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Vaenius's Pluri-Medial Horace: Images for Contemplation, Primer of Philosophy, Iconological Templates for Artists, Latin Commonplace Book, and Vernacular Emblem Book

Karl A.E. Enenkel and Paul J. Smith

1 Introduction

Otho Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana*, which appeared in print for the first time in 1607,¹ is of primary importance for the 17th-century reception of Horace, and it is a striking example of both the high potential of creative transformation of the classics in the early modern period, as well as the intriguing role the various media played in this process.² Among the new inventions are the bi-medial emblem book, originally a combination of Latin poems and woodcut images;³ the printed illustrated book; iconographic template books for visual artists, such as Philip Galle's *Prosopographia* and Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*; printed collections of commonplaces, such as *Sententiae*, *Adagia*, and *Apophthegmata*; compendia of various disciplines, etc. With his *Emblemata Horatiana* the painter and humanist Vaenius created a novel work in which he combined several of the new medial formats: His work represents

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- 1 *Q. Horati Flacci Emblemata. Imaginibus in aes incisus notisque illustrata, studio Othonis Vaenii Batavolugdunensis [...]. Auctoris aere et cura* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen: 1607); cf. facsimile edition Olms (Hildesheim – Zurich – New York: 1996) = *Emblematisches Kabinett* 3.
 - 2 This contribution is based on discussions by both authors on the *Emblemata Horatiana* and the Dutch and French poems Vaenius has added to his follow-up issue of the 1607 edition, and on the findings of Karl Enenkel's previous studies "Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik: Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*", in Laureys M. – Dauvois N. – Coppini D. (eds.), *Non omnis moriar. Die Horaz-Rezeption in der neulateinischen Literatur vom 15. Bis zum 17. Jahrhundert [...]* *Noctes Neolatinae* 35, 1 (Hildesheim – Zurich – New York: 2020), vol. 2, 1243–1305, and "The Transmission of Knowledge via Pictorial Figurations: *Vaenius' Emblemata Horatiana* (1607) as a Manual of Ethics", in Enenkel K.A.E., *The Invention of the Emblem Book and the Transmission of Knowledge, ca. 1570–1610* (Leiden – Boston: 2019) 365–438. In the present contribution, the section on "The Authorship of the First Dutch and French, and of the Second Dutch Poems" is written by Paul Smith, and the other parts are by Karl Enenkel.
 - 3 Cf. Enenkel, *The Invention of the Emblem Book*, with bibliographical annotations.

at the same time an *Illustrated Horace* (with 103 engravings), a *Compendium of Horace*, a Latin commonplace book, an iconographic template book for painters, and a proper (i.e. more traditional) emblem book. The originality of the *Emblemata Horatiana* appears already in its construction and layout: instead of the established mode of the emblem book (1. title/*inscriptio*/motto; 2. *pictura*; 3. epigram/*subscriptio*), Vaenius offers:

- 1) a title that constitutes a commonplace lemma;
- 2) one or more fragments from Horace's poems (*Odes*, *Epodes*, *Satires*, *Epistulae*, and the *Ars poetica*);
- 3) an explanation of the iconology of the engraving, written by himself – this explanation is present in a considerable number of the emblems;
- 4) several *sententiae*, *auctoritates*, *apophthegmata*, proverbs, and other quotations, predominantly from classical Latin poets or prose writers (with an average of four or five items per emblem); and
- 5) after all that, always on recto pages, a large, high-quality engraved image based on a well-thought-out iconology, invented by Vaenius himself.⁴

Usually, the images represent more than a simple illustration of a poem by Horace: in the first place, the engravings translate a commonplace truth or wisdom into a didactic image meant for meditation and philosophical exercise; in the second place, they actually constitute, albeit in a visual language, the moral topos itself; and in the third place, they offer iconological templates for personifications of various moral concepts (virtues, vices, and other qualities).

As one may guess, this all clearly transgresses the borders of an 'ordinary' emblem book of around 1600, and this may be the reason that the *Emblemata Horatiana* were not considered in Henkel and Schöne's manual of emblems;⁵ anyway, they did not fit the definition of the emblem used by Henkel and Schöne, the 'Idealtypologie'. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt that the *Emblemata Horatiana* were understood as emblems in the 17th and 18th centuries, which is not only suggested by their name but appears from the dazzling reception they experienced among emblematic followers, such as

4 The (almost complete) album of Vaenius's preparatory drawings is preserved in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York; see Stampfle F., *Netherlandish Drawings of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries and Flemish Drawings of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries in the Pierpont Morgan Library* (New York: 1991) 65–99 (nos. 113–215); cf. Thoenfer M., "Making a Chimera: Invention, Collaboration and the Production of Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*", in Adams A. – van der Weij M. (eds.), *Emblems of the Low Countries: A Book Historical Perspective*, Glasgow Emblem Studies 8 (Glasgow: 2003) 17–44.

5 Henkel A. – Schöne A. (eds.), *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: 1967/1996).

Le Roy Marin,⁶ Philipp von Zesen,⁷ or Anthonis Jansen van Tergoes,⁸ plus a plagiarism by the engraver Wenceslaus Hollar and the printmakers Robert Walton and Thomas Hawkins, who in the 1640s edited a selection of Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana* with the claim of bringing out *Emblemata nova*.⁹ It is most noteworthy that Vaenius himself, in an augmented issue of the first edition, tried to transform his *Emblemata Horatiana* into a proper emblem book through the addition of Dutch and French poems (quatrains).¹⁰ In this augmented issue, Vaenius offers in each lemma not only the above-mentioned elements but also:

- 6) a Dutch rhymed quatrain and
- 7) a French rhymed quatrain.

Through these additions, each lemma was equipped with two proper emblematic epigrams, and thus became an emblem in the more traditional sense. Currently, we have no clear picture of the principles of composition of these epigrams, what the relationship is between the vernacular poems and the Latin text fragments, and of the way in which the poems interact with the

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- 6 Le Roy Marin, Sieur de Gomberville, *La Doctrine des Moeurs* (Paris: 1646, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685, and 1688). Cf. Adams A. – Rawles S. – Saunders A., *A Bibliography of French Emblem Books of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, vol. 1 (Geneva: 1999), s.v. “Gomberville [...]”. For Gomberville’s work cf. Teyssandier B., *Le Prince à l’école des images: La Doctrine des Moeurs de Marin Le Roy, Sieur de Gomberville*, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Paris IV – Sorbonne: 2004); idem, “La Galerie de M. de Gomberville ou la peinture sérieuse”, in Manning J. – Porteman K. – Van Vaeck M. (eds.), *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries: Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference* (Turnhout: 1999) 337–353.
 - 7 von Zesen Philipp, *Moralia Horatiana – das ist horatizische Sitten-Lehre. Aus der Ernst-sittigen Gesellschaft der Alten Weise-meistern gezogen [...] Und mit 113 in Kupfer gestochenenn Sinn-Bildern und eben so viel Erklärungen und andern Anmärkungen vorgestellt: Itzung aber mit neuen Reim-Bänden gezieret und in reiner Hochdeutschen Sprache zu Lichte gebracht durch Filip von Zesen* (Amsterdam, Cornelis Dankers Kornelis de Bruyn: 1656). Cf. von Zesen Philipp, *Sämtliche Werke*, unter Mitwirkung von U. Maché und V. Meid ed. F. van Ingen, 14 vols. (Berlin – New York: 1997), and the facsimile edition, ed. W. Bauer, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: 1963).
 - 8 Jansen van Tergoes Anthonis, *Zinnebeelden, getrokken uit Horatius Flaccus, naar een geestrijke vinding van den geleerden Otto van Veen* (ed. pr. Amsterdam, Justus Dankerts: 1683).
 - 9 *Emblemata nova* [...] W<enceslaus>. *Hollar Bohemus aquaforti expressit* (London, Robert Walton – Thomas Hawkins: n.d.); cf. Bath M., “Vaenius Abroad: English and Scottish Reception of the *Emblemata Horatiana*”, in Westerweel B. (ed.), *Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Field of the Emblem* (Leiden etc.: 1997) (87–106) 96–97; Astington J.H., “From Emblem to Polemic: Hollar’s *Emblemata Nova*”, in Manning J. – Porteman K. – van Vaeck M. (eds.), *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries* 315–335.
 - 10 https://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb11347961_00012.html.

illustrations; we do not know if the poems affect the constitution of the entire emblem, and if so, in which ways, and how 'Horatian' or 'Un-Horatian' they are in comparison with the selected Latin fragments of Horace's poems. Of course, one may expect that the Dutch and French poems were at least partly intended for another audience than the one that was addressed in the first edition, in which the images were combined with the Latin texts only. Open questions include what the discursive constitution, content, and composition of the poems are, if (and in which way) these things were caused by the orientation to other readerships.

All these questions are even more interesting because Vaenius was apparently not entirely satisfied with the first sets of Dutch and French epigrams: he replaced both sets with different poems in the 1612 edition.¹¹ And of course, the replacement is in itself puzzling: what were the reasons, and in which way do the new poems differ from the ones of the first set? What exactly is the effect of the new poems? What new emblematic constructions do they bring forth?

From the introductory words it has become clear that the *Emblemata Horatiana* represents a pluri-medial work: an *Illustrated Book*, a *Compendium of Horace*, a Latin commonplace book, an album of iconographic templates for painters, and a proper (i.e. more traditional) emblem book. The present contribution aims at analysing these pluri-medial aspects and their interrelation. For this goal, in-depth discussions of single emblems are indispensable. With respect to the overall interpretation of the *Emblemata Horatiana*, in this study certain aspects will be highlighted: the learned character both of the iconology of the images and the construction of the topoi (including antiquarian aspects), the importance of intertextuality with other emblematic works,¹² the role of Christian thought (including confessional aspects), which has thus far

11 *Quinti Horatii Flacci Emblemata. Imaginibus in aes incisus Notisque illustrata. Studio Othonis Vaeni Batavolugdunensis Auctoris aere et cura* (Antwerp, Otho Vaenius and Philippus Lisaert: 1612). This is generally regarded as the second edition.

12 So far, this aspect of the *Emblemata Horatiana* is underresearched. Simon McKeown correctly remarked in his introduction to the collective volume *Otto Vaenius and his Emblem Books* (Glasgow: 2012) xvii that 'there is no doubting his (Vaeenius's) familiarity with the emblem corpus of the 16th century'. For this, McKeown emphasizes Vaenius's sojourn in Antwerp where Christopher Plantin – who was one of the most important and successful publishers of emblem books (among others, the ones of Alciato, Hadrianus Iunius, and Ioannes Sambucus) – had his printing presses. Manning has pointed to the intertextuality between E.H. 62, "In avaros", and Alciato's "In avaros", see Manning J., "Emblems and their Context: A Generic Overview", in McKeown S. (ed.), *The International Emblem: From Incunabula to the Internet* (Newcastle upon Tyne: 2010) 6–7; McKeown notes another instance of intertextuality between the *Emblemata Horatiana* and Alciato in his Introduction to *Otto Vaenius and his Emblem Books* xvii, no. 21.

been underestimated in favour of reading the work as a Neo-Stoic manifesto,¹³ the translation of Horatian common-sense wisdom into didactic plates of a philosophical primer, and the fact that Vaenius's inventions are in the first place visualizations of philosophical topoi, not just illustrations of Horatian verses.¹⁴ The *Emblemata Horatiana* is not only in itself a pluri-medial work, it

- 13 Leonard Forster interpreted the work as a purely Neo-Stoic manifesto: Forster L., "Die *Emblemata Horatiana* des Otho Vaenius", *Wolfenbüttler Forschungen* 12 (1981) 117–128; Forster emphasized that Vaenius avoided Christian symbols, thought, confessional matters, and Christian authors, such as the Church fathers. As we will demonstrate below, this is not true. Forster's Neo-Stoic overall interpretation was carried forward by Roland Mayer in his "Vivere secundum Horatium: Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*", in Houghton L.B.T. – Wyke M. (eds.), *Perceptions of Horace. A Roman Poet and His Readers* (Cambridge: 2009) 200–218, and Walter Ludwig, "Die *Emblemata Horatiana* des Otho Vaenius", *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch* 15 (2013) 219–229; it was present in nuce already in Gerards-Nelissen I., "Otto van Veen's *Emblemata Horatiana*", *Simiolus* 5 (1971) 20–63. Gerards-Nelissen's (1971) and Mayer's (2009) studies have in common that they emphasize the importance of the first ten emblems on *Virtus*, which they regard as paradigmatic expressions of Vaenius's Neo-Stoicism; it is noteworthy, however, that in emblems 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (thus, 8 of 10) there is nothing specifically Stoic: for emblems 5–8 see the present contribution, below. Mayer repeats Forster's assertions with respect to Christian thoughts, elements, and sources: 'Christianity remains conspicuous by its *total absence* [*sic*]. When we turn to the emblems themselves, there is virtually no religious symbolism' ("Vivere secundum Horatium" 212). In my previous studies I have demonstrated that the *Emblemata Horatiana* cannot simply be regarded as a Neo-Stoic manifesto; they contain essential patterns of thought that are definitively not Stoic: the Aristotelian doctrine of Mesotes and other elements of peripatetic thought, Horace's common-sense wisdom, proverbial wisdom, and satirical criticism. See my "Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik", especially the section "Horazische, jedoch unstoische Ethik in den *Emblemata Horatiana*" (1252–1256) and "Horazische Sprichwörterethik – 'Horatius light'?" (1259–1267), and "The Transmission of Knowledge via Pictorial Figurations", especially the section "The *Emblemata Horatiana*: A Mirror of Princes? A Neostoic Manifesto?" (370–373). In these previous studies, I did not discuss Christian thoughts and concepts. Of course, neither the present contribution nor my previous studies aim at denying that Neo-Stoic thoughts are present in the *Emblemata Horatiana*, but argue that the whole work is much more complex than just a Neo-Stoic manifesto. Cf. "Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik", 1275: 'Vaenius verfasste sein Werk nicht in erster Linie für Altertumswissenschaftler, Philosophiehistoriker und Stoa-Spezialisten [...]. Vaenius' Philosophiebegriff ist deshalb viel offener und weniger scharf umrissen, und er beschränkt sich deshalb keineswegs ausschließlich auf die Stoa. Viel eher könnte man von einem sehr allgemein gefassten Begriff antiker Weisheit sprechen. Typisch horazisches Gedankengut, Sprichwörterweisheit, emblematisches Gedankengut und "Stoa light" verschmilzt Vaenius in seinen *Emblemata Horatiana* zu einem neuen, wirkungsvollen Ganzen.'
- 14 Margit Thoenfer in "Making a Chimera" maintained that Vaenius's *inventiones* are the result of a complete reading of all of Horace's poems, which lasted nine years (??), and thus that he illustrated Horace's verse on the basis of an intense reading process; in my "Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik" I have demonstrated that Vaenius worked in a much

opens up a number of perspectives with respect to the transfer of the emblems into other media: we will analyse in this contribution *inter alia* images for private contemplation, including genre paintings and trompe-l'œils, images for self-reflection and social self-representation, e.g. on folding screens from Mexico (biombos), and, furthermore, azulejos for monastic meditation, and political pamphlets.¹⁵

different way: that he used intensively a collection of commonplaces of Roman poets, the *Sententiae et proverbia ex Latinis poetis*. Marc van der Poel was interested in the material fragmentation of the classical poet Horace and the lesser importance of the fragments in the later editions (the 1612 edition, and Gomberville's and Leclerc's works); cf. Poel M. van der, "Veniens' *Emblemata Horatiana*: Material Fragmentation of a Classical Poet", in idem (ed.), *Neo-Latin Philology: Old Tradition, New Approaches* (Leuven: 2014) 131–164. Van der Poel rightly assumes that Vaenius composed his texts on the basis of a commonplace book; in his conclusion, he states that the *Emblemata Horatiana* 'was originally an illustrated commonplace book and it developed' 'into a book of moral emblems' (149). In our view the process of the 'development' of the *Emblemata Horatiana* seems to be more complex and complicated than that: actually, both aspects, the illustrated commonplace book and the 'book of moral emblems', are there in the very first edition, and in the later editions as well. For example, Gomberville's version of 1646 is no less a commonplace book than Vaenius's original Latin edition of 1607, the augmented edition with the Dutch and French quatrains of 1607, or the multilingual edition of 1612. Van der Poel does not study the Dutch and French quatrains of the 1607 edition; he is certainly right with stating that 'the various editions of the *Emblemata Horatiana* need to be studied in more detail'.

- 15 In the framework of this contribution it is not possible to give an exhaustive discussion of all known instances of the reception of the *Emblemata Horatiana* in the visual arts (of the 17th and 18th centuries). Cf. the excellent studies by Michael Bath on the Long Gallery of Pinkie Castle in Scotland, and Simon McKeown on the Skokloster in Sweden: Bath M., "Alexander Seton's Painted Gallery", in Gent L. (ed.), *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550–1650* (New Haven: 1995); idem, "Applied Emblematics in Scotland: Painted Ceilings, 1550, 1650", *Emblematica* 7 (1993) 259–305; idem, "Vaenius Abroad"; McKeown, *Emblematic Paintings from Sweden's Age of Greatness: Nils Bielke and the Neo-Stoic Gallery of Skokloster* (Turnhout: 2006); idem, "The Emblem Paintings at Skokloster: A Philosophical Gallery from Sweden's Age of Greatness", *Emblematica* 13 (2003) 213–266. Furthermore, *Emblemata Horatiana* appear on painted tiles in castle Wrisbergholzen near Hannover, in the room with the 'Spruchfliesen'; cf. Boyken M., "Die Spruchfliesen von Wrisbergholzen", in *Zeitschrift des Museums zu Hildesheim*, Heft 19 (1966), Köhler J.B., *Angewandte Emblematis im Fliesensaal von Wrisbergholzen bei Hildesheim* (Hildesheim: 1988), and idem, "Die emblematischen Monatsfliesen in Wrisbergholzen", in Strasser G.F. – Wade M. (eds.), *Die Domänen des Emblems: Außerliterarische Anwendungen der Emblematis* (Wiesbaden: 2004) 15–27. Cf. also, on the *Emblemata Horatiana* in the Palácio dos Coruchéus in Lisbon, Tribe T., "Word and Image in Emblematic Painting", in Adams A. – Harper A.J. (eds.), *The Emblem in Renaissance and Baroque Europe [...]* (Leiden etc.: 1992) 247–271.

2 The Authorship of the First Dutch and French Poems, and of the Second Dutch Poems

The intermedial aspect of the *Emblemata Horatiana* is enhanced by the fact that Vaenius, in the limited space available on the layout of the text page of the 1607 edition, added two anonymous quatrains, one in Dutch and the other in French. This significantly expanded the intended readership from a humanist-oriented, Latin-reading one to a (in the words of Garnt Stuiveling and B.C. Damsteegt, two renowned specialists in Dutch literature)

slightly simpler southern Dutch audience, not rich enough in classical education to understand the Latin quotes and all the more eager to participate in the new fashion, so to speak, a middle-class audience, which could now read the meaning of the Horatian and other ancient wisdoms in the two languages with which it was familiar.¹⁶

In order to further expand the readership, the collection was republished in 1612, in a new format: a smaller font was used for the Latin text, which was now printed over the full width of the page. The space thus created was filled in as follows: the anonymous Dutch quatrains were replaced by anonymous eight-line poems, and the anonymous French quatrains were replaced by two poems (a quatrain and an eight-line poem), the authors of which are mentioned by Vaenius in his preface (Leo de Meyer, Provost of the St. Veerlekerk te Gent, of the eight-line poems, and Claude de Cordenoy of the quatrains); furthermore, to each emblem was added an Italian poem of eight lines, written by Pietro Benedetti from Genoa, as well as a Spanish poem (of varying length and metre), composed by D. Didaco de Barreda, a theologian from Antwerp.¹⁷ In

16 'een iets eenvoudiger zuidnederlands publiek, niet rijk genoeg aan klassieke scholing om de latijnse aanhalingen te kunnen begrijpen en des te begeriger om toch mee te doen aan de nieuwe mode; om zo te zeggen een middenstandspubliek, dat nu de zin van de horatiaanse en andere antieke levenswijsheden te lezen kon krijgen in de twee talen waarmee het vertrouwd was'. Cf. Stuiveling G. – Damsteegt B.C., "Nalezing na lezing", in Bredero Gerbrand Adriaans, *Verspreid werk*, eds. G. Stuiveling – B.C. Damsteegt (Leiden: 1986) (253–264) 254.

17 M. Blanco takes Otto van Veen's emblem books as an example of 'emblématique plurilingue à Anvers' (from Plantin's Alciato editions on); cf. Blanco M., "L'emblématique plurilingue à Anvers: Otto van Veen (1557–1626) et l'humanisme vernaculaire", in Béhar R. – Blanco M. – Hafner J. (eds.), *Villes à la croisée des langues (XVI^e–XVII^e siècles)*. Anvers, Hambourg, Milan, Naples et Palerme / Städte in Schnittpunkt der Sprachen (16.–17. Jahrhundert). Antwerpen, Hamburg, Mailand, Neapel und Palermo (Geneva: 2018) 713–738; on the *Emblemata Horatiana* pp. 720–727. The composition of the *Emblemata Horatiana*

addition, poems of praise by the Northern Netherlands' Daniel Heinsius and Hugo Grotius were added as paratexts. The expansion of the intended readership therefore concerns not only an Italian- and Spanish-reading public, which was abundantly present in the Southern Netherlands, but an expansion to the readership of the Northern Netherlands.

Much has been written in Dutch literary studies since the 19th century about the authorship of the first and second Dutch poems (1607 and 1612, respectively), especially because the 1607 poems were attributed to Bredero, one of the great Dutch poets, and also to the important Northern Netherlandish poet Anna Roemers Visscher – wrongly, as demonstrated by Stuiveling and Damsteegt, and later Karel Porteman. While our article focuses not so much on issues of authorship as it does on multimodality, the question of authorship is important enough for our topic on multimodality to dig a little deeper into it.

With regard to the Dutch and French poems, it should first be noted that they are by two different poets. J.B. Schepers (1932)¹⁸ has already demonstrated that the French poems cannot come from the Dutch poet; the differences between them, even if they are small, are too numerous to admit a communal authorship. These differences are most apparent when comparing the French and Dutch verses with Vaenius's depiction and with the Latin texts. In most cases, the Dutch poems appear to be more detailed than the French ones. For example, details such as the Icarus figure (emblem 6), Fama looking at the back of the begging bag (emblem 27), the bridle and the whip (emblem 39), and Luxury (emblem 56), are not mentioned in French, but they are in Dutch and in Latin, and they are visualized in Vaenius's illustration. Details such as the face and the heart (emblem 64) appear in the Dutch and the Latin texts, but not in the French poem, nor in the image. And details such as the figure of Paris (emblem 88), the wrinkles in the forehead (emblem 93), and the toll collection (emblem 98) are mentioned in Dutch and are represented in the image, but they are not mentioned in French, nor are they mentioned in Latin.

Occasionally, the French poems are more detailed than the Dutch ones. For example, the hail ('gresle', emblem 15) and the trumpet of fame ('trompette

is too complicated to analyse the exact construction, contents, and function of the various vernacular poems in comparison with the Latin texts in a few pages only; unfortunately, Blanco thinks (721) that the quatrains by Claude de Cordemoy in the 1612 edition are the same as the quatrains of the 1607 edition: '[...] le quatrain de Claude de Cordemoy, déjà présent dans la seconde édition de 1607'. In-depth analyses and comparisons are required to say anything sustainable about the composition and the audiences of the emblematic poems of *Emblemata Horatiana* in relation to the Latin texts and the images.

18 *De Nieuwe Gids*. Jaargang DBNL 47 (1932) 481–495 (Schepers assumed, incorrectly, that the first Dutch poems were composed by Bredero).

de la fame', emblem 26) are mentioned in French but not in Dutch or Latin, but they can be seen in the relevant images. Sometimes the degree of detail is comparable, but it is worked out differently. This is the case in emblem 38: here the French gives the names of Jupiter and Mercury, which are not mentioned in Dutch. In contrast, in the same emblem, Dutch mentions 'the old man' (not in French or Latin) and 'food and drink' (not in French). This also applies to emblem 84, in which the French uses the name 'Titans' (taken from Latin) and the Dutch 'Reuzen' (also from Latin: 'Gigantes').

Be that as it may, the many similarities make it clear that, despite the many minor differences, the French and the Dutch poets worked together in one way or another. From the greater detail of the Dutch poems it can be concluded that their author probably took the lead, and the author of the French quatrains followed, but this is no more than a general trend.

Nothing is known about the identity of the French poet – it is clear, however, that he is not a francophone. For example, his French is not always correct, as in the case of 'poltron' (emblem 14), which means 'cowardly', whereas in this context an adjective meaning 'lazy' is required. Other examples of incorrect word choice are 'sente' (emblem 47) (this should be 'sentier'); 'fine' (emblem 103) (perhaps 'finit?'); 'caquetter' (emblem 30); and 'isnel' (corruption of the Dutch 'fast?'). Stylistically remarkably clumsy are emblems 83 and 101: in emblem 83 a long stopper is used to complete the word 'monster': 'Tous monstres & Brigans, comblez de felonnie' (all monsters and villains, full of malice); and in emblem 101: where the Dutch poet still somewhat expressively says 'Den Menschen die vergaen als Bloemen en het Lof' ('The people, they perish like flowers and leaves'), the French gives a banal, tautological formulation, without any image: 'La vie humaine est courte, & de peu de durée' (Human life is short and does not last long).

Porteman comes up with an interesting hypothesis about the identity of the Dutch poet of 1607. The author would be Vaenius himself.¹⁹ Porteman bases his hypothesis mainly on circumstantial evidence: namely the reputation Vaenius has among his contemporaries as a dual talent: poet and painter. Vaenius came

19 Porteman K., "Miscellanea emblematica", in *Spiegel der letteren* 17 (1975) 161–193. Before Porteman's discussion, Chew suggested that Vaenius authored the Dutch verses himself; cf. Chew S., "Richard Verstegen and the Amorum Emblemata of Otho van Veen", *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 8 (1945) 195: 'It is reasonable to suppose that they are by Van Veen himself'. Cf. also Clements R.J., *Picta Poesis* (Rome: 1960) 122: 'His native idiom is Flemish'; Von Monroy E.F., *Embleme und Emblembücher in den Niederlanden 1560–1630. Eine Geschichte der Wandlungen ihres Illustrationsstils* (Utrecht: 1964) 53–54.

from an environment in which being multitalented was highly valued, as is apparent in the figure of his brother Pieter van Veen: a lawyer, painter, poet, and musician. However, Porteman's hypothesis is untenable. For example, in a considerable number of cases, both the Dutch and the French quatrains appear to have given a substantively distorted and sometimes even incorrect interpretation of either the image, the Latin, or both. In all the cases we identified, these interpretations would not be possible if Vaenius himself were the author. We will find many more examples of these cases in the analyses below.

Also, on stylistic grounds one may conclude that the Dutch poems of 1607 are not by Vaenius himself. This becomes apparent when one compares these quatrains with those from the *Amorum Emblemata* from 1608, which are certainly by Vaenius. These are written in a flowing, easy-to-read style, which is very different from the stocky, compact style of the Dutch quatrains of 1607, which give the impression that the author wanted to cram as much information as possible into the three descriptive verses of the quatrain, and which therefore require a certain effort from the reader.

Interesting, and now we think rightly so, is Porteman's hypothesis that the eight-line Dutch poems from 1512 are written by Vaenius. Porteman bases his hypothesis on the stylistic similarity between these poems and those of Vaenius's *Amoris Divini Emblemata* (1615), which Vaenius in his preface claims were written by him. The similarity is indeed great, for instance in the frequent use of the same rhyme scheme. To this we can add the high number of triads (paratactic enumeration of three words) used in both emblem books – a number that indicates a stylistic tic, typical of Vaenius, and not, for example, of the Dutch poems of 1607.

Indeed, in the use of triads the poems of 1612 differ from the quatrains of 1607. In only two cases is there a triad in a corresponding place in 1607 and 1612 (43 and 101). The difference is that in 1612 the paronymic effect (indicated in italics) is more powerful than it was in 1607, because the enumeration is shorter. In most cases there is a longer enumeration in 1612, in which the poet creates order through triads. This is the case in emblems 5, 15, 19, 22, 38, and 48. This is specifically indicated in emblem 22: here the poet begins with an enumeration, according to the text of 1607, but then cuts off and continues: 'ia int kort / So wilt, so woest, so onmanierich' ('yes, in short / So wild, so ferocious, so uncivilized'). In two cases, namely emblems 65 and 96, there is a concentration of triads with a special effect. Thus, emblem 65 begins with a triad: 'heerschappije, wellust, eer' ('lordship, lust, honour'), followed by a double triad over two lines of verse, with each of the three parts of it phonically corresponding to, but substantively contrasting with, the corresponding part in the other triad:

In druck, in teghenspoet, in lijden	In pressure, in adversity, in suffering
↓	↓
In vreught, in voorspoet, en verblijden	In joy, in prosperity, and rejoicing

Emblem 96 has two consecutive triads with an anticlimactic effect:

Soo wel den Koningh, Prins of Graue,
Als d'Ambachtsman, de knecht of slaue.

The king, prince or count, / as well as the craftsman, servant or slave.

In two cases, namely emblems 90 and 92, the poet appears to have looked very precisely at the image in the creation of his triad. Emblem 90 is about the futility of predictions:

Tracht te vergeefs niet om te weten
Wt beesten, voglen, oft planeten
Wat sal gheschien, of wert verwacht.

Do not try in vain to find out / from animals, birds or planets, / what will happen, or what is expected.

The triad 'Wt beesten, voglen, oft planeten' indicates exactly what can be seen in Vaenius's image: reference is made to the bull, the bird at the bottom right, and the depicted astrologers – this is not the case in the Dutch (and French) poems of 1607. And in emblem 92 a number of personifications are depicted, which are indicated in the triad: 'de smaecken, de slaep and t' minnen', with a precision that is absent in 1607.

In summary, our working hypothesis, from which we will study the multimediality of the *Emblemata Horatiana*, is the following: Vaenius was the instigator of the Dutch and French quatrains from 1607. He probably dictated the form (a quatrain, consisting of three descriptive lines of verse and a concluding line, which summarizes the quatrain in a kind of general truth). After publication, Vaenius concluded that the Dutch and French quatrains had to be replaced, for two main reasons: first because the texts often contradict Vaenius's images and/or the Latin text; and second because the French was defective and the Dutch unpleasant to read. In the 1612 edition of the *Emblemata Horatiana*, Vaenius rewrote the Dutch quatrains into eight-line poems, in which the

errors were corrected, and in which readability was increased. These poems have been submitted as model texts to the authors of the French, Italian, and Spanish poets of the 1612 edition.

In our view, although he probably gave instructions to the authors of the Dutch and French poems of the 1607 edition, Vaenius cannot be the author of the first set of Dutch verses. This appears from the fact that a number of mistakes and misunderstandings occur in the Dutch poems that cannot be due to Vaenius, who was not only the inventor of the emblems but a good Latinist as well. Here follow some examples:

In emblem 80, “Ex vino sapienti virtus”, the Dutch poem suffers from the fact that the poet mistranslated ‘Notus’, ‘South wind’, as ‘de noorden wint’ (‘North wind’). This mistake cannot have been committed by Vaenius; it was corrected by Vaenius in his own Dutch poem (‘den suyden wint en brenghet altijd ...’).²⁰ Furthermore, the author of the first Dutch poems misunderstood the motto of emblem 79, “True philosophy is the meditation of death”, “Vera philosophia est mortis meditatio”;²¹ he rendered it as “Na regen volgt schoon weer, en vreught na droefheyts banden”. This actually has nothing to do with emblem 79. The Stoic philosopher should never let ‘joy’ (vreught) in but should always keep a distance from the *passiones animi* which are depicted in the image: Hope, Sorrow, Fear, and Anger. The author of the Dutch poems has misinterpreted the image, where the sky is cloudy but an amoretto with a cornucopiae flies down from heaven and brings with him some sunrays. The French poet makes the same mistake: ‘la ioye suit l’ennui, et le beau temps l’orage’. Not coincidentally, the failed explanation of the emblematic meaning was removed by Vaenius in the revised version of the Dutch poem. Instead of the erroneous remark on the changeability of the weather Vaenius now focuses on the *meditatio mortis*.²²

Emblem 44 is accompanied by a Horatian strophe that offers a perfect description of the image (*Ode* 11, 16, 21–24; actually, Vaenius had construed it on the basis of these verses): ‘Scandit aeratas vitiosa naveis / Cura nec turmas equitum reliquit’ – ‘Vicious sorrow boards armed (*aeratas*) ships, / and does not leave alone cavalry squadrons’ [Fig. 5.1A]. The author of the Dutch mistranslated ‘scandit’ and ‘aeratas’, and misunderstood the meaning of the first part of the sentence: ‘The sorrows quick as storm *afflict high ships*’ – ‘De

20 For this emblem, see a full discussion below.

21 Pages 164–165.

22 ‘Hij left seer wel en soo’t behoort / Die leeft of hij moest heden voort / En of de Parce allen tijden / Den draet sijns levens soud’ afschnijden.’

sorghen snel als wint de *hooghe* schepen *plaghen*.²³ Vaenius himself did not misunderstand the line: in the image he depicts four personified sorrows (black winged demons) boarding a strong Roman ship. The sorrows do not ‘afflict the ship’ (as a ‘storm’ would do) but simply fly on board to accompany and to worry the travellers. Also, ‘*aeratae naves*’ does not mean ‘*hoghe* schepen’ but ‘armed ships’, i.e. armed with bronze prows [Fig. 5.1B]. Vaenius understood it in this way: he rendered a Roman bronze prow head (a female head) at the top of the ship’s bow.²⁴ Horace’s and Vaenius’s point is that one cannot escape sorrows by armature or by quick movement, and that is why Horace’s verses and Vaenius’ image bring up a warship and cavalymen. In his poem from 1612 Vaenius corrected the mistakes: ‘De sorghen niemant en ontvliet / De wint in snelheyt sy gelijken / Van ’tvluchtich schip sy niet en wijken / ... / Den Ruyter sy van achter grijpen ... / Geen plaets hoe eensaem oft wijt / Den mensch van sorghen gants bevrijt’. In emblem 8, “*Virtus in actione consistit*”, the Dutch poet writes that ‘laziness was long ago buried in forgotten caves’, whereas Vaenius himself depicts a Roman grave tomb like the ones alongside the Via Appia, adorned with the Roman standard grave inscription ‘*DIS MANIBUS SACRUM*’ [cf. below, Fig. 5.11]. Vaenius was very well aware that a grave monument is not the same as ‘forgotten caves’.²⁵ In his corrected version of 1612, Vaenius replaced the ‘forgotten caves’ with the ‘grave of dirty laziness’: ‘De deught de welcke heft behaghen / Te zijn verborghen ’tallen daghen / Niet veel verschild van dien die leyt / In’t graf van vuyl onachtsaemheyt’.

The quoted lines of Horace in emblem 61, “*Pecunia donat omnia*”, sum up the good things that are provided by money: a rich wife, i.e. with a big dowry (‘*uxorem cum dote*’), ‘credit’ (‘*fidem*’), ‘friends’ (‘*amicos*’), nobility (‘*genus*’), beauty (‘*forma*’), and rhetorical gifts (‘*Suadela*’).²⁶ The author of the first Dutch poem repeats this list but strangely leaves out ‘nobility’/‘*genus*’, whereas the French poem correctly gives ‘noblesse’, and Vaenius depicted ‘nobility’ in his image: in the middle of the composition a male person holds up an impressive coat of arms with a knight’s helmet on top which is surrounded by a chain with miniature portraits of noble ancestors [Fig. 5.1C]. Furthermore, it is important to notice that Vaenius did *not* depict ‘Honour’, and that ‘honour’ is *not* mentioned in Horace’s list either, whereas the Dutch poet gives ‘*eer*’. We are afraid that in this case the Dutch poet has copied the French epigram which somehow

23 Emphasis mine.

24 In this case, Vaenius rendered the bronze prow only as the ornamental part of it; in fact, Roman ships were armed with a trident prow on the lower part of the bow: this was meant to ram hostile ships [Fig. 5.1B].

25 For a detailed discussion of this emblem, see below.

26 Horace, *Epist.* 1, 6, 36–38.



FIGURE 5.1A Vaenius, engraving to emblem 44, “Curae inevitabiles” (1607, p. 95): ‘Curae’ (‘Sorrows’) boarding an armed Roman ship equipped with a bronze prow head of a female figure. Public domain



FIGURE 5.1B Roman prow with three teeth (*rostrum tridens*) of bronze (*aes*) of a *navis aerata*, the most important piece of equipment of a strong ship able to ram others. By Finoskov – own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=84956637>

has added ‘honneur’: ‘La Reyne de l’argent au riche femme donne, / Noblesse, amys, honneur [...]’. In his poem of 1612 Vaenius corrected the mistake of the Dutch 1607 poem by adding ‘adel’ (‘nobility’) and deleting ‘eer’ (‘honour’). In emblem 60, “Quid non auro pervium”, the poet of the first Dutch verses misunderstood the motto derived by Vaenius from proverbial expressions such as “Auro patent cuncta” (Walther 35051D) or “auro quaeque ianua patitur” (Walther 35053). Whereas Vaenius’s motto addresses the omnipotent power of money, the Dutch poet transforms it into a sentence which emphasizes the limited power of money: that it is powerful only when people attach value to it: ‘Het ghelt vermagh het al, by hem die t’hooghlick acht.’²⁷ This is not what Vaenius wanted to say. He was obviously not happy with this sentence, because he removed it in the revised version of the Dutch verses. The conclusion of these observations (and they are not exhaustive!) can only be that it is impossible that Vaenius was the author of the Dutch verses of the 1607 edition.

²⁷ The French poem has the same odd transformation of the emblem’s meaning: ‘Tant a pouvoir l’argent envers cil qu’il l’estime’.



FIGURE 5.1C Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 61 (p. 129)

3 Antiquarian Learning, Emblematic Intertextuality, and Christian Messages: The Construction of Horatian Emblems in Icon, Commonplace, and Vernacular Poems

Vaenius produced an *Illustrated Horace*, but he did not simply illustrate Horace's poems: actually, he construed images of *commonplaces*. In emblem 64, "Paupertatis incommoda", "The Disadvantages of Poverty", Vaenius presents a commonplace lemma with a condemnation of Poverty as a morally destructive force.²⁸ The emblematic epigram consists of three lines from Horace's *Ode* III, 24: 'Magnum Pauperies opprobrium, iubet / Quidvis et facere et pati: / Virtutisque viam deserit arduae' – 'Poverty, that huge disgrace, makes people do and suffer anything and abandon the steep path of virtue'.²⁹ These verses offer the image of the 'steep path' but are otherwise not rich in visual elements: 'pauperies' is an abstract notion, and 'quidvis facere et pati' is so general that it is almost impossible to render it in a visual image. However, Vaenius translated abstract notions into images through construing personifications: the main character that appears in the image (foreground left) is the personification of *Pauperies, Poverty*. On the right path of the image appears the steep path of virtue leading to the hilltop on which a church or a temple is depicted [Fig. 5.2A, E. 64]. From the combination of motto, Horatian fragment, and *pictura* the recipient may deduce that poverty is an impediment of exacting virtue.

Importantly, what Vaenius depicts in his image is not Horace's personal opinion: on the contrary, in *Ode* III, 24, 42–44, the statement 'poverty is a huge disgrace' is actually the position Horace rejected as belonging to low, greedy, and morally objectionable people. *Ode* III, 24, as a whole represents a harsh exhortation to moral conversion directed to the poet's contemporaries, whom he criticizes for their boundless greed.³⁰ As I have shown, Vaenius did not select the above-quoted text fragment through a profound reading of Horace, but copied it from a commonplace book, the collection of *Sententiae et pro-verbia ex Poetis Latinis*.³¹ Vaenius did not care about the context and the exact meaning of Horace's verses, and by consequence, the image is not particularly Horatian. Rather, in his image Vaenius construed a moral topos; this topos he equipped with various text fragments with a similar content, e.g. from Juvenal and Battista Mantovano.³² Their origin is symptomatic of a collection of

28 For a discussion of this emblem, especially with respect to its un-Stoic character, cf. my *The Invention of the Emblem Book* 391–397.

29 Lines 42–44.

30 Lines 35–44.

31 (Venice, Giovanni Padovano: 1547), p. 96.

32 For more details, see my *The Invention of the Emblem Book* 392.

commonplaces, such as the *Emblemata Horatiana*: Vaenius copied them from other collections. The topical argument is in itself neither Christian nor Stoic nor Horatian. From an ethical point of view, it is rather poor because it seems to suggest that wealth will lead to virtue.

However, this is not the message Vaenius had in mind. Leonard Forster, who has argued that the underlying principle of the *Emblemata Horatiana* was a kind of Lipsian Neo-Stoicism all'antica, stressed that Vaenius avoided Christian symbols, thought, and confessional matters, as well as Christian authors, such as the Church fathers.³³ Forster maintained that *only one* image (of emblem 86, "Neglectae religionis poena multiplex") has a Christian symbol (a cross on a church tower), and that Vaenius quotes Church fathers only once.³⁴ It is certainly true that antiquarianism and archaeological learning are of pivotal importance for the *Emblemata Horatiana* – we will see this in all emblems discussed in this contribution. However, that does not mean that Vaenius indeed excluded Christian thought, symbols, or even statements concerning confessional matters. This will become clear from the following analyses, and it starts already with the present emblem, no. 64.

Vaenius included in the left part of the image a particular scene: two beggars are sitting along the way that leads to virtue, and they are asking for alms (cf. the folded hands of one of them); a patrician walking the path of virtue takes the other beggar by his hands and is helping him to get up [Fig. 5.2A, left side, middle ground]. Vaenius suggests that the patrician will take the beggar with him on his way to virtue. Therefore, giving alms and similar acts of charity will lead to virtue and salvation, and moreover they will secure the same things for the poor who receive help. On the hilltop the goal of virtuous behaviour becomes visible: a church or temple. In another image (of emblem 49) Vaenius has depicted the same building [Fig. 5.2E] which he calls in the accompanying Dutch poem (written by himself) a 'kerck' ('church'). In his image of emblem 64, Vaenius demonstrates that acts of charity, such as giving alms, helping people in need, feeding the poor, etc., are essential for good Christians. Also, this has confessional implications: Protestants such as Luther had denied the religious value of acts of charity: the only thing that counts, Luther argued in his treatise *Von den gutten Wercken* of 1521, is the individual's belief in God. Thus, emblem 64 conveys not only a Christian message, but principally a Catholic one.

Vaenius's invention has a deeply emotionalizing function, and this refers to the core of the emblem's Christian message: the image of the huge old and ugly

33 Forster, "Die Emblemata Horatiana" 119.

34 Ibidem (St. Jerome).



FIGURE 5.2A Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 64 (p. 135)



FIGURE 5.2B Attributed to Jacob Matham, after Hendrik Goltzius, personification of Avaritia, from the series *The Seven Vices* (1587). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Avarice_-_Jacob_Matham.jpg

woman who is driving relentlessly onwards to downtrodden Poor Man with a bone in her right hand, is designed to evoke Christian *miseriordia* for the Poor Man, and aversion to the very aggressive female personification. Interestingly, Vaenius depicted Poverty as kind of personal unity with the Christian deadly sin of Avarice (Greed). Vaenius took as example of his *Paupertas* Goltzius's *Avaritia* [Fig. 5.2C] from the print series *The Seven Vices*. In her left hand Vaenius's mixed personification holds a cabbage as an attribute. Of course, the cabbage is the well-known food of the poor; but in Vaenius's subtle constructions, it is the symbol of avarice as well. He had demonstrated this just in emblem 62, "Avarus quaesitis frui non audit": in the image he shows the greedy rich man who is gnawing on a cabbage while he is sitting in the middle of his enormous wealth [Fig. 5.2D]. Actually, the *Avarus* is identical with the *Paupertas* of emblem 64: he is dressed in rags just like *Paupertas*, and he holds in his left hand the cabbage and in his right hand a stick (just like *Paupertas* holds a bone with which she beats the Poor Man). Furthermore, Vaenius has designed a pendant to emblem 64, no. 49, "Pecunia a bono et honesto abstracta": on the image appears the same hilltop of virtue with the same church or temple, only this time the protagonist is a greedy rich man who is distracted from virtue by his immense possessions [Fig. 5.2E]. That Vaenius wanted to evoke *miseriordia* for the Poor Man also becomes evident from his own explanation of the iconology: 'This miserable man [= here, in the image] hardly dares to raise his face to the temple of Virtus and Honos, because hard, bitter Poverty is cutting him off and holding him back from the straight path' – 'Miser hic ad Virtutis atque Honoris templum vix audit vultum attollere, dura ac dira Paupertate rectam ipsi semitam praecludente atque impediante'. Vaenius depicts the Poor Man as a victim, and he calls him not 'pauper' but 'miser', i.e. 'miserable'; in the image, his body language radiates suppression and humility.

In his iconological description Vaenius has called the building the 'Virtutis atque Honoris templum', and this identification represents just the tip of a true iceberg of antiquarian learning and emblematic intertextuality. First of all, Vaenius refers to an archaeological issue: actually, a "twin-temple" or "double temple" of Virtue and Honour did exist in Rome, located just outside the city walls in the neighbourhood of the Porta Capena.³⁵ Its fascinating building history is summarized in Platner's manual in this way:³⁶ 'the original part' of this

35 Cf. Schaffner B., "Honos", in *Der neue Pauly* 5 (1998), col. 713; Platner S.B., *A Topographical Lexicon of Ancient Rome* (Oxford: 1929) 258–260, "Honos et Virtus, aedes", https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/Europe/Italy/Lazio/Roma/Rome/_Texts/PLATOP*/Honos_et_Virtus.html, retrieved on 30 June 2021.

36 Ibidem.



FIGURE 5.2C The greedy rich man (Avarus). Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to image to emblem 62 (p. 131)



FIGURE 5.2D Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 49 (p. 105)



FIGURE 5.3A
Achille Bocchi, *Symbolicae Quaestiones*
(Bologna: 1555) symb. II, 33

‘double temple was built by Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus in 234 B.C. after his war with the Ligurians, and dedicated to Honos [...].³⁷ In 222 B.C., after the battle of Clastidium, M. Claudius Marcellus vowed a temple to Honos et Virtus, a vow which he renewed after the capture of Syracuse [in 212], and which he attempted to discharge by re-dedicating the existing temple of Honos (i.e. Fabius Maximus’s) to both gods in 208 B.C. This was forbidden by the pontiffs, and therefore Marcellus restored the temple of Honos, and built a new part for Virtus, making a double shrine’. The written sources of this building history are the ancient historians Livy, Valerius Maximus, and Plutarch.³⁸

Achille Bocchi and Joannes Sambucus have transferred these historical sources into emblems, Bocchi into *symbolum* II, 33, “Virtus vestibulum est honoris alma” (1555),³⁹ and Sambucus into “Virtutem Honor sequitur”

37 Cicero, *De natura deorum* II, 61.

38 Livy XXV, 40, 1–3; XXVII, 25, 7–9; XXIX, 11, 13; Valerius Maximus I, 1, 8; Plutarchus, *Biography of Marcellus* 28.

39 *Symbolicae quaestiones* (Bologna: 1555), II, symb. 33 (p. 68–69); Rolet A., *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d’Achille Bocchi (1555): Recherches sur les modèles littéraires, philosophiques et spirituels [...]*, 4 vols., unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Poitiers: 1998) 979–981; for a comprehensive study of Bocchi’s work cf. eadem, “Achille Bocchi’s *Symbolicarum quaestionum*

(1563).⁴⁰ In his poem, Bocchi says that Honour is always the companion of Virtue, and he suggests that there was a temple complex with two sperate *cellae* (a kind of sacred one-room buildings): one in the front, i.e. that of Virtus, and the other 'behind' ('posterior'), i.e. that of Honos. In the epigram Bocchi states that in the entrance hall ('vestibulum') of the temple stood a statue of Hercules. The image shows the temple of Honos as the epigram suggested, behind the temple of Virtus [Fig. 5.3A, Bocchi II, 33], but Hercules is located as a statue on the crest of the first building (the one dedicated to Virtus).

Sambucus picked up Bocchi's emblematical idea and archaeological explanations as well [Fig. 5.3B]: he was especially triggered by the idea that the two temple buildings were connected and that Virtus's temple was built in front, and that of Honos behind, and, as the motto indicated, that whoever wanted to enter the house of Honos first had to pass the temple of Virtus. Actually, the last idea is the core of his emblem:

Marcellus built two temples, one for virtue and one for honors [plural, *sic*]. But the latter opened only if one excelled as a famous man in daring acts, because there is only one entrance door, and it does not open to just anybody. He built a temple of Virtue in front of it, as if it were the entrance hall to the other: because what hero will easily achieve the reward of praise, if he has not sweated and endured cold? [Fig. 5.3B]⁴¹

Sambucus demonstrates his archaeological learning through adding the statues of the ancient Roman deities: Virtus to the left, and Honos to the right. Virtus is rendered as a female figure with a helmet, with a spear in her left hand and the *parazonium* (triangular sword) in her right. Sambucus derived this image from a Roman coin with the personification of Virtus [Fig. 5.3C], or with a combination of Honos and Virtus [Fig. 5.3D]. Honos is depicted as a young man, bare to his waist, holding a sceptre in his right hand and a cornucopiae in his left. Furthermore, Sambucus has done his best to construe a temple complex, and in doing so he rendered the building of Virtus indeed as an entrance hall (*porticus*) [Fig. 4.3B]. Furthermore, he had the buildings equipped with symbols: the one of virtue with Hercules's club, the one of

libri quinque", in Enenkel K.A.E. – Visser A.S.Q. (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus. Studies in Neo-Latin Emblem Books* (Turnhout: 2003) 101–130; on the emblem cf. also Visser A.S.Q., *Joannes Sambucus and the Learned Image* (Leiden – Boston: 2005) 156–157.

40 *Emblemata* (Antwerp, Christopher Plantin: 1564) 223; for this emblem, cf. Visser, *Joannes Sambucus* 157–158.

41 Lines 1–6; translation after Visser's, *ibidem*, with alterations.

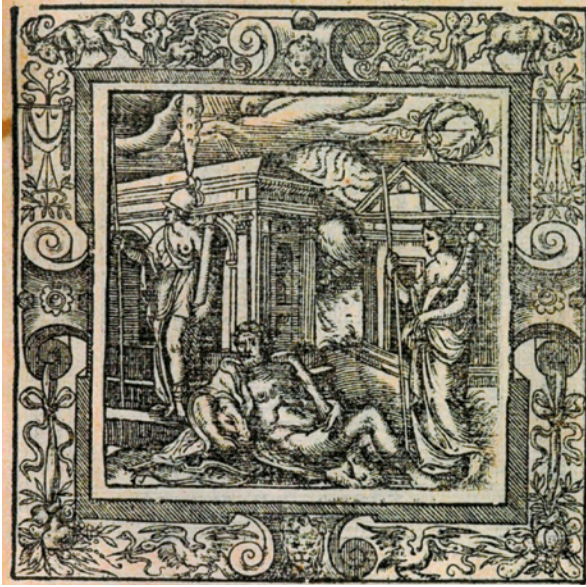


FIGURE 5.3B
Sambucus, emblem
“Virtutem Honor sequitur”
(Antwerp, Christopher
Plantin: 1564), p. 223.
Public domain



FIGURE 5.3C
The goddess Virtus: a female figure with helmet,
a spear in her left hand, and the *parazonium*
(triangular sword) in her right hand. Silver denarius
of Trajan, issued 114–117. [https://www
.forumancientcoins.com/moonmoth/coins/
trajan_014.htm](https://www.forumancientcoins.com/moonmoth/coins/trajan_014.htm)



FIGURE 5.3D
The deities Honos and Virtus. Honos as a young
man, bare to his waist, holding a sceptre in his
right hand and a cornucopiae in his left, facing
Virtus, helmeted, holding a *parazonium* in his
right hand and a spear in his left, resting with her
right foot on a boar's head. After Roman coin,
1st cen. AD. Public domain

Honos with a laurel wreath. These are, however, no architectural details but mere symbols located freely above the buildings.

On the one hand, in the image of Sambucus's emblem, Hercules figures as a kind of symbol: he is not rendered as a statue (as Bocchi had it), but as a person lying on the ground, leaning on his lion's skin [Fig. 5.3B]. On the other hand, Sambucus does not mention Hercules's name in the epigram, but applies a concept associated with the myth of the hero *in bivio*: *the steep path of virtue*, 'ardua virtutis [...] ergo semita [...]' (line 7). From antiquity up to the 17th century, the 'steep path of virtue' had been connected with the myth of *Hercules at the crossroads*.⁴² In this philosophical myth, invented by the sophist Prodicus, the hero came, at the end of his youth, to a crossroads. Two female figures appeared before his eyes; on the one hand was the personification of Pleasure, and on the other was that of Labour (or: Virtue). Each woman tried to persuade him to choose her way of life, with Labour's symbolized by the steep path leading to the hilltop of virtue, and Pleasure's down into a ravine, in Christian versions identified with spiritual perdition and hell. For example, in Wierix's engraving, the personification of Labour is pointing to the hilltop where the temple of Virtue is depicted [cf. below, Fig. 5.3E]. In front of the temple, Virtue is coronated by two Victoriae with a laurel wreath. A big laurel wreath is depicted also in the foreground, next to Lady Labour.

In his iconological construction, Vaenius departed from Sambucus's emblem "Virtutem Honor sequitur". Vaenius transferred the steep path leading to the hilltop from Sambucus's epigram into his image, and he located the archaeological objects, the double temple of Virtus and Honos, on the hilltop; furthermore, he depicted the miserable man exactly at the crossroads where the steep path begins [Fig. 5.2A], and compared him in this way to Hercules, thus referring to the hero's mythological decision *in bivio*. Furthermore, Vaenius improved the double temple of Sambucus's woodcut archaeologically through construing Virtue's building as a *pronaos* of a Roman temple (such as that of the Pantheon), i.e. a broad rectangular building placed in front of the proper temple. The building of Virtue has now become a true entrance hall. Also, he copied Sambucus's statue of Virtus and located it at the entrance door of her temple in a way in which gods frequently appear on Roman coins. The symbols in Sambucus's woodcut – the laurel wreath and Hercules's club – Vaenius transferred into architectural elements he located on the crests of the buildings [Fig. 5.2A]. Of course, the location on the hilltop and the architectural construction of the double temple have little to do with the archaeological reality of the temples of Virtus and Honos in Rome (they are not standing on a hilltop,

42 Panofsky E., *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst* (Leipzig – Berlin: 1930).



FIGURE 5.3E Johannes Wierix after Christpijn van den Broeck (died 1591), *Hercules at the crossroads*, standing between the personifications of Labor and Voluptas, engraving, second half of the 16th century. Public domain

and the house of Virtus was no *pronaos* of the aedes Honoris),⁴³ but Vaenius applied these details as a means to construe a dense iconological image, one loaded with meaning. Again, the construction of the icon as a reworking of the myth of Hercules *in bivio* is a device connected with antiquarian learning, but at the same time it represents Christian thought: the steep path on the right leading to salvation, and the path on the left leading to perdition and hell, just as Johannes Wierix has demonstrated in his engraving, unmistakably explained by the inscription: ‘Den slinken wech die is sieer soet / Maer brenckt ons in den helschen gloet’ – ‘The left path is very pleasant, / but leads us in burning hell’ [Fig. 5.3E].

In a sense, Vaenius’s invention of emblem 64 goes back to one he made in the 1580s when he was in the service of Ernst von Bayern, Elector of Köln:

43 According to Symmachus the temples stood next to each other, with two facades (*Epistulae* 1, 20: ‘gemella facie’).

“Minerva protects the young man / the shepherd Siphyllis” [Fig. 5.4].⁴⁴ Also, in this invention Vaenius depicted a crossroads scene with the steep path leading to the hilltop with – already there! – the double temple of Virtus and Honos. At the crossroads Vaenius renders a true battle around a young man (viz. the shepherd): the personification of Egestas (below, right part of the image) is part of the negative influences that try to withhold the young man from ascending to the temple of Virtus and Honos. Egestas is in fact identical to the Paupertas of emblem 64: an ugly old woman dressed in rags with her attributes of the cabbage and the bone [Fig. 5.4]. The epigram describes the scene and the role of Egestas: ‘Egestas / Sordida dum miserum predat humique premat, / [...] Quo per iter durum ad Virtutis Honoris et aedem / Impiger is tendat, sarta ubi Honora ferat [...]’ – ‘while disgraceful Poverty / Seizes the miserable man and presses him to the ground, / (but Minerva and Time effectuate) that he (the young man / the shepherd) eagerly climbs up the steep path to the temple of Virtus and Honor, / Where he earns the wreath of honour’. In this engraving, Egestas has her attribute, the bone, in her mouth and the cabbage on her knee, whereas the reward for virtuous behaviour (i.e. climbing the steep path) is brought by a putto: two laurel wreaths.

The dense iconological construction of emblem 64 called for an explanatory epigram in the vernacular. Vaenius obviously asked the authors of the Dutch and French poems to provide a description of the image that should be comprehensible to the less learned audience, and to explain the emblem’s meaning. Interestingly, both poets applied the same structure: three lines for the description of the image (*res significans*), one line for the meaning:

description	De Armoey menich dwinght door nootlottelicke wegghen;
of image (1–3):	Van ’t pat des deughts en eer drijft sy den armen mensch. Hoe seer derwaerts ’tghesicht en ’therte is gheneghen:
meaning (4):	’T moet zijn soo d’Armoey wilt, niet baet des armens wensch.

44 On this invention by Otto Vaenius see Ost H., “Unbekannte Werke von Otto von Veen”, *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 68 (2007) (279–294) 281–282. The engraving bears the indication of the inventor: ‘Otho Venius invenit’ (below, left). Pieter Perret dedicated the engraving to Juan de Herrera, court architect to the king of Spain (‘Architecto et designatori palatii Regis Hispaniarum’). Ost mentions several paintings with this invention, two lost ones, and three preserved ones in Copenhagen and the Nationalmuseum of Stockholm (282).



FIGURE 5.4 Pieter Perret after Otto Vaenius, *Minerva protects the Young Man (Siphyllis)*. Engraving, 32.2 × 22.1 cm. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Public domain

Poverty forces many people to walk on fatal paths; it chases away the poor from the path of virtue and honour. Even if his eyes and his heart very much long to get there, Poverty imposes her will: the poor man's wish will not be fulfilled.

It is a characteristic feature of the vernacular poem that it reduces antiquarian or archaeological elements; the curious double temple (nota bene the core of Sambucus's emblem) is not mentioned, but transformed into "t pat des deughts en eer" ('the path of virtue and honour' viz. '*chemin de vertu et d'honneur*').⁴⁵ By consequence, the fascinating intertextuality and interimaginality with Sambucus's emblem "Virtutem honor sequitur" get lost. It is remarkable that Vaenius accepted this transformation by the first Dutch poet and transferred it into his own Dutch poem. Inevitably, Vaenius must have registered the loss of meaning. Probably he agreed with simplifications in order to make his emblems accessible also to less learned readers, e.g. those who were not familiar with Sambucus's emblem and not able to detect the emblematic intertextuality. However, those readers certainly would be able to understand the widespread concept of the steep path of virtue. In a sense, "t pat des deughts en eer" fit Vaenius's iconological construction very well because it alluded to his reference to the myth of Hercules at the crossroads. But nevertheless, it is not a given fact that all vernacular readers would have understood the allusion to *Hercules in bivio*. On the other hand, Vaenius eliminated the verse 'Hoe seer derwaerts 'tghesicht en 'therte is gheneghen' because it is based on a misunderstanding of the gesture of the Poor Man: his left hand expresses humility, not desire (as the author of the first Dutch poem thought).

Also, it is noteworthy that the author of the first Dutch poem did not refer to the scene of charity Vaenius had depicted on the left side of the image [Fig. 5.2A]. Vaenius corrected this in his own poem because it contained an important part of the message (as we have seen above). How important this was for Vaenius appears from the fact that he devoted to it the concluding line of his poem:

D'Armoed, eylaes! veel kloecke menschen
 Van 'tpat der deught en eere drijft,
 Die sy hout onder ('t baet gheen wenschen)
 Sijn licht door haer in tduyster blijft. [...]
Ten sy dat yemant hem optrekt,
 Door noot hy onbekent moet blijven.⁴⁶

45 Emphasis mine.

46 Emphasis mine.

Poverty – it is a shame – drives many gifted men away from the path of virtue and honour; the one she suppresses (his wishes are not relevant) stays in the darkness / ... / If nobody lifts him up, because of paucity he will remain unknown.

The author of the epigrams of Foppens's Spanish edition of the *Emblemata Horatiana* (1669) gave the emblem a much different meaning.⁴⁷ He identified the poor as a personification of *Young Age* – the type of a healthy and strong man who is not willing to engage in labour. Because of his laziness, this man may not lay claim to virtue: 'La robusta Juventud, / Que al trabaxo non se offrece, / Mientras goza de salud; / Aun las vista non merece / Del Templo de la Virtud'.⁴⁸ For this poet, the 'Temple of Virtue' is no archaeological reality but simply a metaphor. If the man in the image represents *Young Age*, the aggressive personification driving him forth becomes by inference *Old Age*. Depictions of the emblem which depart from this Spanish epigram tend to emphasize the young age of the 'lazy' man and the old age of the persecuting person, e.g. one on a folding screen made in the Viceroyalty of New Spain, now in the Museo Soumaya.⁴⁹

With respect to the construction of the commonplace (via the motto), the icon, and the relationship of the Horatian "epigram" with the image, emblem 89 represents an intriguing case. The motto "Tute, si recte vixeris" – "You lead a safe life, if you have led a good life" – seems to indicate a content similar to that in emblem 46, "Culmen honoris lubricum": a philosophical mind who arranges his life according to the 'golden mean' ('aurea mediocritas', from Horace, *Odes* II, 10, 5), that is, who refuses to participate in politics, courtly affairs, and warfare, and dismisses ambition and greed (*avaritia*), will lead a safe and tranquil life. 'Believe me, he has lived well who succeeded with hiding himself well' ('Crede mihi, bene qui latuit, bene vixit'), as the fourth verse fragment, taken from Ovid's *Tristia*, puts it.⁵⁰ This safe, tranquil, and hidden life is in the image expressed by the philosopher in the foreground, who sits in splendid isolation on his own hill, separated from the rest of the landscape, which is stricken by the dangers of political life [Fig. 5.5A]: high pine trees broken by the storm,

47 François Foppens, *Theatro Moral de toda la Philosophia de los Antiguos y Modernos con el Echiridion de Epiceto* (Brussels, François Foppens: 1669) 91.

48 Emphasis mine.

49 On the programme of mental exercises offered by the Soumaya screen, see below, section II; for that screen particularly, cf. Sebastián S., *Iconografía e iconología en el arte novohispano* (Mexico City: 1992) 151–157; idem, "La emblemática moral de Vaenius en Iberoamérica", *Goya* 234 (1993) 322–329; idem, *Emblemática e historia del arte* (Madrid: 1995) 276–282.

50 III, 4, 25–26.



FIGURE 5.5A Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 46, “Culmen honoris lubricum” (p. 99)

the tower of a castle tumbling into a ravine, a king waging war, and lightning hitting high mountains illustrate the topical concept that death always comes unforeseen and unexpectedly. The Horatian verses that accompany the image of emblem 89 also seem to refer to dangerous human ambition: a Carthagian merchant on his way to the Black Sea, and a Roman soldier on the utmost eastern border of the empire fighting against the Parthians.⁵¹ Vaenius has presented similar images in the *pictura* of emblem 44, “*Curae inevitabiles*”:⁵² a ship taking on a dangerous journey over sea, soldiers rushing forth in order to fight a battle [Fig. 5.1A]. However, Horace’s *Ode* 11, 13, is an autobiographical poem: the poet describes his feelings after he was almost struck by a falling tree on his country estate. Triggered by this incident Horace meditates on the unpredictability of human life. Vaenius’s image, however, does not show Horace on his country estate, having almost been struck by a falling tree, but a writer sitting in a meadow outside a town, with an eagle above him holding a turtle in its claws [Fig. 5.5B].

The image of emblem 89 does not contain a direct reference to Horace’s verses: it does not depict the Roman poet on his country estate or the Carthaginian merchant sailing in Asia Minor, nor does it show Roman soldiers fighting Parthian horsemen. It refers to the second text, Valerius Maximus IX, 12, ext. 2, who tells an antiquarian curiosity of the poet Aeschylus’s death:

[The poet Aeschylus’s departure was not voluntary, but the novelty of the occurrence makes it worth mentioning]. Aechylus went beyond the walls of the town when he was staying in Sicily, and sat down at a sunny spot. Above him was an eagle carrying a tortoise: deceived by the gleam of his skull – it was hairless – it instantly dashed the tortoise against it as if it were a stone, in order to feed on the flesh of the broken animal. By that blow the origin and beginning of more perfect tragedy was extinguished.⁵³

After reading Valerius’s entry on the topic “*De mortibus non vulgaribus*” (“Rare causes of death”), the motto sounds a bit awkward, if not cynical: Why, “You lead a safe life, if you have led a good life”? Actually, the image and Valerius’s entry demonstrate the contrary: one never ever lives safely because death may

51 Horace, *Odes* 11, 13, 14–17: ‘navita Bosphorum / Poenus perhorrescit [...] / Miles sagittas et celerem fugam / Parthi’.

52 Page 95.

53 Translation after D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Loeb LCL 493) 375, with alterations. The introductory line of Valerius’s lemma was not quoted by Vaenius.



FIGURE 5.5B Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 89 (p. 185).

come at any time, at any place, and it may be caused even by the rarest occurrences, such as tortoises falling out of the sky. The Horatian verse fragment (*Ode* II, 13, 13–20) displays similar feelings of insecurity:

Humans never give enough cautious thought
 The dangers of the hour; the Carthaginian seaman's fear
 Is all of Bosporus, he does not think of any other
 pitfalls of unforeseen fate.

The (Roman) soldier fears only the arrows and the masked retreat
 Of the Parthian horsemen; on his part, the Parthian is afraid only
 Of being taken captive by the strength of Italy: but actually, the unexpected
 Force of death has carried off and will carry off entire peoples.

In these verses, Horace says two things: (1) people do not give enough thought to the many-fold dangers of human life: what they are afraid of is too limited, narrow-minded, and short-sighted; death can be caused by the most uncommon occurrences (such as the tree that almost fell on the poet). (2) Death is immensely powerful: it has extinguished entire peoples and civilizations. Both thoughts seem to boil down to a pagan *memento mori*, combined with a profound feeling of insecurity. After a renewed reading of Horace's verses, Vaenius's motto (plus construction of the whole emblem) becomes even more enigmatic.

The construction of emblem 89 is characterized not only by antiquarian learning, but also by a subtle emblematic intertextuality. Interestingly, Vaenius has taken both the image of Aeschylus killed by a tortoise, and the first two lines of the Horatian poem ('Quod quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis cautum est in horas'), from Dionysius Lebeus Batillius's *Emblemata*. Emblem 8 has the title "Praescriptum inevitabile fatum" – "Destined fate cannot be avoided". The image shows Aeschylus killed by the tortoise [Fig. 5.5C]; the epigram states:

Certum cuique suum est et inevitabile fatum
 Decretam sortem nemo cavere potest.
 Testis quem perhibent, praedictum avertere casum
 Caeli etiam tuta non potuisse fide.⁵⁴

54 Lebeus Batillius Dionysius, *Emblemata* (Frankfurt a.M., Theodor de Bry: 1596), emblem no. 8.



FIGURE 5.5C Dionysius Lebeus Batillius, *Emblemata* no. 8 (Frankfurt a.M., Theodor de Bry: 1596). Public domain

The fate of everyone is fixed and is inevitable. Determined fate cannot be averted. We have a witness of this: that he could not avert his predicted death, not even by his confident trust in the open sky.

Although Lebeus uses the same image and the same Horatian verses, his emblem has a different meaning: it is about fixed fate, and it expresses the Calvinist's and Neo-Stoic's belief in praedestination.⁵⁵ In his commentary, Lebeus, who was a French Calvinist (born in Troyes), leaves no doubt about the way he interpreted Aeschylus's death:

Quo exemplo docemur sortem fato destinatam defugere impossibile, neque in hominis natura situm avertere, quod ipsi eventurum est, ut neque praestare possit, ut alterum fato impendenti eripiat. Quod quique

55 On Lebeus's Calvinism and Calvinist features in his *Emblemata*, see Antón Martínez B., "Los Emblemata (Frankfurt, 1596) de Dionysius Lebeus Batillius: Clasicismo, Neostoicismo, Calvinismo", *Janus* 3 (2014) 115–176; in her discussion of emblem 8 (143–147) the author interprets it as an expression of all three tendencies, Calvinism blended with Neo-Stoicism and humanist learning.

vitet, nunquam homini satis cautum est in horas. Quae fato manent, quamvis significata non vitantur.

We learn from this example that it is impossible to avoid one's determined fate, and it is not in man's nature to avert what is his future; Therefore, man is also not able to save a fellow man from his imminent fate. Man cannot take enough precautions against the dangers of the day. Fixed fate cannot be averted, even if it has been revealed.

Also, Lebeus narrates the anecdote in this way: 'Aeschylus [...] quum praedictam fati eius diei ruinam secreta caeli fide caveret [...]'⁵⁶ – 'When Aeschylus tried to avert his death that was predicted that day by fate, through confidently trusting the open sky [...]'. Thus, Lebeus interpreted Aeschylus's behaviour as an effort to avoid his destiny. Lebeus's "Praescriptum inevitabile fatum" was meant as a religious lesson: on the emblem appears John the Evangelist, the author of the *Apocalypsis*, with his book open and with his finger pointing at Aeschylus, killed by the tortoise. With this gesture John demonstratively presents Aeschylus as a valid example of the theology of predestination. John seems to recite the words of his gospel 1:3: "Omnia per ipsum Deum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est". It is a curious detail that John also seems to point to the eagle, his symbol as Evangelist. The Calvinist belief in predestination was expressed in emblems by other emblematisers too,⁵⁷ such as Jean Jacques Boissard, Nicolaus Reusner,⁵⁸ and Gabriel Rollenhagen.⁵⁹ Lebeus's friend Boissard composed an emblem with the motto "Manet immutabile fatum" [Fig. 5.5D], with the scales and the T as symbols for predestination, and the following epigram:⁶⁰

Frustra agitant homines curae. Deus omnibus unus
 Providet, et iusta cuncta bilance regit.
 Et quod ab aeterno est, manet immutabile fatum
 Dispensatque aequo singula consilio.

56 Lebeus quotes here Pliny, *Natural History* x, 7: '[...] Quae fors interemit poetam Aeschylum praedictam fati, ut ferunt, eius diei ruinam secreta caeli fide caventem'.

57 Cf. Antón Martínez, "Los Emblemata de Dionysius Lebeus" 146–147.

58 Reusner Nicolaus, *Emblemata partim ethica et physica, partim vero historica et hieroglyphica* (Frankfurt a.M., Sigmund Feyerabend: 1581), emblem 1, 29 "Manet immutabile fatum"; its *pictura* shows a scene from the *Apocalypsis*.

59 Rollenhagen Gabriel, *Nucleus emblematum selectissimorum* [...] ([Cologne] Chrispijn van de Passe: 1611), emblem 83, "Manet immutabile fatum".

60 On this emblem, cf. Adams A. – Rawles S. – Saunders A., *A Bibliography of French Emblem Books* vol. 1, 202–204.



FIGURE 5.5D Boissard Jean Jacques, *Les Emblems Latins* (Metz, Abraham Faber: 1588). Public domain

Worries drive men in vain. God alone / provides for all and controls all things justly. / And because it is eternal, fate remains unchangeable / and dispenses one for each with fair purpose.⁶¹

Boissard rendered a variation of John 1:3 on the altar of the image [Fig. 5-5D]:

SCILICET EXTRA FATUM NIL FACTUM EST
NIL FIT NIL DENIQUE FIET.

Boissard expresses his belief in predestination more elaborately in his French poem with the title “Du jugement divin *le decret immutable*”.⁶² Reusner’s epigram refers to Boissard’s symbolic image, the T and the scales:

- 61 For the English translation see the Glasgow French Emblem Site <https://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/emblem.php?id=FBOa002>; emphasis mine.
- 62 DE toute eternité la sagesse Divine / Establit reiglement aux choses d’icy bas; / Et roidit son decret d’un si ferme compas, / Que du poinct limité pour rien il ne decline. // Qui pour en varier l’ordonnance s’ostine / A son propre-malheur s’avance pas à pas. / Au lieu de l’esbranler, un non-mourant trespas / Perd la rebellion de son ame mutine. // Le ressort eternal d’un si haut reiglement, / Qui ne se meut qu’au poids du Divin jugement, /

Et necis et vitae *manet immutabile fatum*:
 Maximus in coelo quod regit ipse Deus.
 Scilicet hoc monet ista bilanx, e nubibus altis
 Quam librat iusto pondere dextra Dei

Fate (predestination) of life and death remains unchangeable / which is ruled by the greatest God himself in heaven. / This is demonstrated by these scales here on which God puts the right weights with his hand reaching out of the clouds.⁶³

Reusner dedicates his emblem “*Manet immutabile fatum*” to the poet Paulus Melissus (Schede), who had converted to Calvinism and who carried “*Manet immutabile fatum*” as his personal impresa [Fig. 5.5E].



FIGURE 5.5E
 Coat of arms of the Calvinist poet Paulus Melissus (Schede) with his impresa “*Manet immutabile fatum*”. Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. Phil. 2861.8°. Public domain

N'est cogneu que du Sage, et luy seul s'en assure. // Sur ceste providence il s'appuye, & ne craint / Que de l'amour en Christ, auquel il est astraint, / Il soit jamais desjoint, soit qu'il vive, ou qu'il meure./

63 Reusner, *Emblemata* (1581) I, 29 “*Immutabile fatum*” (emphasis mine).

In his Aeschylus emblem, Vaenius changed its tendency and meaning. As a Catholic, he did not share the Calvinists' belief in fate and predestination. Actually, through his selection of the Latin texts he construed *another topic*: this is not 'Inevitabile fatum' (Lebeus's topic), but Valerius's topic, "De moribus non vulgaribus" ("Rare causes of death"). It is noteworthy that Valerius does not talk at all about fate and its inevitability; he does not even mention why Aeschylus left the town: probably this is to emphasize the rarity of the poet's death. Vaenius follows Valerius in this important issue, and he combines it with Horace's *memento mori* and mindful words about unexpected causes of death. This is the core of Vaenius's emblem, to which the motto also refers: *memento mori*; but if you have lived as a good Christian you are safe, because you are well prepared for death whenever it comes.

However, it is evident that this complicated construction of topic and icon, based on emblematic intertextuality but with only an oblique relationship between image and Horatian "epigram", called for a poem that would explain the iconology and indicate the emblem's meaning. This time, the author of the French poem produced a poem with a comprehensive description of the image, but one that – unlike those of Vaenius and Valerius – gave the reason for Aeschylus's stay in the open field:

description of the image:	Eschyle prevoyant de mourir, s'il tomboit Quelque chose sur soy, aux champs print sa demeure, Lors qu'un aigle son chef d'une tortue fendoit.
meaning/conclusion:	l'On ne peut eviter le destin à toute heure.

When Aeschylus foresaw that he would die if something fell on his head, he decided to dwell in the fields. This is the reason why an eagle split his head with a tortoise. One cannot avoid destiny at every hour.

It is remarkable that the author of the poem added to the narrative the pivotal piece of information that was lacking in the text Vaenius selected. Maybe even more surprisingly, in his interpretation of the meaning he again brought in the idea of destiny ('le destin'), which is the core of Lebeus's emblem but was avoided by Vaenius. On what source did the author of the French poem base his version? Did he know Lebeus's emblem? Or did he refer to Pliny's version (*Natural History* x, 7)? 'l'On ne peut eviter le destin' sounds like a translation of Lebeus's explanation 'sortem fato destinatum defugere impossibile'. Because the result of his effort differs considerably from Vaenius's emblem it is not likely that the author of the French poem had received the information

from him; furthermore, one can here exclude that the first Dutch poem was his source. The author of the Italian poem, Pietro Benedetti, copied 'l'On ne peut eviter le destin toute heure' and presented the same emblematic conclusion: 'Fuggir non si puo sempre il crudel Fato'.

Curiously, the author of the Dutch poem brought in 'destiny' again as well, but in the opposite sense, i.e. as a cynical pun that framed the belief in 'inevitable fatum' as stupid superstition: "tBeschick hem meest verheert, die't aldermeest ghelooft' – 'Destiny destroys the most the one who most strongly believes in it'. That means that the Dutch poet interpreted Aeschylus's preventive action as foolish superstition which was not only counter-productive but even caused his death. Although Vaenius himself disagreed with the Calvinist belief in 'inevitabile fatum', he was not happy with this explanation of the emblem because it was not the point he wanted to make. In his opinion, it was in fact irrelevant what man believed. The core of his interpretation of the emblem was: you should not speculate about the hour of your death. Death comes always unexpectedly. But if you lived as a good Christian, you are safe anyway because you are well prepared for death. This is the reason why Vaenius eliminated the sentence "tBeschick hem meest verheert, die't aldermeest ghelooft' and replaced it in his epigram with another explanation: 'Wanneer wy dickwils 'tminste vreesen, / De doot ons overromplen sal' – 'Often, when we are the least afraid of it, Death will take us by surprise'. In his French poem, Leo de Meyer copied the last two lines of Vaenius's explanation: 'Quand nous avons le moins de peur, / c'Est lors que la Mort nous renverse'.

Emblem 73, "Victrix malorum patientia", is a demanding construction with respect to topos, selected texts, and icon, and it probably was not easy for the reader to understand it. Part of the difficulty is that the image (foreground and background scene as well) [Fig. 5.6A] is not derived from one of the selected texts. Vaenius did not illustrate Horace's verses (*Ode* I, 24, 19–20), which belong to a poem of mourning for his friend Quintilius, who had passed away. Also, the context and topic of *Ode* I, 24, do not play a role at all in the emblem. Vaenius quotes an apophthegm of 'Socrates's', whom he calls a 'patientiae exemplar': 'You may be able to bad-mouth me, but I am able to understand it in a good sense'. However, this is not the scene Vaenius had depicted; there, a woman opens the door and pours something into the man's (Socrates's?) neck [Fig. 5.6A]. Besides, Vaenius mixed up the author of the apophthegma: it is not Socrates but Aristippus.⁶⁴ In the background, one can see a boat sailing over the sea, with passengers who are obviously afraid – they pray with folded

64 Cf. Stobaeus, *Anthologia*, sermo 92.



FIGURE 5.6A Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 73, “*Victrix malorum patientia*” (p. 153)

hands. However, no boat is mentioned in the texts. The result of all this is that the reader in fact does not know what exactly is shown on the icon and how the icon relates to the quoted texts.

It is this information the author of the first Dutch poem tried to provide. As usual, he identifies the iconology in three lines, and the emblem's meaning in one line:

Die met den quaden scheept moet lidtsaamheyt ghenieten:
 Seer wel deed' Socrates te lijden sonder schult
 Sijn toornigh wijfs gekijf, oock me haer water-gieten.
 Want 't ongheneeslijck quaet wert lichter door ghedult.

Who embarks with the devil must endure it with patience. Socrates suffered much from the furious nagging of his wife, and also from her pouring water on him, while he did not do anything. One can better withstand irremediable evil through patience.

Only with the help of this epigram (or the French poem that was copied after the Dutch example) may the reader understand the iconology of the image and its relevance to the topic. The three-line explanation of the Dutch poet seems to be entirely correct, even with respect to the boat, which does not occur in one of the text fragments.

The image of the devil in the boat [Fig. 5.6A] is yet another instance in which Vaenius equipped a topic taken from classical antiquity with a Christian interpretation: he explains Socrates's patience with his wife as the behaviour of a good Christian when he is forced to deal with 'the devil'. The moral is that Christian patience is so strong that it enables the individual to resist any evil. The folded hands of the two persons embarked in the ship bear witness to their strong Christian confidence. This Christian interpretation is not only expressed in the image but in the texts as well, albeit in disguise. In the central prose text Vaenius quotes a longer passage from a Catholic primer, Bishop Martinus of Braga's (ca. 515–580) *Formulae vitae honestae*,⁶⁵ which is also called *De quattuor virtutibus* or *De differentiis quattuor virtutum*. The deeply Christian message of this passage is: 'The best and most honest form of wrath is: to *forgive*'. The passage teaches the Christian how to bear insults, affliction, and enemies without

65 *Martini Episcopi Bracarenensis Opera Omnia* ed. C.W. Barlow, *Papers and Monographs of the American Academy of Rome* 12 (New Haven: 1950), containing i.a. the *Formulae vitae honestae*.



FIGURE 5.6B Laurens van Haecht Goidtsenhoven, *Parvus mundus*, emblem 33, “Patientia Socratis”. Public domain

feeling wrath.⁶⁶ Martinus of Braga, the missionary of northern Portugal, dedicated his primer to Miro, the Suebian king of Galicia. *De quattuor virtutibus* was used as a standard introduction into Christian ethics.

On the other hand, it is almost impossible that Vaenius gave the poet the explanation of the scene in the foreground, i.e. Socrates’s wife pouring water on her husband. Why so? Vaenius’s construction of the icon is totally based on emblematic intertextuality: Vaenius derived the image from van Laurens van Haecht Goidtsenhoven’s emblem 33, “Patientia Socratis”, of the *Parvus mundus* (Antwerp, Gerard de Jode: 1579) [Fig. 5.6B].⁶⁷ There, the printmaker Gerard de Jode rendered Socrates sitting in front of his house while one of his wives poured a pisspot on his head. This is also described in van Haecht’s epigram: ‘Exiliensque domum misere est conspersus urina’ – ‘Thrown out of his own

66 Vaenius incorrectly gives ‘Seneca’ as the author of the text; from the 12th century on, the work was erroneously ascribed to Seneca the philosopher and regarded as a proof of his Christian belief (together with another Ps. Senecan writing, the *Letter to Paul*).

67 For depictions of this scene of Socrates’s life cf. Lapatin K., “Picturing Socrates”, in Ahbel-Rappe S. – Kamtekar R. (eds.), *A Companion to Socrates* (Malden, MA – Oxford: 2009) 138–139.

house he was miserably splashed with pee'. In Vaenius's version, Socrates is splashed with pee; thus, Vaenius cannot have been the source of the information of Xanthippe pouring water on the philosopher.

Vaenius has clearly used Gerard de Jode's engraving as a template for his image: the type of house, the open door, Socrates's posture (sitting in front of the house) – all of these are identical to the icon of emblem 73. So, we can be sure that Vaenius knew that pee, not water, was meant. In accordance with that, he corrects the description of the image in his new version of the Dutch poem:

Den goeden Socrates sachtsinnigh
 Sweeg stil als hem sijn wijf toeschoot
 Veel smadelijke woorden vinnigh
 En hem wt spijt met pis begoot.

Good Socrates meekly kept silent when his wife inflicted him with much
 abuse and in anger dashed him with pee.

It is obvious that the author of the first Dutch poem was not familiar with van Haecht's emblem. However, it is interesting that he was able to find out the original content of the anecdote: namely that Xanthippe poured dirty water on her husband. According to the anecdote, Socrates did not get angry but only said: 'Did I not always predict that when Xanthippe fulminates, heavy rain will follow'. This means that the author of the first Dutch poem had access either to Diogenes Laertius II, 36 (available in Latin translations), or St. Jerome's *In Iovinianum* I, 48, or to a version of the anecdote in a collection of commonplaces that derived either from Diogenes Laertius or from *In Iovinianum*. The author of the first French verses, however, had no access to these sources: he did not identify the scene with the pouring of water on Socrates's head. On the contrary: whereas in his poem he imitated the Dutch verses, he eliminated Xanthippe's pouring of water.

Emblema Horatianum 80, "Ex vino sapienti virtus", is a complex construction based on emblematic intertextuality, classical learning, and a kind of close reading of Horace's *Ode* I, 7, 15–19, from the perspective of moral allegory. The image presents the Graeco-Roman goddess Minerva with an unusual attribute, a Greek drinking cup, a *kylix* (instead of shield and spear) [Fig. 5.6C]. In antiquity, this had never been used as a symbol of Pallas. The combination of Pallas's warrior helmet and chestplate (*aegis*) with the drinking cup is especially puzzling. The motto "Ex vino sapienti virtus" is not derived from Horace's poems but from Andrea Alciato, who also provided the idea in his emblem "Vino prudentiam augeri" – "Vine enhances prudence" (no. 23 of the 1591 Leiden



FIGURE 5.6C Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 80 (p. 167)

edition).⁶⁸ However, Alciato's *pictura* shows the antique Goddess Pallas with her usual attributes: shield, aegis, and spear [Fig. 5.6D]. Alciato's emblem is thoroughly antiquarian with respect to both the image and the epigram, which is actually about antique statues of the Gods Pallas and Bacchus, which are

68 Issued by Franciscus Raphelengius; motto, image, and epigram on p. 120, comment on p. 120–123.

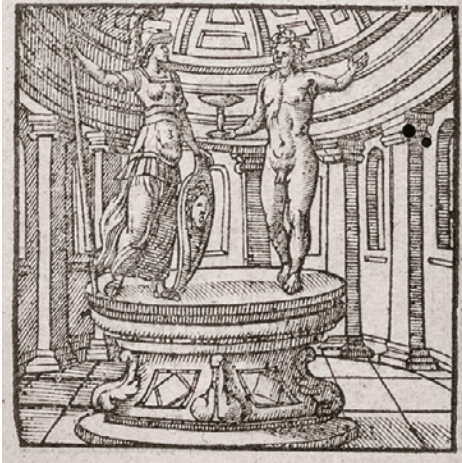


FIGURE 5.6D
Image to Alciato, *Emblematum liber*,
emblem 23 (Leiden, Franciscus
Raphelengius: 1591)

standing in the same temple on the same basement. The underlying wit of the poem refers to the fact that these gods are opposites: on the one hand is sober Pallas, the goddess of wisdom, education, the arts, and war (left part of the image), and on the other hand is Bacchus, the lazy and frivolous god of wine, rendered here as a naked young man decorated with a wreath of grape leaves; in his right hand he holds a drinking cup as his attribute. If we compare Vaenius's image with the one in the Alciato edition, it appears that Vaenius has drawn the image of Pallas from it: it looks as if Alciato's Bacchus has handed over the wine cup to the goddess [Fig. 5.6D]. The template of Alciato's epigram is a poem from the *Greek Anthology*, XVI, 183; there, the visitor of a temple asks the statue of Dionysus why he is standing in this place, what at all he could have in common with Pallas. And the statue answers, 'a lot: I am a warrior too – I conquered all of India; like Pallas, I bestowed to mankind an important gift, wine'. Alciato repeats this argument but adds a far-fetched conclusion: Pallas and Bacchus are indissolubly intertwined – abstinent people will not be aided by Pallas, i.e. will never become good scholars or poets.

In his motto, Vaenius adopts Alciato's emblematic wisdom and adds the learned *auctoritas* by Greek medical doctor Asclepiades of Prusa, a notorious *diaeteticus* who had declared that the excellence of wine equals the power of the Gods ('Asclepiades medicus, praestantiam vini deorum quasi potentiae aequari pronuntiavit'). In this case, Vaenius does not give his source but renders a line taken from Pliny's *Naturalis historia* (XXIII, 38).⁶⁹ I think that Vaenius became attentive to this passage through consulting Claude Mignault's

69 Ost, who did not trace the source, thought it stemmed from medical doctor 'Åskulap' ('Unbekannte Werke' 291); however, it is the medicus and philosopher Asclepiades of

commentary to Alciato's emblem 23.⁷⁰ However, the rest of Vaenius's construction of image and topos is based on a close reading of Horace's *Ode* 1, 7, 15–19, a drinking song addressed to the poet's friend Plancus:

Albus ut obscuro deterget nubila caelo
 Saepe Notus neque parturit imbreis,
 Perpetuos, sic tu *sapiens* finire memento
Tristitiam vitaeque labores,
 Molli, Plance, mero [...].

As the bright South Wind often wipes the clouds from the dark sky and does not invariably produce rain, so should you do the sensible thing, Plancus, and make sure to drown life's *sadness* and *trouble* with mellow wine [...].⁷¹

Vaenius construed his image through translating Horace's abstract notions of 'tristitia' and 'vitae labores' into personifications. For the man with the oxen's head he used Philip Galle's *Prosopographia*.⁷² Pallas is taking the Wise man by his hand and accompanying him to a drinking party; the Wise man makes a gesture of refusal in the direction of Labour and Sorrow, which means he sends them off. The quote from Horace affects Vaenius's construction of the emblematic topos: Vaenius does not advise the intellectual to drink as much wine as possible but to allow himself to drink wine at times, if the situation suggests it, c.q. if it is necessary to relax from the troubles of life.

However, through his construction of *Tristitia* Vaenius gave his emblem a Christian and Catholic touch: he represented Tristitia as the unpardonable (eternal) Catholic Sin of despair (*desperatio*) in God's grace and in salvation. In Thomas of Aquino's list of the six sins against the Holy Spirit, despair takes the lead: it focusses on the ideas that one's sin and malice is greater than God's Goodness, that one is doomed to hell, and that penitence and forgiveness will not lead to anything.⁷³ *Desperatio* may lead to the total loss of belief in God,

Prusa from the 1st century BC who based his medical theory on diatetics. Cf. Vilas H. von, *Der Arzt und Philosoph Asklepiades von Bithynien* (Bremen: 2012) 70.

70 Alciato, *Emblemata* (ed. Leiden, Franciscus Raphelengius: 1591) 121: 'Plinius autem lib<ro>. 23 ait *vino ali vires* [...] et mentem augeri cum nobilioribus partibus'; this is from *Naturalis historia* XXIII, 37 ('Vino aluntur vires, sanguis, colosque hominum') and belongs to the same passage as the Asclepiades quote.

71 Italics mine.

72 For these aspects, cf. the more extended discussion in my *The Transmission of Knowledge* 374–377.

73 Cf. e.g. Ohly F., "*Desperatio und Praesumptio*. Zur theologischen Verzweiflung und Vermessenheit", in Birkhan H. (ed.), *Festgabe für Otto Höfler zum 75. Geburtstag* (Vienna:

and to suicide, which is again a mortal sin.⁷⁴ Because *tristitia*, or *acedia*, was a typical sin of monks, Vaenius construed his impressive personification as a monk (in habit), his face deeply hidden under a cowl, staring at the ground as a sign of depression, and holding in his left hand a torch turned down as symbol of despair [Fig. 5.6C].⁷⁵ In the light of this personification the emblem takes on a religious perspective, because it is, of course, of the highest urgency to avoid an eternal sin. In this way, the advice of drinking wine gets the added value of a moral quality, as is also suggested by the fact that the invitation to drink wine comes from Pallas. In fact, the argument greatly resembles that of emblem 75, “A Musis tranquillitas”: on the image it is demonstrated how the Muses, Apollo, and Pallas chase away the personification of Desperatio / Tristitia, who is the same figure as the one in emblem 80 [cf. below, Fig. 5.6E].

The complex iconological and intertextual construction of emblem 80 called for a clarification of the image and its meaning in vernacular epigrams. The author of the first Dutch poems explained the emblem in this way:

Met een dronck wijns seer wel, en wyselick somtijden
 Gelijck de noorden wint de donck're wolcken schoort,
 De droefheyt van u jaeght en arbeyt drijft ter zijden:
 Den droef en swaren gheest 't ghebruyck des wijns behoort.

At times – and prudently so – you chase away sadness and labour with a cup of wine, as the Northern wind blows away the dark clouds. A depressed and gloomy mind should use wine.

The poet has correctly identified Tristitia and Labour, maybe with help from Vaenius; however, he did not mention Pallas/Minerva, possibly because he considered it obvious. Importantly, the poet has added ‘at times’ (‘sometijden’): this is exactly what was lacking in the Latin texts. It was already noted above that the Dutch poet of the first poem mistranslated the ‘notus’ (in line 2) with ‘noorden wint’. It is open to discussion whether he rendered the rest of the emblem correctly. This would not be the case if he had interpreted the last line

1976) 499–556, and idem, *Ausgewählte und neue Schriften zur Literaturgeschichte und zur Bedeutungsforschung* (Stuttgart – Leipzig: 1995) 177–216.

74 Blöcker S., *Studien zur Ikonographie der Sieben Todsünden in der Niederländischen und deutschen Malerei und Graphik von 1450–1560* (Münster: 1993) 87.

75 Ost's identification of *Tristitia* as ‘Kummer und Sorgen’ is not plausible (cf. Ost, “Unbekannte Werke” 290); also, he did not trace the personification of “Labour” which is construed after Philip Galle's icon of Labour in his *Prosopographia* (plate 20). Cf. my *The Invention of the Emblem Book* 377 with Fig. 129.

in the sense that *only* people who have a gloomy temper should drink wine. This is not the point Vaenius wanted to make. Vaenius himself corrected the mistake of the ‘noorden wint’, and he amplified the propitious effect of the southern wind. In his own Dutch poem, he interpreted his personifications now in a metaphorical sense (‘the pain of labour and sadness’). Furthermore, he copied the first poet’s ‘somtijden’ (‘bij wijlen’) – of course, the intellectual should not drink constantly. But, importantly, he enhances the role of Pallas/Minerva:

Soo set bij wijlen ook ter zijden
Den arbeyt en des droefheyts pijn
Met wijn die 'therte doet verblijden
Maer laet Minerven schencker zijn.

Thus, brush aside at times the pain of labour and of sadness with wine that makes your heart happy; but let Minerva be the cup-bearer.

4 Worshipping the Essential Horace: An Icon for a Humanist or Poet

Hans Ost has discovered a wooden panel with the image of emblem 80, “Ex vino sapienti virtus”, which he published in 2007.⁷⁶ The oil painting, probably in a private collection, has the size of 92 × 71 cm. [Fig. 5.6.E3] Ost ascribed the painting to Vaenius himself, although he had reduced his activity as painter after 1605 in favour of the production of emblem books.⁷⁷ This is certainly possible, but it is not sure that Vaenius painted the panel himself: it was probably made in his workshop by one of the apprentices. But it is important to note that the painting originated in the closest circle around Vaenius: the image of the painting is inverted in comparison with the engraving. Therefore, it was painted not after Vaenius’s engraving, but after his *drawing*. Vaenius’s preparatory drawings to the *Emblemata Horatiana* are preserved in the Pierpont Morgan Library.⁷⁸ Ost made the interesting observation that only two drawings are lost, and that one of these is exactly the drawing for emblem 80.⁷⁹ Ost’s explanation that Vaenius must have taken out the drawing of the album for

76 Ost, “Unbekannte Werke” 287–292.

77 Müller Hofstede J., *Otto van Veen, der Lehrer des Peter Paul Rubens*, Ph.D. dissertation (Freiburg i. Br.: 1959) 24–25.

78 Stampfle, *Netherlandish Drawings* 65–99 (nos. 113–215).

79 Ost, “Unbekannte Werke” 291; Stampfle, *Netherlandish Drawings* 65.

this painting seems plausible.⁸⁰ Ost observed that the panel is cut short on its lower part, and he hypothesized that this was the place where textual elements of emblem 80 were written, which is indeed very likely. The most obvious thing is to suppose that it was the motto that stood in the lacking stroke: “Ex vino sapienti virtus”.

What sense did it make to select exactly this emblematic image for a separate painting? I think that the commissioner of the painting had a specific profile: he was a humanist, an admirer of Horace's lyric poetry, and possibly a Neolatin poet himself. He surely understood the image of emblem 80 as an essential feature of the *Horatius lyricus*, the author of drinking songs and songs of friendship. The commissioner must have considered the pairing of the male protagonist with Minerva/Pallas as being of pivotal importance. It is Minerva herself, and thus the inspiratory deity of humanist poetry, who offers a cup of wine. This is a symbolic act: the scene is in fact depicting poetic inspiration. The oil painting was very probably painted for the studiolo of a humanist, and was meant as a source for poetic or scholarly inspiration. Vaenius's construction of the image leaves ample room for identification. The humanist owner of the painting could easily have identified himself with central figure (a poet, friend of Horace, and so on). It is noteworthy that the face of the male figure on the painting looks quite a bit younger (and more beautiful) than the one on the engraving [Fig. 5.6C]. Vaenius could well have introduced these changes in order to please the commissioner. It is very likely that the commissioner of the painting possessed a copy of the *Emblemata Horatiana* (of 1607 or 1612) and that he made a conscious choice through selecting exactly this emblem. Therefore, he must have been aware that Vaenius had construed the image after *Ode* 1, 7, a drinking song, dedicated to Horace's friend Plancus.

I think that the humanist owner of the painting actually commissioned *two panels* in Vaenius's workshop. The reason is that emblem 80, “Ex vino sapienti virtus”, has a true pendant in the *Emblemata Horatiana*, no. 75, “A Musis tranquillitas” [Fig. 5.6E1]. In the image of emblem 75 the same figures take the central position: a poet (bearded as the male figure on the image of no. 80; Fig. 5.6C) and Minerva, this time with her usual attributes, the spear and the shield. The scene depicts how Minerva is protecting the poet with her shield in order to safeguard his tranquillity of the mind [Fig. 5.6E1]. The negative emotions, i.e. the personifications of Sadness (the monk with the torch turned to the ground) and Fear (the man with the hare in his neck), are chased away, just like the negative emotions in the image of emblem 80, Sadness (exactly the same personification) and Labour. The motto of emblem 75 points to the philosophical benefit of Horatian poetry, the *Horatius ethicus*: to achieve the

80 Ost, “Unbekannte Werke” 291.



FIGURES 5.6E1 AND 5.6E2 Mirroring image of emblem 75, "A Musis tranquillitas", and of emblem 80, as on the painting (E3)



FIGURE 5.6E3
Painting of emblem 80. Private collection.
Whereabouts unknown

state of a tranquil mind. The cheerfulness of drinking songs and tranquillity of the mind – these were actually the two components that together formed a kind of “essential Horace”. I think that the two paintings were meant to represent a tandem or diptichon of this “essential Horace”. It is, of course, very hypothetical to suppose that there was a second painting. Nevertheless, I think that there is important circumstantial evidence: the preparatory drawing for emblem 75 is precisely the other lacking one.⁸¹ It is not absurd to assume that the two related drawings were taken out of the album for the same reason. If this painting was carried out, it must have shown an inverted image (in comparison with the engraving), as in the mirroring image shown in the illustration above [Fig. 5.6E2].

5 The Translation of Socrates's *Patientia* (Emblem 73) into Lechery and Criticism of Medical Doctors in 17th-Century Dutch Genre Painting

Vaenius's image of emblem 73 was used as a template by an anonymous Dutch graphic artist from the 17th century. He translated Vaenius's *inventio* into a kind of *genre scene* [Fig. 5.6F]. Socrates is sitting in front of a Dutch house (instead of the palace all'antica in Vaenius's image), just next to the kitchen; the viewer may see kitchen utensils through the open window. The artist left out Vaenius's background scene with the ship sailing on a stormy sea. Instead, the anonymous artist focusses attention on the kitchen (as the housewife's domain) because – unlike Vaenius – he has Xanthippe pouring the pot out of the window. The artist changed the character of the emblematic icon of *patientia* into a slippery and obscene image by rendering Xanthippe half-naked, with one breast, her right shoulder, and her right leg denuded. Together with the dog as a symbol of in chastity this is meant to allude to sexual activities. One may also register the curious form of the bone next to the dog which resembles a phallus and seems to be an allusion to an erection, a boner. This is not an *exemplum patientiae* anymore, but an example of Socrates's lasciviousness: because of his lechery the philosopher endures being humiliated by Xanthippe. The image may be interpreted as a kind of slapstick humour. The philosopher seems to be smiling while he gets the shower; it looks as if he is thinking about having sex with Xanthippe. But at the same time the image could also have been meant as a serious warning against lasciviousness viz. the sin of *luxuria*.

The reinterpretation of the scene as an obscene image appears more often in Dutch art of the 17th century, e.g. on Reyer van Blommendael's painting

81 Cf. Stampfle, *Netherlandish Drawings* 65.



FIGURE 5.6F Anonymous Dutch artist, 17th century, *Socrates and Xanthippe*. Engraving, 9.0 × 12.5 cm. Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam

which is now in Strasbourg [Fig. 5.6G]: both Xanthippe and Socrates's second wife are depicted with denuded breasts, as if they intend to sexually excite him. Socrates does not exactly remind one of a philosopher: his face bears a very stupid expression, it radiates that the ugly old man is addicted to lechery, and this is why he withstands being humiliated by his two wives; he is dressed in the trousers of a miser or a fool, and his loss of decorum is completed by his dirty feet. Socrates's famous apophthegma 'Gnothi seauton' – 'Know thyself' – depicted in the lower right corner, adds a sarcastic note to the picture: 'Know thyself', i.e. that you are a filthy, foolish, ugly, horny old man.

An anonymous Dutch genre painter of the 17th century invented an extremely interesting image, now in the Fisher Collection, which has the misleading title *Trouble Comes to the Alchemist* [Fig. 5.6H]. Actually, the unknown painter depicted a medical doctor, whom he rendered as Socrates: while this figure is sitting, out of the window his housewife (Xanthippe) pours a pisspot on his head. It is possible to identify the scene if one is acquainted with Vaenius's image to emblem 73. That the identification of the medical doctor with Socrates was intentional appears from a piece of paper hanging down from the table; it says, 'ick wist wel, vrou, het [th] is geen wonder, het reghenen sou naer dit gedonder', 'I knew very well, my wife, it is no wonder, [that] it would rain after this thunder'. These are Socrates's words from Diogenes Laertius's biography of the philosopher (II, 36). The construction of the scene is meant to ridicule medical doctors: it is no coincidence that the housewife (Xanthippe) pours the pot of pee on the medical doctor while he is inspecting urine, an activity that is used in Dutch genre painting as a means of characterizing medical doctors. The painting is almost functioning as a polemical attack against medical doctors: their science is nothing but vanity (cf. the symbols on the table: the skull, the globe, the hourglass, etc.) and fake: they know nothing for sure, give useless advice, and deserve pee to be poured on their heads.

6 The Transfer of the Aeschylus Emblem into Other Media: An Azulejo for Monastic Meditation, a Trompe-l'œil, and Biombos for Private Contemplation

Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana* were open for reuse and reapplication in various media. An interesting case is their reuse in the Franciscan monastery of São Francisco in Salvador de Bahia in Brazil,⁸² where 37 *picturae* of the *Emblemata*

82 For these azulejos, see Santiago S., *Emblemática e Historia de Arte* (Madrid: 1995) 262–276, and Weststeijn Th., "Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana* and the azulejos in the monastery of São Francisco in Salvador de Bahia", *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 21 (2005) 128–145.



FIGURE 5.6G Reyer van Blommendael, *Xanthippe pouring water on Socrates*, 1660s. Oil on canvas, 210 × 198 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Strasbourg, Wikimedia commons



FIGURE 5.6H Medical doctor rendered as the philosopher Socrates, with Xanthippe pouring a pisspot on his head. Dutch School, 17th century, oil on canvas. The Fisher Collection at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, PA. Wikimedia commons

Horatiana were rendered on large azulejo images in the cloister. There they served as images for meditation for the monks who passed the cloister several times a day. Vaenius's eye-catching inventions were ideal for daily meditation, and an advantage of emblems was that they could be used randomly and separately,⁸³ but also in the sequence of the arrangement made for the cloister.⁸⁴ Surely, in their practice of meditation, the monks would have appropriated Vaenius's emblems in certain ways. Thijs Weststeijn has argued that the core of this was a Christian appropriation of Neo-Stoic philosophy, and in this he followed the then prevailing scholarly interpretations of the *Emblemata Horatiana* as a manifesto of Lipsius's Neo-Stoicism.⁸⁵ This may work for a couple of images, but certainly not for all. Emblem 89 is such an example. As we have demonstrated, Vaenius's emblem is not an expression of Neo-Stoicism or the Calvinist belief in predestination, but a Christian *memento mori* with an emphasis on moral integrity as adequate preparation for death.

The *pictura* of emblem 89 figures among the images of contemplation in the cloister of São Francisco in Salvador de Bahía, in the form of an impressive azulejo [Fig. 7A]. The image was surely meant to trigger a *meditatio mortis* by the monks because the azulejo was located on the wall of the cemetery,⁸⁶ where it was accompanied by other emblems dedicated to death, mortality, and the transiency of human life. So, the monks would have interpreted the image of emblem 89 in this context. And in this sense they also would have understood the only textual element of the azulejo, the motto "Tute, si recte vixeris": i.e. as a *memento mori* and an exhortation to be prepared for death at any time. 'Safely', that means: prepared to save one's soul through a good conduct of Christian life, which for the monks would include a perfect performance of Franciscan spirituality. Interestingly, with respect to the monastic use of the image, the inventor of the azulejo had changed the posture of the central male figure (whose habit is reminiscent of a monk): he looks up as if he were expecting or receiving something from heaven. Also, the artist had the figure seated on a hilltop totally isolated from the town: this suggests contemplation in monastic solitude, and it especially seems to allude to the hilltop of contemplation, a symbol for the monastic life. Both adaptations facilitate the

83 As Thijs Weststeijn rightly emphasizes in his groundbreaking contribution (*ibidem*).

84 For this arrangement cf. Weststeijn, *ibidem* 133–135, especially 134, note 22.

85 As I have demonstrated in previous contributions ("Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik" and "The Transmission of Knowledge via Pictorial Figurations"), Neo-Stoic philosophy is only part of the *Emblemata Horatiana*, which also are guided by other focusses and principles, such as certain Horatian ideas and predilections, proverbial wisdom, and other philosophical opinions and dogmas.

86 Weststeijn, "Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*" 134, no. 22.

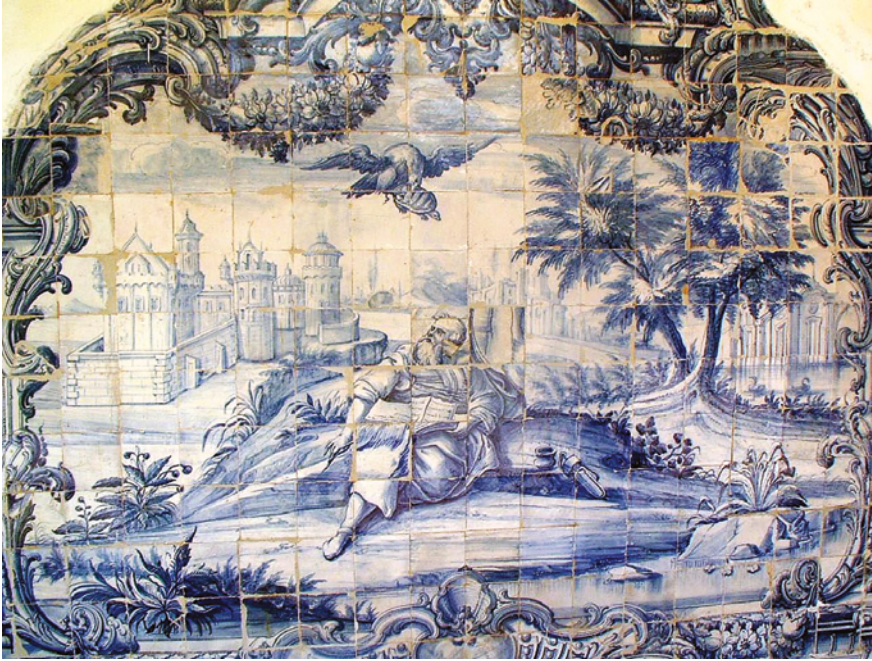


FIGURE 5.7A Azulejo image no. 16 (= emblem 89)

monk's appropriation of the image and emphasize the function of the image as means to initialize self-reflection on the monastic lifestyle.

Would the monks have been able to identify the male figure as the Greek tragedian Aeschylus? This is hard to say. Anyway, *in situ*, in the cloister, they had nothing at hand that would tell them that it was Aeschylus. The inscription only said: "Tute, si recte vixeris". The image of the solitary man sitting in the wilderness outside the town may have reminded them of monastic heroes such as St. Jerome [Fig. 5.7B] or St. Paul the hermit [Fig. 5.7C]. From the example of St. Paul, who was fed by a raven, they knew that a bird flying above a hermit does not necessary bring death. Of course, a tortoise is not the same as a loaf of bread, but the animal was established as a symbol for positive things as well: e.g. for retreat and inner life because of its bony shell (it was used as an image for the motto 'tecum habita', a formula from Persius)⁸⁷ combined with the idea of safety and tranquillity; furthermore, as a symbol for modesty,

87 Cf. Enenkel K.A.E., *Francesco Petrarca, De vita solitaria Buch 1. Kritische Textausgabe und ideengeschichtlicher Kommentar* (Leiden – New York etc.: 1990) 293 (*secum esse* and *secum habitare* as monastic formulas); Henkel – Schöne, *Emblemata* cols. 607–608 (Aneau, *Picta poesis* p. 80).



FIGURE 5.7B Francisco Pacheco, *The penitence of St. Jerome in the Desert*, 1621–1622. Oil on canvas. Museo Goya, Ibercaya. Wikimedia commons

contentedness, and material abstinence ('omnia mea mecum porto'),⁸⁸ but also for the assiduous spiritual labour that was required to reach the hilltop of contemplation, as in Camerarius's emblem II, 92, "Aeque tandem" [Fig. 5.7D].⁸⁹

From about 1700 an intriguing new medium for emblems came into being, Asiatic biombos, or folding screens. Biombos ('byobu' in Japanese) originated

88 Henkel – Schöne, *Emblemata* cols. 609–610, e.g. Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum selectissimarum* I, 74.

89 Cf. Henkel – Schöne, *Emblemata* col. 612.



FIGURE 5.7C After Guercino, *St. Paul the Hermit fed by the raven*, 17th century. Oil on canvas. Wikimedia commons

in China but were transferred via Japan to Europe and to the Americas.⁹⁰ In New Spain especially they were regarded as prestigious objects and a paradigm of refined European high culture which had embraced luxury goods from the

90 Sanabrais S., "From Byobu to *Biombo*: The Transformation of Japanese Folding Screen in Colonial Mexico", *Art History* 38, 4 (2015) 778–791; Donahue-Wallace K., "Secular Painting Circa 1600–1800", in *Art and Architecture of Viceregal Latin America, 1521–1821* (Albuquerque: 2008) 200–223; Hemming C. – Aldbrook M., *The Decorative Folding Screen* (New York: 1982); Grilli E., *The Art of the Japanese Screen* (New York: 1970).



FIGURE 5.7D Camerarius, *Symbolorum et emblematum* [...] *centuria secunda*, II, 92 "Aeque tandem". <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/18-6-eth/start.htm>

Far East.⁹¹ Biombos are painted screens which were used as room dividers applied for separating spaces in the *salon del estrado* of colonial palaces. The *salon del estrado* was on the one hand 'the formal room in which the reception and entertainment of guests took place';⁹² on the other hand, it was also used for all kinds of activities of private leisure,⁹³ and furthermore, the screens may have been used to separate a private space (within a space in which social interaction took place), thus creating in an easy way something like a private *studiolo*.

Interestingly, in New Spain, especially in the capital Mexico, Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana* were chosen as topics for biombos,⁹⁴ and a number of

91 Castelló Yturbide T. – Martínez del Río de Redo M., *Biombos mexicanos* (Mexico City: 1970).

92 Schreffler M.J., "Emblems of Virtue in 18th Century New Spain", in McIntyre K.K. – Phillips R., *Women and Art in Latin America* (Leiden – Boston: 2007) 283.

93 Cf. e.g. Martínez del Río del Redo M., "Los biombos en el ámbito doméstico: sus programas moralizadores y didácticos", in *Juegos de ingenio y agudeza: La pintura emblemática de la Nueva España* (Mexico City: 1994) 133–149.

94 Cf. Sebastián S., "La emblemática moral de Vaenius en Iberoamérica", in *Goya* 234 (1993) 322–329; idem, "Theatro moral de la vida humana, de Otto Vaenius. Lectura y significado de los emblemas", in *Boletín del Museo Camón Aznar* 14 (1983) 7–92; idem, *Emblemática*

such screens still survive:⁹⁵ all of them contain a selection of the *Emblemata Horatiana* consisting of 8, 10, 15, or 20 emblems (out of the whole set of 103). They are mostly richly adorned with various ornaments from European and Asian origins, cf. for example the folding screen now at the Museum of Art in Dallas, consisting of eight emblems [cf. below, Figs. 5.16A, B, C, D and E].⁹⁶ I believe that at least some of the folding screens with *Emblemata Horatiana* were used to create a kind of a *studiolo*, separating the space from the other parts of the *salon del estrado*. As part of the *studiolo*, the emblems were probably meant for their owners' private meditation on moral topics.⁹⁷

On the folding screen preserved in the Museum of Art in Dallas, emblem 89 represents the seventh image [Fig. 5.7E].⁹⁸ As the Spanish verses depicted directly under the image show, it was meant to trigger a meditation on death (*meditatio mortis*), on the importance of being prepared for it at any moment, and the necessity of living a good Christian life. The owner of the screen should contemplate on 'Que qualquiera muerte es Buena / De quien fue Buena la vida' – 'That for the one who leads a good life, / Every kind of death is good'. I think that the folding screen in Dallas provides a certain programme for meditation and self-reflection for noblemen who held an office in New Spain, and that emblem 89 should be interpreted in close connection with the preceding emblem 33.⁹⁹ The content of emblem 89, that if one leads a good life, every kind of death is good (wherever, whenever, under whatever circumstances), is

e historia del arte (Madrid: 1995); idem, *Iconografía e iconología en el arte novohispano* (Mexico City: 1992).

- 95 Schreffler lists four of them, cf. Schreffler "Emblems of Virtue" 266, no. 8: one in the Museo Soumaya in Mexico City; one in the Galería de Antigüedades la Cartuja (Mexico City; cf. Martínez del Río, "Los biombos en el ámbito doméstico" 141–142); one in the Dallas Museum of Art (for that screen, see Venable C. (ed.), *Dallas Museum of Art: A Guide to the Collection* (Dallas: 1997) 206); and the "Richmond Screen", partly in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond (7 panels), partly in a private collection (3 panels); on the Richmond screen cf. Schreffler, "Emblems of Virtue".
- 96 See below, chapter 11 "The Reuse of Vaenius's Horacian Emblems on Biombos in Palaces of New Spain".
- 97 For the *studiolo*, cf. Liebenwein W., *Studiolo. Die Entstehung eines Raumtyps und seine Entwicklung bis um 1600* (Berlin: 1977); Thornton D., *The Scholar in his Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, CT – London: 1997); Campbell S., *The Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d'Este* (New Haven, CT: 2006); Hessler Ch.J., "Dead Men Talking: The Studiolo of Urbino. A Duke in Mourning and the Petrarchan Tradition", in Enenkel K.A.E. – Göttler Ch. (eds.), *Spaces, Places, and Times for Solitude in Late Medieval and Early Modern Cultures* (Leiden – Boston: 2018) *Intersections* 56, 367–404.
- 98 On this screen cf. Venable (ed.), *Dallas Museum of Art* 206.
- 99 For this programme, see below, last section.



FIGURE 5.7E Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana*, emblem 89, The death of Aeschylus: detail of the 7th panel of the Dallas folding screen with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 34 cm (screen in total 340 cm). Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

especially relevant for officers active in a region far away from their fatherland: it is meant to take away their fear of dying and being buried abroad. The same is true for another folding screen, now in the Museo Soumaya in Mexico City: there, emblem 89 represents the concluding panel [see below, Fig. 5.17B].

The Spanish painter Francisco Gallardo has invented a fascinating installation of Vaenius's emblem 89 in the genre of the *trompe-l'œil* [Fig. 5.7F]. He painted an engraved version of the emblem on a separate sheet of dipped paper



FIGURE 5.7F Francisco Gallardo, trompe-l'œil with Vaenius's *Emblema Horatianum* 89, "Tute, si recte vixeris", 1720. Alamy Stock Photo, object number J8XPR7

with wide and uncut borders, which seems to have been provisionally nailed on a wooden panel. The upper and the lower borders of the dipped paper are rolling up a bit, and the nail on top is suggestively accompanied by its shade. In this way, the engraving is rendered in the painting, and through virtuoso technique the painting is intended to deceive the viewer, to make him confuse it with a real object (the wooden panel with the sheet of paper). From various details it appears that Gallardo has appropriated the image, i.e. rendered it in his own individual way: e.g. he altered the ratio of height and breadth (the image's breadth is now larger than its height); he made the town (in the background) invisible; and he added clouds above the hills. Directly under the fake engraving Gallardo copied Horace's Latin verses of *Ode* II, 13, 13–20 – meticulously, entirely readable, and without any mistakes. In doing so, he actually gave the emblem a new layout. It is in line with this art of virtuoso deception that Gallardo marked the fake engraving by his signature as his own work; in his personal handwriting, directly under Horace's verses, he wrote: 'Cadiz anno X<Christi> 1720' and 'Franciscus Gallard F.<ecit>'. In this *trompe-l'œil* construction there are all kinds of double layers, and in the end all seems to be fake, except for the overall meaning of the installation, which is the expression of the total vanity of human existence. The *res significata* of the emblem itself is the transitoriness of human life. Of course, in the light of this truth, everything is vain: as a *leçon par l'exemple*, the painter demonstrates that all the material objects – wood, nails, paper etc. – are vain, the engraving, the printed text on the engraving, are vain, and so on. The artist confirms the authenticity of the painting with his signature, but actually he only signs the engraving, so that the signature becomes fake and real at the same time. In this way, Gallard has transformed emblem 89 into a wonderful object for meditation on the vanity of human existence and the art of virtuoso painting that has the power to fake everything.

7 The Translation of Horatian Common-Sense Wisdom into Didactic Plates of a Philosophical Primer, and of the Didactic Plates into Vernacular Poems

Vaenius's *Emblemata Horatiana* have some peculiarities. One of them is his strong interest in philosophical doctrine, and his wish to construe didactic images that could be useful as a kind of introduction into philosophy. This is also the perspective which is relevant for his collection of Horatian and non-Horatian text fragments. As I have demonstrated in my previous studies, Vaenius selected his Horatian fragments not via a time-consuming reading of Horace's Latin works but through an extensive pillage of a commonplace

collection, the *Sententiae et proverbia ex poetis Latinis*.¹⁰⁰ This means that his starting point was mostly a text that had been already selected as a commonplace. Vaenius enriched the Horatian commonplaces with other commonplace fragments: the aim was always to *constitute a philosophical topos*. This manner of working had certain consequences: 1) In the majority of the cases, the original context of the quoted lines and content of the poems to which they originally belonged got lost.

2) The aim of composing a kind of philosophical primer suppressed certain aspects of Horace's poetry, and poetic readings in general.

3) Horace has a strong inclination toward reservation, irony, common sense, and avoidance of extreme statements. Vaenius was not so much interested in these characteristics. Instead, it was usually his manner of working to take Horace's common-sense wisdoms as building stones for his philosophical primer, i.e. of introductory philosophical doctrine.

4) The function of the images corresponded with that idea: this means that philosophical didactics was of pivotal importance. It is this aspect that caused Vaenius's conspicuous preference for personifications: personifications which were widely used for didactic goals. This brings about that Vaenius read Horatian texts as a treasury for personifications. These peculiarities together lead to the construction of complex emblematic constructions and the invention of subtle iconologies that are far from being directly recognizable illustrations of Horace's poetry. And at the same time, these complex emblematic constructions called for comprehensive vernacular poems that would ensure that less learned readers too might understand this important category of *Emblemata Horatiana*.

An illuminating example of such a complex invention that resulted from reading Horace's common-sense wisdom as a building stone of philosophical doctrine is emblem 6, "In medio consistit virtus" – "Virtue is defined by its middle position". The Horatian "epigram" consists of one line only¹⁰¹ and does not contain any visual image: 'virtus est medium vitiorum in utrimque reductum' – 'virtue is the middle between vices, in an equal distance to both sides [i.e. to the extremes]'.¹⁰² The above-quoted verse is taken from an adhortation of Horace to a younger friend (Lollius) whom he dissuades from extreme behaviour. Apparently Lollius was about to enter an *amicitia* with a powerful man; Horace advises him how to behave in this social context and discourages him from taking too much liberty in his speech, because he might be regarded

100 See my "Horaz als Lehrmeister der Ethik".

101 *Epistulae* 1, 8, 9.

102 Mayer, "Vivere secundum Horatium" 209 rightly remarked: 'Horace's texts did not always provide Vaenius with sufficient matter for illustration'.

as rude and coarse. ‘Virtus est medium vitiorum in utrimque reductum’ is no more than common-sense advice to avoid extreme behaviour in social interaction. Vaenius, however, identified it with Aristotle’s ethical doctrine of *Mesotes*, an almost mathematical approach to defining virtues and vices. Actually, Vaenius invented the image of emblem 6 in the first place through a close reading of *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 8–9. In II, 9, 1, Aristotle says: ‘Enough has now been said to show that moral virtue is a mean, and in what sense this is so, namely that *it is a mean between two vices, one of excess and the other of defect*; and that it is such a mean because it aims at hitting *the middle point* in feelings and actions’.¹⁰³ In the following lines, Aristotle illustrates this doctrine through the example of spending money: ‘it is easy ... to give and spend money; but ... to give money to the right person, and to the right amount, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way – this is not within everybody’s power and is not easy’.¹⁰⁴ Through this demanding, meticulous, and scrupulous behaviour Aristotle addresses the virtue of generosity (ἐλευθεριότης), which he had already mentioned in the previous chapter,¹⁰⁵ together with its vicious state, ἀσωτία (prodigality). Also, Vaenius borrowed the idea of the geometrical construction through a circle from Aristotle, who applied it in II, 9, 2, as a means of demonstrating what a meticulous task it is to define the exact centre of a circle: only a person educated in geometry will be able to do so. Therefore, ethical judgement is a kind of scientific endeavour, and according to Aristotle its first requirement is that it be based on knowledge.

It is from this passage of Aristotle that Vaenius came to the idea to depict *generosity* and its vicious state, *prodigality*. For virtues such as generosity and for various vices, he could recur to a storehouse of personifications, such as Ripa’s *Iconologia* or Philip Galle’s *Prosopographia*. Galle depicted Liberalitas as a young lady with two cornucopiae turned upside down [Fig. 5.8A]. Ripa offered a personification of Liberalità too [Fig. 5.8B]:

a woman with a square forehead, with an eagle’s nose, dressed in a white veil, an eagle over her head; in her right hand she holds a cornucopia turned upside down, and a compass in one hand, whence are scattered jewels and other precious things; in the other hand she holds a cornucopiae with fruit and flowers.¹⁰⁶

103 Translation by H. Rackham.

104 II, 9, 2, translation by H. Rackham (emphasis mine).

105 II, 8, 5.

106 ‘Donna con [...] fronte quadrata, col naso aquilino, [...] col un’aquila in capo, nella mano destra un compasso ed un cornucopia, versi gioie, denari, collane, & altre cose di prezzo, nella mano sinistra una cornucopia piena di frutti e fiori.’



FIGURE 5.8A
Liberalitas, from: Philip Galle,
Prosopographia (Antwerp: ca. 1600),
no. 22. Private collection



FIGURE 5.8B
Liberalità, from: Cesare Ripa,
Iconologia (Rome, Lepido Facio: 1603), s.v. Private
collection

Vaenius seems to have been inspired by Ripa's template of *Liberalità* [Fig. 5.8B]: also, his *Liberalitas* has a square front and a cornucopiae in her left hand; nevertheless, she looks slightly different [Fig. 5.8C]. She is rather based on Vaenius's archaeological interest: he derived the image from a Roman imperial coin propagating the 'liberalitas Augusta' (Generosity of the Emperor) [Fig. 5.8D].¹⁰⁷ Vaenius meticulously copied the figure from a Roman coin: just as on the coin, she holds in her right hand a curious object which looks like a square table with five circles on it (an abacus) [Fig. 5.8C]. Vaenius's preference for the Roman icon is due to his ambition to charge his personifications with antiquarian learning. Probably, he avoided depicting his personification with a cornucopiae turned upside down because this might have come too close to *prodigalitas*: Cesare Ripa's *Prodigialità* was actually rendered in this way [Fig. 5.8E].

For the Vices belonging to *Liberalitas*, i.e. *Prodigalitas* and *Avaritia*, Vaenius, of course, did not have Roman coins at his disposal; for *Prodigalitas* there was a beautiful template in Ripa's iconologia which would have been a logical counterpart to Vaenius's *Liberalitas* because she had the cornucopiae turned upside down [Fig. 5.8E]. However, Vaenius came with his own invention which visualizes the Dutch proverbial expression 'met geld strooien' ('to waste money') [Fig. 5.8C]. For *Avaritia*, Vaenius drew on 16th-century Netherlandish print series of the *The Seven Deadly Sins*,¹⁰⁸ such as the one attributed to Jacob Matham (after Hendrik Goltzius) of about 1587 [Fig. 5.2C]. Vaenius depicted *Avaritia* in a very similar way: as a huge old, ugly woman that holds in her hands several purses filled with money; at her right foot is her symbol the toad [Figs. 5.8C and 5.2C].

Because of the learned and rather difficult construction of the image, Vaenius explained the iconology: 'In circuli centro posita hic Liberalitas, Avaritiam inter ac Prodigalitem' – 'In the centre of the circle Liberalitas is placed between Avaritia and Prodigalitas'. Then he elucidates that the icon expresses the Aristotelian doctrine of *Mesotes*. Horace's 'epigram' of emblem 6 does not contain visual elements, and the whole construction of the emblem is so complicated that without Vaenius's explanations one could hardly understand its exact meaning.¹⁰⁹ The first Dutch poem takes over the function of

107 For this aspect of imperial self-representation cf. Kloft H., *Liberalitas principis; Herkunft und Bedeutung. Studien zur Prinzipsideologie* (Vienna – Graz: 1970).

108 Cf. Blöcker, *Studien zur Ikonographie* 103–104.

109 Even Stampfle erroneously identified the personification in the middle as 'Virtue, holding a cornucopia and a counting tablet' (comment to no. 117).



FIGURE 5.8C Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 6 (p. 19)



FIGURE 5.8D
 Liberalitas Augusti, issued under Claudius Gothicus. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CLAUDIUS_IL_GOTHICUS-RIC_V_57-804260.jpg



FIGURE 5.8E *Prodigalità.* Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, Lepido Facii: 1603), s.v. Public domain

Vaenius's comment and gives a concise identification of the image and its meaning:

image (l. 1–3) Siet, tusschen Ghierigheydt en de Verquistingh' staet
 De Miltheydt, zijnde een deughtt recht tusschen twee extremen.
 Met Icarus hy doolt die niet houdt middelmaet.

meaning (l. 4): Die 't padt der Deught wil gaen, den middel-wegh moet gaen.

See here, between Greed and Prodigality stands / Generosity; she is a virtue just between two extremes. / He who does not steer the middle course strays like Icarus. / Whoever wants to walk the path of Virtue must steer the middle course.

This is a metrically defective, but with respect to its content very effective, emblematic poem, with a correct identification of all personifications. It is remarkable that the Dutch poet even included the mythological background scene with Daedalus and Icarus. Why did he do so? Did he consider the background scene of pivotal importance for the emblematic construction? Or did he regard the classical myth as a kind of rhetorical ornament? Or did he think that vernacular readers might have had difficulties with identifying the background scene? Anyway, the Dutch poet replaced the philosophical definition of virtue of Aristotle's *Mesotes* doctrine with a greatly simplified version ('zijnde een deught recht tusschen twee extremen'), which he blended with a proverbial wisdom: 'den middel-wegh gaen', 'middelmaet houden', 'maet houden'.¹¹⁰ Interestingly, Vaenius himself did more or less the same in the second Dutch poem: he gave a simplified version of the *Mesotes* doctrine in terms of the proverbial expression 'maet houden':

Des menschen offeningh', doen of laten
Bestaet in sekre wet of maten
Daer in de deught haer houden moet.
Sal zy volcomen zijn en goed (lines 5–8).

Man's pursuits and operations / consist of certain rules and measures / which virtue must keep to. Then she will be perfect and good.

However, differently from the first Dutch poet, Vaenius left out the Icarus myth, although he had eight lines at his disposal. It is hard to say why. I cannot believe that he considered it too difficult for the intended vernacular audience. It is a telling detail that he reused the scene with Daedalus and Icarus (in the way he invented it for the *Emblemata Horatiana*) for his *Emblemata amatoria*

¹¹⁰ Cf. Johannes Sartorius, *Adagiorum chiliades tres, quae I.<oannes> S.<artorius> in Batavicum sermonem [...] convertit* (Antwerpen: 1561), *Adag.* 1, vii, 61: 'Alle dinck op maten / Die dat kan, het zal hem baten'.



FIGURE 5.8F Image to Vaenius, *Emblemata amatoria* no. 42

no. 42 [Fig. 5.8F]. In his Dutch epigram to the emblem, Vaenius dedicates two lines to this myth:

Te midden is 't beste.

In 't vrijen 't middel-padt met Dedalus volght wijslick
 Met Icarus te hoogh en vlieght niet onbedacht
 Te laegh oock niet. Bemint, soo werdy niet veracht,
 Te vrijen sijns ghelijck is t'allen tijden prijslick.

In the English version:

Fly in the midst.

See that thy cours bee right with Dedalus adrest,
 For if thow fly to high disdayn may thee disgrace,
 Or if to low thow fly thow doest thy self debase,
 For lyke to loue his lyke befitteth euer best.

In his 1608 emblem 42 Vaenius translated the Aristotelian doctrine of *Mesotes* into a love emblem. In his invention, he illustrates this doctrine again through the idea of the circle: this time, Amor holds a compass in his right hand.

In emblem 7, the motto “Medio tutissimus ibis” refers again to the Icarus myth; however, Horace’s accompanying verse (*Satires* 1, 2, 14) does not contain a clear visual image: ‘Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria incurrunt’ – ‘When stupid people try to avoid vices, they fall into opposite ones’. In this case, Vaenius’s invention is not based on the Latin fragments he collected in order to constitute the topos. For the image, Vaenius actually fell back on the *pictura* of the previous emblem with the personifications of Greed and Prodigality. He now adds the personification of Folly, a young person with a shaven head and a fool’s cap [Fig. 5.9]. As in emblem 6, he added into the background a mythological scene: a ship crushing into a rock on which a figure is sitting. This background scene refers to the fifth textual fragment: ‘Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim’ – ‘He who tries to avoid Scylla shipwrecks on Charybdis’. This scene originates in Homer’s *Odyssey*, where the story is told of Ulysses’s ship sailing between Scylla and Charybdis.¹¹¹ According to Vaenius the quote is taken from Horace’s *Ars poetica*. However, the author of the verse is actually Walter of Chatillon (from his *Alexandreis* of ca. 1180).¹¹² In Walter’s epos, the line is not part of a detailed narrative, but rather figures as proverbial wisdom; the sentence found its way into collections of *proverbia sententiaeque*, which is probably the reason why Vaenius mistakenly ascribed it to Horace. I think that Vaenius derived it from Erasmus’s *Adage* 404, “Evitata Charybdi in Scyllam incidi”:¹¹³ there, Erasmus quoted the verse line but did not remember its author: ‘Celebratur apud Latinos hic versiculus, quocumque natus autore, nam in presentia non occurrit: *Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim*’.¹¹⁴ It seems likely that Vaenius used this *Adage* because he copied two quotes of emblem 7 from the adjacent *Adage* 405.¹¹⁵

While Horace’s “epigram” (*Satires* 1, 2, 14) does not offer anything like a visual image, Vaenius’s prose commentary is in fact the only part of the Latin texts that unmistakably identifies the *pictura*.¹¹⁶ Here, again, the author of the first Dutch poem takes on the task of providing a clear description of the

111 Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* XII, 244 ff.

112 *Alexandreis* v, 301. Cf. Mayer, “Vivere secundum Horatium” 206.

113 *ASD* II, 1, 479–482.

114 *Ibidem* 482.

115 Erasmus, *Adage* 405: ‘In vitium ducit culpae fuga, si caret arte’ (Horace, *Ars poetica* 31) and ‘Nam frustra vitium vitaveris illud / Si te alio pravum detorseris’ (Horace, *Satires* II, 2, 54–55).

116 Vaenius explains: ‘Stultus ac male sanus virtutem in medio positam deserit, et concitato cursu, fugiens Avaritiam, in Prodigalitatem incidit [...]’ – ‘Stupid and insane persons leave the middle position; in order to quickly avoid Greed, they fall into Prodigality’.



FIGURE 5.9 Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 7 (p. 21)

heat' are not opposites. The poet correctly translated the Latin 'medium' with 'moyen', but less fortunately, he distorted it into the 'vray moyen', 'true middle', which is again confusing because this is not the point here: no other kind of 'moyen' is mentioned or suggested. Like the author of the Dutch poem, he introduces the concept of the 'path'; but unfortunately, he mixes up the concept of the 'middel-wegh' or 'middle course' with that of the 'droict chemin' or 'straight way'. This may be a related concept, but it is nevertheless pointless here, especially in relation with the image. However, with respect to the background scene he followed the Dutch poet by inserting a correct description in the third line: 'De Charybd' en Scylla parcrainte il fait naufrage'.

Vaenius's new poem is basically an amplification of the first Dutch epigram. However, he introduces a new concept ('d'onmatigheyt', 'immoderacy'); unlike the previous emblem, this time he not only includes the mythological scene (just as the first Dutch poet had done) but also uses it as emblematic conclusion, i.e. as the core of the emblem's meaning:

Den dwaes om Ghierigheyt te mijden
 Hem tot Verquistinghe begheeft.
 Des Redens toom hy niet en heeft;
 Hy laet de middelwegh ter sijden.
 D'onmatigheyt hem vallen doet
 Van 'teen in 'tander quaet met schanden,
 Als die so seer wijckt Scillas vloet,
 Dat hem Charybdis clip doet stranden.

In order to avoid Greed the Fool turns to Prodigality. He lacks the reins of reason; he fails to steer a middle course. Immoderacy makes him fall from one evil into the other. Precisely as the one who recoils so much from the flood of Scylla that he shipwrecks at the rock of Charybdis.

It is interesting to observe that Vaenius has used the myth as a final explanation of the emblem. Obviously, he did not consider it as something too difficult or too specific for the vernacular audience. With this respect it is important to note that Scylla and Charybdis had the status of proverbial wisdom, not only for learned classicists but also for vernacular readers. Vaenius was surely aware of this fact. As indicated above, he must have picked it up from a proverbial source (in all probability Erasmus's *Adagia*). However, it is curious that Vaenius confused Scylla (which is actually the rock) with Charybdis (which is the fatal vortex): 'Scillas vloet, / Dat hem Charybdis clip doet stranden'. It may be that it was the casual use of proverbs that led to this confusion.

Horace's "epigram" to emblem 5, "Virtuti sapientia comes" ("Wisdom is the companion of Virtue"), consists of the common-sense wisdom 'Virtue is to avoid vice, and the first step of wisdom is to exclude foolishness' ('Virtus est, vitium fugere et sapientia prima, / Stultitia caruisse').¹¹⁸ The line offers abstract notions, such as virtue, vice, and wisdom, but nothing like a catchy image. Here, again, Vaenius invented the image through reading Horace's abstract notions as personifications: through taking the flat metaphorical usage of 'fugere', 'to avoid', in its literal sense, i.e. 'to flee, to escape', he construed an image with the personification of Virtue fleeing from vice;¹¹⁹ 'caruisse' he regarded as an equivalent of 'fugere': so, the personification of Wisdom, i.e. Goddess Pallas, flees too, and she does so from 'stultitia', which Vaenius could easily visualize as Folly – a female figure with the fool's cap and a crown with a triple tunsure. Furthermore, Vaenius derived the idea of visualizing 'vitium' from the context of the quoted *Epistulae* 1, 1, 41–42. Just in the preceding lines Horace sums up a couple of flaws of character: 'Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator / nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit' (ll. 38–39). Almost naturally, Vaenius identified those flaws of character with the Christian Seven Deadly Sins or Seven Vices; thus, Virtue and Pallas are fleeing from Lust (*Luxuria*), Gluttony (*Gula*), Greed (*Avaritia*), Envy (*Invidia*), Sloth (*Acedia / Inertia*), Pride (*Superbia*), and Wrath (*Ira*) [Fig. 5.10A].¹²⁰ Interestingly, Vaenius construed from these lines also a separate emblem: 22 "Disciplinae animus attentus" [cf. below, Fig. 5.10D].

In the image of emblem 5, Gluttony is rendered as a young woman with a drinking cup and wine pitcher [Fig. 5.10A], Greed by an old woman holding a purse to her breast, Wrath by a blindfolded man with a sword, *Superbia* by a young woman with a peacock [Fig. 5.10B], Sloth only by its symbolic animal, the ass, and Envy by an old woman with snakes for hair who is eating her own heart. Vaenius construed his personification of Lust (*Luxuria*) probably after the example of Goltzius's personification of the vice Libido, who holds in her left hand Aphrodite's symbol the dove, and who is accompanied by her symbolic animal, the billy goat [Fig. 5.10C]. However, Vaenius has equipped his *Luxuria* with another learned symbol, the onion (*allium cepa*), which was considered to be an aphrodisiac already in antiquity,¹²¹ thus replacing Goltzius's

118 *Epistulae* 1, 1, 41–42.

119 The personification of Virtue figures very frequently in the *Emblemata Horatiana*: a female figure resembling Pallas, but with one naked breast and equipped with a sword instead of shield and aegis.

120 I cannot agree with Mayer, "Vivere secundum Horatium" 214: 'the emblematic vices which assail the individual are just that, vices; they do not appear as sins'.

121 For example Ovid, *Ars amatoria* 11, 422; Columella, *De re rustica* x, 106.



FIGURE 5.10A Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to image to emblem 5 (p. 17)



FIGURE 5.10B Hendrik Goltzius (inventor), engraving ascribed to Jacob Matham, *Superbia* from the series of *The Seven Vices*, by the same artists, 1587. Wikimedia commons



FIGURE 5.10C Hendrik Goltzius (inventor), engraving ascribed to Jacob Matham, *Luxuria/Libido* from the series of *The Seven Vices*, by the same artists, 1587

symbol, the myrtle (which was another attribute of the antique goddess Venus). It may well be that Vaenius had derived this idea from the tradition of botanic manuals, such as Dioscurides,¹²² or *Tacuina sanitatis*, in which onions are described as a means to kindle coitus. For example, a Florentine *Tacuinum* shows the harvest of onions by a man and a woman, and how the harvested onions make them approach each other. The subscription says: '(sc. cepa) coy-tum adit'.

The Latin texts altogether do not give a full explanation of what is to be seen in the image. Only in a short comment (= the 4th Latin text) does Vaenius say that Pallas flees from Folly, and that she is the sister and companion of Virtue: 'Quae [sc. Pallas] stultitiam fugiens, virtutis soror est et comes'. From the image together with this short explanation it can be concluded that 1) Vaenius has

122 *Materia medica* II, 202.

transformed Horace's common-sense wisdom into a well-known Christian concept of moral theology (Seven Deadly Sins); 2) furthermore into a paradigm of Stoic philosophy (of controlling the emotions, *passiones animi* or *affectus*);¹²³ furthermore, 3) into a philosophical argument that emphasizes the cognitive aspects of virtue. The words of the motto "Virtuti Sapientia comes" are Vaenius's, as is the just-quoted explanation of the image's iconology.

The author of the first Dutch poem departed from Vaenius's explanation and aimed primarily at offering a comprehensible description of the image:

Description Van sotheydt wijsheydt wijkt, de Deughdt vlucht van d'ondeughden.
of the image: Hoe dat sy zijn vervolght, sy vlieden even seer
Van des siel-siekten snoo, daer sy noyt me verheughden.
Meaning Want dinghen onghelijck vereenen nimmermeer.
(conclusio):

Wisdom flees from Folly, and Virtue from the Vices. / It does not matter how much they are persecuted: / the more they flee from the evil of mental disease, by which they never made (anybody) happy: / Opposites never go together.

The first two lines address the core of the *pictura* and its main characters; the personifications Wisdom, Virtue, Folly, and in fact also the Vices ('ondeughden') are correctly identified. However, the author of the poem did not identify the individual personifications of the vices. Why so? Of course, three lines may have left little room for mentioning seven personifications. Or did the Dutch poet think that everybody would recognize the Seven Vices also without explanation? In the pendant to emblem 5, emblem 22, "Disciplinae animus attentus", Vaenius depicted the Seven Vices again [Fig. 5.10D]; in this case, the Dutch poet followed Horace's verse (*Epist.* 1, 38), but at the same time – since the first three lines are always dedicated to the description of the image – addressed in his translation the Christian Seven Vices: 'Soo nijdigh (= Invidia, 2nd fr.r.), toornigh (= Ira, 1st fr.l.), traegh (= Inertia, middle: sleeping man with head of donkey) soo wildt, is niemandt niet, / Wijn-suyppigh (= Gula, 1st fr.r.) of onkuysch (= Luxuria, loving couple to the left) hy kan door wijse reden / Te horen zijn

123 Cf. his comment: 'Virtus est iram cohibere, cupiditatem compescere, libidinem refranare [...] omnia [...] ab his oriuntur affectibus'.



FIGURE 5.10D Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 22 (p. 51)

ghetemt, dat hy de ondeughdt vliedt. / Goey leeringhe wel licht verandert 'smenschen seden' – 'Nobody can be so envious, irate (wrathful), lazy, wild, / addicted to drinking and unchastity that he cannot be tamed through wise advice so that he abandons vice. / Good instruction can change people's morals'. Among other things, his translation of Horace's 'amator' ('lover') with 'onkuysch' ('unchaste') indicates that he has applied the concept of the Seven Vices. Anyway, Vaenius himself, who had corrected this poem, understood it in this way. However, in his description of the image the Dutch poet obviously had difficulties with the identification of two vices: Pride/Superbia (the woman with the headdress) and Greed/Avaritia (the old woman in the middle with the purse). In the case of Avaritia, the reason may be that she is hidden behind the shield of Minerva; in the case of Superbia, the poet misunderstood the headdress of feathers (of the fourth figure from left): instead of an attribute of the personification of Pride/Superbia, he probably interpreted it as the headdress of native Indians (cf. in his list 'soo wildt'). Vaenius, however, had construed the vice of *Superbia* after Chrispijn van de Passe's *Superbia* of around 1584.

It is noteworthy that Vaenius himself considered it a good idea to identify the vices in his Dutch poem; in doing so, he followed the author of the first Dutch poem but amended it through the addition of Superbia and Avaritia:

Gheen mensch so traegh (Inertia) bevonden wort,
 Wijn-gulsich (Gula), toornich (Ira), nijdich (Invidia), *ghierigh* (Avaritia),
 Onkuys (Luxuria), *hooveerdigh* (Superbia), ia int kort
 So wilt, so woest, so onmanierich,
 Die niet door wijse redens cracht
 Betemt can werden en besneden
 Van sijn ghebreck en quade seden,
 Soo hy op goede leering acht.¹²⁴

Nobody can be so lazy, wine-loving, irate (wrathful), envious, greedy, wanton, prideful, in short: so unbridled and uncivilized that he cannot be tamed through the power of wise words, and curtailed of his bad manners, of course, if he listens to good instruction.

No. 8, "Virtus in actione consistit" – "Virtue consists essentially of action" – is a very complex emblem because it brings together the topics of the philosophical discussion of *vita activa* versus *vita contemplativa* (1a), Cicero's ethics

124 Emphasis mine.

of the Roman statesman (1b), antiquity's concept of fame and glory achieved through praise in literature (2), and the recognition of philosophers and intellectuals by their fellow men, viz. the lack of it (3). Vaenius picked up the motto from the commonplace book *Sententiae et proverbia ex poetis Latinis* (p. 212). It originally comes from Cicero's *De officiis* (1, 19) and is part of the discussion of active vs. contemplative life. After Cicero has emphasized that the desire for knowledge and truth is a basic need of man, he balances it from the perspective of the Roman statesman: 'But if one would be averted from politics by intellectual pursuit, it would be negligence of one's duty: because all praiseworthy aspects of virtue consist of action.' Thus, Vaenius's motto represents a strong recommendation of the active life. Actually, it states: whoever does not engage in active life will never possess virtue. The second topic is fame and glory achieved through praise in literature. In the "epigramm", i.e. two lines taken from *Ode* IV, 9, Horace promises to the addressee Lollius that he will make him famous through his verses. Horace argues that heroic deeds do not get recognition if they are not praised by a 'sacred poet' ('carent quia vate sacro'). Thus, 'Paullum sepultae distat inertiae / Celata virtus' – 'Concealed virtue hardly differs from entombed idleness' (l. 29–30). It means that if Lollius's political achievements remain unknown by the audience, it would produce the same effect as if he had led a life in idleness. Vaenius connects this topic with the status of the writer: great knowledge of a writer does not bring any result if it is not acknowledged by the audience ('Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter', Persius, *Satires* 1, 27).¹²⁵

Vaenius derived the image from Horace's 'Concealed virtue hardly differs from entombed idleness', through rendering virtue and idleness as personifications. The personification of *Inertia*, a man with a donkey,¹²⁶ is lying in its tomb, actually an ancient Roman grave tomb (such as those alongside the Via Appia) with the standard inscription "D[is] M[anibus] SR [sacrum]" [Fig. 5.11].¹²⁷ In

125 Vaenius did not use this *auctoritas* in its original and proper sense. It is not a statement, as it is given on p. 22, and it does not reflect Persius's opinion. Actually, it is a rhetorical question by Persius meant as a criticism of the contemporary poets' boundless desire for fame and glory. In an imaginative dialogue, Persius asks such a poet: 'Does your knowledge really mean nothing to you, except another one knows that you have it?' Vaenius picked up the *auctoritas* in the *Sententiae et proverbia ex Latinis poetis* (p. 121), where it is indeed presented as a statement.

126 Vaenius represents Sloth with a donkey (e.g. emblem 5) or a person with a donkey (emblem 8) or just the head of a donkey (emblem 22). For the donkey as an animal accompanying Sloth, cf. Blöcker, *Studien zur Ikonographie* 95; Dittrich S. – Dittrich L., *Lexikon der Tiersymbolik. Tiere als Sinnbilder in der Malerei des 14.–17. Jahrhunderts* (Petersberg: 2004).

127 For the formula, cf. e.g. Sandys J.E., *Latin Epigraphy: An Introduction to the Study of Latin Inscriptions*, 2nd ed. by S.G. Campbell (Chicago: 1971) 62–63.



FIGURE 5.11 Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 8 (p. 23)

the same tomb sits Virtue (indicated by her symbols of sword, helmet, and pike), hidden in the dark. Behind the grave stands a bearded poet equipped with pen and paper, obviously keen to write something, but unfortunately he is not able to discern Virtue (she is hidden in the grave). Behind the poet (i.e. the provider of everlasting fame) an obelisk is depicted as a symbol of eternal glory.

The author of the first Dutch poem gives, as usual, first a description of the image in three lines, then the meaning in a one-liner. He identifies the personifications, but he does not address their attributes:

description of the image:	Soo de verborghen Deught int donker blijft verholen, Niet verre sy verschilt van de Onachtsaemheidt, Die langh begraven is in de vergheten holen.
Meaning:	De Deughtd moet door haer selfs oft and're zijn verbreydt.

If concealed Virtue stays hidden in the dark, She does not much differ from Laziness, Who has been buried long ago in forgotten caves. Virtue must gain recognition either by herself or by other people.¹²⁸

For the identification of the image, the poet has used Vaenius's explanation ('Vides hic Virtutem et Inertiam') and also the engraved image, although he had no interest in Vaenius's archaeological ecphrasis: he obviously did not understand that Vaenius depicted a *Roman tomb* – he rendered it as '*forgotten caves*' ('vergheten holen'), thus a place where one can hide. Vaenius corrected this mistake in his Dutch poem of 1612, rendering it as 'graf' ('grave'). Furthermore, Vaenius added a comparison with two well-known instruments, the bow and the lute: 'De deught die nimmermeer en blijkt / D'onspannen boogh of luyt gelijckt / Die aen den haeck altijd blijft hanghen' – 'Concealed virtue resembles an unbended bow or a lute / that always stays hung up': if instruments are not used, they are worthless. Leo de Meyer copied this in the second French poem: 'Toute Vertu, qui se cache, / Resemble à l'arcq detendu, / Et au luth au croc pendu'. The reason for this addition could well be a special concern for the vernacular audience; however, it should be noted that the addition is a translation of the last line of the Claudian quote: 'Vel lyra quae reticet vel qui non tenditur arcus'.¹²⁹

128 Italics mine.

129 Claudian, *De consulatu Honorii* VIII, 224.

8 The Re-functionalization of Vaenius's Didactic Plates as Icons for Monastic Contemplation and other Forms of Contemplation

Liberalitas (Generosity), who appeared in the image of emblem 6, was not a compelling or important moral issue for the monks of São Francisco. Nevertheless, a beautiful azulejo image was applied in their cloister. Probably the monks did not understand that the person in the middle was meant to represent Generosity. In their contemplation of the image they were dependent on the *inscriptio*: 'Virtus consistit in medio' – 'Virtue takes her place in the middle'. This means that they naturally would have thought that the female figure in the middle was a personification of *Virtus*. One can exclude that they had the archaeological knowledge to identify the object in the person's right hand as the Roman accounting tool, the *abacus*, and to understand that the conception of the image was derived from the Roman personification of the *Liberalitas Augusti*. But it was not only the monks who had been unable to do so, the artist who had made the drawings of the azulejos had been incapable as well: he rendered the female figure as if she were looking into a mirror;¹³⁰ apparently, he took the object as the mirror commonly attributed to the personification of Prudence (Prudentia) [Fig. 5.12B]. Moreover, the artist did not understand the attribute of Greed, the toad: he rendered it as a common South American animal, the Brazilian cavia or guinea pig [Fig. 5.12C].

Already in Wenceslaus Hollar's *Emblemata nova* (made in the early 1640s) the personification in the middle was presented as *Virtus*; the text chosen as an explanation of the image does not contain a trace that *Liberalitas* was meant originally [Fig. 5.12D].¹³¹

Interestingly, also on the Mexican biombos Vaenius's *Liberalitas* of emblem 6 was misunderstood as being a representation of *Virtus*. The reason is on the one hand the motto (as with the monks of the Franciscan monastery in Bahia), on the other hand the accompanying emblematic verses from Foppens's Spanish version of the *Emblemata Horatiana* from 1669. According to these verses, the female figure in the middle was a personification of *Virtue*:

¹³⁰ Also, Alexander Globe, in his catalogue of the prints by Peter Stent, erroneously interpreted the accounting tablet as a mirror, and *Liberalitas/Generosity* as moderation: 'moderation, a woman holding a cornucopia and a mirror, stands between Liberty [actually, this should be Prodigality, K.E.], a young woman to the left throwing coins over her head [...] and Avarice'; Globe A., *Peter Stent, ca. 1642–1666, London Printseller. A Catalogue Raisonné of his Engraved Prints and Books* [...] (Vancouver: 1985) 120, no. 429, vi.

¹³¹ See the text under the image: 'In medio consistit virtus. / Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines / Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum'.



FIGURE 5.12A Azulejo image no. 3 (= Vaenius, emblem 6)



FIGURE 5.12B
Cesare Ripa,
personification of
Prudenza, with a mirror.
Private Collection



FIGURE 5.12C1 Brazilian cavia. Detail of Azulejo image no. 3 (= Vaenius, emblem 6)



FIGURE 5.12C2 Brazilian cavia



FIGURE 5.12D Wenceslaus Hollar, "In medio consistit virtus" (*Emblemata nova*, no. 6). By Petra Karstedt (= PetraK; www.Tiermotive.de) – selbst fotografiert von Petra Karstedt mit einer Canon EOS 300D, CC BY-SA 2.0 de, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1273672>

Los vicios no conocemos
 Por la grand similitud
 Que con la *Virtud* les vemos:
 Pero siempre la *Virtud*
 Se aparta sus estremos.¹³²

We are not able to identify the vices, because we see a great similarity between them and *Virtue*: For *Virtue* always withdraws from the extremes.

It is a telling detail that even modern scholars misinterpreted the personification in the middle in this way.¹³³ The painter of the biombo has done his best to express what was indicated in the poem. In Vaenius's engraving, the three ladies represent different ages: Prodigality is very young, Liberalitas is of middle age, and Avaritia is an old woman. The painter of the "Richmond screen", however, depicted the ladies with more or less the same age. This he applied as a device to demonstrate that they are lookalikes, i.e. that it is extremely difficult to discern *Virtue* from the *Vices*.

Emblem 6 was part of the pictorial programme of the wall adjacent to the church of São Francisco which contained: 1) *Silentium* (azulejo no. 1); 2) The principles of virtue (nos. 2–5); 3) *Nature* (no. 6); and 4) The avoidance of the *Deadly Sins* (nos. 7–9).¹³⁴ Thus, emblem 6 figures in the sequence of emblems that are explaining the principles of virtue. The monks were supposed to meditate on the question of what exactly it means for virtue to hold the middle position. In doing so, they surely would have considered the supposed mirror in *Virtue's* right hand: thus, it is prudence, to avoid extreme positions.¹³⁵ In this line of meditation, Greed and Prodigality (the monks may have recognized them by their monetary attributes) figure only as an example. The longing to take a moderate position refers to other areas and topics too, e.g. the acquisition of knowledge (cf. *Icarus*) and of all kinds of earthly goods (as is suggested by the Brazilian colonial town with a harbour).

The monks of São Francisco in Salvador de Bahía were not particularly interested in Vaenius's concept of cognition as a precondition of virtue, which comes to the fore in emblem 5, "*Virtuti sapientia comes*". Their spiritual

132 Foppens, *Theatro Moral de toda la Philosophia*, p. 21.

133 Stampfle, *Netherlandish Drawings* 70 (no. 117): 'Virtue, holding a cornucopia and an accounting tablet [...]'; the same misinterpretation in Schreffler, "Emblems of Virtue" 276.

134 Cf. Weststeyn, "Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*" 134, note 22.

135 Similarly, in depictions of the emblem on folding screens in New Spain (they used Foppens, *Theatro Moral de toda la Philosophia* as an example) the object is depicted as a mirror – with a wooden frame, and no balls on it.



FIGURE 5.13 Azulejo 3 (emblem 5). Wikimedia commons. Von Wellington Da Costa Gomez – Eigenes Werk, CC BY-SA 4.0, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=95390393>)

exercises required powerful visual images in order to work on their spiritual progress. And Vaenius's image of emblem 5 offers exactly that, an impressive representation of the Seven Deadly Sins. The meditation of the monks should circle around how dangerous the deadly sins were, their devastating effect on the human soul, and the ways to avoid them. Therefore, the title of emblem 5 was changed from "Virtuti Sapientia comes" into "Virtus est vitium fugere" – "Virtue is to avoid vice": this title addresses the core of the intended meditations to be facilitated by the image [Fig. 5.13].

Emblem 8, which was selected as a meditative image for the cloister of São Francisco, represents another interesting case of transformation of one medium into another: the second main topic of Vaenius's emblem, the acquisition of fame through being praised in literature, was counterproductive for the monks because, according to their values, it would bring forth nothing but



FIGURE 5.14A Azulejo 4 representing Vaenius's emblem 8

arrogance, vanity, and pride. The monks surely did not interpret the emblem in this sense. Also, archaeology cannot have played a major role in their appropriation of the image, because the inscription “D.M. SR”, i.e. the indication that the building represented an ancient Roman grave, was left out [Fig. 5.14A]. One wonders whether the monks were at all able to understand that the two persons, the female and the male, were depicted in a *grave*. In a sense, the building resembles a shadowy colonnade. The obelisk too, the symbol of eternal fame, had been transformed by the azulejo artist into a church tower, which may have been another adaptation of the image to fit the needs of the monks. The monks would have understood the man as a personification of Sloth (*acedia*, *inertia*) because the donkey was its standard attribute (cf., e.g., Goltzius's *Segnitias* [= Sloth], Fig. 5.14B); and Sloth was regarded as a sin that was especially relevant for monks. The Franciscans were keen to avoid it, through participation in public life (education, health care, pastoral care, preaching, etc.). “Virtus in actione consistit” was a proper *adagium* for the Franciscans. It was profitable for them to meditate on their core business and to internalize that one must avoid laziness under all circumstances.



FIGURE 5.14B
Hendrik Goltzius,
Personification of Sloth
(Segnities) (1587). Public
domain

9 The Translation of Horace's Autobiographical *Poesis Docta* into a Typological Icon for Christian Contemplation

In his lyrical poetry, Horace presents himself as *poeta doctus*: he displays his learning by geographical, ethnological, historical, and mythological information, names, epitheta, quotations, and allusions. Although such elements are impressive, they are sometimes not easy to translate into comprehensive images. In the epigram to emblem 33, “Innocentia ubique tuta” – “Innocence is safe everywhere” – Horace takes his reader’s fantasy to various remote places of the world, to the North African desert, the Caucasus mountains, and the region bordering India and Pakistan:

No need of Moorish archer's craft
 To guard the pure and stainless liver;
 He wants not, Fuscus, poisoned shaft
 To store his quiver,

Whether he traverse Libyan shoals,
 Or Caucasus, forlorn and horrent,
 Or lands where far Hydaspes rolls
 His fabled torrent.

Ode 1, 22, 1–8

These landscapes are not only a far distance from each other, but they exclude each other: the hot, flat, and dry Libyan desert is almost the opposite of the cold region of the high mountains of Caucasus on the border of Europe and Asia. Not many of Horace's readers would have been familiar with the Hydaspes river, and that is why he calls it 'fabled': this is the Jhelum in the Punjab region, which carries the cold waters of the snow-capped Himalaya into the Chenab river. The Hydaspes/Jhelum river, however, is a historical allusion to Alexander the Great, who fought a battle against the Punjab king Porus there in 326 BC. In the parts of *Ode 1, 22*, not quoted by Vaenius, Horace came up with even more geographical and historical knowledge: the oak forests of the 'dominion of king Daunias' and the 'land of Juba, the dry mother of lions', the 'edges of the earth close to the sun', i.e. the utmost south, Ethiopia; 'Jubas's land' refers to the coastal region around Cirte (today Constantine in Algeria), which was reigned over by Juba I, an ally of Pompeius who fought against the armies of Julius Caesar. When Horace wrote these verses, Juba had already died long ago (46 BC); Daunias was the mythical king supposed to have reigned over Apulia, Horace's homeland.

In contrast with this learned geography directed toward the edges of the world, *Ode 1, 22*, is an autobiographical poem staged on Horace's country estate in the Sabine mountains. There Horace reports an encounter with a wolf, which triggered autobiographical reflection: why did the wolf leave him alone? Why did he not harm him? Horace considered this remarkable, a small wonder. He concluded that it must have been his moral integrity that protected him.

In his construction of the *pictura* Vaenius transferred the autobiographical poem into a typological representation of a Christian lifestyle. Consciously he refrained from portraying Horace walking through his country estate; the man in the centre of the image wears a beard, and therefore is not identical to Horace. Instead, he depicted the type of the holy man or the Good Christian,

accompanied by the symbol of Christ and of innocence, the lamb [Fig. 5.15A]. Vaenius depicts the Good Christian (or the personification of Innocence) just at the moment he encounters terrible monsters: a roaring lion, a hissing dragon, and a snake. He does not show any sign of fear but continues on his way. The hand gesture signifies that he abhors violence and weapons. Vaenius came to the idea of depicting the *typus Innocentiae* because of Erasmus's *Adage* 2535, "Ne spina quidem vulneravit": 'Nemo molestus fuerit innocenti [...] ubique tuta est innocentia vitaeque integritas' – 'Nobody may harm an innocent man [...] innocence and integrity is safe everywhere'. Through adding the lamb, the symbol of Christ, Vaenius transformed Horace's moral integrity into the essence of Christianity.

The difficulty of understanding the emblem, however, is partly caused by the puzzling *geographica* and historical allusions in the accompanying Latin text, partly by the fact that the quoted parts of Horace's ode do not tell us anything about the encounter with dangerous animals: the lion appears only in the unquoted part, and the dragon and the snake do not occur at all. In order to make the emblem more comprehensible, an epigram was required that offered a more appropriate description of the image, including the wild beasts, and an indication of the emblem's Christian meaning. The author of the first Dutch poem took on this task:

description	Den goeden mensch en heeft gheen wapenen van noode,
of the image:	Want sijn onnooselheydt en sijn deught hem bewaert
	Als ist door berghen woest, vol wreede beesten snoode:
meaning:	<i>De vrome leeft gherust in alles onvervaert.</i> ¹³⁶

A good man does not require any weapons, because his innocence and virtue defend him, even when he makes his way through desert mountains full of cruel and evil beasts: the life of the pious man is quiet and free from fear.

As one can see, the poet has eliminated all learned geographical, ethnological, historical, and mythological information, all names, epitheta, and allusions. In this vein, he has also skipped Horace's detailed information on the kind of weapons he refuses: the javelins of the people of Mauretania, and poisoned

¹³⁶ Emphasis mine.



FIGURE 5.15A Vaenius, *Emblemata Horatiana* (1607). Engraving to emblem 33 (p. 73)

arrows. On the other hand, he specified the innocent man as the 'vrome', i.e. the pious man in the sense of Christian religion. The description of the French poet is similar, and he may have used the Dutch epigram as example; however, in his interpretation the author hits a different note: instead of a introducing Christian patterns of thought, he renders the innocent man as a 'wise man' ('homme ... sage', line 1) with a Stoic profile because he achieved the state of *tranquillitas animi*: 'Le iuste n'a point peur, ains bien tranquille vit' (line 4). This suggests that the author of the French poem did not consider it important to express the Christian content of the emblem.

10 The Transfer of Emblem 33 into Political Pamphlets

In 1646, in the English Civil War, the image of emblem 33 appears on a broadsheet of the militant Parliamentarians called *The Watchmans Warning-Peece* [Fig. 5.15B].¹³⁷ It was used here as a warning to the soldiers of the Parliament not to lay down their weapons in order to end the civil war against the Royalists and King Charles I. In 1646, after almost four years of civil war, the armies of the Parliamentarians were on the winning side, and this is the context of the pamphlet: it urges the soldiers of the parliament 'to finish the work', otherwise they will suffer heavy losses and will lose lives, as well as the territories they had gained. Vaenius's Good Christian viz. personification of Christian Innocence has been transformed into a *personification of Reason*, as is unmistakably indicated by an inscription on his breast. Mister Reason acts contrary to Vaenius's figure: instead of abhorring weapons, he is interpreted as advising taking them up. The gesture depicted by Vaenius meant a refusal of arms; the parliamentary Watchman regarded the gesture as *grasping* the arms (to the left). According to the Watchman, the image tells the story of a 'downright man' who 'conquered his foes'; because he thought that 'the storm was over', he 'layed down his arms', but again, three terrible monsters, all marked with a capital P appeared, a 'leopard', a 'dragon', and a poisonous snake. The dragon represents the POPE, the leopard the PRELATES of Rome, the snake the 'Antichristian PRESBYTER'. These monsters threaten the innocent animals (i.e. citizens), the lamb and the deer. Therefore, the reasonable 'downright man'

137 For this broadsheet, cf. Young A., "Wenceslaus Hollar, the London Book Trade, and Two Unidentified English Emblem Books", in Daly P.M. (ed.), *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition* (New York: 1988) 161–165; Astington, "From Emblem to Polemic" 319–325; Pierce H., *Unseemingly Pictures: Political Graphic Satire in England, 1600–1650*, PhD dissertation (University of New York: 2004) 191–193; Bath, "Vaenius Abroad" 99–100.

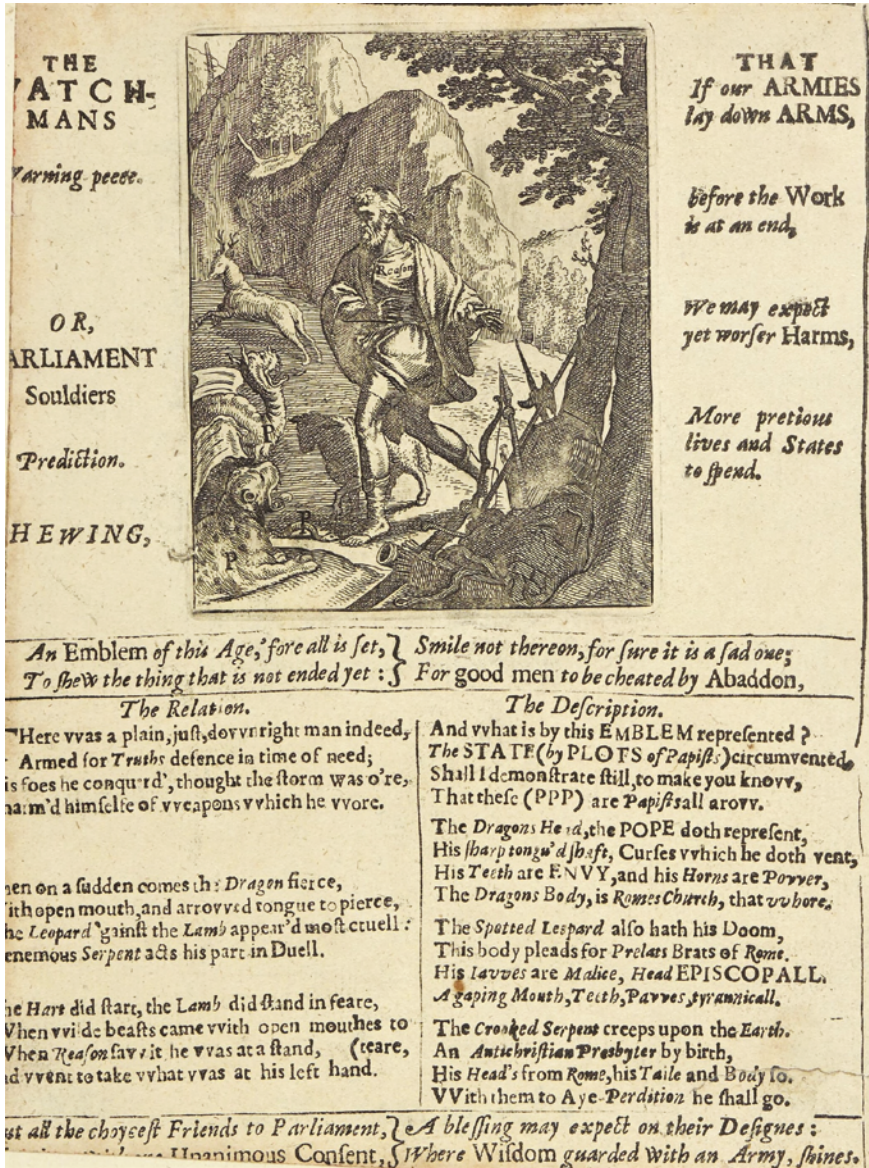


FIGURE 5.15B Pamphlet *The Watchmans Warning-peece. Or, Parliament souldiers prediction*, – 1642 – National Library of Scotland, United Kingdom (1646). https://www.europeana.eu/de/item/g1/_Resource_144784157



FIGURE 5.15C Engraving to Thomas Hobbes, *Philosophical Rudiments* (1651), part III, on "Religion"



FIGURE 5.15D Wenceslas Hollar, Charles I. on horseback inspecting his troops, 1644. Engraving, 20 × 26 cm. Public domain

did the only right thing, i.e. to take up arms and defend the innocent. A curious detail is that in the pamphlet the wolf in Vaenius's image (which was still an allusion to Horace's autobiographical encounter) was transformed into a deer: 'The *Hart* did starr, the *Lamb* did stand in feare, / When wilde beasts came with open mouthes to reare. / When Reason saw it, he was at a stand, / And went to take what was at his left hand [i.e. the arms]'. In this pamphlet the personification of Innocence has turned into a militant warrior, the wolf into a deer, the praise of Christian innocence into an adhortation to prolong civil war against the Royalists and Catholics, and to 'finish the work'. The emblematic conclusion is as follows: 'But alle the choysiest friends of Parliament / That joyn with one unanimous consent, / A blessing may expect on their Designes / Where Wisdom guarded with an Army, shines'.

As the pamphlet advised, the Parliamentarians did not lay down their arms, and finally they got hold of the king. They brought him to trial for high treason, and Charles was sentenced to death in 1649. In 1651 the Royalist publisher Richard Royston brought out an English translation of Thomas Hobbes's *De*



FIGURE 5.15E
Anonymous,
Charles I as Saint, late
17th century. Oil on
canvas, 83.8 × 73.7 cm.
National Portrait Gallery,
London. Public domain

cive, titled *Philosophical Rudiments*. The third part of the work (“Religion”) was introduced with a reworking of above-discussed emblem of *The Watchmans Warning-Peece*. At first sight, it may be taken as an illustration of true religion. However, it is again a kind of pamphlet, now printed in a philosophical treatise of an author who was a notorious Royalist, too.¹³⁸ The political message of this emblem is totally different. Most remarkably, the central figure is no longer a personification of REASON, but a portrait of King Charles, who had been sentenced to death [Fig. 5.15C]. It shows Charles as an example of Christian innocence, as a champion of peace, and as a martyr. The likeness becomes immediately apparent if one compares the engraving with portraits of the king, e.g. in an engraving made by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1644 [Fig. 5.15D]. As becomes apparent from this engraving, Charles I was anything but peaceful; rather, he led his armies for years (1642–1648) in a bloody civil war against the Parliamentarians. In the image for *Philosophical Rudiments* he appears as

138 See Goldsmith M.M., “Hobbes’s Ambiguous Politics”, *History of Political Thought* 11 (1990) (639–673) 647–648; Pierce, *Unseemingly Pictures* 192; Bath, “Vaenius Abroad” 99.

a martyr, with his head depicted as being cut off [Fig. 5.15C]. Now, his gesture means again that he refused to take up arms. The presence of the deer shows that the engraving was made after that of *The Watchmans Warning-Peece*. One may suppose that Charles's image in the *Philosophical Rudiments* even resembles Christ. Anyway, there are portraits with Charles as a Saint with a halo, and his face resembling that of Christ [Fig. 5.15E].

11 The Reuse of Vaenius's Horatian Emblems on Biombos in Palaces of New Spain

It is remarkable that for the biombos of New Spain emblem 33, "Innocentia ubique tuta", is a kind of favourite emblem: it appears in three of five known biombos, e.g. on the Dallas screen [Fig. 5.16A and B] and the Soumaya screen [see below, Fig. 5.17A]. One can imagine that an emblem that refers to the far-away regions of the world was especially appealing to Europeans who lived in the New World. The image clearly depicts such a faraway region: a remote, mountainous area with pines, spruces, and other trees in which the innocent man encounters dangerous animals, such as a lion, a wolf, and a dragon [Fig. 5.16A]. The particular way in which the lion is rendered may remind the New World viewer of the cougar of the Americas: whereas on Vaenius's engraving the predator's fur is adorned with black spots, these are lacking in the painting of the Dallas screen [Fig. 5.16A]. Also, the poem (Foppens, p. 143) elaborates on the wild animals and their moral meaning. On the one hand, it stresses the good Christian's power to dwell in wild nature without being harmed, on the other hand it blames the low morals of the ordinary people who are said to be more dangerous than wild beasts:

Este que consideras / Se vee de su inocencia acompañado, / Segur entre las Fieras, / Quando de muchos hombres no lo hà estado / Y desto no te asombres: / Que ay Fieras mas tratables que los hombres.

This man whom you see, dwells – accompanied by his innocence – safely among the wild animals, while he was not safe when he stayed among crowds of his fellow men. You should not be astonished about the fact that wild beasts are better to deal with than men.

Thus, the poem contains on the one hand a severe criticism of civilisation (which means *eo ipso* European civilisation), on the other hand a religious



FIGURE 5.16A Element 6 of folding screen (biombo) with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 34 cm (screen in total 340 cm). Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

message that advertises innocence as a central virtue of a good Christian. It is only the innocent man who deserves godly protection in the wild nature of the Americas. It is exactly these ideas that are essential for the self-consciousness and self-assurance of the colonial officer. These officers would normally be Christian noblemen, and they believed that their moral and religious



FIGURE 5.16B Folding screen (biombo) with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 340 cm. Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

superiority would safeguard their survival in the New World. One can imagine that this kind of self-consciousness was extremely useful for colonial life, and that it made sense to cultivate it through mental exercises.

Of course, such mental exercises could be triggered by the contemplation of a single emblem. However, I have the impression that the selection of emblems of the *Emblemata Horatiana* on the viceregal folding screens was not made randomly or accidentally. I believe that the biombo's selection and sequence of the emblems represent various programmes for meditation. Let us first regard the Dallas screen; it contains the following emblems (from left to right, Fig. 5.16B):

A. Ethical realism:

1. “El sabio no ha de ser siempre severamente sabio” (Foppens, p. 153, E.H. 30) – approval of leisure as part of the nobleman's lifestyle
2. “La naturaleza regula el apetito” (Foppens, p. 25; E.H. 18) – approval of the expression of emotions as part of the nobleman's lifestyle

B. Internalisation of good morals that provide independence from outward circumstances:

3. “Honesto y publicamente” (Foppens, p. 149; E.H. 27) – identity of public and private moral conduct
4. “La fortuna non muda el linage” (Foppens, p. 103; E.H. 74) – the nobleman despises fortune
5. “Accomodate al tiempo” (Foppens, p. 174, E.H. 81) – the adaptation to the vicissitude of good and bad times

C. Christian ethics:

6. "La innocentia por todo anda seguro" (Seguro entre las fieras; Foppens 1669, p. 143; E.H. 33)
7. "Seguro esta qui viviere bien" (Foppens, p. 89; E.H. 89)
8. "La Medicina del alma es la que importa" (Foppens, p. 33; E.H. 24)

The emblem of the first panel (from left to right, i.e. E.H. 30, Foppens, p. 153) is meant to trigger a kind of introductory meditation, addressing the very location of the screen in the *salon del estrado* in which all kinds of activities of private leisure and entertainment took place,¹³⁹ and in which biombos were used to separate a private space (within a social space), e.g. for religious and mental exercises. The first emblem not only addresses this ambiente of private leisure but actually calls for it: it says that it does not make sense to always be serious, but that sometimes it is wise to be foolish, and to enjoy and entertain oneself, provided that it contributes to one's health and takes place on the right occasion [Fig. 5.16C]:¹⁴⁰ the image represents the personifications of good Occasion, Folly, and Wisdom – Occasion actually recommends little Folly to Minerva, the Goddess of wisdom (and offers her her lock) [Fig. 5.16C].

This "leisure emblem" introduces a first set of mental exercises that may be characterised as ethical realism or common-sense ethics. They represent general rules of moral conduct that safeguard the nobleman's mental health and are not hard to accomplish: 1) the importance of relaxation, fun, and entertainment; and 2) the justification of having emotions (E.H. 18). Both are far from Stoicism or severe Christian ascetism. The second rule is even specifically anti-Stoic because it approves of all emotions and passions, love included, provided that one keeps an eye on their intensity and degree.¹⁴¹ This exercise contributes to the nobleman's self-formation: it justifies him having and expressing emotions, but at the same time it teaches him to regulate and moderate them with respect to his mental health as well as, of course, social decorum. That exercise is based on the idea that the expression of emotions is part of the nobleman's lifestyle. It excludes the typically Stoic radical eradication of the *passiones animi*. Although this exercise is not particularly philosophical, it comes close

139 Cf. e.g. Martínez del Río del Redo M., "Los biombos en el ámbito doméstico: sus programas moralizadores y didácticos", in *Juegos de ingenio y agudeza: La pintura emblemática de la Nueva España* (Mexico City: 1994) 133–149.

140 As the poem in Foppens's edition has it: 'Sabias las locuras son, / Quando sirven de sainete, / A su tiempo, y en sazón. / La qual muestra ocasion / Offrezriendo su copete'.

141 As the poem in Foppens's edition has it: 'Pues qualquier passion es buena, / Con su peso, y su medida'.



FIGURE 5.16C Element 1 of folding screen (biombo) with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 34 cm (screen in total 340 cm). Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

to Aristotle's doctrine of *Mesotes*. The common ground is that the idea that virtue represents the middle of extremes comes close to common-sense ethics (which always tend to avoid extreme forms of behaviour).

Then follows a set of three meditations that are more demanding and the goal of which is more difficult to accomplish. They are dedicated to the exercise of a moral attitude that provides independence from outward circumstances: they advise the individual to appear in public as the same person he or she is



FIGURE 5.16D Element 3 (from left to right) of folding screen (biombo) with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 34 cm (screen in total 340 cm). Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

in private (exercise no. 3, E.H. 27) [Fig. 5.16D]; to distrust and deprecate fortune (exercise no. 4, E.H. 74) [Fig. 5.16E]; and to adapt to the vicissitude of good and bad times, in full acceptance and with patience (exercise no. 5, E.H. 81). The junction between exercises 2 and 3 is probably that the expression of emotion unites the private and the public spheres. The third meditation builds on this:

the fact that the nobleman may express his emotions in public implies the virtue of honesty and frankness: he should be sincere and truthful, and not prettify himself, primp, and make himself better than he is, and he should not hide or conceal anything: ‘Quien vive honestamente, / Alegre manifesta sus defectos; / Y sin temor consiente / Que la Fama descubra sus secretos’ – ‘Who lives honestly / does not mind to confess his weaknesses, / And without fear agrees / That Fame reveals his secrets’.¹⁴² The image depicts a private person who goes out in public dressed in the same clothes he wears at home [Fig. 5.16D]. This kind of ethics is essentially anti-Machiavellian: the Florentine’s fraud and deceit is forbidden. This meditation provides a good conscience and a tranquil mind. It goes together with Cicero’s *De officiis* (which was propagated in the 16th and 17th centuries as anti-Machiavellian ethics for the statesman) and with Christian piety as well. The next exercise is anti-Machiavellian as well: the nobleman refuses to act as a son of fortune (E.H. 74, Foppens, p. 103); he is not proud of fortuitous successes even if he gains high positions, and he does so in the full consciousness of his nobility – a monkey will always stay a monkey, even if he wears a king’s crown [Fig. 5.16E], and a nobleman will always be a nobleman, notwithstanding the changes of fortune. This meditation strengthens his self-awareness of belonging to the nobility, and makes him independent from outward circumstances. Good luck has always a reverse: bad fortune, catastrophes, thunderstorms, ruin, the loss of palaces and all kinds of earthly goods, in the end the loss of one’s life. The exercise is about accepting these things without hardship, grief, or despair. Notwithstanding the vicissitudes of fortune, the nobleman gladly embraces the life span given to him and will do his best to use it well (exercise no. 5, E.H. 81, Foppens p. 174). If all is taken from him unexpectedly, he will not complain, but accept what he cannot change. The core of this exercise is a kind of patience, which goes together well with both Stoic philosophy and Christian belief.

The series of emblems conclude with three mental exercises that are more specifically tailored by Christian thought. The first one is “La innocencia por todo (h)anda seguro” (exercise no. 6, as described above) [Fig. 5.16A], which is dedicated to the pivotal Christian virtue of innocence. It is absolutely forbidden to scheme, intrigue, and harm other people. The one who is sincere and innocent will not be harmed by anything. This exercise in Christian innocence is again essentially anti-Machiavellian. At the same time, it is of great value for the self-assurance of the colonial officer in order to prevail in this remote part of the world, because it neutralises the dangers of the New World through demonstrating that life in civilisation is more dangerous than ‘living among wild animals’. Thus, on the one hand the exercise provides good morality in a

¹⁴² Cf. the poem in Foppens’s edition, p. 149.



FIGURE 5.16E Element 4 (from left to right) of folding screen (biombo) with a set of *Emblemata Horatiana*, viceroyalty of New Spain, ca. 1740–1760. Oil on canvas, pine, gilding, 150.5 × 34 cm (screen in total 340 cm). Dallas Museum of Art, gift of the Stanley and Linda Marcus Foundation, 1993.74.A-B. Image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

Christian sense, and on the other hand it also has the function of taking away fear. The next emblem reinforces this attitude and deepens it (exercise no. 7, E.H. 89, cf. above Fig. 5.7E). It insists on the need to lead a good Christian life and aims at taking away the fear of death: if one leads a good life, every kind of death is good (wherever, whenever, under whatever circumstances). For



FIGURE 5.17A Soumaya screen, elements 1–5

officers active in a region far away from their fatherland this means that they should not be afraid of dying and being buried abroad.¹⁴³ Again, these two emblems represent a logical sequence of meditation. This leads to the final meditation, and this is about the importance of Christian spiritual exercises as such: instead of fear and despair, it triggers a constant wish to engage in devotional exercises in order to save the individual's soul; its title is: "La Medicina del alma es la que importa" (exercise no. 8, E.H. 24). As the poem has it: 'Del alma es mayor el mal, / Y que pide mas cuydado / Que la vista corporal; / Pero el ciego en el peccado, / Solo tiende à lo mortal' (cf. Foppens, p. 33).

143 Cf. above, section 6 on "The Transfer of the Aeschylus Emblem into Other Media".



FIGURE 5.17B Soumaya screen, elements 6–10

The Soumaya screen consisting of 10 *Emblemata Horatiana* represents a similar programme of mental exercises and partly contains the same emblems [Fig. 5.17A and 5.17B]:¹⁴⁴

- A. Ethic realism: the nobleman's attitude to wealth and riches:
1. "La virtud consiste e nel medio" (Foppens, p. 21; E.H. 6)
 2. "Nada dessea quien tiene lo que basta" (Foppens, p. 63, E.H. 53)
 3. "El avaro no goza de su hazienda" (Foppens, p. 113, E.H. 62)

¹⁴⁴ I.e., nos. 4, 5, 7, and 10.

- B. Internalisation of good morals that provide independence from outward circumstances:
4. “La fortuna non muda el linage” (Foppens, p. 103; E.H. 74) – the nobleman deprecates fortune
 5. “La inocentia por todo anda seguro” (Seguro entre las fieras; Foppens 1669, p. 143; E.H. 33)
 6. “La paciencia vence los malos” (Foppens, p. 145, E.H. 71)
 7. “Accommodate al tiempo” (Foppens, p. 174, E.H. 81)
- C. Christian ethics:
8. “La pena acompana, y opprime la culpa” (Foppens p. 43, E.H. 87)
 9. “Las incomodidades de la Pobreza” (Foppens, p. 91, E.H. 64)
 10. “Seguro esta qui viviere bien” (Foppens, p. 89; E.H. 89)

Also on the Soumaya screen, the first set of exercises is characterised by ethical realism, but this time it is dedicated to the nobleman’s conduct with respect to wealth and outward goods [Figs. 5.17A and B]. The introductory exercise (no. 1) comprises the common-sense wisdom that virtue is essentially defined through avoiding extremes: ‘Los vicios no conocemos / Por la grand similitud / Que con la *Virtud* les vemos: / Pero siempre la *Virtud* / Se aparta sus estremos’ – ‘We are not able to identify the vices, / Because we see a great similarity / Between them and *Virtue*: / For *Virtue* always / Withdraws from the extremes’ [Fig. 5.17A]. After that follows the application of this ethical principle to the topic of wealth and riches. How should the nobleman behave? Should he try to gain as much wealth as possible? Or should he be parsimonious and save his money as much as he can? The programme offers two exercises, and both are tailored to make the nobleman avoid extreme conduct. The first one teaches him to be content with the possessions he has (exercise no. 2). Acquisition of wealth should never be a goal in itself. On the other hand, he should avoid avarice and miserliness, and he should spend his money according to the decorum of nobility (exercise no. 3). The image represents the negative: the rich cheap-skate who is so greedy that he prefers to wear rags, eat cabbage (the food of the poor), and drink water because he is afraid of losing his enormous number of possessions, among which he sits as a miserable figure [Fig. 5.17A].

The next set of meditations is almost identical to the middle section of the Dallas screen, and it contains the same emblems (three of the four in total). As with the ones on the Dallas screen, the exercises are meant to provide independence from outward circumstances (for a close analysis, see above). The section is extended through the “Socrates emblem” “La paciencia vence los malos” (Foppens, p. 145, E.H. 71) which exercises patience, as does the concluding emblem of the section, “Accommodate al tiempo” (Foppens, p. 174, E.H. 81) [Fig. 5.17B]. As on the Dallas screen, the meditations of this section are

anti-Machiavellian. The last three exercises of the Soumaya screen are devoted to stimulating a good Christian life: emblem 8 triggers religious fear through demonstrating that in the end all sins will be punished by God; emblem 9 is meant as an incentive for virtuous behaviour and demands immediate action – if one does not exhibit good moral behaviour in one's youth it will be too late (Foppens, p. 91, E.H. 64). The last exercise (no. 10), “Seguro esta qui viviere bien” (Foppens, p. 89; E.H. 89), is identical to no. 7 of the Dallas screen: if one leads a good life, every kind of death is good. For officers active in a region far away from their fatherland this means that they should not be afraid of dying and being buried abroad. Thus, the final exercise contains a *meditatio mortis* which is meant as an incentive to conduct a good Christian life.

12 Conclusion: The Construction and Function of the First Vernacular Poems

In his *Emblemata Horatiana* Vaenius construed complex topoi and icons with a complicated relationship between the verse fragments and the images, often charged with antiquarian learning, emblematic intertextuality and interimaginality, or other allegorical interimaginality, as, for example, with series of the Seven Deadly Sins, Philip Galle's *Prosopographia*, or Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*. Vaenius was well aware that his inventions were demanding for his audience, all the more so because he preferred to illustrate a philosophical topic, not so much poetic verses that contained ample visual elements; more than once he derived the image not from Horace's “epigram”, as, for example, in emblems 89 and 73. The pictorial *inventio* was sometimes based on other emblem books (such as in emblems 73, 89, 62, 64, and 28), very often on iconological elements and personifications not directly addressed in the “epigram”, sometimes on subordinate text by authors other than Horace (such as in emblem 89), and sometimes the common ground of texts and images is Vaenius's commentary only. Vaenius rightly supposed that his subtle web of Latin fragments and visual elements was actually a bit too difficult, especially for less learned or vernacular audiences. All this called for more traditional and concise emblematic poems, and this is the main reason why Vaenius commissioned the first sets of short Dutch and French poems (the quatrains). Through these poems he aimed at making his Horatian emblems more accessible to wider, less learned audiences, including visual artists, who were mostly not trained Latinists. For this goal, the first and foremost requirement was a concise and clear description of the iconology, the second a brief indication of the emblem's meaning. The format of the first Dutch and the first French poem is uniform, one and the same in each case: rhymed four-liners (quatrains), with three lines dedicated

to the iconology and one line to the emblem's meaning (*res significata*). This fact confirms our hypothesis that it was Vaenius who prescribed the format of the poems. It is noteworthy that the follow-up to the *Emblemata Horatiana*, the *Emblemata amatoria* (which appeared already in the next year, 1608), displays the same predilection for epigrams with four lines, and that these epigrams have a dichotomous structure too: the first part is always dedicated to the *res significans* (usually two lines in the *Emblemata amatoria*), the second to the meaning. It is a special trait of the *Emblemata Horatiana* that 75% of each poem is dedicated to the iconology: this marks the greatest difficulty and the primary task of the poems.

As part of our working hypothesis we considered it likely that the two poets were instructed by Vaenius; after the in-depth analyses this hypothesis requires some nuance: if so, the instructions must have been incomplete, short, and random, and probably limited to a number of iconological identifications. Vaenius surely did not explain emblematic intertextualities or translate Horatian verses and other Latin text fragments. And actually, it would have been a hard thing to provide complete information about all 103 emblems. This is why the poets partly depended on their own interpretation, learning, and understanding. Inevitably, this led to interpretations that differed from Vaenius's, as we have seen in the majority of the emblems discussed above. Both poets were able to translate Latin, and both were equipped with a certain amount of classical learning, although they were not very learned scholars or philologists.

If these poets delivered explanations that differed from Vaenius's constructions, these are not necessarily due to a lack of learning. In a number of cases, these changes may have been caused by the effort to "translate" the emblems to vernacular audiences. For example, in the case of emblem 64, this brought forth a simplified version of the iconology, the elimination of antiquarian elements, and of the emblematic intertextuality; in emblem 6, a simplified version of the *Mesotes* doctrine. However, this is not a rule that goes for all *Emblemata Horatiana*. For example, in the case of emblem 73 the Dutch poet was able to add necessary information from his own classical learning (which interestingly differed from Vaenius's idea that was based on emblematic intertextuality); in the case of the French poem to emblem 89, one gets the impression that the poet was familiar with the emblematic intertextuality, and reintroduced it in his epigram (whereas Vaenius had set his emblematic invention apart from its emblematic template). Even if the Dutch and French poems differ from Vaenius's interpretations, they represent a major contribution to the understanding of the emblems for vernacular readers, but also – given the complexity of the emblematic constructions – intellectuals trained in Latin could profit from the vernacular epigrams as well, which is suggested e.g. by our analyses of emblems 89 and 73.

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