; III, 20, 76.
  - 40 Vasoli, op. cit. (note 2), p. 515.
  - 41 On the art of rhetoric, see Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1988); Bice Mortara Garavelli, *Manuale di retorica* (Bologna, 1989).
  - 42 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Ei.v.
  - 43 'Ad peregrina cum nostris et vetera cum novis examinandum.' Ibid., sig. Eiii.r.
  - 44 'Ob naturae varietatem, vel appellationum diversitatem.' Ibid., sig. Bii.v.
  - 45 Ibid., sig. Ei.v.
  - 46 '... quod aliquam varietatem adferre potest.' Ibid., sig. Bii.r.
  - 47 Ibid., sig. Eiii.r.
  - 48 Zwinger completed the monumental work that was left unfinished by his father-in-law, Lycosthenes, and published it under the title *Theatrum vitae humanae*. Cf. Theodor Zwinger, *Theatrum vitae humanae*, Oporinus et Frobenius (Basel,

- 1565). On this work, see Walter J. Ong, 'Commonplace rhapsody: Ravisius Textor, Zwinger and Shakespeare' 3 in Robert R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture AD 1500–1700* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 91–126, in particular pp. 111–15; Alfredo Serrai, *Storia della bibliografia 1. Bibliografia e Cabala. Le Enciclopedie rinascimentali (1)*, ed. Maria Cochetti (Rome, 1988), pp. 396–413; Helmut Zedelmaier, *Bibliotheca universalis und Bibliotheca selecta. Das Problem der Ordnung des gelehrten Wissens in der frühen Neuzeit* (Vienna, 1992), pp. 227–41.
- 49 Among the seminal studies on this topic, see Ong, op. cit. (note 48); Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Topica universalis. Eine Modellgeschichte humanistischer und barocker Wissenschaft* (Hamburg, 1983); Alfredo Serrai, *Dai 'loci communes' alla bibliometria* (Rome, 1984); Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford, 1996); Francis Goyet, *Le sublime du 'lieu commun'. L'invention rhétorique dans l'Antiquité et à la Renaissance* (Paris, 1996); Alberto Cevolini, *De arte excerptendi. Imparare a dimenticare nella modernità* (Florence, 2006).
- 50 Another scholar who has examined Quiccheberg's method of displaying the objects in his theatre from the perspective of rhetoric is Manuela Kahle. While suggesting a correlation between rhetorical *inventio* and collecting, Kahle does not analyze the concrete influence of the practice of collecting *loci communes* on the spatial composition of Quiccheberg's theatre. Cf. Kahle, op. cit. (note 7).
- 51 Aristotle, *Topica*, VIII, 14, 163 b20–b30.
- 52 Idem, *Rhetorica*, I, 2, 1358 a10–a30.
- 53 Cf. Jocelyn P. Small, *Wax Tablets of the Mind. Cognitive Studies of Memory and Literacy in Classical Antiquity* (London, 1997), pp. 95 ff.
- 54 The fundamental Roman texts on rhetoric that explain the concept of *topoi* are: Cicero, *Topica*, II, 7–8; idem, *De oratore*, II, 34; Pseudo-Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 1.8.13; Quintilianus, *Institutio oratoria*, V, 10, 20–22.
- 55 On the literary *topos* in the Middle Ages, see the classic study by Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York, 1953).
- 56 On this literary genre, see Jacqueline Hamesse, 'Parafraasi, florilegi e compendi', in Guglielmo Cavallo et al. (eds), *Lo spazio letterario del Medioevo. 1. Il Medioevo latino*, III (Rome, 1995), pp. 197–220.
- 57 On the equivalence between *loci communes* and subject titles for cataloguing purposes, see Serrai, op. cit. (note 49), pp. 5–153.
- 58 Desiderius Erasmus, *De copia verborum ac rerum*, in idem, *Opera Omnia*, I, 6 (Amsterdam, 1988), pp. 258–65.
- 59 To illustrate the notion of *pugnans*, Erasmus offered the example of the title: 'Pietas et Impietas'. Cf. ibid., p. 260.
- 60 Io. Ravisii Textoris *Officina partim historicis partim poeticis refertis disciplina . . .*, Reginaldus Chauldière (Paris, 1520). On Textor's *Officina*, see Ong, op. cit. (note 48), pp. 95–101; Serrai, op. cit. (note 9), pp. 153–60. On Textor's life, see Nathaël Istasse, 'Johannes Ravisius Textor: mise au point biographique', in *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 69 no. 3 (2007), pp. 691–703.
- 61 Cf. Walter J. Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue. From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*, (Cambridge, MA, 1958), pp. 116–21; idem, op. cit. (note 48), pp. 91–126; idem, *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York, 1982), pp. 117–30.
- 62 Cf. Falguières, op. cit. (note 9).
- 63 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Dii.v.
- 64 *Officinae Ioannis Ravisii Textoris Epitome*, Haered. Seb. Gryphi (Lyon, 1560), vol. I, p. 341.
- 65 Ibid., p. 172.
- 66 Ibid., pp. 169, 325, 337, and vol. II, pp. 17, 44, 157, 244, 255, respectively.
- 67 Lothar Schmitt as well hypothesized a link between Zwinger's theatre and that of Quiccheberg based on their use of the term *promptuarium*. Cf. Lothar Schmitt, 'Ordnung im Gedächtnis: Alternative Überlegungen zum funktionalen und theoretischen Kontext des frühneuzeitlichen Sammlungswesens in deutschsprachigen Raum', in Wessel Reinink and Jeroen Stumpel (eds), *Memory & Oblivion* (Dordrecht, 1999), pp. 183–90.
- 68 Ong, op. cit. (note 48), p. 114.
- 69 'Sententiae et gnomae: eaeque ad certa spacia theatri inscriptae: potissimum vero sacrae, vel morales: vel ad classes supellectilis cuiuscunque pervenuste congruentes. Harum aliae parietibus, aliae in appensis tabellis, aliae aureis, aliae coloratis literis depictae'. Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Ciii.r.
- 70 ' . . . aut imitentur eos, qui in monasterijs undique ad postes sententias inscribere consueverunt. item praeceptores Bohemos, qui natura structurae suae moniti scholarum et conclavium undique maceris trabesque, tigillis lavigant, inque earum patulis iamque solidatis commissuris undique sententias maxima elegantia inscribunt'. Ibid., sig. Fii.r.
- 71 Desiderius Erasmus, *De ratione studii*, in idem, *Opera Omnia*, I, 2 (Amsterdam, 1971), pp. 118–19.
- 72 Cf. Giovin, op. cit. (note 24).
- 73 Cf. Daniel S. Russell, *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture* (Toronto, 1995), p. 213.
- 74 ' . . . nec enim hic philosophis res naturales omnes ad amussim, cum ipsa natura partim sed principibus, in quosdam non difficiles ordines, res plerasque adservatu iucundas segregamus', Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Diiii.r.
- 75 'Nec enim iam etiam licuit secundum VII Planetas singula distribuere, ut facere potuissent Vitruvium et Camillum imitando, cum ordo facilius secundum formas rerum debuerit exhiberi', ibid., sig. Diiii.r.
- 76 Ibid., sigs. Diiii.r – Diiii.v.
- 77 ' . . . eiusmodi autem aliquid in libro de insignibus apud colores sum prolaturus. aut citius forte, si oportunitas videbitur in libro de facilibus methodis'. Ibid., Diiii.v.
- 78 ' . . . fere solum ad typographos Europae instituentur: noverint enim inde illi quoque methodicos indices librorum, cuiuscunque offerantur argumenti eosque planissimos et utilissimos contexere'. Ibid.
- 79 Lothar Schmitt has suggested that in this passage Quiccheberg was alluding to the indexing method invented by Conrad Gesner. In my opinion, however, this intriguing hypothesis is not demonstrable solely on the basis of an analysis of the text. Cf. Schmitt, op. cit. (note 67), p. 185.
- 80 On the development of the humanist concept of *methodus*, the reader may consult the following definitive studies: Ong, op. cit. [Ramus] (note 61); Neal W. Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method* (New York, 1960); Cesare Vasoli, *La dialettica e la retorica dell'Umanesimo. 'Invenzione' e 'Metodo' nella cultura del XV e XVI secolo* (Milan, 1968); Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon. Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (Cambridge, 1974); Nelly

- Bruyère, *Méthode et dialectique dans l'oeuvre de la Ramée. Renaissance et âge classique* (Paris, 1984).
- 81 Cf. Vasoli, op. cit. (note 80), pp. 296–9; idem, op. cit. (note 2), p. 606.
- 82 Vasoli, op. cit. (note 2), p. 562.
- 83 Cf. Vasoli, op. cit. (note 80), pp. 315–17; idem, op. cit. (note 2), p. 560; Moss, op. cit. (note 49), pp. 120–29, 195.
- 84 On this theme, see Ong, op. cit. [*Ramus*] (note 61), pp. 75–91, 195, 310–14; Bolzoni, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 29–78.
- 85 On the influence of Ramism on Zwinger, see Ong, op. cit. (note 48), pp. 114–17; Zedelmaier, op. cit. (note 48), p. 241.
- 86 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Cii.v.
- 87 ‘Nulla enim sub coelo est disciplina, nullum studium, aut exercitatio, quae non sua etiam instrumenta ex hac praescripta supellectile rectissime petat’. Ibid., sig. Dii.r.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 On the spread of Ramism in Europe, see Ong, op. cit. [*Ramus*] (note 61), pp. 297–305; Vasoli, op. cit. (note 80), pp. 570 ff.; Guido Oldini, *La disputa del metodo nel Rinascimento. Indagini su Ramo e sul ramismo* (Florence, 1997), *passim*.
- 90 In her fascinating study Patricia Falguières mentions the possible influence of Ramism on Quiccheberg’s theatre, but does not devote sufficient attention to his book ‘De facilibus methodis’. Furthermore, based on a premise of historical evolutionism in which Ramée’s *methodus* is assumed to represent the apogee, the French author evaluates Quiccheberg’s work somewhat negatively. According to Falguières, the Flemish physician’s mode of arranging the objects in his theatre was not yet Ramist and therefore ‘désuet’; what is more, he divided his objects ‘poorly’ in comparison to Zwinger, whose theatre closely followed the Ramist system of tree diagrams. Cf. Falguières, op. cit. (note 9), pp. 100–101.
- 91 ‘... siquidem ea adsunt omnia, quae uniuersa natura comprehendit, quae omnes libri docent, quae tota uita humana suggerere potest: nulla enim disciplina disci, nullum artificium considerari, nulla uitae conditio mente concipi potest, quae non habeat hic sua fundamenta, instrumenta, adiumenta, documenta.’ Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Fiii.r.
- 92 ‘Therefore it will be conceded to that candidate, for whom I have already made provision that he bases his studies usefully in such a theatre, to examine for a period, if he will take into consideration the names added to all the things present [through the place and languages, in the sections in which we must consider the necessities]; if to those things [he] fittingly assigns the classes that should be rightly understood, [he] will not in the end remain entirely unpolished, but erudite thanks to a certain method of learning; he who examines the things with affinities, those that are different and those that are opposite, or those that must be considered among the remaining subjects, cannot be far from acquiring a complete and immense skill in all things and divine wisdom in a very short time without undue fatigue, danger and trouble, burdens that otherwise must be borne when studying things’. Ibid., sigs. Fiii.r–Fiii.v.
- 93 Ibid, sig. Fiii.v.
- 94 Ibid., sig. Eii.v.
- 95 Ibid, sig. Eiii.r.
- 96 Kahle, op. cit. (note 7), p. 73.
- 97 Cf. Pseudo-Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.18.
- 98 ‘... plus enim quandoque praestat memoriae inspectio solum alicuius picturae quam diuturna lectio multarum paginarum’. Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Eiiii.v.
- 99 ‘In our theatre we will use the term *iscrizione* as if some king or prince or other patron had inscribed the single things thus gathered in specific places, or had still decided to inscribe them so’, *ibid.*, sig. Diii.v.
- 100 Ibid., sig. Diiii.v.
- 101 Cf. Paula Findlen, ‘The museum: Its classical etymology and Renaissance genealogy’, *Journal of the History of Collections* 1 (1989), pp. 59–78.
- 102 Cf. Lugli, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 55–8.
- 103 Quiccheberg, op. cit. (note 5), sig. Eiii.v. and Ci.v., respectively.
- 104 Cicero, *De oratore*, II, 87, 357.
- 105 Ibid., II, 85, 355.
- 106 On this theme, see Small, op. cit. (note 53), pp. 132–3.
- 107 Cf. Cicero, *De oratore*, II, 87, 354–5; Quintilianus, *De institutione oratoria*, XI, II, 4; Pseudo-Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III, 16, 30.
- 108 It was traditionally believed that the *animus* was the seat of the memory. Cicero, for example, in *Tuscolanae disputationes*, I, 57 affirmed that ‘... the soul has memory, a memory too without limit of things without number’. The translation is from the edition by J. E. King (London and Cambridge, MA, 1966).
- 109 ‘... in truth by such means we will create with great ease an almost infinite number of places, at least for the inscription, which we will do with material letters in an orderly manner ...’ Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo del modo di accrescere e conservar la memoria*, ed. Andrea Torre (Pisa, 2001), p. 76.
- 110 Carruthers, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 33–44; Bolzoni, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 247–52.
- 111 ‘... animus referendus est ad ea capita et ad illos, quos saepe iam appellavi, locos, ex quibus omnia ad omnem orationem inventa ducuntur’. Cicero, *De oratore*, II, 34, 146.
- 112 Cf. *ibid.*, I, 42, 187–8, III, 5, 20–21, III, 7, 25, III, 35, 140; idem, *Pro Archia poeta*, I, 2; Vitruvius, *De architectura*, I, I, 12. On the influence of their ideas on encyclopaedic thinking in the early modern age, see Walter Tega (ed.), *Le origini della modernità (I) & (II)* (Florence, 1998–9).
- 113 Cf. Thomas Leinkauf, ‘*Scientia universalis, memoria und status corruptionis*: Überlegungen zu philosophischen und theologischen Implikationen der Universalwissenschaft sowie zum Verhältnis von Universalwissenschaft und Theorien des Gedächtnisses’, in Berns and Neuber, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 1–34.