

Summary

This book-length study has two thematic parts. After an introduction to the methodology of the work (chap. 2.1), which we call the historiography of cultural ideas, the first part (chap. 2–4) introduces the reader to the pre-Enlightenment intellectual history of encyclopaedism, more precisely to the genesis of encyclopaedia as a cultural idea from some specific cognitive metaphors. Particularly, it is documented what role cognitive metaphors and metonymies played in this process among thinkers of antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance, but especially among thinkers of the Herborn circle. The metaphors and metonymies in question are at the intersection of mathematics, philosophy, and theology: CIRCULAR WORLD/KNOWLEDGE, GENERATION OF THE WORD, INCARNATION OF GOD, DEIFICATION OF MAN, ALPHABET OF THOUGHTS/THINGS, etc.

The methodology of the work draws on George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's cognitive metaphor theory (CMT), Erich Rothacker's (1888–1965) history of metaphors, Hans Blumenberg's (1920–1996) metaphorology, Reinhard Koselleck's (1923–2006) historical semantics, and Marcelo Stamm and Martin Mulsow's research in constellations.

While the first part of the book explores cognitive metaphors, the second part itself uses them as a primary interpretive and narrative tool, as it analyses in detail (ch. 5) a prosopographical constellation of figures around the couple of encyclopaedists Komenský–Leibniz. What is meant by that constellation is the network of intellectuals that link Comenius and Leibniz together, but without these persons always and in all cases being actors in the process of ideation (transmission of ideas), i.e., without necessarily being the agents through which Leibniz received Comenian ideas.

From such an intellectual-prosopographical point of view, then, the main subject of this book are the Herborn encyclopaedists (alias: the three Herborn stars): Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588–1638), Johann Heinrich Bisterfeld (1605–1655), Jan Amos Komenský (1592–1670) – and their successor Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716). However, the scope of this book also extends to many other persons, key figures to the emergence of early modern encyclopaedism. Diachronically, these include Raimund Lull (1232–1315), Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1221–1274), and Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464); synchronically, Valentin Weigel (1533–1588), Johann Arndt (1555–1621), and Heinrich Khunrath (1560–1605) among others. From the perspective of in-

tellectual geography, the study focuses primarily on Central Europe, which enjoys exceptional importance and attention here, although the broader European context is taken into account.