

Learned Love

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Colour plates

Digitising Dutch love emblems

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Perhaps I should explain at the outset that I was invited to evaluate the website The Emblem Project Utrecht (EPU), with its 26 editions of Dutch love emblems. I have said it before, and I have no difficulty in saying it again: digitising emblems is certainly the way to go in the present and the immediate future. With the thousands of printed emblem books known to bibliography – forgetting for the moment the presence of emblematic configurations in the material culture – we are not likely ever to see a sufficient number of facsimiles, or even microform editions, in spite of the valiant efforts of IDC, to make enough of the books accessible for scholarship. But that is not to say there are no problems in the digitisation of emblems. Who said beginnings would always be easy?

The most recent results of such digitising is the Emblem Project Utrecht that will make accessible a substantial corpus of Dutch love emblems. There are good reasons why this should be so. It appears that the Dutch were the originators of the love emblem, and again it was here that ICONCLASS was born.

One of the joys of the internet is that it is interactive. But that very interactivity can be a hazard for the user. In a sense each website is a work in progress. It may be in a state of flux. That very interactivity brings with it certain obligations. Users or visitors, as we are often called, need to know that what we read today may not be the same tomorrow. The website can be corrected or expanded or updated by the creators at will. Users are well advised to give the date of their visit for any reference or quotation they may want to make. I visited the EPU site in late August and again in mid September, and what I wrote for the November 2006 conference was correct at that time, but changes have been made since, and I have updated my evaluation accordingly on January 24, 2007.

But which love emblems books were in fact Dutch? I suppose it depends what the label means. Was Alciato's emblem book, as first published, Italian, German or perhaps Latin? Andrea Alciato wrote the texts and he was Italian. The language of the texts was Latin. The place of publication was German, as was the publisher and the assumed illustrator. Does it much matter? How have bibliographers decided? Praz and bibliographies of library holdings tend to proceed alphabetically, and so the problem does not arise. Landwehr, and those like him, attributes a title to the place of publication or to the language of the texts. Illustrations do not count in such a taxonomy. Thus in Landwehr's *German Emblem Books 1531-1888* (1972, 23-25) Alciato's Augsburg 1531 editions are German (Fig. 1) (based on place of publication) as are the Paris 1542 German translation by Wolfgang Hunger (based on the language of the texts), and Jeremias Held's German translation, Frankfurt am Main 1567 (Fig. 2), 1580, and 1583 editions (based on language of texts, and place of publication). When Alciato's emblems have French texts or were published in France (Fig. 3), Landwehr

QVAE SVpra NOS NI-
hil ad nos.

B 4



*Caucasia eterni pendens in rupe Prometheus
Dirripitur sacri prepetis ungue iccus
Et nollet fecisse hominem, figulosq; posus
Accensa rapto damnat ab igne facem
Roduntur usurijs prudentum pectora curis
Qui coeli affectant scire deumq; uices*

Fig. 1: Andrea Alciato's Prometheus emblem with the motto 'Quae supra nos, nihil ad nos'. Augsburg 1531 ed. fol. B4 & B4v. Reproduction from the facsimile edition by Olms

Was vber vns ist geht vns nicht an.
Auff dem hohen Berg Caucaso
Ligt angeschmidt Prometheus do
Dem zerreist vnd frist die Leber
On vnderlaß der schnell Adler
Der wölt jetzt daß er gemacht hett nie
Kein Bild vnd wer müßig gweßn je
Hett auch das Feuwr nie gerürt an
Hetts oben im Himmel lon stahn
Der Klugen Hertzen so da wölln
Ins Himmels lauff seyn Gotts Geselln
Werden mit vil angst sorg vnd müh
Teglich on vnderlaß gplagt hie.

Fig. 2: German text from Jeremias Held. Reproduction from the Henkel/Schöne *Handbuch*



Fig. 3: Lyons 1551 ed., page 112. The decorative border has been removed. Reproduction from the facsimile edition by Klincksieck

includes them in his *French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese Books of Devices and Emblems 1534-1827* (1976, 25-40). That leads Landwehr to include Wolfgang Hunger's German translation in both bibliographies.

There will, of course, be critics of any attempt to digitise emblem books. Dietmar Peil embodied in the title of a recent discussion of emblem digitisation the phrase 'Nobody's perfect.'¹ Pace Dietmar, the point is not perfection, but scholarly procedures, and availability. And in fairness to Dietmar, I should say that he did address many of the issues and problems that beset digitisation. He did so from his considerable experience with the Munich project, but the problems that he discussed are also endemic to the process of digitisation. Hopefully, we can get a better idea about what we should be doing, and again, hopefully, we can learn from some of the imperfections of earlier attempts.

What I have to say will have a lot to do with the use of the internet and digital editions. In other words, what is offered, and how available is it for immediate and future research?

1 See Peil 2004. The book was reviewed by Antonio Bernat Vistarini in *Emblematica* 14 (2005), 357-367.

What we all need as we enter this brave new world of digital editions, in addition to gratitude, is a little healthy scepticism. There is no reason to give greater credence to digital information than we give to printed information. Furthermore, you are likely to find just as many errors in internet or CD-ROM sources as you will find in printed sources, if not more. The internet at best provides information, not knowledge. Can you even imagine the Age of the Enlightenment wanting to be known as the Age of Information? Even if we find sophisticated digital editions, our work of analysis and interpretation is probably only beginning. After all, even when we have a printed critical edition of a writer or of one work, even if that critical edition has an array of notes in addition to variants, our work of analysis and interpretation is not usually already done for us. How could it be?

Many emblem scholars are only interested in one or two books, or the production of one emblemist. For such a purpose, the bibliographical information can probably be found already in existing printed bibliographies,² not that they will ever be final or complete. Emblem books devoted to a theme, such as love, or salvation, are a different kettle of fish. But we now have the Utrecht Project devoted to Dutch love emblems. Such a specialisation is unusual. And we are grateful to our colleagues who made the site possible. But what if one needs accurate information on library holdings?³ Or if one is interested in, say, the production of a linguistic community, perhaps the Italians, or the French, or the Jesuits, during a certain period, or we desire information on all emblem books in all languages of a specific period, such as 1531-1600, then printed bibliographies will be of limited help. One needs a computerized bibliography to customize such a search.

As I said, as long as you only need limited bibliographic information, you are likely to find it via the internet. But if you want more, if you want a complete text, and you find it, either on the internet or in a CD-ROM, can you use it in a manner that is consistent with computer capabilities? That is a big question, which can only be answered in small pieces. Suffice it to say that there are digital editions of, for example, Goethe, and if you need names or concepts you can probably find them. But even here you must be prepared to search with singulars and plurals, and geni-

2 For general bibliographies, see Praz 1964 and 1974. See also Kolb and Sulzer 1976, 33-176 (containing some 2,338 bibliographic entries). For English emblem books, see Freeman 1948/1967; Daly and Silcox 1989, 333-76; Daly and Silcox 1990; Daly and Silcox 1991; Daly and Silcox 1990 and 2002. For French emblem books, see Landwehr 1976; Adams, Rawles, and Saunders 1999 and 2002. For German emblem books, see Landwehr 1972. For emblem books of the Low Countries, see Landwehr 1962; Landwehr 1970; Landwehr 1988. For Italian emblem books, see Landwehr 1976. For Polish emblem books, see Buchwald-Pelcova 1981. For Spanish emblem books, see Landwehr 1976; Campa 1990; Campa 2001. For Alciato, see Green 1872/1964. For Jesuit emblem books, see Daly and Dimler 1997; thereafter parts 2 to 4 were published in Toronto by the University of Toronto Press; Part Five, which completes the series, is in press at the University of Toronto Press.

3 There is a handful of library catalogues. See Black and Weston 1988; Warncke 1982; Cieslack 1993; McGeary and Nash 1993; Heckscher and Sherman, 1984; Kemp and Schilling 1978; Visser, Hoftijzer and Westerweel 1999.

tive singulars and genitive plurals. Otherwise, inflected or conjugated forms may slip through the net of your search. Concretely, I can search a Goethe CD-ROM for such key concepts as *Allegorie*, *Symbol*, and *Emblem*, or for names such as Alciato, Camerarius, and Reusner, but I must remember also to name synonyms such as *Sinnbild*, and *Bild*, and I must remember that Alciato was also known as Alciat, Alciati and Alciatus. I should not forget to use genitives and plurals, or use a kind of truncated word search.

I should note that this contribution is based in part on my book that AMS Press (New York) published in 2002, and which I do not expect everyone to have consulted, let alone read. I have also presented some of my general reflections at conferences in Spain, Italy, and Canada. I may be a voice in the wilderness, but someone has to sound the note of caution and scepticism, in the midst of all the enthusiasm about digitisation.⁴ Not that I am a Luddite. I started using computers for more than word processing decades ago. But those involved in computing applications tend to exhibit boundless enthusiasm for what the computer can accomplish. There is often an element of *Zukunftsmusik* in their enthusiasm. What has actually been accomplished tends to be modest, apart from the creation of concordances and indexes. So much by way of introduction and disclaimers.

Before assessing The Emblem Project Utrecht, I should make some general observations on digitising emblems. I want to suggest some reasons for scepticism about computerization by looking at some earlier attempts to digitise emblems. First of all, the emblem book – and I will not be concerned with the emblem in the material culture – was big business. We know of at least 6,400 books of or about emblems and *imprese*, printed from 1531 to last week, not all with illustrations. That is a lot of books. No one knows how many examples of emblems and *imprese* still exist in the material culture, understood as the significant decoration of buildings, as well as the many decorative arts. Modernisation, fire, and warfare have obliterated most of the manifestations of the emblem in the material culture that were likely still in place in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

As colleagues will know, there are several large digitising projects underway: two in Spain, Germany, and the U.S., one each in Canada, Holland, Hungary, and Scotland. The number of emblematic books that are, or will be, available in digital form

4 I recently examined a doctoral dissertation in Anthropology at McGill which reviewed the archaeological discussion of rock images in the Lake of the Woods area of Canada. The author, Alicia Colson, had used various digital tools to enhance the images, such as Photoshop 6.0, and it became clear to me that emblem scholars have it somewhat easier. Our images are in printed books or tend to be on the walls and ceilings of buildings. There is little, if any, deterioration of image, so that naming the pictorial motif is not a problem. Problems may arise when we ascribe a meaning to the motif, when used emblematically. This is not to say that there is never deterioration of a motif. Tapestry and embroidery can present problems because colors can change over time, and threads can disappear. I recall advising restorers at Hatfield House that the tapestry motif of a female figure on a tapestry was probably not a Boticelli Venus on a sea shell, but an Occasio figure on a wheel on the sea. I was convinced because I knew the source in Alciato. The restorers were guided by their knowledge of art history, which in this case would have led them astray.

is impressive: over 600, including the Emblem Project Utrecht, which is the subject of this volume. Current estimates suggest that there were over 6,400 printings of emblematic books, with or without pictures, in all languages following the publication of the first emblem book by Andrea Alciato in 1531. My aim here is to review some of the issues involved in digitising the emblem, because it combines text and picture.

What should be digitised?

Ideally everything should be digitised. But at what cost, how, and by whom? Duplication may or may not be an issue. Even with the projects known to exist at the beginning of this millennium, there appeared to be a rather substantial amount of duplication (Daly 2002, xii, 261). And should one digitise everything, including works that have appeared in facsimile reprints and microforms, which often lack indexes to some or all of the parts of the emblems reproduced? It would be naive to assume that there is agreement on what constitutes an emblem, or even on the genre of emblem books. For bibliographic purposes, I disregarded the distinction of emblem book and books with emblems because I would not wish to lose emblems from books that are not considered canonical emblem books.

What is the emblem and how does the emblem communicate?

Emblem scholars know that the emblem usually communicates through three parts, *inscriptio*, *pictura* and *subscriptio*. The texts can indicate the direction of meaning of the whole emblem; they can interpret the picture, they can also extend or subvert the meaning of the picture. The emblem should not be equated with the symbolic picture, thereby devaluing textual components. The texts should not be given primacy, thereby devaluing the picture. Emblems cannot usually be decoded to 'mean' something easy to state.

Who made the digital edition?

Few websites and few CD-ROMs actually provide bibliographical information on the editors or compilers of digital editions while most published books give a brief blurb on the author. There may be good reasons for this absence of information: personal modesty, or the assumption that we all know the names of the individuals who did the scholarly work. However, not every visitor to a website or every user of a CD-ROM can be expected to know the scholarly credentials of the editors. A particle physicist will check the source, as well as review the new information. I would suggest that basic bibliographic information should always be included such as position, current place of employment, and perhaps the ten most important publications on emblematic topics. While that information will not preclude poor design of a website or the inaccurate description of an individual emblem, it will tell the user who created the edition. That information may help to explain the choice of emblem writer or emblem book.

Let it be noted that the Emblem Project Utrecht always names the editor of each book edited. Usually it is simply EPU, but some emblem scholars are also named, such as Peter Boot, Hans Luijten, and Karel Porteman, although even there we will read that 'adaptations' were made by EPU.

For whom is the digital edition intended?

That is not a silly question. The answer will determine how much and what kind of analysis, if any, is included. For example, it is likely that library conservationists would be satisfied with digitised books with no analysis. General readers would probably like more information than an emblem specialist. But then again, which member of our emblem guild is likely to consider him- or herself equally conversant with the products of the different national traditions, which may span centuries, to say nothing of the wealth of Neo-Latin material? Put simply, the digitisation of emblematic books can perform two functions: 1. preserve these rare books, and 2. increase our understanding.

Digitisation as preservation

In itself digitising the pages of emblem books is neither a mystery, nor a hugely expensive undertaking. All one needs is a digital camera or a scanner, assuming that libraries cooperate. Of course, the copy chosen may be incomplete or defective, requiring additions. Such digitising will look after preservation. But the results are not amenable to computer searching.

Digitisation as enrichment

The texts of early modern books can be scanned as images, but they will resist the OCR functions of the computer because of the vagaries of typesetting. Early modern printing will always present problems with its broken fonts, uneven spacing and inking, erratic use of uppercase, and idiosyncratic abbreviations. When we add to this the problem of early modern orthography, it is clear that in itself the scanned image of a page of text and picture is no more amenable to research than was the original page.

Pictures themselves cannot be queried by words – unless a picture description is added, nor by visual icons. You may recognise the picture of a lion, but no visual icon of a lion can be produced to allow the computer to recognise the emblematic lion, which may be large or small, sitting, standing, running, rampant, stylized, looking left or right. A human fingerprint is unique, and can be matched against a database with millions of fingerprints. The same is not true of an emblematic lion.

We can have hyperlinks until we hyperventilate, but they will only be as useful as the information added by the editor. That's the rub. Ideally, scholars would wish to see emblem books scanned, and enriched with analytical information. Each picture needs a brief description, not just a few key words. But in which language? It is obvious that when Spanish scholars describe pictures, they tend to use Spanish. German scholars tend to use German. British, Canadian and American scholars tend to use

English. French and Quebecois scholars tend to use French. Frequently, scholars in Scandinavia, in the Low Countries, and in eastern European countries use English. But knowledge of modern and ancient languages can no longer be assumed of all emblem scholars. If we want to introduce emblem studies to a new generation, more conversant with the computer than with a second or third natural language, then some accommodations must be made. But which? I notice that this Emblem Project Utrecht is available in either Dutch or English.

At the very least, picture description should record accurately the symbolic motifs in the picture. If a scanned emblem is enriched with additional information, the user has virtually unlimited freedom to query. The only limit is the knowledge of the user, and the information provided by the editor.

If *increased understanding* is the goal, then we need to ask ourselves what kinds of analysis are required. And we need to see that question in the context of the study of literature and art history. In the last hundred years we have seen the rise and fall of positivism, structuralism, political relevance, and new historicism to name but a few. All analyses make assumptions about classifications, but theoretical paradigms shift. And classifications are usually not identical with the words or pictorial motifs of books. Full text searching only provides access to the words, not necessarily to the concepts, of an emblem text. A search may provide access to pictorial motifs, but not to concepts, assuming the visual images have been correctly identified and named. Classifications have to be added and these classifications change as the purposes of analysis change.

The notion of classification may sound foreign to some, but most of us read emblems for their topics or concepts. Reducing emblems to 'meaning' is almost unavoidable. But those concepts are rarely identical with words in an emblem, and seldom identical with visual motifs. We may say that the Brutus who falls on his sword in an emblem 'means' suicide, or fickle fortune, or something else, depending on the *scriptura* of the emblem. But what is pictured is Brutus, not a concept.

'Meaning' is not a simple matter. That is why I argue for 'identification of motif' rather than for the 'meaning of motif.' When talking of meaning, are we referring to the 'meaning of a complete emblem,' the 'meaning of motif in an emblem,' or perhaps the sense of the words of an emblem *subscriptio*? The attribution of meaning or signification to an individual emblem can be a hazardous business, because most emblems cannot be decoded to mean something easy to name. Scholars can offer different 'meanings' of one and the same emblem. De Soto's first emblem is glossed as 'war' or 'human life' on the López Poza website, but for Bernat and Cull it signifies 'Glory in Danger / Temerity / Honor / Fame / Life as Warfare,' while for Henkel and Schöne, it is fame ('Ruhm').

Consistency is important. In an emblem picture should an eagle carrying a human male figure on its back, always be identified as Jupiter's eagle with Ganymede? What if the text does not make that identification? The *Enciclopedia de Emblemas Españoles Ilustrados* (Madrid 1999) identifies such a picture as 'Eagle soars in air

with child; 2 men watch' (no. 49, 49). Sebastián de Covarrubias Horozoco, who was responsible for the emblem, does not name the figure, nor the provenance of the eagle. The same encyclopedia identifies a similar picture in Alciato as 'Ganymedes is swept up by eagle of Jupiter . . .' (no. 731, 365), and no. 732 (366) as 'Ganymedes kidnapped by the eagle of Jupiter . . .' This is not so much a matter of 'meaning' as it is of identification. The user is better served by the addition of the names 'Jupiter' and 'Ganymede,' even if the texts do not provide those names.

'Meaning' as related to emblem texts is quite another matter. Some words change their meanings over time and some become obsolete.

It is my hope that digitised emblem books will enable me to do better what I already do fairly well. But that will depend on the quality of the input. Who is editing the digital editions? Do they know emblems? It will also depend on the availability of the website or CD information to other scholars. Can we download the material and work with it?

The choice of the emblemist

The choice of the emblemist is often accidental. Even when institutions have substantial collections, the direction of digitisation is frequently serendipitous. Illinois has an enviable collection of emblem books, but the decision to focus on the 67 German books has more to do with Professor Wade's initiative than it is a reflection of the university library's holdings.

The choice of edition

The decision which emblem edition to select is usually based on the library collection; in other words, it also tends to be accidental. Whereas there are critical editions of canonical authors, there are virtually no such editions of emblem books. Should the edition be the first, the largest, or the last one with the author's approval? Projects based on library collections use whatever editions the library possesses. *Studiolum* tends to use first editions.

If enriched digitisation can provide the kind of scanned and analyzed emblem books that scholars would prefer, then the people adding the information need to understand the emblem genre and the nature of the early modern language of the textual parts of the emblems.

The issue of picture description

I suggest that it is enough to identify the symbolic images that contribute to the communication of the emblem. This requires identification of motif, rather than interpretation of meaning. However, I do not think it is sufficient to list key motifs in emblem pictures. Making a fuller description forces the editor to look more closely at the picture. For example, the Illinois project offered brief picture descriptions called 'descriptors.' In my view they are somewhat primitive, consisting only of separate nouns. For example, Pfann no. 7 depicts a burial. Why does the list of descriptors not contain 'grave'? A mattock is depicted next to the shovel, but not

named. I see no skeleton, but rather a death's head. Fault can often be found with the description of an emblem picture. But in a digitised emblem book we can no longer speak of WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get). What you get is what someone else saw.

Picture description, in my view, must be primarily a matter of identification rather than interpretation of 'meaning.' I admit that identification cannot always be divorced from interpretation, and the correct identification of pictorial motifs is not always easy. My expectation that picture description provide identification rather than interpretation is something of a simplification, even if it points in the right direction. A square is always a 'square'. A palm tree is recognizable. But at some point certainty becomes clouded. When is a snake a viper, rather than a generic snake? Should modern scholars use early modern terms to identify the pictorial motifs provided by early modern artists, who were guided by the texts they illustrated, or perhaps by instructions provided by writers or publishers? We know that emblems derive from the pre-Linnean period.

When we use words today to identify pictorial motifs, we can hardly help using language that is in some regards conditioned by our own culture. When is the female figure in a *pictura* a virgin, a woman, a wife, a whore, perhaps the Virgin Mary? The texts will sometimes help. In dealing with the texts we have no choice; we must translate as accurately as possible. But in some pictures we find only a female figure.

Language is not innocent. Language is always conditioned by social convention, although that does not necessarily vitiate the attempt to describe what we see. This concern also applies to the modern attempt to name picture motifs, and to digitise the emblem.

The issue of the treatment of texts

The texts of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century emblem books are written in the languages of the early modern period. That means their orthography is not always identical with modern practice. Also some words have gone through a change of meaning, and others have become obsolete. Then there is the problem of word forms. Should the texts be normalized, i.e., modernized and lemmatized? Should semantic changes be signalled?

Standardizing usually means modernizing the spelling of an early modern text. It is no great feat, and it does not falsify the original text, provided the original text is displayed, perhaps together with the modernized version. Important as this is, it deals only with the form, not the meaning, of words. Lemmatization is another issue. A lemma could be added to each conjugated and inflected word form. Or, if existing software is reliable for the languages required, it could provide the lemma for search. The lemma then becomes the object of search, and the computer displays the original word.

I regard simple scanning as a valuable if limited undertaking that will fulfil only library needs to preserve materials, and to protect books from readers. Scans can be

sent to scholars far away, while libraries are understandably reluctant to entrust rare material to the postal service. Ironically, the books most at risk are not the products of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century presses, which used rag paper, but the mass-produced printings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with their cheap, acidic, and now brittle paper. Preservation is important. But simple scanning does nothing to make the information more accessible.

One problem in the enriched digitisation of emblems has to do with words that have changed their meanings. Words can become obsolete. Words can lose one or more of the meanings available in the early modern period. Finally, words can remain but mean something different.

Obsolete words are not a problem to the modern reader, who will not understand the obsolete words, and will look them up in a historical dictionary. But if they are not tagged, obsolete words are lost to the computer-based search. Those who know their Shakespeare will know that 'stewes' is an obsolete term for brothel; George Wither (1:27) uses it, too.

More dangerous are words that continue to exist, but which have lost one or more of their early modern meanings. We all know what a chameleon looks like, and that it changes colour with its environment. But no one today can be expected to 'know' that the chameleon feeds on air. Yet this 'fact of nature' was believed in the early modern period. Alciato refers to this in emblem no. 53 (Padua, 1621), and Shakespeare has Hamlet make an emblematic argument with the chameleon and capon in the Play Scene.

Judging the effectiveness of enriched digitisation

The main goal of any digitisation project is, or should be, to create a research tool that should not only serve literary and art historians. Databases will eventually make available a vast body of source material, hitherto largely inaccessible, on such subjects as botany, medicine, and zoology; the occult; folklore; philosophy and theology; education and the history of language.

ICONCLASS could be chosen as the iconographic classification system, since it provides a standardized access to the contents of visual documents. By using Iconclass, emblem research would share a common access with such institutions as the Library of the Courtauld Institute (London), the Index of Christian Art (Princeton), the Dutch Royal Library (The Hague), the Bildarchiv (Foto Marburg), the Getty Provenance Index, and Iconclass projects at the Universities of Utrecht and Leiden. Members of the Iconclass research group at Utrecht and Leiden are not only involved in the translation of Iconclass into various vernacular languages, but have computerized Iconclass. Iconclass is now multi-lingual and available on a Windows platform as Iconclass2000 Browser. The book *Image and Belief* (Hourihane 1999) contains four useful papers by Peter van Huisstede, Carol Tognari, Hans Brandhorst, and by Jörgen van den Berg and Gerda G.J. Duijfjes-Vellekoop. Huisstede and Brandhorst developed techniques to analyse and access the verbal and visual information con-

tained in Dutch printers' marks. Such printers' marks are, of course, in form and content closely related to imprese and emblems.⁵ But, for some, Iconclass is not without its drawbacks. One wonders whether the Iconclass system, which was developed as a descriptive system for identifying with single terms pictorial images, is fully adaptable to the emblem, where the pictorial function of the epigram, which is text not image, can expand, or even run counter to the *pictura*. Iconclass would appear to privilege the *pictura*, and that can be a disservice to the emblem, which comprises text and image.

Availability

Even assuming that the scans are enriched in my sense, are the results available for me to work with? Allow me to be pedantically precise here. I mean, can I download to my computer the enriched, analysed data or metadata if the term is preferred? Some members of the *Studiolum* team attended the 2006 meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in San Francisco where in one session discussion centred on what I call availability.⁶ One of the 'very pertinent questions' asked was 'whether we would allow the copying of our texts for free use.' The answer thus far is 'no.' *Studiolum* is correct in observing that 'the value of the work we are doing lies precisely in the presentation of a text that is fully *transcribed, linked and annotated . . .*' It is understandable that *Studiolum* wants to protect its work, although protection can mean different things. No one wants his or her research work altered, but 'pilfering' is another matter, covered already by laws governing plagiarism. Protecting analyzed texts in CDs and internet editions is doable. For the moment I fail to see how working with a shadow file (*Studiolum's* term) is much help, if one cannot export one's annotated and edited version to another programme. I would want to do just that: work on the scanned and edited emblems, and copy the results to Word or WordPerfect for further work. In a print one gives credit to earlier scholars and the editions used, surely one will continue to do so when the edition is an analysed digital version. If a scholar fails to do that, then he or she may be guilty of plagiarism.

The question of critical mass

Thus far I have been largely concerned with the manner in which an individual emblem is digitised. But if one seeks to answer larger questions such as the nature of emblems in *castra doloris*, or the direction of German political emblems, then questions of critical mass arise. A few emblems or even emblem books will not suffice. This question of critical mass was addressed recently in the final draft report of the American Council of Learned Societies' Commission on Cyber-infrastructure for Humanities and Social Sciences (26 July, 2006).⁷ The report notes that ' . . . a critical mass of

5 See Van Huisstede and Brandhorst 1999. This three volume set is accompanied by a CD-ROM.

6 See <http://www.emblematica.com/blog2006/04/rsa-recapitulation.html>

7 The draft report was authored by P. Courant, S. Fraser, M. Goodchild, M. Hedstrom, P.B.

information is often necessary for understanding both the context and the specifics of an artefact or event, and this may include large collections of multimedia content – images, text, moving images, audio.’ The authors of the report rightly observe that ‘Humanities scholars are often concerned with how meaning is created, communicated, manipulated, and perceived. Recent trends in scholarship have broadened the sense of what falls within a given academic discipline: for example, scholars who in the past might have worked only with texts now turn to architecture and urban planning, art, music, videogames, film and television, fashion illustrations, billboards, dance videos, graffiti, and blogs.’ Oddly missing in this long list is the illustrated advertisement, which not infrequently has emblematic qualities. The report stresses ‘the value of a critical mass of data’ (p. 25). Shoah archives have special authenticity in large part because they are so comprehensive.

Anyone writing in more general terms about emblems has difficulty making generalisations. ‘What is an emblem?’ seems to be a reasonable question, but demands a generalised answer. Such generalisations are difficult because over the five hundred years of the existence of books of emblems and imprese – not even to mention the presence of emblematic decoration in the material culture – well over six thousand emblematic books have been published. No one really knows how large was the average print-run, and as we all know emblematic books could contain anywhere from a handful to hundreds of individual emblems. My conservative estimate is that anywhere from fifty million to one hundred million emblems must have been printed, and presumably read. That is a lot of emblems.

The visitor to the website on Dutch love emblems has a critical mass, since the site contains digitised Dutch love emblems from some 26 books. It will be possible to make general statements regarding this group of emblem books, but obviously not all such generalisations can be applied elsewhere.

An evaluation of the Emblem Project Utrecht

The most recent results of digitising emblem books is this Utrecht Project that will make accessible a corpus of Dutch love emblems. Listed chronologically below are the 26 books:

- Heinsius, *Quaeris quid sit Amor* (1601)
- Heinsius, *Emblemata amatoria* (1607-8)
- Vaenius, *Amorum emblemata* (1608)
- Hooft, *Emblemata amatoria* (1611)
- Vaenius, *Horatiana emblemata* (1612)
- [Anonymous], *Cupido’s lusthof* (1613)
- De Monteny / Roemer Visscher, *Emblemes* (ca. 1615)

Kaufman, J. McGann, R. Rosenzweig, J. Unsworth, and B. Zuckerman. The final draft report can be read as a pdf file at: <http://www.acls.org/cyberinfrastructure> I read the report on August 26, 2006.

Vaenius, *Amoris divini emblemata* (1615)
 Heinsius, *Ambacht van Cupido* (1616)
 [Anonymous], *Niewen leucht spiegel* (1617)
 Vaenius, *Emblemata aliquot selectiora amatoria* (1618)
 Cats, *Proteus* [partial] (1618)
 [Anonymous], *Thronus Cupidinis* (1620)
 Cats, *Sinne-en minnebeelden* (1627)
 [Anonymous], *Typus mundi* (1627)
 [Anonymous], *Amoris divini et humani antipathia* (1628)
 Van Leuven, *Amoris divini et humani antipathia* (1629)
 De Harduwjin, *Goddelycke wenschen* (1629)
 Luyken, *Duytse lier* (1671)
 Luyken, *Jezus en de ziel* (1685)
 Huygen, *Beginselen van Gods Koninkrijk* (1689)
 [Anonymous], *Emblemata amatoria* (1690)
 De la Feuille, *Devises et emblemes* (1691)
 Den Elger, *Zinne-beelden der liefde* (1703)
 Hoogstraten, *Zegepraal der goddelyke liefde* (1709)
 Suderman, *De godlievende ziel* (1724).

This is an impressive site, viewable on both Apple and Windows computers, which I last viewed January 24, 2007. A great deal of thought as well as work and effort have gone into preparing it. And it has an unusual educational purpose. The Home Page has a section for teachers and one for students. The site includes information on the love emblem in general, including roots in Alciato's emblems; a history of the development of love emblems; explanations for the development of love emblems; marriage ethics; male-female relations; the market for the love emblem, and the game of love. This information will be very helpful to the newcomer to emblems, and to the Dutch love emblem.

The visitor may call up any of the 26 books, and explore it in one or more of several modes. For instance, the first emblem book is by Heinsius, *Quaeris quid sit amor* (1601), and one finds that it can be considered under the following headings on the left of the screen: Introduction, Concordance, All Picturae (This Book) [three thumbnails per line], All Facsimile Images (This Book) [Three thumbnails per line], and Petrarchist Motives [sic] based on Leonard Forster's *Icy Fire*. Most of us will want to browse the edition, which means looking at one emblem at a time. You will find that the texts (*inscriptio* and *subscriptio*) have been newly entered making them easily readable, which they may be less so in the original. The *pictura*, which may have an engraved *motto*, has been scanned in. Translations into modern Dutch and English are added. 'Literature' meaning bibliographic references are added. The pictorial motifs are named, briefly using only keywords. That Cupid or Eros have been omitted is a moot point. And I for one believe in the value

of making a full description of the *pictura*, although how inclusive 'full' should be is perhaps a matter of debate. Does it matter how large the lion is, whether it looks like a natural lion, and whether the lion is looking to the left or right? The browsed page continues with sources and parallels, and notes.

Each digital edition is or in the future will be provided with a full introduction, concordance, *picturae*, and facsimile images (both text and illustrations). Each page of each book has been digitised, and the pictures are available separately.

In some cases the Introduction is not yet 'full' and it is intended to 'add a full introduction' in the future. None the less, readers will be grateful for the brief biography of the emblem writer, the account of the book itself, its influence, and details of the copy used for the edition, transcription, editorial additions, and a brief bibliography, here called 'literature.'

The Home Page has five centred headings: Emblem Books, Search, Compare, Bibliography, and Project. 'Emblem Books' provides a list of the books digitised. 'Search' offers a global search, which means of all the 26 books. One can search for a given term in all elements, or *motto*, or emblem text, or note text, or Iconclass. The result can be displayed showing *picturae*, sorted by book, showing *picturae*, sorted by relevance, by motto only. This is a refined search capability. From Heinsius, *Quaeris quid sit amor* (1601) I entered 'amor' in all elements, perhaps not very cleverly, and was rewarded with 710 hits in all of the 26 books. When I refined the search, this time for 'amor' and 'anvil,' I had 193 hits. Then I tried again with 'anvil' alone, and I received 10 hits. 'Compare' will allow one to compare any two distinct books. The 'bibliography' has two categories: a list of authors/editors, which lumps together the names of emblem writers, poets and philosphers with modern scholars so that Alison Adams rubs shoulders alphabetically with Académie Royale ... de Belgie. This could be improved by listing separately modern scholars. The second category 'items by title / author/ year' is a massive listing of titles organized by the very first word of the title, which may be an article such as 'A.' 'Project' has four sections: 'Project info,' 'Editorial Procedures and Techniques,' 'Help,' and 'What's Next.'

Having accessed a particular emblem book, one finds that the site is organized with two columns on the left: Edition, Emblem Book: Content.

Conclusions and prospects

Much is being done to digitise emblems. But the digitisation of emblem books is still in its infancy, although the Emblem Project Utrecht is more sophisticated and advanced than many. If some projects appear unsatisfactory, this has to do with the apparent unwillingness of some scholars to provide the information necessary to render the digitised pages accessible to research. And then there is the issue of tagging with SGML, XML, or what have you.

It comes as no surprise that there is little international agreement on the language of access, when it comes to enriched digitisation. Picture descriptions and

editorial interventions are for the most part in Spanish, German, French or English, depending on who is leading the project. But what if one is not fully competent in one or more of those languages? The very fact that the EPU provides not only translations in English but also into modern Dutch of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch texts suggests that the creators of EPU do not assume that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch is a readily accessible language.

It is possible to make emblem books truly searchable. But we should never forget that an emblem is composed of texts and graphics. It is no great feat to describe in words the picture, which then makes the symbolic image accessible. Newly keying in text will take more time, but is doable. Tagging is more time-consuming. Standardizing and lemmatizing language is a larger issue, because it calls for greater expenditures of time and expertise. But it is also doable. However, the needs of scholarship are sometimes not compatible with career paths. Will universities that encourage, allow, or condone tenured staff when they publish on emblems, give job security to younger scholars who devote time to computer projects? Rendering printed emblems accessible through enriched digitisation is possible. I, for one, look forward to these digital editions.

Perhaps I may return to the matter of the availability for further computer-based research of internet and CD-ROM editions. It is obvious that when I read an original emblem book, or any printed edition, I must make notes on paper or enter those notes immediately into my computer. But why should I have to resort to this antediluvian procedure if I have before me a digital edition?

I recently read a news release indicating that Google is about to collaborate with a number of world-class libraries (Oxford University, New York Public Library, Stanford, Michigan, and Harvard), to scan millions of pages of books to create a virtual library. It appears that some 15 million books and documents are covered in the agreement. Just how much of that digitised material will be available to readers, at what cost, and in what form (enriched analyses or not) is not yet clear. It is more important than ever to think about the needs of scholarship in this brave new world of virtual libraries.

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