Learned Love

Proceedings of the Emblem Project Utrecht Conference on Dutch Love Emblems and the Internet (November 2006)

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The Dutch love emblem on the Internet: an introduction

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This volume contains the selected papers of the conference on the Dutch love emblem and emblem digitisation held in Utrecht, on November 6th and 7th, 2006. On those two days, scholars from multiple disciplines and countries gathered to discuss Dutch love emblems books, their digitisation in the Emblem Project Utrecht, and its connection with other emblem digitisation efforts. The conference's title, *Learned Love*, referred to the motto of emblem 23 in one of those emblem books, first published in 1613: Daniel Heinsius's *Ambacht van Cupido* (Trade of Cupid). As it turned out, not only this motto but also the beginning of the subscriptio of this emblem 23 proved to be applicable to the conference: 'He who possesses knowledge, flies over all countries' (Fig. 1).[1]

Studying the Dutch love emblem in the context of emblem digitisation requires knowledge from disciplines such as art history, editorial science, information science, literary studies, theology and history. This volume mirrors the diversity of disciplines. Part I is dedicated to the study of the (digitised) Dutch love emblem; Part II to the study of emblem digitisation. This introduction first discusses the goals of the Emblem Project Utrecht and its results, and then summarizes the specific contributions to the study of the Dutch love emblem and emblem digitisation in this volume.

The two goals of the Emblem Project Utrecht

In recent years, scholars from all over the world have recognized the value of information technology for the study of the emblematic tradition. Due to the typical constraint of the emblematic genre (best described as a web of citations, imitations and adaptations from pictorial as well as textual sources) emblem studies are partly comparative in nature. Before the digital era, emblem studies were undertaken with scholarly reprints, and indexes – such as the iconographical index of Arthur Henkel en Albrecht Schöne's *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts* and Peter Daly's *Index emblematicus*. However useful, the reprints and indexes were not as flexible as one might wish. To find answers to questions of origin and influence in the literary and pictorial (and sometimes musical) motifs and elements of emblems, we need some of the benefits of recent IT-techniques.

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1 'Die wetenschap besit, vliecht over alle landen'

Fig. 1: D. Heinsius, 'Amor eruditus' [Learned love], emblem 23 of Ambacht van Cupido: in *Nederduytsche poemata* 1616 (EPU site).

In line with these efforts, the Emblem Project Utrecht (EPU) was created in 2002. The Netherlands Organisation of Scientific Research (NWO) funded it from 2003 to 2006. The project aimed to publish an Internet site with scholarly and searchable editions of Dutch emblem books. Through these editions, the project hoped to stimulate research in the field of the Dutch love emblem as well as to investigate and test the application of recent IT-developments in emblem digitisation.

In general, how successful has EPU been in producing an Internet site with advanced digital resources? In November 2006, the EPU launched a site with 26 digital editions of Dutch love emblem books at http://emblems.let.uu.nl. The site includes a bibliography referring to literature relevant to the Dutch love emblem, editorial introductions as well as search indexes, concordances and references to parallels and sources. The editions may be searched through a variety of means. The global search page allows selection by pictorial motifs/elements and other indexes. The tables of contents allow selection by motto, concordances allow selection by individual words, and the bibliography cross-references all places in the EPU editions that refer to a given bibliographical item. From the first, unofficial launch of the EPU site in 2003, the number of visitors has been growing regularly, adding up to a total of approximately 145,000 hits in the year 2006. A third of these visitors log in from the Netherlands, a tenth from the United States and Belgium. But it is not only numbers that tell us how widely the EPU site is known. Based on

the emails with requests and questions we get on a daily basis, it is clear scholars as well as visitors with other interests and backgrounds are using the EPU site in a fruitful manner. Publications that specifically record their use of the EPU site include Peil 2004 and Peil 2005. As a further indication of the impact of the EPU site, we include in this volume a paper on wall paintings in a French castle, the owner of which contacted us shortly after the conference was over. Searching on the Internet, she had found out for herself that Heinsius's *Emblemata amatoria* must have been the source for these wall paintings. Needless to say she would probably never have managed to do so if the EPU corpus was not digitised.

To facilitate visitors of the EPU site that do not have a scholarly background, we have developed an educational site, explaining to them the main characteristics of the profane Dutch love emblem and providing a questionnaire to test their growing knowledge. This site was visited around 3000 times in between 2004 and 2006.[2]

More specifically, what is the EPU research output in the fields of the Dutch love emblem and emblem digitisation? We will briefly discuss the results of the project in these two areas, starting with the study of the Dutch love emblem.

The EPU corpus was selected because of its uniquely Dutch character and because of the many unresolved questions about its history, background and wider importance. The selection was limited to love emblem books written in Dutch, published between 1600 and 1725, and printed in the Low Countries.[3] On the basis of existing research, conducted by for instance Karel Porteman and Marc Van Vaeck (see Porteman 1977, Van Vaeck 1993), the corpus was selected at the beginning of the EPU, based on the following assumptions: the most important contribution to what was to become the tradition of the Dutch love emblem came around 1601 from Daniel Heinsius, professor in Leiden. Heinsius combined the efforts of several of his friends (among them the engraver Jacques de Gheyn and lawyer/historian/statesman Hugo Grotius) in the volume *Quaeris quid sit amor* (Do you seek/ask what love is). *Quaeris quid sit amor* proved a resounding success. Reprints appeared in rapid succession, and the new title given to the volume with the third printing – *Emblemata amatoria* – would grow into the label for a subgenre in international emblematics. The title of this first Dutch love emblem book indicates that the new subgenre had a very European side to it. Mottoes and epigrams in languages other than Dutch accompanied the *picturae*, and traces from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and other important classical and contemporary sources can be found everywhere in the book.

The poet and artist Otto Vaenius whose *Amorum emblemata* was published in 1608, thereafter played an important role in the development of the Dutch love

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2 See: http://emblems.let.uu.nl/emblems/educational/home.html
3 We have made some exceptions, as in the case of Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana*, which is not a love emblem book, but seemed sufficiently related to the other books to be included in the corpus.

emblem. Vaenius's emblems were made for the European market. Vaenius and be-friended artists collaborated in the production of *epigrammata* in Latin, English, Italian, French, Spanish and Dutch to accompany one set of *picturae*. Four editions with different sets of epigrams were published at the same time. Vaenius's example may have inspired Heinsius to republish his *Quaeris*, now named *Emblemata amatoria*. A couple of years later, Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft published his *Emblemata amatoria* (1611).

All of these emblem books have their roots in the Petrarchist tradition, with as leading motif a lamenting lover whose mistress turns out to be an icy-hearted god-dess. In 1618, by publishing his *Sinne- en minnebeelden*, Jacob Cats created a new tradition in the love emblem. In his works, Cats introduces realism and everyday life, in a serious attempt to change the Dutch outlook on love and marriage. The amatory emblems in the first part of this book were used again with a moral and religious explanation in the second and third part. The love emblem had obtained a religious dimension when Vaenius's *Amoris divini emblemata* was published in 1615. On this occasion, Vaenius adapted his formula for secular emblems in a reli-gious sense. Numerous poets followed in Vaenius's and Cats's footsteps; their ideas gained currency in Catholic as well as protestant circles. The Counter-Reforma-tion anthology *Amoris divini et humani antipathia* (1626/8/9) initiated and pub-lished by Michiel Snijders, for example, contains many borrowings from Cats. His *Sinne- and minnebeelden* served as the point of departure for many engravings in *Amoris divini et humani antipathia*, and a good many of the Latin texts were taken over as well. Here, as in Vaenius, divine love (Amor divinus) in most cases takes the place of Cupid. The *Amoris divini et humani antipathia* in addition shows in-fluences of Heinsius and of the *Pia desideria* by Hermannus Hugo. This volume therefore serves as a prime example of love emblematics as a melting-pot genre. In the northern part of the Netherlands this tradition was followed by for instance Jan Luyken, Jan van Hoogstraten and Jan Suderman.

A number of articles dedicated to the study of the Dutch love emblem have been published during the course of the project, discussing the assumptions thus far made about the corpus. Topics were the specific nature of Vaenius's *Amoris di-vini emblemata*, the contribution of Jan Luyken to the religious love emblem, the success of Cats's *Sinne- en minnebeelden*, the relationship between theatre and em-blems, and the role of Heinsius's *Ambacht van Cupido* in the transition from the Petrarchist tradition to the Dutch love emblem as developed by Cats (Bloemen-dal 2002; Boot 2007a, 2007b; Stronks 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2005). In the next few years, a group of researchers in both Leuven and Utrecht will focus in more detail on the specifics of the relationship between religious emblems in the northern and southern parts of the Netherlands, as well as on the relationship between pro-fane and religious emblems and emblems and other art forms in a research proj-ect titled 'The religious emblem tradition in the Low Countries in light of Herman Hugo's *Pia desideria*' (FWO/NWO), started in January 2007.

What were the results of the EPU in the second area of attention, the study of emblem digitisation? The EPU was founded in the firm belief that the project should embrace international standards for encoding textual and pictorial data. The EPU adopted the guidelines of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), the Iconclass system, XML and XSLT as the most relevant standards. A number of articles on the issue of these choices and their consequences have been published over the course of the project. The development of digital tools for the editor was also included in the project's scope of interest (Boot 2002a, 2002b, 2002c and Boot 2005; resulting in a PhD dissertation on emblem digitisation in 2008). Another result in this area is the co-operation of the EPU and others in the OpenEmblem Portal, a resource for emblem book researchers from around the world, helping them share resources and discuss with others in the emblem book community.[4]

Since the EPU is based on the principle that the sharing of knowledge is extremely important when it comes to making progress, all of our files and documentation on the techniques we used are available on the EPU site.[5] The site offers TIF and JPG files (600 dpi) of all images. Everything on the site is licensed under a Creative Commons License.[6]

Part 1: The Dutch love emblem

After this brief look at the history and results of the Emblem Project Utrecht, we will now turn to the contents of this volume. Part 1 is opened by Alison Saunders's paper on the origins of the love emblem. A newly discovered French emblem book, Guillaume La Perrière's *Cent considerations d'amour*, dating from the first half of the sixteenth century, may well have been a model for the Dutch love emblem books published after 1601. This paper thus questions the very fundamental assumption made so far that the love emblem was a Dutch invention.

The second contribution, by Arnoud Visser, compares Otto Vaenius's *Amoris divini emblemata* from 1615 and Michel Hoyer's *Flammulae amoris* (*Sparkles of Augustine's love*) from 1629, explaining the profound difference between the two emblem books. On the basis of this comparison, should Vaenius's religious emblems really be located in a tradition of devotional mysticism, as has often been assumed?

Marc Van Vaeck's contribution discusses the Jesuit appropriation of the love emblem (and other emblem traditions) in the *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Jesu* (1640), the work celebrating the centenary of the Jesuit order. He devotes special attention to the adaptation of the Latin volume for a vernacular audience, a subject closely related to the *Pia desideria* project mentioned above.

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4 See: http://media.library.uiuc.edu/projects/oebp/
5 See: http://emblems.let.uu.nl/project_procedures.html
6 The Attribution-Non Commercial/ShareAlike license.
See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/1.0/

The issue of classification, already a topic in Visser's contribution, is further discussed in Els Stronks's paper on the development of the religious love emblem. Thus far, Vaenius's *Amoris divini emblemata*, printed in 1615, has always been considered as the first religious love emblem book. There are good reasons to doubt this, one of which is the changing nature of Heinsius's profane love emblem books between 1601 and 1613. If the development of the religious subgenre was a gradual process, should we not start to question the strict division between profane and religious emblem books?

Sagrario López Poza discusses the Spanish epigrams in Vaenius's *Amoris divini emblemata*, written by the Spanish poet Alonso de Ledesma, and positions them in the wider tradition of Spanish poetry. He applied the same wit and humor in his other poetry.

Jan Bloemendal raises a similar issue in his contribution, in which he reflects on the possibilities of reconstructing a seventeenth-century reading experience using an Internet site like the one made for the EPU. From the examples he discusses, it becomes very clear that emblems derived from various literary sources, contemporary as well as ancient. One can detect traces from other emblematic sources within and outside the EPU corpus, but also from Roman philosophers and playwrights. Just as the emblems, on their turn, left their marks in contemporary poetry and paintings. The emblems thus were intertextual and even intermedial webs of allusions and quotations. How can an Internet site reflect their complexity?

Stefan Kiedron and Joanna Skubisz discuss the European context of the seventeenth-century reading experience in their contribution. The Library of the University of Wroclaw has a copy of the 1615 edition of Heinsius's *Ambacht van Cupido* that has a very interesting provenance. How did a Dutch emblem book land in Poland, and what can be said about the apparently European popularity of an emblem book in Europe that seemed to be especially made for the Dutch market?

This Dutch market as the source of inspiration for Dutch love emblem writers is discussed in detail in the contribution by Arie Jan Gelderblom. In the same period the love emblems became very popular in the Netherlands, the Dutch Republic was flourishing economically. Was there a connection between these trends? Is the kind of advice given to Dutch citizens about their economic affairs reflected in the lessons taught about love in the love emblems books?

The last contribution to this section of the volume by Peter Boot sheds light on a pleasant discovery that almost coincided with the completion of the Emblem Project Utrecht in November 2006.

Part 2: The digitisation of the emblem

Part 2 of this volume opens with a contribution by Els Stronks, attempting to classify the EPU site. The intention was to create a collection of digital editions, but how should the outcome be judged? The relatively new concept of a 'knowledge site' is introduced as an alternative for 'digital edition', and the ramifications of this change in attitude are listed and discussed.

Edward Vanhoutte in his contribution reflects on the specifics of digital editions. Scholars are in the process of defining technical and editorial standards for this type of edition. This process, Vanhoutte argues, should be finalized in the next few years to ensure the quality of digital editions, as well as their durability and comparability.

Johan Tilstra, in his contribution to the volume, explains the technical choices made by the EPU and their implications. What principles motivated these design decisions, and what future benefits are expected from the techniques chosen for the EPU site? The technical standards Vanhoutte is assuming for digital editions, are they also applicable for knowledge sites such as the EPU site aims to become?

Peter M. Daly presents an overview of digitisation efforts made so far in the field of emblem studies, and assesses the specific features of the EPU site.

In his contribution, Thomas Stäcker discusses future technical developments of emblem digitisation projects. The next logical step is the introduction of the XML Schema for the exchange of emblem data between emblem projects and the Open-Emblem Portal? Stäcker discusses an experimental implementation of a 'harvesting' procedure. Are the underlying data of sufficient quality, or will the individual databases need to be redesigned?

In the last contribution to this volume, Peter Boot discusses future developments for the editors and researchers using sites like the EPU site. Assuming that annotation facilities are the single most important item that digitisation projects will need to address, how will this influence scholarly reading, writing and publication? His article introduces the concept of mesotext to describe the bodies of structured annotation that may provide the supporting data for future emblem studies. Will this affect the nature of research done in the humanities?

As these summaries of the papers in this volume show, the conference *Learned Love* has resulted in new discoveries, new assumptions and new questions, offering all kinds of perspectives for future research and future digitisation projects. The Dutch love emblem should not be looked upon as an isolated event in Dutch literature. It was connected with the European culture and readers, just as it will be – by means of digitisation – connected to a world wide audience in our times.

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