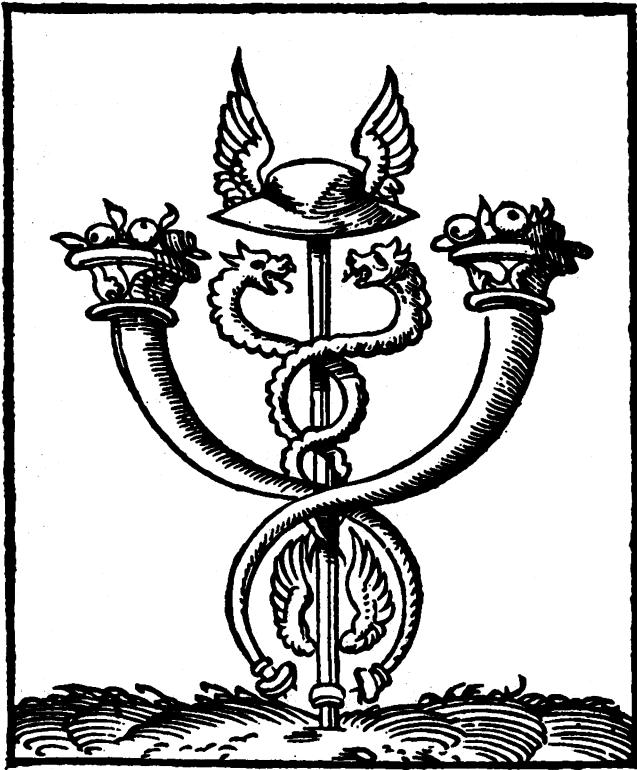


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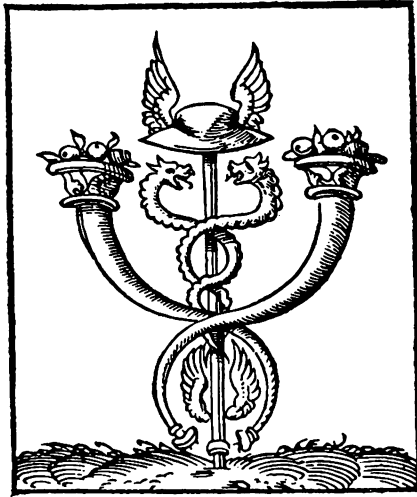
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Editors

**Peter M. Daly**

**Daniel S. Russell**

**John Manning**

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# Emblem Types in Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Nucleus Emblematum*

DIETMAR PEIL  
*Universität München*

With its total of 200 emblems, Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Nucleus Emblematum*, published in two volumes in 1611 and 1613, is without a doubt one of the most important emblem collections by a German author.<sup>1</sup> Although this collection ranks as a "masterpiece of the genre,"<sup>2</sup> it has so far not received the scholarly attention which it

1. A version of this paper was read at the conference *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory (1500-1700)* held at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, May 1-3, 1992.
2. Carsten-Peter Warncke in Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Sinn-Bilder. Ein Tugendspiegel*, ed. Carsten-Peter Warncke, *Die bibliophilen Taschenbücher*, 378 (Dortmund: Harenberg, 1983), postscript, p. 430 ("Spitzenwerk der Gattung"); cf. postscript, p. 425: "model example of the art of the emblem" [Musterbeispiel der Emblematik]; cf. preface, p. 7: "the most beautiful example of the whole genre" [schönstes Beispiel der ganzen Gattung]. Warncke adds a short commentary with a translation of motto and *subscriptio* to each emblem. The French translations of the 100 epigrams in the first part of Rollenhagen's work are quoted from Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum selectissimorum* (Cologne and Arnheim, 1611; repr. in the series: "Emblematisches Cabinet," Hildesheim and New York: Olms, 1985); the French epigrams of the second part are quoted from Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Selectorum emblematum centuria secunda* (Arnheim and Utrecht, 1613). Both parts are reprinted together in the series: *Les recueils d'emblèmes et les traités de physiognomie de la Bibliothèque Inter-universitaire de Lille*, 4 (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989).—I am indebted to Gabriele Knappe (Bamberg) for the translation of my original German version.

deserves.<sup>3</sup> In the main part of my paper I will attempt a detailed analysis of the different conceptions of the *pictura* in order then to draw up a suitable classification of types. Moreover, I want to take a fresh look at the interaction of word and picture, taking into consideration the anonymous French translation of the epigrams. With regard to a comparison to contemporary *impresa* and emblem theory, with which Rollenhagen was certainly familiar, I will have to confine myself to a few remarks in the final section.

When dealing with the problem of different principles for the design of the emblematic *pictura*, scholars have up to now mainly concentrated on possible deviations between emblematic theory and practice.<sup>4</sup> Albrecht Schöne was one of the first to consider the problem of different emblem types. He differentiated between distinct emblem types by supposing an "ideal type of the basic form of the emblem"<sup>5</sup> which is characterized by the potential facticity of its image content. From this basic form Schöne sets apart, but does not further define, the "allegorical variant."<sup>6</sup> Here it is not now the represented event in itself that deserves credibility, but only its content. A third type, the "hieroglyphic variant of the emblem,"<sup>7</sup> is established by an argument which is ultimately derived from a

3. Apart from Warncke's comments, which at times have to be considered with a critical eye, there is only one more relevant contribution: Wolfgang Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter emblematischer Auslegungen und die Rolle des Lesers Gabriel Rollenhagens Epigramme," in *Deutsche Barocklyrik*, ed. Martin Bircher and Alois M. Haas (Bern and Munich: Francke, 1973), pp. 49-64.
4. Cf., e. g., Dieter Sulzer, "Zu einer Geschichte der Emblemtheorien," *Euphorion*, 64 (1970), 23-50; Hartmut Freytag, "Die Embleme in Ludwigsburg und Gaarz vor dem Hintergrund zeitgenössischer Emblemtheorie," in *Außerliterarische Wirkungen barocker Emblembücher. Emblematisches in Ludwigsburg, Gaarz und Pommersfelden*, ed. Wolfgang Harms and Hartmut Freytag (Munich: Fink, 1975), pp. 19-39; Dietmar Peil, *Zur 'angewandten Emblematis' in protestantischen Erbauungsbüchern. Dillherr - Arndt - Francisci - Scriver*, "Beihefte zum Euphorion," 11 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1978), passim.
5. Albrecht Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock*, 2nd. ed. (Munich: Beck, 1968), p. 30 ("idealtypischen emblematischen Grundform").
6. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, p. 30 ("allegorische Spielart").
7. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, p. 38 ("hieroglyphische Spielart des Emblems").

critical study of the sources. It must be granted that this last type can be seen as a special form of the allegorical emblem even though Schöne claims that in this variant the "potential facticity [is], as it were, obscured, mystified, lifted onto an enigmatic level of abstraction."<sup>8</sup> Peter M. Daly, on the other hand, differentiates according to the mode of thought which takes effect in the respective cases. Thus he arrives at "three broad groupings: typological, hieroglyphic and allegorical."<sup>9</sup> The typological variant corresponds to Schöne's ideal type of the emblem. The hieroglyphic form is "a meaningful arrangement of motifs to present visually a piece of . . . wisdom,"<sup>10</sup> and due to its inorganic combination, its "facticity" is in doubt. Therefore it follows that Daly's hieroglyphic form can be approximated to Schöne's allegorical variant. According to Daly the allegorical mode of thought takes effect:

where the emblem-writer employs an existing pictorial generalization, such as a personification, to illustrate a general truth, which is not rendered specific in any way. In such instances the complete concept is anticipated, indeed, fully stated in the picture, with the result that . . . pictorial representation and textual elucidation operate on the same intellectual plane and no development may be observed.<sup>11</sup>

Since it is not possible for me to examine in this paper Daly's stimulating thoughts on the differentiation between "the typological use of a classical motif and its allegorical employment"<sup>12</sup> more thoroughly, I would like to replace the classifications of types presented above with my own attempt at such a classification.

8. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, p. 38 ("potentielle Faktizität . . . gleichsam verdunkelt, verrätselt, auf eine ängstliche Abstraktionsstufe gehoben").
9. Peter M. Daly, *Emblem Theory. Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre*, Wolfenbüttler Forschungen, 9 (Nendeln: Kraus Thompson Organization, 1979), p. 80.
10. Daly, *Emblem Theory*, p. 84.
11. Daly, *Emblem Theory*, p. 92.
12. Daly, *Emblem Theory*, p. 96.

Although I consider both Schöne's notion of the ideal type and Daly's typological emblem as a distinct formal type to be entirely reasonable, I prefer to use the term "hermeneutic emblem." This designation takes account of the fact that we have to proceed from the idea of the priority of the picture, that is to say, from the emblematic element of meaning.



Fig. 1. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I, 96.

Its semantic content, as the well-known example of Nikolaus Taurellus suggests,<sup>13</sup> is initially arrived at by the emblem writer in a hermeneutic way, and has then to be reconstructed anew by the reader through recourse to the interpretational aids provided by the verbal parts of the emblem. This type is represented by emblem I, 96, the main component of its *pictura* being a flail above stalks of wheat (Fig. 1). A first aid in the process of comprehension is provided by the motto "Tribulatio ditat" [Enrichment through tribulation], the *subscriptio* discloses the complete emblematic meaning: "Tribulat atque quatit segetes ditescere sperans / Rusticus, et nobis crux bene nostra facit" [In the hope of becoming rich the farmer presses and beats the wheat; and we are ennobled by the Cross]. The process of threshing wheat is thus interpreted as a symbol of purification through suffering. The motif is taken from everyday rural life and as such it is observable at any time; the fact that an arm, which reaches out of a cloud and holds the flail, is depicted as well is iconographic convention and therefore irrelevant

13. Cf. Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, p. 27.



Fig. 2. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, 1,39.

to the structure of the *pictura*. As scholarly discussion has shown, the designation "ideal type of the emblem" can be misunderstood.<sup>14</sup> In view of the intense discussion of the term "typology" in German philology,<sup>15</sup> it is advisable to restrict the use of the adjective "typological," which was already used by Schöne in this connection when he talked about a typological interpretation,<sup>16</sup> to the typological relations between the characters and events of the Old and New Testaments.

14. Cf. Dieter Sulzer, "Poetik synthetisierender Künste und Interpretation der Emblematis," in *Geist und Zeichen. Festschrift Arthur Henkel*, ed. H. Anton, B. Gajek and P. Pfaff (Heidelberg: Winter, 1977), pp. 401-26, esp. p. 410.
15. Cf. Rudolf Suntrup, "Zur sprachlichen Form der Typologie," in *Geistliche Denkformen in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, ed. Ruth Schmidt-Wiegand, Klaus Grubmüller and Klaus Speckenbach, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, 51 (Munich: Fink, 1984), pp. 23-68, esp. pp. 24-38; for the interdisciplinary discussion of typology cf. Friedrich Ohly, "Typologie als Denkform der Geschichtsbetrachtung," in *Typologie. Internationale Beiträge zur Poetik*, ed. Volker Bohn, Edition Suhrkamp N. F., 451: Poetik, Internationale Beiträge, 2 (1983; Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1988), pp. 22-63. More recent theoretical considerations are contained in Paul Michel, "Übergangsformen zwischen Typologie und anderen Gestalten des Textbezugs," in *Bildhafte Rede in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit. Probleme ihrer Legitimation und ihrer Funktion*, ed. Wolfgang Harms, Klaus Speckenbach and Herfried Vögel (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992), pp. 43-72.
16. Cf. Schöne, *Emblematis und Drama*, p. 46.

For the second type of emblematic form I would like to suggest the term "allegorizing emblem." This type embraces combinations of significant single elements, that is to say allegorical or still life groupings. The only criterion for the arrangement of the single elements is the meaning which the emblem is intended to convey. The problem of potential facticity is irrelevant for this type; priority of the picture is out of the question because the starting point is the



*NE TENEAR, postica cauet pars ver-tice ralo,  
Caesarem qui lae prenderet, frontis, sicut.*

Fig. 3. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,4.

meaning. With this meaning in mind, a suitable picture is chosen, and it is irrelevant whether the elements of the picture derive from the sphere of hieroglyphics or from other pictorial traditions. Emblem I,39 is an example of such an allegorical arrangement, emblemizing doubts of love (Fig. 2). The motto and the *subscriptio* tell us that it is love which is designated by the burning heart, the anchor is employed as a conventional symbol for hope, and the taut bow represents timid fear: "Speque metuque pavet calido cor amore perustum / Spes est solcito plena timore venus" [The heart burning which hot love is trembling with hope and fear. Love is hope full of timid fear].

Probably most emblems featuring personifications have to be interpreted as allegorizing emblems of this kind since these personifications are usually characterized by allegorical attributes. The personification of Occasio (I,4) is shown standing with winged feet on a wheel, the back of her head shaved and still holding the shearing knife in her hand, her wrap blowing in the wind (Fig. 3). Although the *subscriptio* elucidates nothing more than the meaning of her peculiar hair-style, the other elements are also laden with

meaning; I would like to draw attention only to the wheel as an allusion to fickleness.<sup>17</sup>

The third type is not employed as frequently; I would like to term it "exemplary" or "example-emblem." Here "example" is understood in the sense of classical rhetoric as one kind of comparison employing facts which can be found in history, mythology or literature.<sup>18</sup>

It is not always possible to draw a clear dividing line between this emblem type and the allegorizing emblem with a personification as its main picture element. The Arion-Emblem (I,10) can be understood as such an example-emblem (Fig. 4). In connection with the motto "Spernit pericula virtus" [Virtue spurns dangers], Arion signifies the invincibility of virtue.<sup>19</sup>



*Non adversa timet SPERNIT PERICULA VIRTUS  
Illa vel in medio, ne sit obre, mari.*

Fig. 4. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,10.

17. Cf. Gottfried Kirchner, *Fortuna in Dichtung und Emblematik des Barock. Tradition und Bedeutungswandel eines Motivs* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1970), pp. 21-24 (with numerous illustrations). For the pictorial relationship of the depictions of Occasio and Fortuna, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 27-33. For depictions of Fortuna in Rollenhagen, cf. I,6 and II,40.

18. Cf. Heinrich Lausberg, *Elemente der literarischen Rhetorik*, 9th ed. (Munich: Hueber, 1987), p. 135, § 404.

19. For other example-emblems cf. I,14 (Hercules), I,19 (Sisyphus), I,33 (Pyramus and Thisbe), I,53 (David), I,57 (Ixion), II,45 (Geryon), II,67 (Claus Narr), II,76 (Apollo).



68

*Suet duo qui faciunt ut dext in honore sit ars mars  
Gloria ab arte venit gloria Marte venit*

Fig. 5. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I, 68.



24

*C. ONS E Q U I T U R Q U O D C I Q U O D P E T I T d'anna sagittis,  
Et mens consequitur quod pia cumq; petit*

Fig. 6. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I, 24.



But whenever mythological personifications are merely used as visual correlatives of their respective virtues or skills, the border with the allegorizing type is very likely to be breached. Thus, for example, in emblem I,68 (Fig. 5), Mars and Athena together with the motto "Arte et marte" [Through science and the art of war] represent exclusively wisdom and generalship, two virtues of a sovereign. The hermeneutic type is approached in the Diana-Emblem (I,24 [Fig. 6]) where the Goddess of the Hunt's accuracy of aim—motto: "Consequitur quodcunque petit [She reaches what she wants]—is explicitly equated with man's certainty in faith in the *subscriptio*: "Consequitur quodcunque petit Dycinna sagittis, / Et mens consequitur quod pia cunque petit" [What she wants Diana reaches with her arrows; likewise a pious mind achieves what it wants].

Mixed types of the hermeneutic, the allegorizing and the exam-



15

*Detinet hunc non alta quies similisque sapor,  
Qui vigili, nec bras res, ratione, regit*

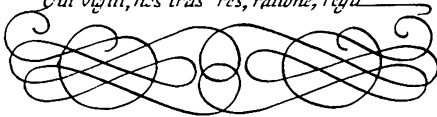


Fig. 7. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II,15.

ple-emblem are quite possible. Thus emblem II,15 features as its main picture element a crane standing on a crosier, holding a stone in its right talon (Fig. 7). This combination of crosier and crane can be considered inorganic, an allegorizing still life. Accordingly, this emblem will have to be classed as allegorizing in so far as the structure of its picture is concerned. The crosier, its identity established by an appropriate inscription, represents, according to the *sub-*

*scriptio*, the power of control and is a symbolic sign; and therefore it is an allegorizing element as well. From the point of view of rhetor-



Fig. 8. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,91.

element of meaning from the realm of natural science with an allegorizing picture element as we have it here, when seen as a whole, has to be classified as an allegorizing emblem type. Although it is quite conceivable that a crane could sit down on a crozier—and in so doing meet the criterion of potential facticity—, this was certainly not the intention of the arrangement in this picture. The crozier would have more closely approximated a “perch” had it been stuck into the ground rather than held by a hand reaching out of a cloud.

A combination of the allegorizing emblem with the example-type can be seen in the centaur-emblem (I,91). Chiron is holding a snake in his right hand and a bow in his left (Fig. 8). In an emblem by

ical theory, this crozier can be considered as a metonymy in the sense of an “actual interweaving of social phenomenon and symbol.”<sup>20</sup> According to the theory of natural science transmitted from classical antiquity, the crane is holding a stone in its talon in order to stay awake. This image can claim potential facticity; and if it were the only element of meaning, as is often the case in other emblems,<sup>21</sup> we would classify the respective emblem as hermeneutic. However, the combination of an

20. Lausberg, *Elemente der literarischen Rhetorik*, p. 78, § 224 (“ . . . realen Verflechtung von sozialem Phänomen und Symbol . . .”).

21. Cf. *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Arthur Henkel and Albrecht Schöne, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976), cols. 820f.



Fig. 9. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,19.

*subscriptio* to the Sisyphus-emblem (I,19 [Fig. 9]) gives a new, positive interpretation to the hero's fate, as it is an appeal to untiring endeavour: "Volve scopum donec, licet aegre, attingere possis, / Et frustra, molem volve revolve tamen" [Roll until you reach the goal, you might reach it, although it may be difficult and unsuccessful, roll your burden, and roll it yet again]. This exemplary quality of the mythological figure is specified by a further (hermeneutic) picture element: two rabbits are crouching in a cave in the rock. With its breeding-place on the rock, however, the rabbit is understood in the exegetical tradition as man hoping for God.<sup>24</sup> Taking this tradi-

Barthélemy Aneau, Chiron is aiming at the sky with bow and arrow,<sup>22</sup> but this is not the case in Rollenhagen's sketch. Here, snake and bow cannot be made to function on the level of potential facticity, but are employed merely because they are able to refer to prudence and strength. They therefore resemble the allegorizing attributes that are usually added to personifications.<sup>23</sup>

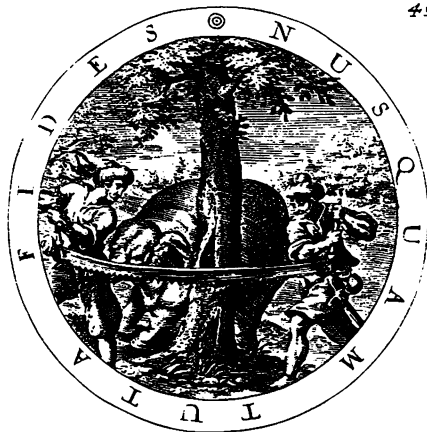
It is also possible to combine the example-type with hermeneutic picture elements. The

22. Cf. *Emblemata*, col. 1672. According to Aneau this behaviour is a reference to the combination of reason and effort necessary when striving for the highest.

23. The structure of the Chiron-emblems (cf. *Emblemata*, cols. 1669-1674) is ambiguous. Whenever Chiron's function as a teacher of heroes and gods is implied, we can consider it an example-type; the allusion to his combined human and animal nature is more in accordance with the hermeneutic procedure.

24. Cf. Filippo Picinelli, *Mundus symbolicus* (Cologne, 1687; ed. Dietrich Donat,

tion into account, Sisyphus is no longer a mere example of laborious effort but an example of the untiring virtuousness of the devout.<sup>25</sup>



*Nuquam tuta fides nec somnus tutus ab hoste,  
Qui sapit, hic cautus, nocte dieq̄, pavet.*



Fig. 10. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II, 49.

It is not only this possibility of combining the basic emblem types which is of interest in the Sisyphus-emblem. At the same time it also points to a further particularity in the organization of the *pictura*. Not only does it combine those elements which belong to different basic types but add up to a homogeneous and to some extent self-contained picture like the Chiron-emblem, but it also allows the realisation of different possibilities depending on how the main element of meaning is embedded into the background of the picture.

Apart from the relatively rare scenes set inside a building,<sup>26</sup> most backgrounds consist of a landscape which, like the background of the Sisyphus-emblem, can be irrelevant or connected to the main element of meaning in different functional relationships. Similarly,

Hildesheim and New York: Olms, 1979), part I, p. 404 (lib. IV, num. 511).

25. Warncke understands this emblem in this sense and is therefore justified in extending the meaning given in the handbook *Emblemata* ("untiring endeavour"). The French verses complement the appeal, which they express exclusively on the level of meaning, by a justification: "Ne desiste couart, de ton sage dessein, / Bien qu'il t'ayt reuſi par plusieurs fois en vain: / Car Dieu ne manque point, d'un secours fauorable, / A ceux qui perseuerent, d'une constance stable [Never cowardly abandon your wise plan even if it has failed many times; because God never fails to provide benevolent help to those who hold out with stable constancy].

26. Cf. I, 77, 82, II, 47, 57.

the foreground of a picture can represent different partial pictures side by side which, while possessing an informative value of their own, are only held together by the integrative power of the frame which the landscape provides and which they all share. In this way the Sisyphus-emblem, for example, depicts two scenes from the myth, namely Sisyphus on his toilsome way to the top of the mountain and the frustrating final outcome of his efforts which have to be repeated time and again: having reached the summit Sisyphus has to watch his stone rolling back down the mountain. This kind of combination of partial scenes from one course of action can be considered as a simultaneous depiction of events. Such a simultaneous depiction is also provided by the elephant-emblem (II,49 [Fig. 10]) which shows in the foreground skilled hunters who are sawing into a tree-trunk while in the background the consequences of this action are to be seen: the elephant has fallen over together with the thus prepared tree. Now, we know from the natural science of classical antiquity that elephants lean against a tree when they want to sleep, and that they can be easily caught when they have fallen over together with the tree because they do not have the joints which

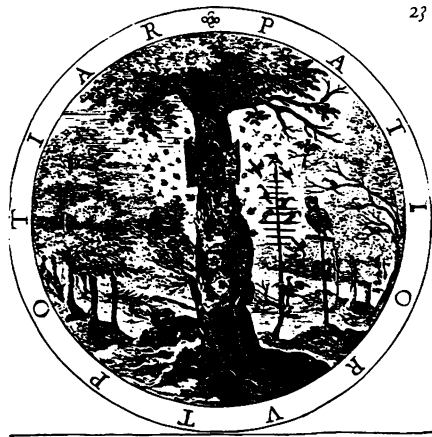
allow them to stand up again immediately. In showing the elephant as an eye-witness, as it were, to the act of sabotage, the *pictura* contradicts the laws of the logic of events; but this illogical representation must be attributed to the author's endeavour to depict the emblematic element of meaning in an eye-catching way.

Let us return to Sisyphus. The rabbits, which are integrated into the foreground of the picture in such a way as to pass almost unnoticed, are threatened with the possibility of becoming victims



*NAUIGARUM VIRE S. SOLEERTIA CAUTA SCITURI  
vincit. et in ligni cortice nare docet.*

Fig. 11. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II,2.



23

*Ut POTENTIOR Stimulus pro melle, doloris.  
 Nulle, ut mille frangit pectoris, delicias.*

Fig. 12. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I, 23.



51

*Perfero, quid faciam, NE QVOD COMPESCERE MVLTOS,  
 Si vis cedendo vincere, Dylce pati.*

Fig. 13 Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I, 51

of the falling millstone. They can be regarded as a second element of meaning with the task of modifying, or accentuating differently, the emblematic main element of meaning. However, it is also possible that a second element of meaning with the same significance



*Ut candela perit, nobis dum lumina praestat:  
Dux ita, subiectos dum fovet, ipse cadit.*

Fig. 14. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II, 31.

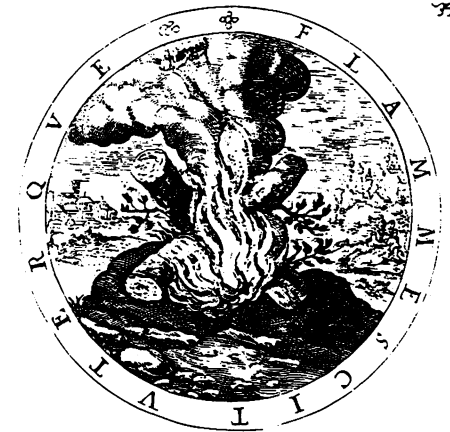
as the main one is included in the picture. The squirrel-emblem (II, 2 [Fig. 11]), illustrating the victory of cunning over power, includes in the foreground two barely perceptible crabs and some shells on the shore. This picture element seems to be an abbreviated version of a different emblematic subject, an allusion to the stratagem employed by the hunting crab: it holds the shells of the oyster apart by means of a little stone in order to be able to suck out its prey.<sup>27</sup> If this interpretation is correct, Rollenhagen has provided two different

elements of meaning in this emblem with approximately the same significance.

Elements of meaning of this kind can also be placed in the background of the picture. Thus emblem I, 23 (Fig. 12) depicts as its main picture element a bear climbing up a tree in order to get to the honey of a colony of bees while being stung all over by the bees. The motto "Patior ut potiar" [In order to win I suffer] points just like the *subscriptio* to joy gained through suffering: "Ut potiar patior stimulos pro melle, dolores, / Mille et mille feram pectore delicias" [In order to win I suffer the stings because of the honey. A thousand pains and a thousand joys I bear in my breast]. In the background of the picture we see an owl which has been tethered to a pole, with

27. Cf. *Emblemata*, cols. 725f.

several birds swarming around it aggressively. Some of them have already settled next to the owl onto a pole covered with bird lime, and in so doing, have already fallen victim to the bird-catcher's trick. This motif appears in emblem I,51 (Fig. 13) as the main element of meaning and is interpreted in the *subscriptio*<sup>28</sup> as triumph through complaisance.<sup>29</sup> In the background of this emblem, the



*Verò ardore pari facit cum FLAMMESCI VTERQUE  
Is dici meruit non simulacris AMOR.*

Fig. 15. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,34.

bird-catcher is shown at work. By this device the background embeds the main picture element in its appropriate context. Many more examples in Rollenhagen's collection demonstrate such a contextualizing function of the background. Even though the bear in emblem I,23 uses force to achieve his aim and, in contrast to the owl, is himself the cause of his suffering, both elements of meaning share the idea of triumph achieved through suffering.<sup>30</sup>

A further possibility is that a different significant picture element takes the

28. "Perfero, quid faciam? Nequeo compescere multos, / Si vis cedendo vincere, Disce pati" [I endure it, what should I do? I cannot defeat the majority. Thus learn to suffer if you want to prevail through yielding].
29. Thus Warncke, p. 112, who accordingly ignores the interpretation provided in the handbook *Emblemata* ("prudent submission to fate").
30. Warncke, p. 56, interprets I,23 as "ein Emblem der Schicksalsergebenheit der Frommen" [an emblem of the pious who submit to fate]; in my view, this interpretation does not seem to be supported by the combination of the rapacious honey-bear with the patient owl. It can, however, not be excluded on principle, but the French translation (see below, p. 278) prefers a general interpretation to a specifically Christian one.





density of information conveyed, the word is certainly better able to guide the understanding of complex information in a more unequivocal way than the picture can.

The background scenes can lead to very complex interpretations of the main element of meaning. Rollenhagen's pelican-emblem (II,20 [Fig. 16]) with its well-known motto "Pro lege et pro grege" [For the law and for the flock] has been interpreted repeatedly in the past. The *subscriptio* relates it to the sovereign's readiness to sacrifice himself for his people.<sup>31</sup> But the background shows Christ on the cross; and this scene is more than a merely suitable biblical example. Its iconographic type corresponds to a variant of the picture of the stream of grace<sup>32</sup> since the blood of Christ is flowing into chalices which people are holding up and which apparently represent the seven sacraments. The pelican is again depicted on top of the cross itself,<sup>33</sup> hence the pelican is identified as a symbol of Christ's act of redemption. The *pictura* is made self-explanatory in so far as it depicts the element of meaning together with the meaning of the emblem. Yet the text favours the political interpretation in that it identifies the example of Christ's sacrifice on the cross with the sovereign's readiness to sacrifice himself. By establishing this context the emblem also manages to remind us at the same time that the sovereign should fulfill his office as the representative of God.

The possibility of structuring the *pictura* antithetically deserves special attention. In emblem I,58 (Fig. 17) the two main elements of meaning create an antithetical tension: on the right-hand side the sun is scorching a group of plants, while on the left a benevolent shower revives the plants. This antithesis is repeated in the motto by the use of the terms *tentatio* and *consolatio*: "Post tentationem

31. Dux, vitam, bonus, et pro lege, et pro grege ponit, / Haec veluti pullos sanguine spargit avis [The good monarch gives up his life for both law and the people, just like this bird sprinkles its fledgelings with blood].

32. In this context, cf. Friedrich Ohly, *Gesetz und Evangelium. Zur Typologie bei Luther und Lucas Cranach. Zum Blutstrahl der Gnade in der Kunst*, Schriftenreihe der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität, Neue Folge, 1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1985).

33. The most recent discussion of this motif is to be found in Ohly, *Gesetz und Evangelium*, p. 57 and n. 119, with references to preceding literature.

consolatio" [Trial is followed by consolation]. Antithesis can also be employed between different picture elements of the allegorizing type. In emblem I,90 (Fig. 18), which symbolizes the transitoriness of mankind and the immortality of the soul, a snake-ring as a sign of eternity is encircling a flowering rose which stands for transitoriness. Whether this antithesis is also taken up in the background scenes cannot be determined exactly. While it is true that on the right-hand side the birth of a child seems to be depicted, the scene on the left can hardly be understood as representing a funeral.<sup>34</sup> Antithetical structure is also employed in the *pictura* of emblem II,33 (Fig. 19) which illustrates the motto "Fures privati in nervo publici in auro" [He who steals private property wears fetters, he who embezzles public property wears golden chains] by showing in the



*Sanguineant flores radijs solaribus vsq.  
Per fluvias soliti tollere sponda caput.*

Fig. 17. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,58.

foreground the splendidly arrayed thief of public property and in the background both armed robbery and the gallows. The background of the Apollo-emblem (II,76 [Fig. 20]) will suffice as a last example of the principle of contrast. In the left part of the picture Apollo's victory over the dragon Python<sup>35</sup> is represented while on the right-hand side we see him as a shepherd playing his pipes.

In order to conclude my observations on the structure of the *pictura* in Rollenhagen's emblem collection, I would like to give

34. Thus Warncke, p. 190. It is more likely, however, that the picture motif resembles Narcissus at the well; cf. the background of emblem II,91.

35. Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 441ff.



Ὡς ὄφει' ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπιωνίος ἀλλὰ φρόσιν μὲν  
 Πρόσκαρον, χαμαὶ ἐν ἐνὶ γῆσιν ἔρῳ.



Fig. 18. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, I,90.



*PUBLICI qui rapiunt FVRES, vincla aurea gestant.*

*Pro pudor, in nervo est OTI BONA PRIVA tult.*

Fig. 19. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II,33.

a short summary. In terms of the kinds of main elements of meaning, we can distinguish between the hermeneutic, the allegorizing and the (rarer) example-emblem; mixed types of these three basic types are also possible. The basic types may be furnished with different additional elements and background scenes. The background can be made up of an irrelevant landscape, or can contextualize the element of meaning; but, in addition, it can also provide a second element of meaning (above all in the form of an example) or anticipate



*Interdum ad cytharæ cantans agit oia nervos .*

*TENDIT ARCUM SEMPER TENDIT APOLLONIS .*



Fig. 20. Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus Emblematum*, II,76.

by means of suitable motifs the interpretation which is usually supplied in the first instance by the *subscriptio*. It is further possible that different picture elements or scenes relate to each other in an antithetical way or, as is the case in simultaneous representations, can be seen as members of a succession of different temporal stages.

Concerning the form of the mottos and the epigrams, whose fragmentary status has already been pointed out by Wolfgang Harms,<sup>36</sup> the first fact we observe is that, in most

cases, the epigrams repeat the mottos almost verbatim. With only a few exceptions, both verbal elements are written in Latin.<sup>37</sup> Most epigrams have the form of couplets, although in the first part we find the occasional quatrain.<sup>38</sup>

36. Cf. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter."

37. The mottos and epigrams are usually written in the same language; Greek: I,12, 43, 80, 90, II, 64; Italian: I,30, 40, 95, II,39, 71; French: I,87; emblem I,64 has a Latin version of the epigram in addition to the Italian text.

Like the *pictura*, the verbal parts can also participate in the double function of illustration and interpretation in different ways. In the case of the Chiron-emblem (I,91 [Fig. 8]) it is the level of meaning exclusively to which the motto ("Viribus iungenda sapientia" [strength must be coupled with wisdom]) and the epigram refer: "Viribus est iungenda modis sapientia cunctis / Vti qui nescit robore saepe cadit" [Wisdom should accompany strength in all cases; / whoever does not know how to use his strength will often fall]. But in the Apollo-emblem (II,76 [Fig. 20]) the two verbal elements actually convey nothing more than what is to be seen in the picture: "Non semper arcum tendit" [Not always he bends his bow]; "Interdum ad cytharae cantans agit ocia nervos, / Non arcum semper tendit (Apollo) suum" [From time to time Apollo is idle and sings to the strings of the lyre; he does not always bend his bow]. The essential message of this emblem, the claim for leisure as a necessary precondition for the performance of art<sup>39</sup> is hidden from the reader and has to be deduced by him. Strictly speaking, the information conveyed by the text is even less than that conveyed by the picture because one of Apollo's heroic deeds, the killing of the dragon, is also depicted.

In emblem I,58 (Fig. 17) each of the two functions, illustration and interpretation, is assigned to one of the verbal parts respectively. The motto states the meaning ("Post tentationem consolatio" [trial is followed by consolation]), and the antithetically constructed *pictura* is described by the *subscriptio*: "Languescunt flores radijs solaribus usti, / Per pluvias soliti tollere sponte caput" [The flowers languish when the sun's rays scorch them, in the rain they raise their heads immediately]. In the candle-emblem (II,31 [Fig. 14]) the epigram supplies the description of the central picture motif as well as interpreting it by means of a comparison: "Ut candela perit, nobis dum lumina praestat: / Dux ita, subiectos dum fovet, ipse cadit"

39. In the French epigram the argumentation is reversed. Here Apollo serves as an example for the statement that only if you take your leisure from time to time, can you master great tasks. "Celuy qui veut durer au train des grands affaires / Se doit aucunes fois reposer sagement, / Comme Apollon son arcq debandant va soubvent / Iouer sur son doux luc parmy ses Muses cheres" [Whoever wants the endurance to undertake great tasks has to be wise enough to take a rest from time to time, just as Apollo often unstrings his bow and plays his sweet lute in the midst of his dear Muses].

interpreting it by means of a comparison: "Ut candela perit, nobis dum lumina praestat: / Dux ita, subiectos dum fovet, ipse cadit" [Just as the candle perishes while granting us light, so the prince diminishes while caring for his subjects]. The statement of the motto is formulated in the first person and can be related both to the element of meaning and to the meaning itself: "Aliis inserviando consumor" [In the service of others I consume myself].

If the motto as well as the epigram are to be understood as a statement by the element of meaning itself, both verbal parts can be regarded as a prosopopoeia. This holds true, for example, for the Occasio-emblem (I,4 [Fig. 3]): "Ne tenear" [In order that I am not held back]. "Ne tenear postica cavet pars vertice raso, / Caesariem qui scit prendere, fronte, sapit" [In order that I am not held back, the back of the head protects itself by shaving; wise is the one who knows that he must grasp the hair at the forehead]. The moral which, in the declarative sentence, is conveyed only implicitly as an invitation to action can also be directly formulated as an appeal. In the Sisyphus-emblem (I,19 [Fig. 9]) the motto "Ad scopum licet aegre et frustra" [To the goal, may it be difficult and unsuccessful] can be related to both picture and meaning while the epigram, whose appellative character cannot be ignored in the repeated imperative *volve*, is clearly bound up with the picture level: "Volve scopum donec, licet aegre, attingere possis, / Et frustra, molem volve revolve tamen" [Roll until you reach the goal, you might reach it, although it may be difficult and unsuccessful, roll your burden, and roll it yet again].

In some of the French epigrams—the mottos have not been translated—we can observe a redistribution of functions. While the Latin *subscriptio* to emblem I,58 (Fig. 17) merely reports the depicted facts (see above), the French translation offers, in addition, the interpretation by means of a comparison:

L'aride plaine estant de grand ardeur rostie,  
 Se reuestit de fleurs par vne douce pluye:  
 Ainsi l'homme constant en la tentation,  
 En reçoit par aprez grand' consolation.

[The withered land, scorched by great heat, covers itself again with flowers after a mild shower. Likewise he who proves to be constant in the face of temptation will receive great consolation from it later].

Where the original only deals with the meaning, the translation also takes up single picture motifs, as is the case in emblem I,91 (Fig. 8):

Peu sert au Centaure ces membres vigoureux,  
 S'il n'a la prudence du serpent cauteleux:  
 Si tu veux d'onc vaincre, il faut que la prudence,  
 Tousiours face à ta force, vne seure assistance

[The centaur can make little use of his strong limbs if he has not the prudence of the wily snake: therefore, if you want to prevail, prudence has always to be a reliable aid to your strength].

It is apparent that the translator is aiming at a clearer elaboration of the emblematic meaning in order to relieve the reader of the burden of making his own interpretation.<sup>40</sup> In the case of the Latin prosopopoeia in the bear-emblem (I,23 [Fig. 12]) the direction of interpretation is prescribed by a mere repetition of the motto without further elaboration of the connection between pain and joy. Here the translator changes to a clear sequence of declarative sentences in the form of authorial intrusion. Having described the central motif of the picture, he interprets it unequivocally:

Celui gouste du miel les douceurs non pareilles,  
 Qui souffre patient la pointe des abeilles:  
 Qui veut donc recevoir quelque contentement,  
 Il faut premier le mal porter patiemment

[Whoever patiently endures the sting of the bees will taste the incomparable sweetness of the honey. Therefore he who wants to attain any joy must first suffer hardship patiently].

Occasionally a differently accentuated interpretation of the emblem is conveyed by the French alexandrines. Thus the Latin *sub-*

40. The same tendency is expressed by the English editor George Wither. Cf. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," pp. 57-60.



*scriptio* of emblem I,15, for example, with the motto "Dum nutrio conumor" [In nourishing I consume myself] interprets the burning logs as a symbol of complete sacrifice: "Conumor miserum, flammis dum nutrio, lignum, / Officium in damno est nil bene facta iuvant" [I am poor wood and consume myself while nourishing the flames. My service is my ruin, the good deed is of no avail to me]. The translator, on the other hand, understands the *pictura* as a symbol of foolish love:

Le bois dans les flammes ne sçauroit rien attendre  
 Du feu qu'il entretient, si non sa triste cendre:  
 Ainsi le fol Amant bruslé d'ardeur extreme,  
 En nourrissant son feu, se consume soy mesme.

[In the flames of the fire which it maintains, the wood cannot obtain anything but its sad ashes. Likewise the foolish lover, enflamed by utmost ardour, consumes himself by nourishing his fire].<sup>41</sup>

Wolfgang Harms has been able to show that the traces of interpretation in Rollenhagen's emblems "remain fragmentary and enigmatic only because they intend to initiate in the mind of the reader

41. Similar discrepancies between the interpretations can be found in the case of the salamander-emblem (I,30). Warncke, p. 70 interprets the *subscriptio* "Nudrisco il buono, il reo spengo: / Trapassa danno il fert' ingegno" [I nourish the good one, I kill the bad one; by shattering him they give him a strong character] as meaning purification: "Wie die Flammen dieses Tier nähren und erhalten, so stärken Schicksalsschläge und Unglück den Guten in seinem Charakter und läutern sein Wesen zu wahrer Menschlichkeit" [In the same way that the flames nourish and sustain this animal, blows of fate and misfortune strengthen the character of the good and purify their nature to true humanity]. The French translator, on the other hand, interprets this emblem politically and compares the salamander with the sovereign who rewards the good and punishes the bad: "Celuy qui a la teste d'une couronne ornee, / Doibt tousiours retenir pour sa compagne Astree, / Recompenser les bons de leurs vertueux faicts, / Et punir sans mercy des meschants les forfaits [He whose head is adorned with a crown must always have Astraea (the Goddess of Justice) as his companion and reward the good for their virtuous deeds and punish without mercy the crimes of the bad].

the additional process of interpretation in which the fragment of interpretation is meant to be expanded or the enigma solved. . . . In Rollenhagen's work the proper and final revelation of the meaning which is hidden in the emblematic *res* takes place not within, but outside of the emblematic trias, that is, at the reader's and viewer's hands."<sup>42</sup> This statement, which may not of course be applied to all emblems,<sup>43</sup> is surely meant as a positive judgment since after all it places "author and reader on almost the same level in their efforts to infer the truth."<sup>44</sup> In orienting himself towards the ideal of epigrammatic *brevitas*, Rollenhagen is at odds with the tendency of his contemporaries to "enlarge the parts of the emblem which provide a comment,"<sup>45</sup> but at the same time he sets himself against the postulates of emblem theory. Because the *subscriptio* approaches the criteria "which contemporary theory sets for the emblematic motto"<sup>46</sup> and also because of the organization of the *pictura*,<sup>47</sup> the emblems allow for varying interpretations and therefore infringe the

42. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," p. 61 (" . . . nur deshalb fragmentarisch und rätselartig bleiben, weil sie auf der Seite des Lesers den weiteren Auslegungsprozeß initiieren wollen, in dem das Deutungsfragment weiter aufgefüllt oder das Ainigmatische aufgelöst werden soll. . . . In Rollenhagens Werk geschieht das eigentliche Aufdecken der in der emblematischen res verhüllten Bedeutung endgültig nicht innerhalb, sondern außerhalb der emblematischen Trias, eben auf der Seite des Lesers und Betrachters.").
43. Unambiguous interpretations are found in those epigrams which make clear statements on the level of meaning (cf., e. g., I,39, 53, 55, 91) or establish distinct relations between the levels of picture and meaning (cf., e. g., I,46, 48, 58, II,31).
44. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," p. 62 (" . . . Autor und Leser bei dem Bemühen um Wahrheitserschließung fast auf der gleichen Stufe . . .").
45. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," p. 49 (" . . . Ausweitung der kommentierenden Teile des Emblems . . .").
46. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," p. 61 (" . . . die die zeitgenössische Theorie für das emblematische Motto aufzustellen pflegt.").
47. It remains an open question whether the conception of the background originates with the engraver Crispijn van de Passe or whether both author and artist developed the ideas together by continuous collaboration. For possible co-operation between author, artist and French translator, cf. Harms, "Der Fragment-Charakter," p. 57.

basic rule which was formulated for the art of the *impresa*. According to this rule the *impresa* is allowed to have "only one single interpretation or concept" [nur eine eintzige Deutung oder concept].<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the possibility of interpreting the emblem in different ways certainly does not correspond to the postulate of easy intelligibility.<sup>49</sup>

But there are also other principles which Rollenhagen does not adhere to: he is not in accordance with the rule that the *pictura* should not be comprehensible without the motto, and the motto for its part should not be comprehensible without the *pictura*. Thus the meaning of a *pictura* which explains itself by means of an additional picture element, as for example in the pelican-emblem,<sup>50</sup> can be understood without reference to the motto and the *subscriptio*. In the same way mottos which, in the form of a complete declarative sentence, relate to the level of meaning, as for example "Superat solertia vires" [Cunning overcomes power] (II,2), do not require visual or further textual aids for their comprehension. While the theory demands that the figures "on their own have to be known without the help by or addition of some words, colours or other figures" [für sich müssen bekandt seyn ohne Hülff oder Zusatz einiger Wort / Farben oder anderer Figuren],<sup>51</sup> some of Rollenhagen's emblems make sure that the element of meaning is identified by means of suitable inscriptions in the *pictura*. Thus Sisyphus rolls his name-plate together with his millstone up the

48. Tommaso Garzoni, *Piazza universale. Das ist: Allgemeiner Schauwplatz . . .* (Frankfurt a. M.: Jennis, 1619) [Italian orig. 1585], p. 97. Garzoni briefly summarizes the pertinent rules. He is quoted here as a representative of the Italian literature on the *impresa*.

49. Cf. Garzoni, *Piazza universale*, p. 98: "Vnd muß beydes Figur vnnnd Wort / also mit einander vbereinstimmen / daß sie wol vnd leicht zuverstehen seynd [And both figure and word have to correspond to each other in such a way that they can be understood well and easily].

50. The combination of different independent partial pictures also conflicts with the demand: "daß man nicht viel Figuren in einander verwirre / oder viel Wort häuffe / oder auch vnterschiedliche deutungen in einander menge" [not to entangle many figures with each other, nor to pile up many words, nor to mix different interpretations together]; Garzoni, *Piazza universale*, p. 98.

51. Garzoni, *Piazza universale*, p. 98.

mountain (I,19 [Fig. 9]), Apollo identifies the square stone as his seat by means of a Greek inscription (II,76 [Fig. 20]), and Hercules at the crossroads is given a name-tag (I,14).<sup>52</sup> The rule which forbids the use of parts of the human body as elements of meaning is infringed by emblems such as the one showing a winged tongue (I,42) or all those depicting a heart (e. g. I,39 [Fig. 2]). But we have to be careful not to derive a negative evaluation from this discrepancy between emblematic theory and practice. Firstly, the theorists stress time and again that the art of the *impresa* is subject to stricter rules than the art of the emblem; secondly, we find divergences of this kind in nearly all collections. With these devices it is not only the principle of *variatio delectat* that is met; it is exactly this greater complexity of structures employed in the pictures that raises the emblem to the level of a picture for contemplation which can inspire the viewer and reader to further thought.

52. This device contradicts the tendency to offer the readers the possibility of coming to their own interpretation, but it does not ensure the interpretation; cf. the emblem I,47.