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### **Citation**

Smith, P. J. (2025). Petrarchism and Petrarch's reception in Haarlem and Leiden around 1600. In B. Huss (Ed.), *Petrarchism* (pp. 117-139). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4211588>

Version: Publisher's Version

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**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

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## Petrarchism and Petrarch's Reception in Haarlem and Leiden around 1600

The point of departure for my paper is the seminal study by Catharina Ypes, *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde* (*Petrarch in Dutch Literature*), which, despite having been published in 1934,<sup>1</sup> can still be considered a pivotal reference work. My end point is an inspiring recently published essay by Leiden historian Willem Otterspeer, titled *De stad, de dood en de dichters* (*The City, Death and the Poets*), with a long subtitle, in translation: *How in Leiden around 1600 everything the world knew came together*.<sup>2</sup> My focus is on the period that runs from 1575 (the founding year of Leiden University) to 1621, the end of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621) – the ceasefire during the Revolte, the so-called Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Dutch Republic – and, more specifically, on the cultural communities of the Dutch towns Haarlem and Leiden. But before delving deeper into this, it is necessary to take a step back in history.

Ypes' study provides a historical, highly detailed overview of the Petrarch reception in the Netherlands, from the Middle Ages to the early twentieth century. The title of her book is revealing for various reasons. Firstly, the term 'Dutch literature' should be understood both broadly and narrowly – broadly because medieval Latin and neo-Latin writings are also included, and narrowly because Ypes' focus (at least for the post-sixteenth-century period) is mainly on the Northern Netherlands. Moreover, the term 'literature' somewhat excludes Petrarch's reception in the visual arts, which are only cursorily addressed by Ypes. Secondly, the title indicates that Ypes' study is not only about Petrarchism (the imitation of forms and themes of Petrarch's Italian love poetry), but also about other aspects related to Petrarch's 'Nachwirkung', which are, incidentally, not the least important. Thus, we see that before 1500 it is mainly his Latin moral-philosophical writings (such as *De remediis*, *De rebus memorandis*, or *De vita solitaria*) that are read, and referred to, always in Latin. These philosophical and moralistic writings can be found in monastery libraries, as is witnessed by the medieval library inventories. These were all in Latin. An exception must be made for the Griseldis story, which was widely disseminated in vernacular all around Europe. Ypes mentions three Middle Dutch translations from the fifteenth century and some sixteenth-

<sup>1</sup> Catharina Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, Amsterdam 1934.

<sup>2</sup> Willem Otterspeer: *De stad, de dood en de dichters. Hoe in Leiden rond 1600 alles bij elkaar kwam wat de wereld wist*, Amsterdam 2022.

century adaptations, including folk books and even drama. The first Dutch humanists, in the wake of Erasmus, pointed to Petrarch's double role as a forerunner of humanism and as an advocate of Italian vernacular as a poetic language as early as the early sixteenth century. Petrarch's reputation as a moral philosopher, pre-humanist, and language innovator continued into the seventeenth century, as I will demonstrate later.

Looking at the reception of Petrarch's vernacular love poetry, Ypes comes to some striking observations:

1. No relatively complete Dutch translations of the *Canzoniere* were published in the early modern period – this is in sharp contrast to the French, English, and German literatures, which saw several translations.

2. There are relatively few Dutch translations of individual poems by Petrarch. For the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Ypes arrives at a total of one canzone and about 20 sonnets, translated by nine different translators. Ypes notes “that admiration for the Italian poet in our country during the Renaissance can easily be overestimated.”<sup>3</sup> This is her explanation: “Presumably, national character [...] came into play here. The Dutchman, on the whole, lives too strongly in wholesome, down-to-earth reality, than to be permanently and completely enamoured by the abstract, mystical love lyricism of Petrarch.”<sup>4</sup> We will see that this observation does not really hold true for Dutch Petrarch readers around 1600.

3. These translations came about mainly through French, and so did the ‘Petrarchan’ themes, terms, images and genres. For instance, the sonnet is introduced as a genre by the painter-poet Lucas D’Heere (1534–1584) in 1565, but the model here is not Petrarch – nor is it Ronsard, Du Bellay, or any other Pléiade poet, as one would expect – but Clément Marot.<sup>5</sup>

## 1 Petrarch in the Southern Low Countries

Particularly important for the spread of Petrarchism in the Southern Low Countries was Jan van der Noot (1539–1595), a nobleman-poet who had fled from Antwerp to London in 1567 because of his Calvinist sympathies. In London, he came into contact with other Flemish refugees, including Lucas D’Heere, who in turn put

<sup>3</sup> Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., p. 57. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations from Dutch, French and Latin are mine.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> For the Netherlandish reception of Clément Marot, see Paul J. Smith: *Clément Marot aux Pays Bas. Présence de Marot dans les bibliothèques privées des Hollandais au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in: *Clément Marot, “Prince des poètes François”, 1496–1996*, ed. by Gérard Defaux/Michel Simonin, Paris 1997, pp. 799–813. The most comprehensive guide for readers wanting to find their way through early modern Netherlandish literature is Karel Porteman/Mieke B. Smits-Veldt: *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse letterkunde 1560–1700*, Amsterdam 2008.

him in touch with the engraver-painter Marcus Gheeraerts (ca. 1520–ca. 1590), who also fled to London in 1567. All this led to an extraordinary, bimedial, international production, the *Het theatre oft toon-neel*, in 1568; after its creation there immediately appeared, also in London, a French version (1568) and an English translation (1569), made by young Edmund Spenser (ca. 1552–1599).<sup>6</sup> The illustrations, produced by Marcus Gheeraerts in the new etching technique, make this book the first emblem book published on British soil, and the first book at all with etched illustrations to be printed in England. In terms of Petrarch's reception, this collection of illustrated poems is important because here, for the first time in Netherlandish literature, a series of Petrarch's poems is published as a whole: to be precise, it is the translation of the famous canzone 'in morte di Madonna Laura' ('Canzone delle Visioni', *RVF* 323), Petrarch's six Visions on the impermanence of all worldly things, as exemplified, for instance, in the text and illustration of the sixth Vision (fig. 1): a description of a beautiful lady who is suddenly surrounded by a dark cloud and bitten to death by a poisonous snake. The starting point for the text is not precisely Petrarch's original poem in Italian, but again Clément Marot's French translation. But Van der Noot also appears to know the Italian version, as he writes a prose commentary on these poems using Gesualdo's Italian commentary.<sup>7</sup>

In many ways, this volume marks an important moment in Petrarch's reception in the Low Countries. Firstly, this is because Petrarch is drawn into a Protestant, anti-Catholic discourse – as would later be the case for, among others, Marnix of St Aldegonde, who was well aware of the anti-papal and anti-clerical texts Petrarch wrote.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, it is because the translation is illustrated with Gheeraerts' influential etchings in the Dutch and French editions of the work, and with the woodcuts based on Gheeraerts' etchings that would illustrate the English edition, as well as the later German edition. I have studied elsewhere how Gheeraerts took his inspiration from a beautifully illustrated manuscript of Clément Marot's translation (now in Glasgow), and how Gheeraerts himself in turn inspired a later manuscript version of Marot's translation (now in Berlin).<sup>9</sup> The third reason why this collection of poems is important for Petrarch's reception is that in 1571 this book is published in German, under the title *Theatrum das ist Schawplatz*. In his prose commentary in German, Van der Noot gives a description of Petrarch's house in Fontaine de Vaucluse. He is probably the first Dutchman to have made a

<sup>6</sup> On Van der Noot's *Theatre*, see most recently Alisa van de Haar: *From Antwerpen to London and back via Paris. Jan van der Noot's Theatre connecting people and languages*, in: *Anglo-Dutch Connections in the Early Modern World*, ed. by Sjoerd Levelt/Esther van Raamsdonk/Michael D. Rose, New York, London 2023, pp. 183–191.

<sup>7</sup> See Paul J. Smith: *Petrarch Translated and Illustrated in Jan van der Noot's Theatre (1568)*, in: *Petrarch and His Readers in the Renaissance*, ed. by Karl A. E. Enenkel/Jan Papy, Leiden, Boston 2006, pp. 289–324.

<sup>8</sup> Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., pp. 35–39.

<sup>9</sup> See Smith: *Petrarch Translated*, cit.

poetic pilgrimage to Fontaine de Vaucluse. Meanwhile, Van der Noot has converted back to Catholicism: this means that in the German version, Petrarch's Visions are now explained by Van der Noot in a more general, not specifically anti-roman framework. Therefore, the enemy is no longer Rome, but the Devil. Van der Noot returns to Antwerp via Germany. In Antwerp he increasingly positions himself as an innovator of Dutch poetry, placing himself in the tradition of Petrarch and Ronsard. Following Petrarch's Laura and Ronsard's Cassandre, Van der Noot also creates an ideal female figure, named Olympia, who plays a role in *Das Buch Extasis* (1576), a kind of epic in German, of which abridged Dutch and French versions appear in 1579.

Van der Noot is one of the nine early modern Dutch translators of Petrarch. According to Ypes, he translated two of Petrarch's sonnets in his youth: he translated Petrarch's sonnet *Una candida cerva sopra l'erba* directly from Italian, but the sonnet *S'amor non è, che dunque è quel ch'io sento?* was translated via Jean-Antoine de Baïf's French version. The case of Van der Noot shows us that the distinction between translation, adaptation, and imitation is often problematic.

Indeed, Petrarchism can take on complicated forms of imitation. This can be seen in the poetry of the Antwerp poet Justus de Harduwijn (1582–1636), an interesting poet to whom Ypes paid only scant attention. De Harduwijn (or Harduyn) wrote a canzoniere, dedicated to Rosemonde, titled *De Weerliicke liefden tot Roose-mond* (*Earthly Loves for Rosemonde*, Antwerp 1613). From this canzoniere I take as an example a sonnet that, in terms of imitation, is particularly complicated, namely the adaptation of Du Bellay's sonnet *Regrets* 91: *O beaux cheveux d'argent mignonement retors*. As we know, this sonnet by Du Bellay is a parody, inspired by Berni, of the traditional description in the form of an anaphoric apostrophe, of feminine beauty – a description that goes from top to bottom, from head to toe.<sup>10</sup> De Harduwijn rewrote this parodic sonnet as a sonnet in praise of feminine beauty in the Petrarchan tradition. To this end, he transformed “beaux cheveux d'argent” (“beautiful silver hair”) into “blond-ghestruyvelt hair” (“blond, curly hair”), “belles dents d'èbène” (“beautiful ebony teeth”) into “tanden van yvoir” (“ivory teeth”), “grands tétins” (“large nipples”) into “borstjes” (“small nipples”) and “main courte et grasse” (“short, plump hand”) into “wel-besneden handt” (“well-shaped hand”).

Despite their high poetic quality, the poems of De Harduwijn fell into oblivion, and so did, more or less, the aforementioned poets from the Southern Netherlands.

<sup>10</sup> On this example of ‘creative imitation’, see Frans A.J. Dambre: *Twee sonnetten uit Justus de Harduyns De weerliicke liefden tot Roose-mond als voorbeelden van creatieve imitatio*, in: *Spiegel der Letteren* 12 (1969/70), pp. 24–29; Petrus E.L. Verkuyl: *Het eerste Roose-mond-portret van De Harduyn: creatieve imitatio?* in: *Spiegel der Letteren* 16 (1974), pp. 55–62. This paragraph is based on my *Lecteurs de Du Bellay aux Pays-Bas (1555–1712)*, in: *Joachim Du Bellay, poète bifrons*, ed. by Adeline Lionetto/François Rouget, Geneva 2023, pp. 353–374, at p. 368.

In the Northern Netherlands, there was little or no further reference to the innovations of Lucas D'Heere or to the poetic ambitions of Jan van der Noot.

## 2 Petrarch Readers in Haarlem

Let us now move on to the Northern Netherlands, in which Petrarch's fame received a significant boost. I focus on the cities of Haarlem and Leiden around 1600. The cultural communities in these cities were very different from each other, but because the two cities are geographically close to each other – only about 40 km as the crow flies – fruitful mutual contact was possible. Let us first give a brief historical overview. From the 1560s onwards (and especially after the Fall of Antwerp of 1585), a flow of Protestant refugees from Brabant and Flanders had started heading north, especially to the cities of Haarlem and Leiden. The distribution of refugees in Holland is remarkable: the city of Leiden mainly received Flemish Calvinists, attracted by the fighting Calvinist spirit of the young university. The city of Haarlem received many Flemish Mennonites, who did not feel comfortable in the Calvinist context of the University of Leiden. Many of the refugees were intellectuals.<sup>11</sup> The young University of Leiden attracted scholars from the Southern Netherlands, including Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538–1614) and Carolus Clusius (1526–1609). The Antwerp native Christopher Plantin (1520–1589) and his son-in-law Franciscus Raphelengius (1539–1597) opened branches in Leiden, operating in cooperation with their printing and sales outlets in Antwerp. The situation in Haarlem was quite different. Here, Flemish intellectuals, poets, and painters gathered around the Flemish painter-poet Carel van Mander (1548–1606), a disciple of the aforementioned Lucas D'Heere.

Let us first look at Haarlem's cultural community. Among the painters who gathered around Van Mander, Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) is important for Petrarch's reception, especially because he introduced to the Low Countries the Italian fashion of the triumphal procession in series. Thus, he successively produced, in collaboration with highly qualified engravers like Dirck Volkertsz. Coornhert (1522–1590), Cornelis Cort (1533–1578) and Philips Galle (1537–1612), a *Triumph of Patience* (1559; eight engravings by Coornhert), the *Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs* (1564; nine prints by Cort), and finally the triumphs on which the other triumphs were based, namely Petrarch's *Trionfi* (1565; six prints by Galle). This last set of six was based on the six engravings of the *Trionfi* made by the German artist Georg Pencz (1500–1550) between 1530 and 1550. However, Van Heemskerck was also directly inspired by Petrarch's

<sup>11</sup> However, the majority of refugees consisted of workers, especially textile workers. See Dirk Jaap Noordam: *Leiden als ideale stad (1574–1795)*, in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 22 (2006), pp. 15–34; Jannis W. Marsilje: *De geografische institutionele en politieke ontwikkelingen*, in: *Deugd boven geweld. Een geschiedenis van Haarlem, 1245–1995*, ed. by Gineke van de Ree-Scholten, Hilversum 1995, pp. 19–45, at pp. 25f.

text, as is evidenced by his *Triumph of Chastity* (fig. 2) and *Triumph of Fame* (fig. 3). The heroes depicted by Van Heemskerck were absent in Pencz' prints, but they were mentioned by Petrarch: Scipio Africanus is leading the parade in the *Triumph of Chastity*, whereas Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar do so in the *Triumph of Fame*. Van Heemskerck's prints are full of learned allegories and references to classical antiquity. The scholarly character of these prints was further heightened by the four-line Latin epigrams written by his friend, the Haarlem neo-Latin poet Hadrianus Junius (1511–1575). Van Heemskerck's prints of Petrarch's *Trionfi* have been imitated all over Europe.<sup>12</sup>

The poets who gathered around Van Mander were also important for Petrarch's reception in the Northern Netherlands. Of particular importance for my argument is the collective anthology of Dutch poems *Den Nederduytschen Helicon* (Haarlem 1610).<sup>13</sup> This anthology, created on the initiative of Van Mander, was composed of 89 poems written by 20 poets, mostly Flemish ones, who had fled to the Northern Netherlands. This collection can be seen as a form of community building through poetry.

The *Helicon*, which takes a poetic walk as a prose framework, was based on the prose framework of *La Bergerie* (1565) by the Pléiade poet Rémy Belleau. It contains many mentions of Petrarch. The most extraordinary example of Petrarch's presence in this collection is in its final scene, describing a feast celebrating the Twelve Years' Truce. During this feast several weddings are celebrated (although it is not specified who the brides and grooms are), marriage being a recurring theme in the work of Rémy Belleau, who also combined the hoped-for peace between Catholics and Huguenots with the theme of marriage. Now, in the midst of the joyous conviviality at the end of the *Helicon*, four actors, representing Petrarch, and three Petrarchan poets – Clément Marot, Pierre de Ronsard, and Philippe Desportes, respectively – make their entrance. The first actor quotes six poems by Petrarch, translated by a certain Maerten Beheynt. Beheynt did not translate directly from Italian but instead used Marot's French translation.<sup>14</sup> The four poet-actors are introduced by brief prose comments: Petrarch's poems are called "droef-klachtigh" ("plaintively sad"). The actor tilts his head toward on his shoulder, as a sign of sadness. The second actor quoted *Le Temple de Cupidon* in translation, the third *L'élégie à Janet* by Ronsard, and the fourth sang the poem *O Nuit*

<sup>12</sup> For a description and analysis of Van Heemskerck's *Triumphs* and their popularity, see Ilya M. Veldman: *Leerrijke reeksen van Maarten van Heemskerck*, The Hague, Haarlem 1986.

<sup>13</sup> On this collection, see Boukje Thijs: *De hoefslag van Pegasus. Een cultuurhistorisch onderzoek naar Den Nederduytschen Helicon (1610)*, Hilversum 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Together, these poems form a kind of summary of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* – the glorification of Laura, her unattainability, her death and deification, and the poet's longing for heavenly reunion. According to Ypes, this makes Beheynt the first Dutchman to present Laura sonnets in a coherent whole, demonstrating knowledge of the general structure of the *Canzoniere*. Cf. Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., p. 42.

*jalouse Nuit* by Desportes. With the four poets and the love theme of their poems, the poets of the *Helicon* indicated the new French-Petrarchan direction that Dutch poetry should take in these times of war, in order to achieve a national literature and create a unified and peaceful society. Petrarch's poetry is thus linked, albeit indirectly, to the political situation of the time.<sup>15</sup>

### 3 Leiden Readers of Petrarch

The *Helicon* allows us to move from the cultural community of Haarlem to the academic community of Leiden. Indeed, two prominent figures from Leiden participated in the *Helicon*, namely Janus Dousa (1545–1604) and Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655). To be precise, the still-young Heinsius dedicates a poem to the elder Dousa, his mentor. This poem is followed by one by Dousa, dedicated to his pupil Heinsius.

Janus Dousa was of noble birth, a diplomat, and commander during the Spanish siege of Leiden in 1574. He was part of the preparatory committee that was set up when Leiden University was founded in 1575. He succeeded the aforementioned Hadrianus Junius as historian of the States of Holland. He had a huge intellectual international network, made visible in his 'album amicorum'.<sup>16</sup> In it are the names of Jean Dorat (with whom he stayed in Paris) and Jean-Antoine de Baïf. This network enabled him to bring in a luminary like Justus Lipsius as a professor at the new university and, when Lipsius returned to Leuven, to attract his successor, Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540–1609).

Dousa wrote in Latin. He translated poems by Ronsard into Latin, and he also adapted two poems by Petrarch from Italian into Latin. One of those poems, sonnet *S'amor non è, che dunque è quel ch'io sento?*, has in Dousa's Latin translation as its opening verse: "Esse quid hoc dicam, quod sentio?" This sonnet was very popular among early modern translators,<sup>17</sup> and it seems to have functioned as a standard master test for translators. In Dutch, this sonnet was translated by Jan van der Noot and Amsterdam poet Roemer Visscher (1547–1620).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For a further interpretation of the final scene of the *Helicon*, see my *Paix et poésie en pays d'exil. Les réfugiés flamands lecteurs de la Pléiade*, in: *Chemins de l'exil, havres de paix. Migrations d'hommes et d'idées au XVIIe siècle*, ed. by Jean Balsamo/Chiara Lastra-Ioli, Paris 2010, pp. 289–301.

<sup>16</sup> See Chris Heesakkers: *Een netwerk aan de basis van de Leidse universiteit. Het album amicorum van Janus Dousa [...]*, Leiden 2000.

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, Giacomo Comiati: *Translating Petrarch's Vernacular Poems in Latin in Early-Modern Italy*, in: 'Gelehrte Liebesnöte' – Lateinischer Petrarkismus der Frühen Neuzeit, ed. by Beate Hintzen, Berlin, Boston 2022, pp. 215–238, who mentions five Latin translations.

<sup>18</sup> Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., p. 77.

Dousa's library was auctioned off after his death. The printed catalogue of this auction has survived.<sup>19</sup> It lists three important parts of Petrarch's work, that is, his Latin poetry, his Letters, and his Italian poetry. This indicates the breadth of Dousa's reading of Petrarch:

*Francisci Petrarcae Poemata universa quae quidem Latine scripta.* Basileae.  
*Franc. Petrarcae opus Epistolarum.* Lugd. 1601.  
*Il Petrarcha con la spositione di M. Giovanni Andrea Gesualdo,* Venetijs, 53.

Also of interest to our argument is that Dousa was a close friend of Jan van Hout (1542–1609), city councillor of Leiden and one of Dousa's fellow fighters during the Spanish siege. As a co-founder of Leiden University, Van Hout was responsible for organising the allegorical procession that opened the university on 8 February 1575 – I will come back to the Petrarchan echoes in this procession. Van Hout was an influential poet and poetical theorist who had a particular interest in contemporary innovative French literature. He introduced a number of important poetic innovations concerning the versification of Dutch poetry. He also played a role in the purification of the Dutch language. He was the first in the world to translate texts by Montaigne (already in 1585), and he also translated several poems by Petrarch, only one of which has survived.<sup>20</sup>

The third important figure to be mentioned is Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655). Daniel Heinsius had gained international fame as a humanist scholar and literary theorist. As a student, he was the pupil of both Dousa and Scaliger. Early in his career, he wrote a large number of Dutch and Latin poems. Of interest for our argument are the *Nederduytsche poemata* published in 1616, a collection edited by Heinsius' friend Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660). In his preface, Scriverius presented Heinsius' poems as an example of a new Dutch-language poetry based on classical and modern models. In it, Petrarch is also mentioned as a model:

De Italianen sijn de eerste, die in onse tijdt de gheleertheit, ende by nae teenemael vervallen sprake der Romeynen, weder opgehoubt, ende verciert hebben: maer hebben daerentusschen niet vergeten haer eyghen. De gheleerde Petrarcha, die soo veel in 't Latijn ghedaen en beschreven hadde, heeft driemael grooter eer in sijn moeders tale behaelt, ende is veel meer bekent gheworden door zijn Toscaenschen sanck, als door alle het gheen dat hy aen den dach gebrocht heeft.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Catalogus librorum Iani ac Georgii Dousarum (piae memoriae) Filiorum Iani Dousae, Domini in Noortwijck [...]*, Leiden 1604.

<sup>20</sup> Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., p. 75. On the importance of Van Hout, see Karel Bostoën: *Hart voor Leiden. Jan van Hout (1542–1609), stadssecretaris, dichter en vernieuwer*, Hilversum 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted by Ypes: *Petrarca in de Nederlandse letterkunde*, cit., p. 158.

The Italians have been the first in our time to rebuild, and illustrate, the learned and almost lost language of the Romans, but they have not forgotten their own language in the process. The scholar Petrarch, who wrote so much in Latin, has won three times as many honours in his mother tongue, and has become far more famous for his Tuscan poems than anything else he has written.

Truly Petrarchan in inspiration is the emblem book Heinsius wrote as a student and published in 1601 under the title *Quaeris quid sit amor*.<sup>22</sup> In fact, this book of 24 emblems – the first Dutch emblem book of profane love – was a Leiden ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’. The 24 illustrations were produced by the well-known painter Jacques de Gheyn (1565–1629). Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), who was studying in Leiden at the time and would later become internationally famous as a jurist, provided the sententiae in Latin, as well as the French and Italian mottos. Heinsius added an eight-line Dutch poem to each print. This elegantly published booklet was intended as a gift book for wealthy youngsters, la jeunesse dorée, especially girls. Hence, this booklet is printed in civilité, a typeface intended for female readers. And therefore this Leiden booklet was printed in Amsterdam, where there were more well-to-do girls compared with Leiden. With this collection, Heinsius showed his interest in the emblematic genre created by Alciato. The third edition of this emblem book has a title in three languages, *Afbeeldinge van minne. Emblemata amatoria. Emblemes d’amour*. The Latin title became the generic name for the genre of the love emblem, which was extremely popular in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century and was practised by Otto Vaenius, P.C. Hooft, Jacob Cats, Herman Hugo, and many other poets who in their youth devoted themselves to the theme of love, both secular and religious.

Combining emblematics with Petrarchan love discourse, Heinsius and De Gheyn follow the example of Maurice Scève’s *Délie, objet de plus haulte vertu* (1544). Indeed, *Délie* is an important source of inspiration for this emblem book, as can be exemplified by comparing the illustrated poem *Mon mal me suit* (fig. 4) with the corresponding emblem from Scève’s *Délie*, no. 35 (fig. 5). Heinsius’ version is much more Petrarchan in the sense that almost every line contains one or two Petrarchan paradoxes:

Mon mal me suit  
 Het gene dat ick vlie dat moet ick selve draegen,  
 Ick voere waer ick gae het geen dat my doet klaegen.  
 Ick wend’ my hier end’ daer, ick ben noch even blendt.  
 Ick gae, ick keer, ick kom, ’tbeginsel is het endt.  
 ’Tsy dat ick blijde ben, ’tsy dat ick ben verbolgen,  
 Het gene dat ick vlie, dat moet ick selve volgen.

<sup>22</sup> Theocritus a Ganda [pseudonym of Daniel Heinsius], *Quaeris quid sit Amor* [...], Amsterdam 1601.

Daer ick gae is mijn liefd', ick moeder doch wel aen,  
Ick most my selven eerst, woud' ick mijn brandt ontgaen.<sup>23</sup>

This is my translation in prose:

That which I flee, I have to carry myself.  
I take what I complain about everywhere with me.  
I go then here, then there, but remain equally blind.  
I go, turn around, come back; the beginning is also the end.  
Whether I am happy or outraged,  
that from which I flee I must follow myself.  
Where I go is my love. I cannot do otherwise,  
first I must flee myself before I lose the fire.

To what extent can Heinsius' emblem book indeed be called Petrarchan? Researchers of the Utrecht Emblem Project have tried to formulate an answer to this question.<sup>24</sup> To this end, they have identified a list of Petrarchan motifs that are based on the introductory pages of Leonard Forster's book *The Icy Fire*.<sup>25</sup> From this list, I have included here in simplified form the motifs that are applicable to Heinsius' emblems, with the number of occurrences in the right-hand column:

Petrarchan motifs	Occurrences
Physical and spiritual perfection, described in hyperbolic terms	2
Iconographical description of her individual beauties	1
Scenery in which the lover wanders, to meditate upon his love or to forget it	1
Location of the first meeting	1
Location of the first embrace, usually a garden, grove, or grotto	1
Interpenetration of pleasure and pain	15
Freedom-servitude paradox	5
Confused senses	1
Sens of individuality is lost	1
Scorn of women who keep their lovers dangling forever	1
The lady is unkind, the lover in pain	2
Lover begs for the beloved to be struck with love	1
Physical effects of love	1
Flames as a symbol of love	8
If the lover's longing is not fulfilled, he dies	1

<sup>23</sup> I quote from the digital edition made by the Utrecht Emblem Project: <https://emblems.hum.uu.nl/he1616047.html> (13 March 2024).

<sup>24</sup> [https://emblems.hum.uu.nl/he1608\\_petrarchist\\_motives.html](https://emblems.hum.uu.nl/he1608_petrarchist_motives.html) (13 March 2024).

<sup>25</sup> Leonard Forster: *The Icy Fire. Five Studies in European Petrarchism*, Cambridge 1969, pp. 8–23.

It is death to be parted and death to be joined	1
The lover longs for death as bringing an end to the lover's sorrows	1
Lovers feel dead while alive	2
Death signifying the (male) orgasm	1
System of correspondences between the beloved and cosmic phenomena	3

There are undoubtedly methodological criticisms to be made of this list,<sup>26</sup> but it provides an insightful overview of the Petrarchan content of Heinsius' emblem book.

This book, created in the context of Leiden University, marks the beginning of a new movement within Petrarchism in the Northern Netherlands. The Petrarchan love poetry and emblematics that almost all Dutch poets practised in their youth would, in a few special cases, gain a depth in the later work of those poets from the 1630s onwards. I am thinking in particular of the poets P.C. Hooft and Constantijn Huygens, whose personal experiences of love and mourning found direct inspiration in Petrarch's poems, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Ypes.

That Petrarch is widely read in Leiden is also evident from the stock catalogues of the international publishing house Bibliopolium Commelinianum, printed in Leiden by Jan Claesz van Dorp. These are the Petrarchan titles in Commelinus' 1606 catalogue:

*De republica optime administranda liber, & de officijs & virtutibus Imperatorijs.*

*De officio Religiosorum libri duo, & de vera sapientia, in 16.*

*Rerum memorandarum libri 4, in 16.*

*Opuscula historica, in 16. Bernae*

*De contempu mundi colloquiorum liber, quem secretum suum inscripsit de VII Psalmis poenitentialibus, in 16.*

*De Remedijs utriusque fortunae liber, in 16.<sup>27</sup>*

Elsewhere in this catalogue one also finds an edition of Petrarch's letters: *Francisci Petrarchae Epistolae*. Lugdunum apud Samuelem Crispinum, 1601.

One year later, in the 1607 catalogue, we encounter the following titles, now with indications of the year of printing:

*Francisci Petrarchae de Remedijs vtriusque Fortunae libri 2. Bernae, 1605.*

*Ejusdem Rerum memorandarum libri 4. Ibidem, 1604.*

*Ejusdem de Contemptu Mundi. Idem, 1600.*

*Ejusdem de Vita Solitaria. Ibidem, 1600.*

<sup>26</sup> For instance, some motives could have more textual impact (in terms of numbers of words and of lines) than others, and there are motives that could be present in combined form.

<sup>27</sup> *Plurimorum insignium librorum Commelinianorum [...] catalogus*, Leiden 1606, n.p.

Ejusdem de *Republica optime administranda*. Ibidem, 1602.<sup>28</sup>

It is striking that these are very recent editions, all from Bern and all printed between 1600 and 1604. These books had most likely been purchased at the Frankfurt Book Fair. There appears to have been a certain demand for Petrarch's works, because within one year two works appear to have been sold, four remain unsold, and the stock is renewed with two new works.

It is also striking that Commelinus apparently has little interest in Petrarch's Italian poetry. In the stock catalogue of 1609, I found only the mention of an old edition from 1524, under the entry *Il Petrarcha di nuovo ristampato*. 24.

I further consulted a number of early printed book auction catalogues. Petrarch is mentioned regularly in these, but unfortunately I cannot draw any general quantitative conclusions from them – as I did a long time ago with the presence of French authors and poets in seventeenth-century book auction catalogues.<sup>29</sup> There are, however, a few interesting cases. For instance, the 1609 catalogue of the aforementioned Scaliger appears to contain four works by Petrarch:

*Petrarchae opera*. Venet. 1502.

*Petrarcha con l'ispositione di Gesualdo* 4o. Venet. 74.

*Petrarcha*. 24. Venet. 92

*Opera Francisci Petrarchae*. Basiliae 1554.<sup>30</sup>

And Jacobus Arminius, one of Leiden's leading theologians, to my surprise, turns out to have been a Petrarch enthusiast, as can be concluded from his 1610 catalogue, which mentions four works by Petrarch:

*Petrarcha de vita solitaria, de mundi contemptu*.

*H. petrarcha con la spositionis [sic] di M. Gesualdo*.

*Il petrarcha*.

*Petrarcha Italicé*.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Plurimorum insignium librorum Commelinianorum [...] catalogus*, Leiden 1607, n.p.

<sup>29</sup> Paul J. Smith: *La Présence de la littérature française renaissante dans les catalogues des ventes aux enchères en Hollande au XVIIe siècle. Bilan et perspectives*, in: *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 34.3 (2011), pp. 185–202. Consultation (search term 'Petrar-') of the recently published database of Mediate (<https://mediate18.rich.ru.nl/>) also produces many hits, but from these no unambiguous quantitative or qualitative conclusions can be drawn.

<sup>30</sup> *Catalogus librorum bibliothecae [...] Iosephi Scaligeri [...]*, Leiden 1609.

<sup>31</sup> *Catalogus librorum [...] Iacobi Arminii [...]*, Leiden 1610.

## 4 By Way of Conclusion

Arminius' likely but unexpected enthusiasm<sup>32</sup> for Petrarch brings me to my conclusion, largely inspired by Willem Otterspeer's recent essay *The City, Death and the Poets*. According to Otterspeer, the early years of Leiden University were characterised by an undeniable poetic, even Petrarchan ambience. Thus, the procession on 8 February 1575 that inaugurated the foundation of the university was inspired by the scholarly triumphs recently brought into fashion by Van Heemskerck. The procession itself was sparse, due to the meagre financial resources caused by the prolonged Spanish siege of Leiden – limited, that is, compared to the lavish joyous entries of the towns in the Southern Netherlands. This muted character can be seen from the description of the inauguration by the city historian Jan Jansz. Orlers (1570–1646),<sup>33</sup> and an anonymous detailed illustration of the procession (fig. 6). This illustration shows that besides a number of allegorical figures on horseback, only two allegorical vehicles are depicted – a boat with Apollo and the nine Muses, and a chariot drawn by horses with the allegorical figure Scriptura, accompanied by the four apostles. However, these vehicles are of great importance to the identity of the university, which was based on the Bible and poetry. Although these two vehicles are not directly derived from Van Heemskerck, it seems very likely that the idea of a triumphal procession was inspired by Van Heemskerck's triumphs. It is likely that the two poets Van Hout and Dousa had a hand in this. Van Hout, as mentioned, was responsible for the composition and organisation of the procession. And his friend Dousa was, as we have seen, the successor to Junius, who wrote the Latin subscriptions to Van Heemskerck's engravings.

Also the inaugural address with which the theologian Louis Capel (Capellus) opened the academic year in July 6, 1575 has, according to Otterspeer, a Petrarchan echo. Capel based his speech on the image of the conjunction of bow and lyre, of war and art – a 'coincidentia oppositorum' that Petrarch himself also had used in his laurel oration in Rome. This conjunction corresponds to the double talents of Minerva, as represented since 1581 in the great seal of the university: a reading Minerva holding a book in one hand, and in her other a shield, resting on the ground (figs. 7 and 8).

Another possible but rather distant Petrarchan echo can be heard in Van Hout's frequent recourse to the number 4, which was, according to Otterspeer, a leading structural principle for Petrarch. The significance of the number 4 is evident in Van Hout's layout of the university's four academic institutions: the Library, the Hortus 'academicus' or botanicus, the Anatomical Theatre, and the Fencing School, which was also an engineering school. Both the Hortus botanicus, set up by Carolus Clusius in 1590, and Lipsius' eulogy of gardening in the second part

<sup>32</sup> This enthusiasm is likely but not proven, because the presence of a book or author in a library does not automatically imply that the owner of the library has read it.

<sup>33</sup> Jan Jansz. Orlers: *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, Leiden 1641, pp. 190f.

of his *De constantia* (1583) could have been inspired by Petrarch's garden descriptions, which were based on a 'coincidentia oppositorum' bringing together 'copia' and 'ordo' and 'otium' and 'negotium', with the number 4 as the guiding principle, as can be seen in the four-part flower and herb beds (fig. 9).

And finally, Petrarch is also present in the large print collection held in the *Theatrum anatomicum*. According to Otterspeer, "Petrarch's vision of life runs throughout this print collection",<sup>34</sup> as it contains many reminiscences of the *Trionfi*, of Petrarch's hero Scipio Africanus, and of his *De viribus illustribus* and *De remediis*.

Although these instances of Leiden references to and imitations of Petrarch cannot all be fully substantiated, taken together they provide a stimulating corrective and complement of Ypes' findings, as well as my own research. Petrarch is indeed widely present, directly and indirectly, in the cultural and academic communities of Haarlem and Leiden.

<sup>34</sup> Otterspeer: *De stad, de dood en de dichters*, cit., p. 274.



Fig. 1: [Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder], etching in: Jan van der Noot: *Het Theatre* [...], London, John Day 1568, fol. A7r  
Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, KW 1714 E 22



Fig. 2: Philips Galle after Maarten van Heemskerck: *Triumph of Chastity* (ca. 1565)  
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam RP-P-1891-A-16464



Fig. 3: Philips Galle after Maarten van Heemskerck: *Triumph of Fame* (ca. 1565)  
 Rijksmuseum Amsterdam RP-P-1891-A-16466



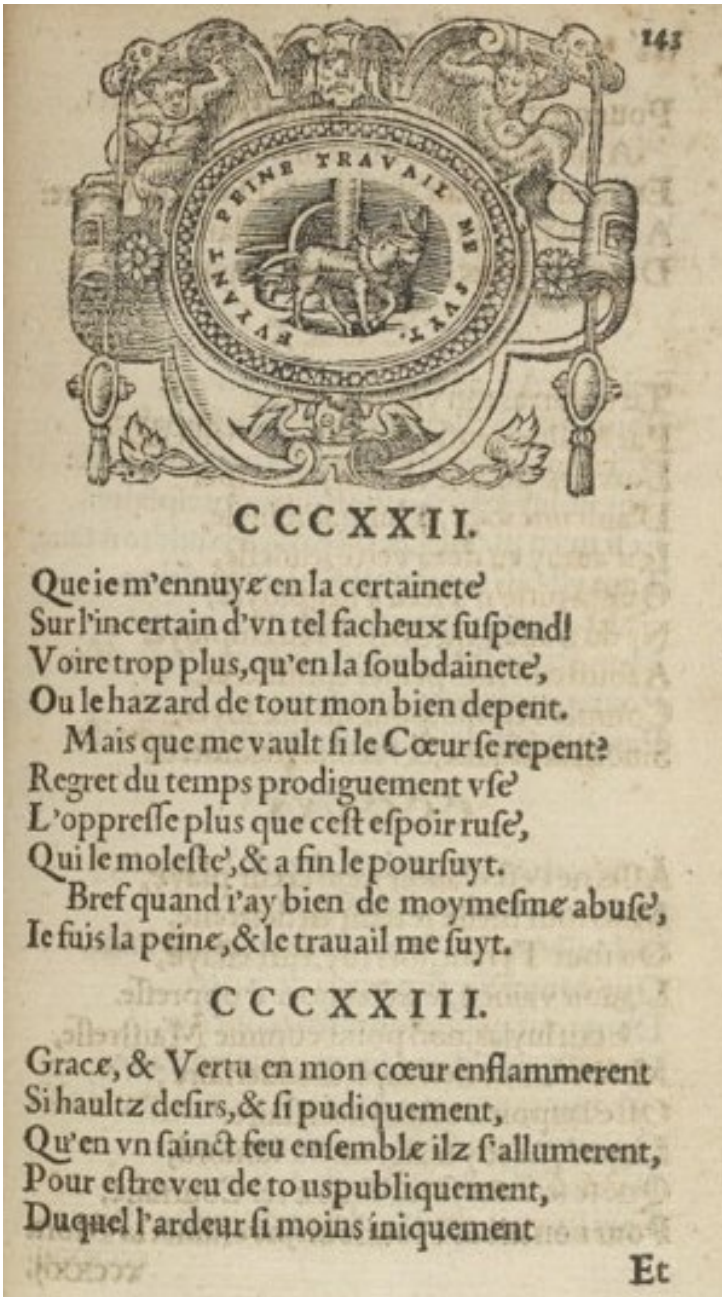


Fig. 5: Maurice Scève: *Délie, objet de plus haulte vertu*, Lyon 1544  
 Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, Rés 355912



Fig. 6: Anonymous: *Parade at the Inauguration of Leiden University* (1575)  
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-79.613



Fig. 7: Great Seal of Leiden University (1581)

<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/dossiers/rembrandt-en-de-universiteit-leiden/zevendoecken/minerva-in-haar-studeerkamer>

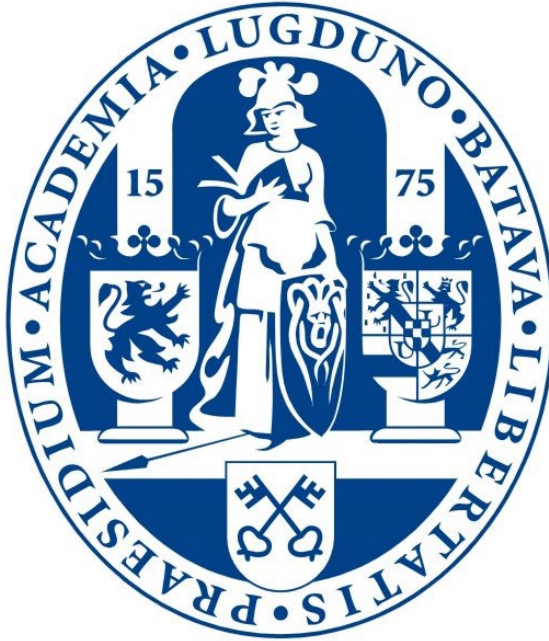


Fig. 8: Logo Leiden University

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Leiden\\_University\\_seal.svg](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Leiden_University_seal.svg)

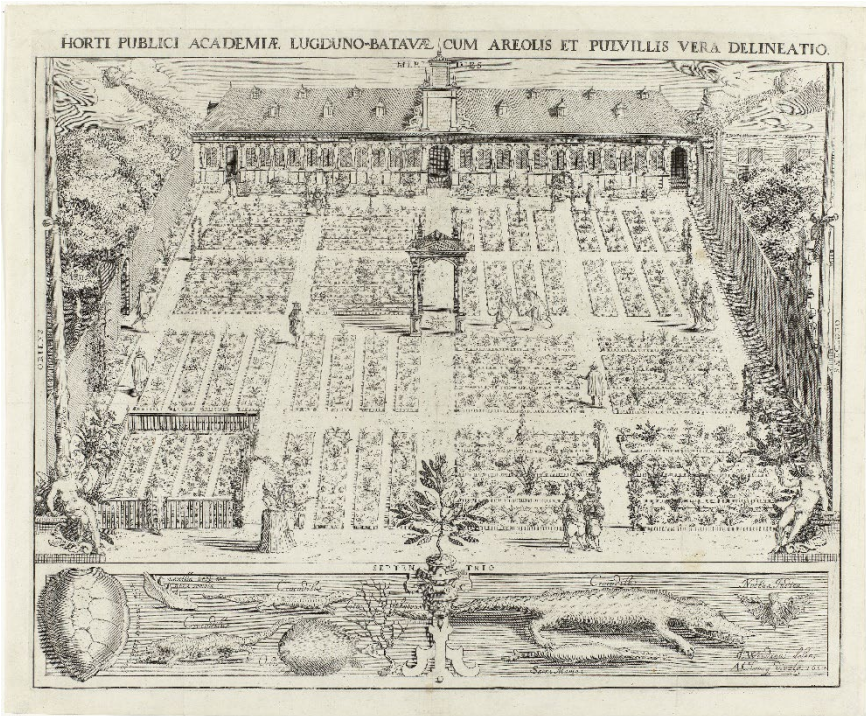


Fig. 9: Willem Isaacsz. van Swanenburg after Jan Cornelisz. van 't Woudt: *Horti publici academiae Lugduno-Batavae cum areolis et pulvillis vera delineatio* (1610)  
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-1893-A-18089