

## Image designations in J. Romberch's *Congestorium* Designações de imagem no *Congestorium* de J. Romberch

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**Abstract:** Johannes Romberch's *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae* (Venice, 1520 and 1533) is one of the most comprehensive treatises on *ars memoriae*, especially from a theoretical point of view. In this sense, the role of the terms that name images is striking. Furthermore, from the scholastic concept of *similitudo*, there are various possibilities to develop relationships of similarity. Thus, the *similitudines* crystallize in different types of images (*simulachrum, forma, idolum, idea* ...). In the present study, we intend to discern whether this theoretical differentiation also operates in the practical part of Romberch's treatise.

**Keywords:** Romberch; *Congestorium*; *ars memorativa*; *imagines*; *similitudo*.

### 1. Romberch's *Congestorium* and the images of the *ars memorativa*

The *Congestorium Artificiosae Memoriae* by Johannes Romberch (ca. 1482-1533) is an extensive treatise on artificial memory published in 1520 at the Venetian press of Georgius de Rusconibus. The work also has a second edition, which appeared only thirteen years later, also in Venice, by Melchior Sessa and probably after the author's death. The *Congestorium* stands out in relation to the numerous manuals published during the last years of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the first two decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century for its profuse collection of material on *ars memorativa*. It is not a meaningless accumulation, as Yates'<sup>2</sup> judgement might suggest, but a text that responds to clear principles of organisation and distribution of contents. This makes the *Congestorium* a practically unique manual among those dealing with the *per locos et imagines* system in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Of its author, Johannes Host von Romberch, little can be said beyond the works of VASOLI (2007) and MERINO (2021), to which we are largely indebted in this introduction. Romberch was born around 1482 in the German town of

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<sup>2</sup> YATES (1966) 138, defines it in the following terms: *a strange congestion of memory material*.

Kierspe, not far from Cologne, where he entered the Dominican convent in which he received his training. There he met his teacher, Arnoldus de Tungris, to whom we will refer later, and came into contact with the Inquisitor of Cologne, Jacob Hoggstraaten. When the Reuchlin *affaire* broke out at the end of 1513<sup>3</sup>, Romberch was sent to Rome to act as the Inquisitor's procurator in the judicial process that resulted from the *affaire*. Romberch's must have been secondary, since he distanced himself from the proceedings around March 1514, when all seemed lost for Hoggstraaten<sup>4</sup>. Indeed, the sentence was then favourable to Reuchlin, but the confrontation was not definitively closed until many years later, generating continuous debates and various polemics between the supporters of the Inquisitor and those of the humanist.

Despite the outcome of the conflict, which was unfavourable to the Dominicans, Romberch remained in Italy for a few more years, as he himself recounts in one of the opening epistles of the *Congestorium*<sup>5</sup>. In fact, Romberch was still in Venice when in mid-1520 Pope Leo X reopened the Reuchlin *affaire*, which had seemed closed after the condemnation of the Inquisitor. As a result of this decision, Hoggstraaten was acquitted. At this point, Romberch, who seemed to be unaware of the latest developments, left his manuscript at the printing house of Georgius de Rusconibus and departed back to Cologne on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1520. The *Congestorium* was completed on 9<sup>th</sup> July of the same year, as indicated at the end of the work itself.

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<sup>3</sup> This judicial process is extensively developed in the works of PAULUS (1903), PETERSE (1995), RUMMEL (2002) or MERINO (2021).

<sup>4</sup> Romberch himself speaks of this in one of the letters that opens the *Congestorium*, dedicated to Cardinal Domenico Grimani, who had also taken part in the process, ratifying precisely the initial defeat of the Inquisitor, f. 2v: *Cumque igitur, reverendissime pater, e procuratore quem gessi apud Episcopum Spyrensem factus apud reverendissimam dominationem tuam sollicitator contra capnioneas illas opinationes abs te iustitiam (ad quam ultroneus videbare) efflagitandam, in dies vel rectius horatim aedes tuas frequentarem.*

<sup>5</sup> In the letter addressed to Cardinal García de Loaysa (*Congestorium*) f. 4v, who granted Romberch the bachelor's degree in Theology, we read the following: *Opusculum profecto nostrum ideo nostrum, quia ex omnibus his artis professoribus mea opera congestum et, quantum vires suppetebant et ocio concessum est, Coloniae, Ulmae, Romae, Bononiae et ubi me reppererim usu comprobatum.*

If up to this point, the news we had of our author was scarce, the problem becomes more acute with regard to the last years of his life. Back in Cologne, Romberch devoted his life to the defence of Catholicism, publishing various works of a theological nature and, possibly, teaching in the same convent where he himself had been educated. Later, for reasons that still elude us, both his name and his work ended up in the *Index librorum prohibitorum* (1557) of the Inquisition<sup>6</sup>.

As we have already mentioned, the *Congestorium* is a very complete manual and, as a consequence, very complex, especially if we take into account the tradition of this type of work, as it usually takes as its starting point one or more previous manuals. This is the case with the *Congestorium*, as it combines precepts from classical works such as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero's *De Oratore* or Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, anonymous treatises from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century and, above all, authors more or less contemporary to Romberch himself. His rules for the formation of places and images are mainly taken from the *Ars memorativa* by Jacobus Publicius<sup>7</sup> and the *Phoenix* (1492) by Peter of Ravenna, authors who had emerged a few years earlier; in fact, Yates considers them, together with Romberch and Cosma Rossellius, as the great pillars of the discipline<sup>8</sup>.

In terms of content, as a result of Romberch's training among the Cologne Dominicans, the *Congestorium* is deeply rooted in the scholastic tradition. As far as this doctrine is concerned, Yates underlined Romberch's constant allusions to "corporeal resemblances"<sup>9</sup>, a concept of the scholastic tradition of the *ars memorativa* which is frequently repeated in the more theoretical part of the manual. However, we consider that images based on corporeal resemblances are not exclusive to the Thomistic tradition, since the systems *per locos et imagines* are based on the corporeal, as perceptible by the senses. On the contrary, we believe that Yates' point about "corporeal

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<sup>6</sup> PAULUS (1903) 152.

<sup>7</sup> The tradition of Publicius' text is particularly complex, which makes it difficult to recognise the edition or editions that Romberch may have handled, although it is possible that it was the one of 1485. On the tradition of this *ars memorativa*, cf. MERINO (2020).

<sup>8</sup> YATES (1966) 117.

<sup>9</sup> YATES (1966) 131.

resemblances” could be applied to places. This is because among the Dominicans certain celestial spaces or hierarchies that are not perceptible by the senses were taken as loci. However, from the point of view of a Dominican like Romberch, it could be argued that such places are perceptible by common sense, although this would merit a separate study.

In any case, the scholastic basis of the *Congestorium* seems to us more evident in the theoretical apparatus that supports the use and functioning of the memory system. Romberch manages to relate certain metaphysical conceptions, scholastic reflections on human perception<sup>10</sup>, Aristotelian predicaments or discussions on the concept of place with the largely rhetorical tradition of his doctrinal sources. We consider, moreover, that Romberch may have taken all these theories from the writings of his teacher, Arnoldus de Tungris, whom we have already mentioned, since he is the author of a series of commentaries on the works of Aristotle<sup>11</sup>. In them Arnoldus de Tungris approaches the works of the Stagirite taking as a starting point the commentaries of the two great Dominican masters: Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, whom Romberch also follows in several passages of his work. And, although we have not found textual quotations from the commentaries of his preceptor, it is certain that the theories of one and the other coincide and that the taxonomic classifications of the logical and metaphysical concepts coincide in both authors. It should also be added that these parallels do not usually occur completely between the *Congestorium* and the proposals of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, but often present slight differences. Therefore, in order to clarify certain definitions, found in the *Congestorium*, we have resorted to the works of Arnoldus de Tungris, who offers a sufficient theoretical foundation for the understanding of the work, especially in the area of *similitudo*, a key element of this work.

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<sup>10</sup> In this respect, TELLKAMP (1995).

<sup>11</sup> ROMBERCH himself points out in his work, f. 23v, the relationship with this author: *dominus Arnoldus Tungris praeceptor noster*. The commentaries to which we refer are the following: *Reparationes logice* (1500); *Epitomata que vulgo reparationes dicuntur* (1508) and *Epitomata nova que vulgo reparationes dicuntur* (1510). All these works were published by Quentell in Cologne.

In this respect it should be added that one of the bases of the *per locos et imagines* system is precisely to establish similarities (*similitudines*) between what is to be remembered and its mental representation (*imagines*) and between some physical or imaginable place and the plan that is constructed of it in the mind (*loci*). All treatises deal with their possible realisations in the system and, therefore, many of the modern studies deal with them in this sense<sup>12</sup>; however, we have not found works on the terminology used for the most important elements of this memory system: order, places and images. Order and places are usually called *ordo* and *loci/loca* respectively in the manuals, although certain authors refer not only to *loci*, but also to *sphaerae* perhaps as *antonomasia* for certain types of non-architectural places, which are often related to the celestial spheres<sup>13</sup>. In contrast, as far as images are concerned, there are different terms by which they are named: *imago*, *species*, *forma*, *figura*, *simulachrum*, *phantasma*, *idea*, *idolum*, *effictio*, *nota*, *effigies*... Despite this terminological variety, not much attention has been given to why this is the case, perhaps because not many treatises beyond Romberch offer such a clear definition and distinction between these concepts. In addition, the *Congestorium* has not yet been critically edited<sup>14</sup>, which undoubtedly makes it difficult to study the work.

In any case, if we stop to briefly analyse the concept of *imago*, understood as a mental likeness of something we want to remember, we will see that it is defined as early as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* by the union of two apparently synonymous words<sup>15</sup>, considering the terms as equivalent.

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<sup>12</sup> Some examples are the works of RIVERS (2002), TORRE (2009) or those edited by BERTHOZ and SCHEID (2018).

<sup>13</sup> This name is used, for example, in the texts of Giulio Camillo or Giordano Bruno.

<sup>14</sup> Our doctoral thesis consists precisely of a critical edition, translation, commentary and study of the text of the *Congestorium*. The text used as the basis for the edition is that of 1520, which contains fewer errata than the 1533 edition. In our work, we have adapted the spelling of the printed text to classical Latin and modified the punctuation. In addition, all translations in this work are our own.

<sup>15</sup> In this work the following is stated (Rhet. Her., 3, 16): *imagines sunt formae quaedam et notae et simulachra eius rei quam meminisse volumus*. Years later, QUINTILIAN also points out that (*Inst.*, 12, 2, 21): *opus est ergo locis quae vel finguntur vel sumuntur imaginibus vel*

We will try to show that this synonymy is no longer total in the *Congestorium*, or at least not in all cases. On the other hand, it is clear from the study of other treatises that there is a large number of processes and resources for forming these mental representations, for example, from the form of the word or from the reality itself that is to be remembered. Consequently, it is possible that the use of each term responds to a different process of image formation, i.e. that their *similarities* have different origins.

By virtue of the above, we propose to analyse in the following pages the different terms that Romberch uses in the *Congestorium* to name the images of memory, offering a definition of each of them and a reflection on their use in the treatise. Our intention is to discern whether the differentiation established between the terms is really operative in the system that Romberch proposes or whether it responds only to the author's desire to compile.

## 2. Image designations in the *Congestorium*

Before analysing the typology of the images in the *Congestorium*, we will dwell on the interpretation of the scholastic theory of signification that is intuited in the work<sup>16</sup>. We start from the assumption that the arts of memory *per locos et imagines* make use of a system that is often compared to writing, in such a way that the mnemonic images are identified with the characters. This simile already appears in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*<sup>17</sup> and, from this text onwards, is included in other manuals of memory, among them the *Congestorium*, f. 13r. However, Romberch goes further and attributes to images certain semantic properties of the linguistic sign, equating the images of realities and their signifiers in terms of their functioning: *Voces etenim sunt signa rerum; quare si rerum imagines habemus, illa quoque sint vocum oportet, alioquin conceptam rem per imaginemque in sede sua collocatam expremere non*

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*simulachris quae utique fingenda sunt. Imagines notae sunt quibus ea quae ediscenda sunt notamus ut, quomodo Cicero dicit, locis pro cera, simulachris pro litteris utamur.*

<sup>16</sup> In this respect, we follow the general theory put forward by SARANYANA (1978) or BEUCHOT (1996).

<sup>17</sup> *Rhet. Her.* (3, 30): *Nam locis cerae aut cartae simillimi sunt, imagines litteris, dispositio et conlocatio imaginum scripturae, pronuntiatio lectioni. Oportet igitur, si volumus multa meminisse, multos <nos> nobis locos comparare, uti multis locis multas imagines conlocare possimus.*

*possemus*; *Congestorium* f. 60r<sup>18</sup>. Thus, both images and signifiers are means without which reality as it is conceived could not be expressed, and just as words acquire their meanings in different ways, images represent their content in different ways.

In this sense, the nineteenth chapter of the third treatise of the *Congestorium*<sup>19</sup> deals with the types of images according to the relationship between what is to be remembered and the mental representation created for it. Thus, images can be vocal, real or *mixtae*. In verbal images, the similarity is based on the signifier of the term to be remembered, such as taking a man called John in order to remember that same name. In the real ones the link lies in the content itself, as if one thinks of a fox to mean a cunning person. And in the mixed ones the connection can be twofold, for example, taking a house to mean a house or the term "house" itself. Consequently, Romberch's approach to the attribution of meaning to images is particularly relevant to *imagines vocales*, where the form of the word is considered in order to devise a suitable and helpful image.

Thus, according to Romberch, the way of attributing meaning to an image depends on the type of relationship previously established between them and each user must do so in the way that is most natural to him, i.e. *ad placitum y libera cogitatione*<sup>20</sup>. However, this does not entail absolute freedom, as this would incur a *fallatia aequivocationis*<sup>21</sup>, but there is a limit, set by the type of similarity:

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<sup>18</sup> *In fact, words are signs of things; so, if we have images for things, there must also be signs of words, otherwise we would not be able to explain reality as it is conceived and put in its place through an image.*

<sup>19</sup> Structurally, the *Congestorium* is divided into four books, which Romberch calls treatises, each of which deals with one of the fundamental aspects of the *ars memorativa* of the time. Their content is distributed respectively among the treatises as follows: justification of the necessity of the *ars* and its functioning; places; images and practical examples of realisation according to his own system. Each of these treatises is divided into a series of chapters in which specific aspects of the four blocks of content are analysed.

<sup>20</sup> In this sense Thomas uses the term *imago* in the theory of perception he expounds in the *Summa Theologica*, in the words of ZARZO (2016) 137: *the imago is a natural sign that naturally represents another thing with which it has a relationship.*

<sup>21</sup> In this regard, ARNOLDUS DE TUNGRIS, in *Epitomata* (1510) f. P ii-r, points out, referring to the name, the following: *Si nomen significaret ad placitum, sequeretur quod significativo*

*Possunt quoque vocum imagines libera cogitatione fieri, non quidem consonantia quadam, sed representatione quam voluntas ex proprietate aliqua in ipsis constituit, ut dum tympanum pro certamine ponatur... (Congestorium f. 60v)<sup>22</sup>.*

It is precisely this conformity (*consonantia*) that makes it possible to identify the type of relationship of similarity (*similitudo*), since it points to the common property on the basis of which the mnemonic image is created. In fact, the concept of *similitudo* will be key in this type of work.

*Similitudo* is a conceptual element related to intellectual perception and knowledge. It is a resemblance, that is, the elements with which intellection operates, thus defending that knowledge is assumed from entities that are previously known<sup>23</sup>. Scholastic authors such as Thomas Aquinas or Arnoldus de Tungris<sup>24</sup> had already developed the definition and scope of the term in this sense. In rhetoric, too, the term had been used to name the relationship established between the two members of a simile or metaphor. As far as the arts of memory are concerned, *similitudo* is at the basis of the images, but it seems that Romberch is the first to try to discern its transcendence. As far as we are concerned here, we can define *similitudo* as the relationship established between what is to be remembered and the image that each user devises for this purpose<sup>25</sup>. This explains the following words of Romberch quoting Thomas

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*nominis posset variari et hoc videtur inconveniens. Patet quia placitum hominis est variabile. Solutio: nomen non significat ad placitum cuiuscumque, sed ad placitum primi instituentis et hoc placitum non variatur, sed manet eius auctoritas apud omnes posteriores suo placito se conformantes.* Adapting the same to the *ars memorativa*, we can point out that each user must ensure the univocity of the images and the invariability of their meaning as long as the representation is in use, as advised in the treatises on the *ars memorativa*.

<sup>22</sup> *Verbal images can also be made with free thought, not with any kind of accordance, but with the support of representation that the will makes from any property in them, as when a drum is put instead of a battle...*

<sup>23</sup> Precisely for this reason, in the arts of memory, it is advisable to take as a starting point, realities cognised by the senses in order to construct mental images.

<sup>24</sup> Specifically, this author relates *similitudo* to the theoretical proximity between certain accidents in *Epitomata* (1510) f. K iii-r: *Similitudo causatur ex eadem qualitate in rebus differentiis*. On the other hand, like Romberch, Arnoldus de Tungris determines that this similarity is not total, but merely partial.

<sup>25</sup> In several passages of the *Congestorium similitudo* is placed at the level of certain resources to characterise images (e.g. *inscriptio* or *notatio*). In these cases, Romberch refers



and Cicero in f. 32 v: *Similitudo superius quidem ad imaginem est, nam Cicero in tertio Novae Rhetoricae: 'quoniam rerum similitudines imagines esse opum, ex omnibus verbis nosmet notas nobis similitudines eligere debemus'*<sup>26</sup>. And it is the similarity that would be the object of memory and not the images on f. 33v: *memoria circa imaginem non negociatur, ut circa rem, sed circa similitudinem eius*.

And if *similitudo* points to the relation established depending on matter of the object<sup>27</sup>, that is, it is established as an *exemplar* or principle, the *imago* is the principium, the realisation of that *similitudo*, endowed with meaning<sup>28</sup>. The unmarked term for mental representations is precisely *imago*<sup>29</sup>. Romberch defines it as a likeness of what is to be remembered, taken from that same reality<sup>30</sup> and, like Umhauser, a treatise writer of the early 16th century, stresses that it must have a meaning: *Imago est similitudo et significatio rei quam volumus locis tradere* (f. 33r). We can therefore conclude that all images are likenesses, but not all likenesses are images<sup>31</sup>.

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to the pure representation, without other elements that refer to the meaning of the image. The term is sometimes also applied to places to warn against similarity between them.

<sup>26</sup> In fact, "*similitudo*" is at a higher level than image, as Cicero says in the third book of his *Rhetorica Nova*: "since it is necessary for images to be similitudes of things, we ourselves have to choose among all the words, the similitudes that are known to us". Sobre el concepto de notas similitudines, cf. MERINO (2015).

<sup>27</sup> *Congestorium* (III, 2; f. 33v): *sicque iuxta obiectalem rationem tanquam materiam, quam anterior est divisio proximi capitis*. And that *anterior proximus caput* is the one we cite in this whole paper.

<sup>28</sup> *Similitudo quaedam est ut principium et haec 'exemplar' nuncupanda est, alia aut, ut principiatum, quae rectius 'imago' dicetur, sicque pariformiter species rei memorandae ad rem unde abstracta est si conferatur, eius similitudo venit nominanda*. Romberch's reference is taken from the first part of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (q. 35, a. 1, ob. 1).

<sup>29</sup> The term *imago* appears in the body of the *Congestorium* 385 times to refer to memory images. The next most used term is *figura*, which appears only 56 times, followed by *species*, which is repeated in 38 places. Despite the strong theoretical tinge of the *Congestorium*, it is worth noting that *similitudo* is only used 63 times in this sense.

<sup>30</sup> In the words of ROMBERCH f. 33r: *Est autem proprie 'imago' secundum Sanctum Thomam (q. 35 primae partis, a. 1) quod procedit ad similitudinem alterius*. Also following Thomas, he indicates that there are two kinds of images, those that occur in one's own nature and those that occur in the nature of others, i.e. representations, the latter being the ones dealt with here.

<sup>31</sup> This statement is also found in other treatises such as MATEOLO OF VERONA in his *De arte memorandi*, f. 88v or in the anonymous *Tractatus solemnns artis...* f. 23v, where we read the following: *imagines sunt rerum aut verborum similitudines in mente conceptae*.

Once these two concepts have been analysed, it is easier to study the rest of the terms Romberch uses to refer to images. These are defined in the first chapter of the third treatise, which deals with images, and so this will be our starting point. It should be noted that we will not take as synonyms for *imago* the word *effictio*, "representation", since Romberch himself does not consider it in this passage, nor "*phantasma*", for the same reason. Moreover, the latter is only used on two occasions, quoting Aristotle on one of them, so it is not as common a term in the *Congestorium* as in other treatises, for example, Pedro Ciruelo's *Opusculum brevissimum de arte memorativa* (1528). Nor do we include in the present study the uses that go beyond the scope of memorial representation, such as when *species* is used in opposition to *genus* or *forma* alludes to one of the Aristotelian predicates.

First, Romberch deals with *species*, characterising it as follows: *si meminisse velim alicuius rei, non ipsam penes substantiam materialem in anima repono, sed tantummodo species eius* f. 32r<sup>32</sup>. Although we could interpret here that the *species* is a sort of equivalent of *similitudo* as the object with which memory operates, Romberch is not referring to the object itself, but to the formal-modelical part of the reality to be remembered. And, as the author himself indicates, *species* is one of the Latin terms that translates the Greek *eideia*<sup>33</sup>. This is the reason why we consider that Romberch uses *species* in especially theoretical contexts, related to the Thomistic-Scholastic theory of knowledge as a non-material part of an object, following the example of Aristotle: *non enim (ut supra ex Aristoteleis tertio De anima allegavimus) lapis est in anima, sed species lapidis; Congestorium* f. 32r.

Secondly, the *idolum* is discussed, of which Romberch states the following: *possumus proinde illas figuras quae nihil praeter se ipsas nobis significant nuncupare idola; Congestorium* f. 32v<sup>34</sup>. Thus, an *idolum* is an image

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<sup>32</sup> If there is something I want to remember, I put in my soul not its own material substance, but only its species.

<sup>33</sup> *Congestorium* f. 33r: *Ideas, iuxta beatum Augustinum libro suo 80 Quaestiones, latine possumus vel formas vel species dicere.*

<sup>34</sup> Then, we can call *idolum* to the figures that do not have for us a different meaning than its own. We find the appearance of the term "figure" in the definition significant, since in the

that symbolises itself. Romberch uses the term on thirteen occasions, most of them alluding to frescoes or to images of reality that represent people. For this reason, this is the most difficult term to translate, since the relationship it indicates is almost that of a portrait, that is to say, a kind of reproduction. The reason why we consider that this term is so rarely used is that a self-representational image would no longer be appealing to the user, which is one of the main requirements for the functioning of the system<sup>35</sup>.

Romberch then deals with *simulachrum*, which is rarely used to distinguish a type of image. He defines it as follows: '*Simulachrum*' autem proprie ficta alicuius dicitur imago f. 32v<sup>36</sup>. The example that illustrates this explanation is to take a wolf to mean a voracious person, thus pointing to a semantic translation of metaphors<sup>37</sup>. The word often appears in coordination with other types of image as a further possibility within the system; however, Romberch relates it to etymology. In the *Congestorium*, etymology serves the memory as a mechanism for creating images from the primary roots of the signifiers of what is to be remembered, in such a way that it is proposed to form a single image with the etymemes that will be interpreted as a kind of metaphor. With this in mind, it seems that Romberch uses the term in accordance with the definition he offers of it, a fact that does not always occur, as we shall see below.

The three remaining terms, *figura*, *forma* and *idea*, are the most complex to analyse, since they do not belong exclusively to our field of study, as they are rooted in the thought of Plato and Aristotle and, therefore, of their continuators and commentators. Moreover, both *forma* and *figura* and their diminutives (*formula* and *figurula*) designate in the *Congestorium* some of the images printed in it, *forma* encompassing the diagrams and *figura* encompassing

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Platonic *Sophist* 235d-236c both terms are used as equivalents, from which it follows that they were not so far apart semantically.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *Congestorium* f. 34v: *enimvero minus commovent, [...] sensum vix aut debiliter moveat neque phantasiam sufficienter commovebit et inde mala fiet impressio*. Stimulating the imagination and touching the mood are two essential prerequisites for the right impression of the images.

<sup>36</sup> *And the fictitious image of something is properly called "simulachrum".*

<sup>37</sup> On the possibilities of metaphors in the field of memory and the ways in which they acquire their meanings, cf. TENA (2022), in this same volume.

the rest of the representations. On the other hand, neither of the two terms has been taken into account for this study in cases where they designate predicaments, causes or qualities in the Aristotelian-Scholastic tradition.

*Figura* and *forma* are, in fact, so closely linked that Romberch considers them together, although he does not use them in the same way. His definition would be as follows:

*Figura et forma paene idem esse vel propinqua noscuntur ex beato Thoma. Figura autem 'fingo' dicta est, quae dat quantitati terminationem (I parte, q. 7, art. 1). Sed forma dat esse specificum artificiati. Poterit [33r] proinde abstracta rei species in loco imaginata similitudinariae vel figura vel forma dici secundum quod hoc autve illo modo qualificatam concipimus (Congestorium, ff. 33v-33r<sup>38</sup>).*

*Forma*, on the other hand, is one of the terms least used for images in the *Congestorium*, since it seems to be reserved for the doctrine of predicaments. Likewise, as the external limit of a body, it is used for the disquisition on place, which appears in the first chapter of the second treatise of the work. On the other hand, *figura* is the term that is most frequently repeated. However, this could be explained by the fact that *figura* also designates the appearance of letters, *figura litterae* being nothing more than a spelling. In this respect, it should be noted that Romberch attaches particular importance to the writing of memory, either through inscriptions or notes to be added to the images to aid in their decoding or through mental writing itself, following Publicius. The incorporation of the latter type of writing by means of objects representing letters of the alphabet, all of which are taken from Publicius' text, deserves a separate study. We will limit ourselves here to mentioning that this resource is developed in several chapters of the treatise on images, offering an explanation of Publicius and alternatives for the use of this kind of mental writing.

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<sup>38</sup> Due to Thomas Aquinas, we know that '*figura*' and '*forma*' are almost the same thing or quite similar. On the one hand, '*figura*' takes its name from the verb '*fingo*', because it delimitates quantity (I<sup>a</sup>, q. 7, a. 1). On the other hand, '*forma*' gives its specific being to a created thing. This is the reason why the species, abstracted from reality and imagined in a place thanks to a similitude, can be called '*figura*' or '*forma*', depending on which way we think it is qualified. Other authors, such as ARNOLDUS DE TUNGRIS in *Epitomata*, (1510) f. K i-v, also define figure and form as two aspects of the same thing, relating figure to quantity and form to quality.

At this point, one last term remains: *idea*. *Idea* is a word of Greek origin whose possible Latin translations, as we have already indicated, are *forma* and *species*. The fact that Romberch prefers in most cases the translated terms rather than the proper Greek ones could explain why *idea* appears only six times in the *Congestorium*. On the other hand, the definition given by our author is very close to Neoplatonism<sup>39</sup>, explaining ideas as models to be imitated, in this case to form images: *ipsum exemplar faciendi imagines rei memorandae 'idea' diceretur* f. 33r<sup>40</sup>. It is, then, the model that each user has in his mind from which a likeness is developed.

By taking these descriptions into account, we can discern whether the use of the terms in their context really corresponds to the definition Romberch attributes to them. Certainly, our author presents a very clear distinction on the theoretical level, but this differentiation is not always evident in practice. In several passages, various types of images are presented as alternatives<sup>41</sup>, which points to the distinction, but it is true that these terms are placed on the same level as *imago*, which would be the general term. It is possible that in these cases *imago* includes all the other types of representation of *similitudines*, since these enumerations are always found in statements of a general nature that affect the whole memory system and not a specific example.

Romberch notes on two occasions that these terms are used interchangeably, both in other treatises<sup>42</sup> and in his own<sup>43</sup>, so that he will, he says, use the word *imago* following Cicero and Quintilian. However, in the light of Romberch's own use of these words, we do not believe his statement to be entirely true. As we noted earlier, *forma*, *figura* or *simulachrum* operate in an

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<sup>39</sup> In fact, in Plotinus' *Enneads*, the terms "image" and "idea" can be understood as equivalent.

<sup>40</sup> *The model for making images of what we want to remember itself will be called 'idea'.*

<sup>41</sup> For example, on f. 6v we find: *multiphariis idolis, simulachris, imaginibus et figuris*; and on f. 13r: *imagines, simulachra, idola sive ideas*.

<sup>42</sup> *Congestorium* ff. 31v-32r: *Et quod ad primum attinet, huiusmodi figurae variam habent denominationem, utque species, idolum, simulachrum, similitudo, figura, forma, idea et imago saepe nominentur ac alterum [32r] pro altero dicatur.*

<sup>43</sup> *Congestorium* f. 32v: *Sed permixtim his terminis utimur. Vsitatori attamen vocabulo imagines dicimus.*

apparently very specific semantic field, relating to logic, writing or painting, respectively. Another proof of this is the prominent presence of the term *species* in the first two treatises: the first is the most theoretical, as Romberch gives the art of memory a place in the studies, justifying it from scholastic philosophy; and the second deals with places, including a dense discussion on the definition and characteristics of places, also typical of the medieval Aristotelian tradition. *Imago*, on the other hand, is used more frequently in the last treatise, the most practical of all the *Congestorium*. This could be explained by the difficulty of distinguishing the types of *similitudines* in practice, since more importance is attached to the formation of the examples themselves than to their explanation from a logical point of view.

### 3. Conclusions

In conclusion, we would like to stress once again that the terms used in the *Congestorium* to name the different types of *imagines* and, therefore, of *similitudines* have a definition that allows them to be differentiated. However, their distinctions are not always evident in practice, which leads to a certain terminological confusion that Romberch resolves with the use of *imago* as a general term. The other words have a more or less restricted use to certain types of *similitudo*, a concept that we have defined as the semantic relationship between what is to be remembered and its mental representation. Thus, *species* is mostly used in the more theoretical sections, *idolum* figures realities that represent themselves, *simulachrum* implies a metaphorical translation, *figura* is frequent for letters and writing, *forma* has to do with appearance, place and predicaments and, finally, *idea* contains the Greek sense of the word.

On the other hand, terms are often interchanged or coordinated as if they were equivalent, as Romberch himself points out. This may be due precisely to the fact that the theoretical distinction is not always clear in its application, as the types of *similitudines* can be mixed or occur at the same time and, because the system is based on natural associations, it is not always possible to distinguish the first similarity from which the representation develops. The latter is evident from the fact that such confusions arise especially in the most practical part of the *Congestorium*, i.e. the fourth treatise.

Therefore, we believe that, although Romberch differentiates the terms on a theoretical level, neither he nor his predecessors really consider the distinction between the types of images necessary to put the *ars memorativa* into practice. Consequently, we think that the distinction does not always operate in the *Congestorium*, the compiler of theories per excellence in this field, although Romberch tries to be consistent in his use of the terms as he himself defines them. We also hope that from this analysis further studies can be developed on the different applications of the terminology of *imagines* in other treatises on the *ars memorativa*.

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**Resumo:** O *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae* de Johannes Romberch (Veneza, 1520 e 1533) é um dos tratados mais abrangentes sobre a *ars memoriae*, especialmente do ponto de vista teórico. Nesse sentido, o papel dos termos que nomeiam as imagens é marcante. Além disso, a partir do conceito escolástico de *similitudo*, são várias as possibilidades de desenvolver relações de semelhança. Assim, as *similitudes* cristalizam-se em diferentes tipos de imagens (*simulachrum, forma, idolum, idea...*). Neste estudo pretendemos distinguir se essa diferenciação teórica também atua na parte prática do tratado de Romberch.

**Palavras-chave:** Romberch; *Congestorium*; *ars memorativa*; *imagines*; *similitudo*.

**Resumen:** El *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae* (Venecia, 1520 y 1533) de Johannes Romberch es uno de los tratados de *ars memoriae* más exhaustivos, especialmente desde un punto de vista teórico. En este sentido, el papel de las denominaciones de las imágenes es llamativo. Además, partiendo del concepto escolástico de *similitudo*, hay varias posibilidades para desarrollar relaciones de semejanza. Así, las *similitudines* cristalizan en distintos tipos de imágenes (*simulachrum, forma, idolum, idea ...*). En el presente estudio trataremos de discernir si esta diferenciación teórica también opera en la parte práctica del tratado de Romberch.

**Palabras clave:** Romberch; *Congestorium*; *ars memorativa*; *imagines*; *similitudo*.

**Résumé :** Le *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae* de Johannes Romberch (Venise, 1520 et 1533) est l'un des traités les plus complets sur l'*ars memoriae*, surtout du point de vue théorique. Dans ce sens, le rôle des termes qui désignent les images est frappant. En outre, le concept scolastique de *similitudo* offre diverses possibilités de développer des relations de similitude. Ainsi, les *similitudines* se cristallisent dans différents types d'images (*simulachrum, forma, idolum, idea ...*). Dans la présente étude, nous tâcherons de voir si cette différenciation théorique s'applique également à la partie pratique du traité de Romberch.

**Mots-clés :** Romberch; *Congestorium*; *ars memorativa*; *imagines*; *similitudo*.