

Learned Love

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Encoding the emblematic tradition of love. The emblems in the *Imago primi saeculi soietatis Jesu* (Antwerp 1640) and Poirters's emblematica verses in the *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eeuwe der societeyt Iesu* (Antwerp 1640)¹

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In 1640 the Jesuits of the *Provincia Flandro-Belgica* commemorated the first centenary of the founding of the Society of Jesus with a large number of festivities: pageants, fireworks and highly spectacular and multimedia theatre plays performed in the different Jesuit colleges, and especially with great splendour in those of Antwerp and Brussels.² One of the most remarkable and prestigious events in this respect was undoubtedly the publication of the *Imago Primi Saeculi Societatis Jesu* by the highly qualified and reputed Antwerp *Officina Plantiniana* (Fig. 1). The initiative for the project was taken by the industrious Father Joannes Bollandus (1596-1665). Together with his colleague Father Godefridus Henschenius (1600-1681) he was released from his work on the *Acta Sanctorum*, and succeeded, after eight months of hard work, to deliver the volume right in time: the royal privilege was granted in January, the publication was approved by the censor in February 1640.³

The impressive and quite expensive volume in the large folio format – its price being 12 guilders; 1050 copies of the book were printed –⁴ would become an icon of the Jesuit order at that time. And though the initiative was a rather contested event, the Jesuit order itself considered the volume as quite successful and as a highly persuasive form of self-representation. The voluminous book of about 950 pages foregrounds not only the order's specific spirituality, but also its founding fathers, its martyrs and its missionaries. These are presented in a chronological-thematic account divided into six books. The first five parts correspond to the five stages of Christ's life. And in this way the history of the order is presented in terms of its origin, its rise, its accomplishments, its pursuit and persecution, and finally its glorification. The sixth and final part of the *Imago* was devoted, according

1 The research for this article was realised within the VNC-research-project at the Universities of Leuven and Utrecht on ‘The Religious Emblem Tradition in the Low Countries in the Light of Herman Hugo’s “Pia desideria”’ (FWO Research Foundation Flanders – NWO Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research).

2 See a.o. Poncelet 1928, II, 544-549, Rombauts [1930], 66-68, Salviucci Insolera 2004, 61-83 and D'Amiens 1641. On the performances in Brussels in 1640, see i.p. Porteman 1996a, 90-91 and Porteman 1996b. A description in manuscript is mentioned in Brouwers 1979, 75.

3 De Backer-Sommervogel 1960, 1, 1625-1626, nr. 5, Landwehr 1988, 149-150, Daly and Dimler 1997, 56-57.

4 Waterschoot 1996, 465.



Fig. 1: Title engraving of the *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu a provincia Flandro-Belgica eisdem Societatis repraesentata* (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640). (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 3C 577).

to the same tropological scheme, to the history of the Flemish-Belgian province and was written by Father Jacobus Libens. The quite lengthy and overwhelming prose texts in all six books were intertwined with many rhetorical and poetical exercises: *exercitationes oratoriae*, encomiastic poetry, elegies, *ludi poetici*, and at the end of each section a number of emblems. The Courtrai Jesuit and most talented man of letters Sidronius Hosschius (1596-1653) and the gifted Jacobus Wallius (1599-1690) were responsible for these literary and poetic achievements. The emblems themselves – and I quote John Manning – drew the attention thanks to their ‘visual and verbal opulence’ and exploited the skills of the talented engraver and book illustrator Cornelis I Galle (1576-1650): with their ‘luxuriant scrolls’ and most ‘pompous cartouches’ (Praz) the *picturae* were as ‘grandiloquent’ as ‘finely wrought’ (Manning).⁵

⁵ Manning 2002, 194 and 195, Praz 1964, 186. On the initiative and the overall concept of the *Imago*, see a.o. (in chronological order) Praz 1964, 185-190, Chatelain 1993, 118, Van Houdt 1996a, Waterschoot 1996, 464-465, Waterschoot 2002, 163-164, Manning 2002, 194-196, Salvi-



Fig. 2: Title engraving of the *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eeuwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlandtsche provincie der selver Societeyt* (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640). (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

The *Imago* was not in the first place a historical, didactical or apologetic account of the order, but above all an optimistic, even triumphalistic and encomiastic presentation of its glorious accomplishments. The jubilee was a celebration and as such the *Imago* fully participated in the spectacular festive culture of the Society's centennial. Father Daniel Papebrochius (1628-1714) mentioned in 1640 in his *Annales antverpienses* that certain copies of the 126 emblems were being hand-coloured and were hung out as emblematic exhibitions (*affixiones*) in the portal and the side aisles of the Antwerp Jesuit church ('Quae emblemata, aeri insculpta, volumen istud ornant, eadem per ecclesiae parietes et porticus fuerant vivis coloribus expressa').⁶

In 1640 the *Imago* was also published in a substantially abridged Dutch version, in the smaller 4°-format (though still covering over 700 pages): the *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eeuwe der societeyt Iesu* (Fig. 2).⁷ Balthasar I Moretus printed

ucci Insolera 2004, 84-102. On the *Imago* and its adversaries: Fumaroli 1986 and Salviucci Insolera 2004, 195-222.

6 Mertens and Buschmann 1845-1848, IV, 414. See also Poncelet 1928, vol. 2, 546, Rombauts 1930, 68 and Salviucci Insolera 2004, 71, note14.

7 De Backer-Sommervogel 1960, VI, 927, Landwehr 1988, 41-42, Daly and Dimler 1997, 58-59.

no less than 1525 copies and sold them at 9 guilders.⁸ The publication was again a joint enterprise. Father Laurentius Uwens (1589-1641) took care of the prose texts; Father Adriaen Poirters (1605-1674), a former student of Hosschius and an upcoming occasional poet, was responsible for the Dutch verses in the emblems. Together with Balthasar I Moretus (1574-1641) both Fathers must have worked under great time pressure since the volume had to appear before the end of 1640; the approbation dates from mid December. Despite all this haste, the initiative was taken most seriously and should not be minimized: it was published with a very specific public in mind, the ‘ongestudeerde gemeynte’ (i.e. the public not acquainted with the Latin verse forms) and fitted in with a quite consciously established and keen publishing strategy of the Society: from 1600 onwards the Jesuit order made their editions available not only in Latin but also in thoroughly adapted versions in one or more of the vernacular languages. And so the province’s superior, Johannes Tollenarius (1582-1643), was prompted by one of his fathers, Judocus Andreas (1588-1658), ‘utinam in idioma Gallicum liber vertatur’ [that also a French edition would be published].⁹

The Dutch edition was in many respects thoughtfully reconsidered. The lengthy prose texts for the *dissertationes* in the *Imago* were reduced by half; all the *exercitationes oratoriae* (about 200 pages in the *Imago*) were left out, and so were the Latin poems by Wallius and Hosschius (about 100 pages). The Dutch *subscriptiones* of the emblems on the contrary were now getting more space: the 22-line epigrams in the *Imago* were replaced by 40 line poems in the *Af-beeldinghe* and they were now being spread over two pages. As a result the Dutch epigrams indeed did not present a translation of the Latin texts, but they interpreted the emblematic images in a new, quite often very idiosyncratic and even more self-conscious and highly polemic way. Father Papebrochius even thought that many of Poirters’s verses excelled the Latin ones.¹⁰

It is fairly well known from the research by Dimler that the *picturae* went back for their *inventio* to the classics of the genre, be these e.g. the *Liber emblematum* of the founding father Andreas Alciato, Joachim Camerarius’s *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae* or the in the Low Countries well-known and highly influential corpus of love emblematics, ranging from Vaenius’s *Amorum emblemata* and Heinsius’s *Ambacht van Cupido* (Cupid’s trade) to the more ethical *Maechdenplicht* [Maiden’s Duties] by Jacob Cats and his *Proteus*.¹¹ But also other emblem books were involved: Herman Hugo’s *Pia desideria*, above all *Sylvestro Petrasanc-*

On the Dutch *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, see a.o. Romabuts [1930], 66-68 and 241-242, Salsmans 1940, B[ronselae]r 1994, Van Houdt 1996b, Meeus 1997, Waterschoot 1996, 465; Waterschoot 2002 and Salviucci Insolera 2004, 102-105.

8 Waterschoot 1996, 465.

9 Sacré 1996, 125. On Father Judocus Andreas (Josse Andries) and his work, see D[e] L[andtsheer] 1996.

10 Mertens and Buschmann (1845-1848), IV, 414.

11 Dimler 1981 and Salviucci Insolera 2004, 126-140.

ta's *De symbolis heroicis libri ix* (Antwerp, 1634; published by Balthasar I Moretus as well),¹² and (as became clear from my own research) Antonius à Burgundia's *Linguae vitia et remedia* (Antwerp 1631).¹³

In this article I will try to establish how some of the emblems in the *Imago* in a very intense and quite specific way made use of existing emblematic traditions with regard to profane love. But rather than presenting a study on the source material, that shows the often straightforward use of *picturae* from the profane love emblem tradition, my main focus will be on how the profane emblem tradition and its specific textual and visual discourse is recreated anew and integrated within the large Jesuit project. Or to put it in John Manning's terms: I will focus on how 'the pagan pantheon has been converted, and now works in full support of the order'.¹⁴

At first sight it is very tempting in this respect to assume that the volume just conforms to the well-known and convincing strategy of substitution: profane love being transposed into divine love. The technique became widespread after Vaenius had turned his profane love emblems, the *Amorum emblemata*, into a 'similar collection on spiritual love', the *Amoris divini emblemata* (1615).¹⁵ In the same way did the Counter Reformation give rise during the first decennia of the seventeenth century to quite a number of religious songbooks that were intentionally set up to counter the large production of worldly songbooks.¹⁶ As such it does not come as a surprise that in the *Af-beeldinghe* there are some overt allusions to the great success of the profane love songs and similarly tuned emblem books. In the prose text dealing with the Jesuit's vow of chastity 'amoureuse boecken' [amorous books] are seen as 'verweckselen der wellustighey' [arousing lust].¹⁷ And for this reason, so we can read in the prose texts from book VI, some Jesuit authors had provided the youngsters with catechetical songs that could ban the foul songs from the shops and the streets ('soo wierden eensweeghs onder de meyssens ende ionghedochters in winckels ende op straete de vuyle liedekens uytghebannen, ende in plaatse van die, gheestelijcke, diemen inden Catechismus hoorde, inghebragt').¹⁸

However in the *Imago* there is more at stake than just a mere application of the technique of appropriation and – subsequently – substitution, of turning profane love motifs into images of sacred love, or of annihilating the profane discourse just

12 Salviucci Insolera 2004, 135-140. On Petrasancta and Moretus see also Waterschoot 1996, 462.

13 Compare e.g. the *picturae* in Burgundia's *Linguae Vitia et remedia* on p. 46, 64 or 112 with respectively the *picturae* in the *Imago* 1640 on p. 462 (*Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 278), p. 719 or p. 456 (*Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 112).

14 Manning 2002, 196.

15 Porteman 1996c, 3.

16 See a.o. Keersmaekers 1989-1990, Keersmaekers 1991, Van Vaeck 1996 and Porteman 1998, 7-8.

17 *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 76.

18 *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 559.

Castitas sit intaminata.



Vapor rapit omne decus.

Nuper amor nuditum cum se confere notaret
Crysallo, Scyphicis que glaciata inge,
Miratur conans fulos que pullorum auro,
Miratur prima annula labra rotis:
Dum se ridetur videt, dum fimbria leudat,
Ventreque oculis, purpuraque genas,
Flammeo oris honesta, & lattea colla prunis,
Et frons saceribus plendifera placet:
Dumque suo familiaris Nareffio arridet imago,
Ingenit, & genitus contra plana reptat.
Uter omne decus rupes eripit, stramine nubes
Ora superflua oculis in tenebris.
Vicina catus Veneris contagia ruitet
Swedes, qui casta lilia mentis amat:
Si puer rex floculo Nomen tibi mente remedit,
Ab eam, & vel labes rima fugare potest.
Infect afflatus, licet oculis blanda prepedit:
Avara malitia rosa, Cypridis umbra nocet.
Aut fimo, aut turpi patrua tale flunt.
Altiden memorant, nimis toller sole fuentia
Vicind tallum sic periret iure.

A 2

Casti-

by replacing it with a sacred narrative. On the contrary, some of the emblems in the *Imago* seem to activate and to incorporate the actual discourse of profane emblematics quite consciously. And Poirters's texts in this respect (and therefore this contribution will be dealing mainly with the Dutch version) even go much further than the *Imago*. This specific kind of intertextuality or intericonicity can best be described – and I refer here to Enenkel's research on Reusner – in terms of 'Scherenschnitt' and 'Montage', or 'Dekonstruktion' and 'Konstruktion'.¹⁹ In this respect the somewhat prudish and at first sight quite trivial critique that has come down to us in a letter from January 1641, becomes more than an anecdote. In this letter the Bruges Jesuit, Juddocus Andreas, complains to the province's superior Johannes Tollenarius that the little Cupid on page 187 in the *Imago* (in contrast to the one on the preceding folio) is not decently covered and misses a waist-cloth (Fig. 3). Or in Latin: 'in emblemate parvulus Cupido non videtur sat tectus'.²⁰ The worldly god of love in the *Imago* is not always replaced by *amor divinus* but stands in opposition to it, not just as an *exemplum a malo* but as a very concrete and almost tangible world *a malo* as well.

This is most clearly the case in those emblems from book I ('Societas nascens') that are dealing with or referring to the Jesuits's vow of chastity. It is surely no coincidence that the quote about amorous books arousing lust is taken from this book. In the *pictura* of the emblem on page 185 in the *Imago* (Fig. 4) (page 110 in the *Af-beeldinghe*) a weeping Cupid is placed amidst some peasants. The engraver Cornelis Galle clearly copied some of the gestures after an engraving in Burgundia's *Linguae Vitia et remedia* (1631, 80) (Fig. 5), but the whole idea for the *pictura* was not inspired by an existing emblem volume. The peasants, the younger as well as the older ones, are destroying Cupid's arrows and bow in a very industrious and busy way, and by doing so they visualize the Latin motto taken from Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* (book 2, 139): 'Otia si tollas, perierte Cupidinis arcus' [if you give up

19 Enenkel 2003.

20 Sacré 1996, 53, note 185.

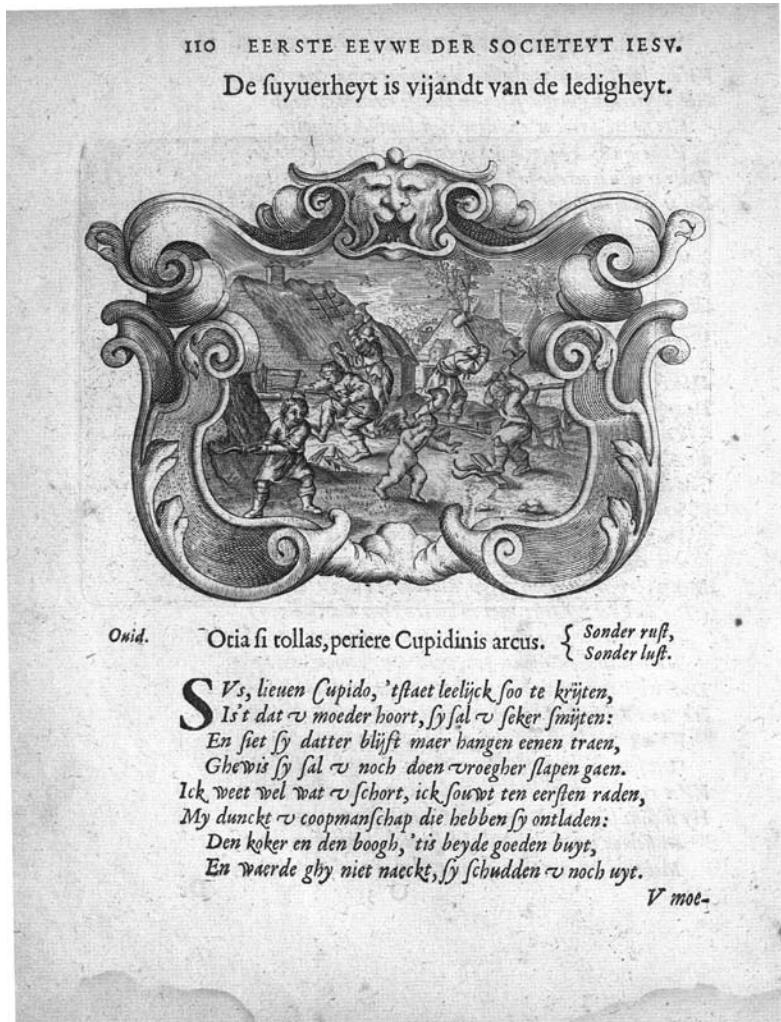


Fig. 4: Af-beeldinghe van deerste eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), 110. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

your quiet life, the bow of Cupid will lose its power]. The didaxis becomes clear: chastity hates idleness ('Castitas otio inimica', 'De suyverheydt is vijandt van de ledigheyt').

Poerter's Dutch verses on pages 110-111 in the *Af-beeldinghe* amplify the Latin texts from the *Imago* quite substantively and bring a quite lengthy and often very humorous *imitatio* of Daniel Heinsius's well-known love lyrics in the Theocritian style²¹:

²¹ Becker-Cantarino 1983, 55*-60*.



Fig.5: Antonius à Burgundia, *Lingvae vitia & remedia Emblematice expressa*. (Antwerp: Jan Cnobbaert, 1631), pictura of emblem 37, p. 80. (Photo: Heverlee, Park Abbey, PrJIX/1).

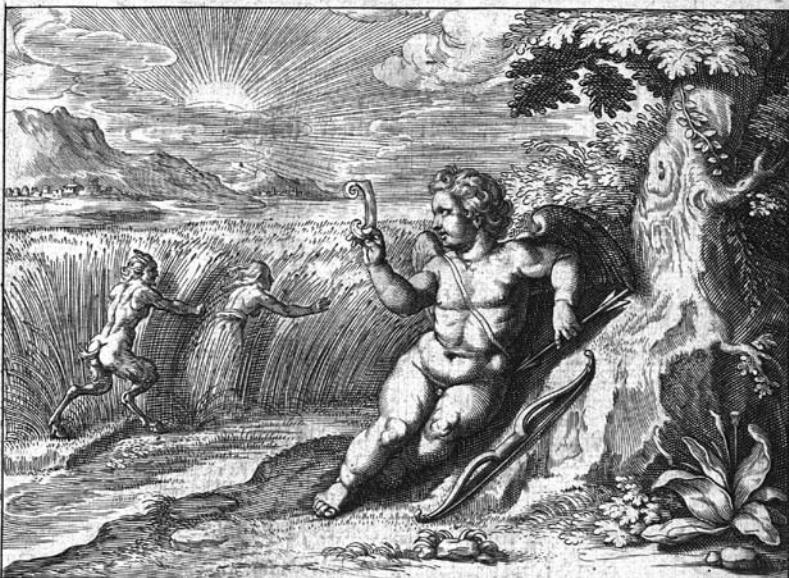
Sus, lieven Cupido, 't staet leelijck soo te krijten,
Is't dat u moeder hoort, sy sal u seker smijten:
En siet sy datter blijft maer hangen eenen traen,
Ghewis sy sal u noch doen vroegher slapen gaen.
Ick weet wel wat u schort, ick souwt ten eersten raden,
My dunckt u coopmanschap die hebben sy ontladen:
Den koker en den boogh, 'tis beyde goeden buyt,
En waerde ghy niet naeckt, sy schudden u noch uyt.

[Hush, dear Cupid, weeping like that sounds so ugly.
If your mother hears you, she will box your ears.
And if she notices that there is still one more tear,
Surely she will send you to bed a bit earlier.
I know what bothers you, I can guess it at once.
I think that they took away your goods.
The quiver and the bow, these are both a good catch.
And if you were not naked, they would take all of you.]

As such the emblem as a whole pays tribute to the Jesuits's vow of chastity ('wy zijn al vromer [...] [and] trotsen al u maght' [we are more brave and we withstand your

Coudt zijnde stichtse brandt.

FRIGIDA ACCENDIT



Froide, elle allume .

Fig. 6: Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft, *Emblemata amatoria. Afbeeldinghen van minne. Emblemes d'amour* (Amsterdam: Willem Jansz. Blaeu, 1611), embleem 23, 57. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 5A 30738).

– Cupid’s – power]).²² But at the same time Poirters is aiming at a broader public of youngsters. They should keep away from the foolish youth ('de domme ieught') and the idle layabouts ('de lege danten, Die vanden morgen-stondt tot 's nachts toe lanter-fanten' [the idle layabouts, who are loafing around all day]).²³

In the same way the self-confident praise on *castitas* becomes in the other emblems a symbol for not losing one's virginity and presents itself as a lesson for youngsters: they are being addressed repeatedly and most explicitly in the Dutch verses. In the emblem on page 187 of the *Imago* (*Af-beeldinghe*, 114) (Fig. 3) Cupid looks at himself in a mirror, just like a new Narcissus (in the Latin text: 'similis Narciso'), but his breath deprives the mirror of its lustre. (This time Cornelis Galle copied Cupid's gesture and the shape of the tree after the *pictura* of emblem 23 in Hooft's *Emblemata amatoria* (compare Fig. 3 with Fig. 6)).²⁴ Poirters's text starts with a large digression on the fashion-crazed coquettes of the time and goes on in this way (*Af-beeldinghe*, 115):

22 *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 111.

23 *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, 111.

24 I am grateful to my students Kristof Claesen and Bérangère Fortemps for this information.

Sy doen ghelyck dit kindt dat wou een Spiegel houwen,
Om daer sijn witte sneeuw, en root corael t'aenschouwen.
Het neemt hem in sijn handt, daer sit den krolle-bol,
En spiegelt wat hy magh, en siet sijn buycksken vol.
Dan siet hy op het root van alle bey sijn wanghen,
'tSchijnt dat op elcken kant een roosken is gehangen,
Dan siet het sijnen mond, dan siet het op sijn kin,
En merckt, soo draey hy lacht, daer komt een kloofken in.
Dan siet het sijnen hals, dan sijn' ivoore tanden,
En dan sijn goudt-geel hayr, en sijn sneeuw-witte handen:
Dit siet het al te mael, iae stelt noch mondten aen mondten,
Als of daer in't gelas een ander knechtjen stondt.
Elaes! Ter wijl hy kust, den asem comt gevlogen,
En siet, den spiegel wordt terstont heel overtogen,
Den luyster isser af [...].
Och ionckheydt, wat ghy doet, den asem moet ghy schouwen,
Is't dat ghy dit versuymt, het sal u eeuwigh rouwen [...].
Sy zijn van een beslagh den spiegel, en u eer,
En speelt met gheen van bey, ô iongheyt, immermeer.

[They (i.e. these coquettes) behave like this child who wanted to hold a mirror
So that he could look at his white snow and at his red coral.
He took the mirror in his hands; and there the curly head is sitting
And he is looking at himself, looking, looking his little belly full.
Then he is looking at the red colour on both his cheeks.
It seems as if a small rose is dangling at every side.
Then he is looking at his mouth, then his chin
And he notices that, as soon as he laughs, a dimple does appear.
Then he sees his neck, then his ivory teeth
Then his golden and yellow hair and his hands white like snow.
He sees all this, and then, oh yeah, he presses mouth to mouth
As if another boy was standing in the mirror.
Alas, as soon as he kisses, his breath comes near,
And look the mirror is being misted over.
Its lustre has gone. (...)
O, you youth, whatever you do, beware of the breath.
If you do not take care, you will repent it for ever
The mirror and your honour, they are one of a kind (literally: they are both
made out of one and the same dough)
And do not trifle either of these, o you youngsters, never do!]

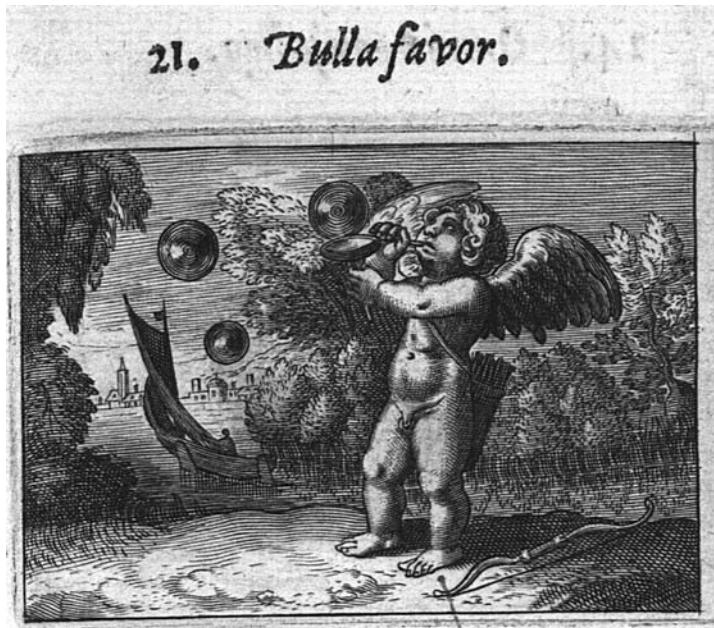


Fig. 7: Daniel Heinsius, *Nederduytsche poemata* (Amsterdam: Willem Jansz. Blaeu, 1616), *Ambacht van Cupido*, pictura of emblem 21, 79. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC A 5422).

The tone of Poirters's didaxis in the emblem obviously comes quite near to the ethics that were established in Jacob Cats's *Maechden-plicht* [the Maiden's Duties] (1618), a maiden's mirror to which the *Imago* was so much indebted (infra).

The present emblem was certainly not a unique case. I just give you two more examples, taken from the emblems on *castitas*, that also illustrate the rather intricate intertextual relationships of the emblems in the *Af-beeldinghe* with the Dutch corpus of profane love emblematics.

The *homo bulla* depicted in the *pictura* of emblem 21 in Heinsius's *Ambacht van Cupido* [Cupid's trade] must have inspired the emblem 'Si tangas, frangas' on the vulnerability of *castitas* in the *Af-beeldinghe* (*Af-beeldinghe*, 112-113) (Figs 7-8). The opening lines of Poirters's text address the young maidens directly: 'Komt maeghden, siet dit kinder-spel, // En hebdy tijdt, besiet het wel [Young maiden, come here, and have a look at this children's play. And please, if you have time, consider it thoughtfully.]

In Heinsius's emblem the soap bubbles are an image of the unsteady kindness of the beloved one, in Poirters's text they become a metaphor for the fragility of a young maiden's honour: a soap bubble should not be touched upon: 'Een bobbel, en der maeghden eer, // Zijn alle bey al euen teer' [a soap bubble and the honour of a young lady, are as equally vulnerable]. Precisely this idea links Poirters's text to another love emblem, now one figuring as opening emblem in Cats's *Maech-*



Fig. 8: *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt* (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), p. 112. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

den-plicht (Fig. 9). I refer here more precisely to Cats's well-known emblem on the fragility of a grape of vines as a symbol for a young maiden's vulnerable virginity: a grape that should not be felt upon by a frisky young man.²⁵

Also in other emblems on chastity Poirters integrates elements from the profane love emblems in his discourse and redirects them as lessons for young maidens. In the eighth emblem on chastity (Fig. 10) (on pages 116-117 in the *Af-beeldinghe*) penitence is seen as a means to safeguard one's virginity ('De suyverheydt wordt door lijf-kastijdinghe beschermt'). In the centre of the *pictura* a small hedgehog (designed after Jacob Cats's *Proteus*, emblem 35, (Fig. 11))²⁶ curls itself up and with its firm spines keeps the other animals (dog, swine, serpent and male goat) at a safe distance. (The swine and the serpent were modelled after the *pictura* in Burgundia's *Linguae vitia et remedia*, page 4, (Fig. 12)). The *pictura* itself visualises the Horatian motto from *Carmina* 3, 1: 'Odi profanum vulgus, & arceo' [I hate the uncivilised mob and keep it at a distance]. As such the didaxis in the Latin text pleads for physical castigation as a means to preserve one's chastity without addressing a specific public, but in the Dutch text again a public of youngsters is being aimed at (page 117):

25 Cats 1618, 'Wapen-Schilt alle eerbare maeghden toe-ghe-eyghent' [coat of arms dedicated to alle honourable young maiden].

26 Luijten 1996, I, 240-245 and II, 553-563.



Fig. 9: Jacob Cats, *Maecheden-plicht, ofte ampt der Ionck-vrovvven, in eerbaer liefde, aen-ghewesen door Sinne-beelden. Officivm puellarum, in castis Amoribus, Emblemate expressum* (Middelburg: H. van der Hellen, 1618), ‘Wapen-Schilt alle eerbare maeghden toe-ghe-eyghent’ [coat of arms dedicated to all honourable young maidens]. (Photo: University of Utrecht, University Library, 132 B 1:4).

Leert dit dan voor besluyt: het lichaem te castijden
Is eenen stercken schilt waer mé de maeghden strijden

[Take this as your lesson: physical castigation
is a safe shield and a firm weapon for virgins].

Poirters even expands in a Petrarchist way the Latin verses by two *exempla* taken from the lives of Saint Frances and Pelagia of Antioch. Pelagia, in order to escape from the soldiers that were threatening her, threw herself into the sea and by doing so, extinguishes and smothers the fire of love:

Pelagia die spongħ, en sonck in een rivier,
Versmachte daer den brant, en bluschte daer het vier.

The sea that gave birth to the goddess of love ('schoon dat Venus is geboren uyt



Fig. 10: Af-beeldinghe van d'eerwe eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor oogen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), p. 116. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).



Fig. 11: Jacob Cats, *Proteus ofte Minne-beelden verandert in Sinne-beelden* (Rotterdam: Pieter van Waesberghe, 1627), emblem 35, 206 (EPU site).

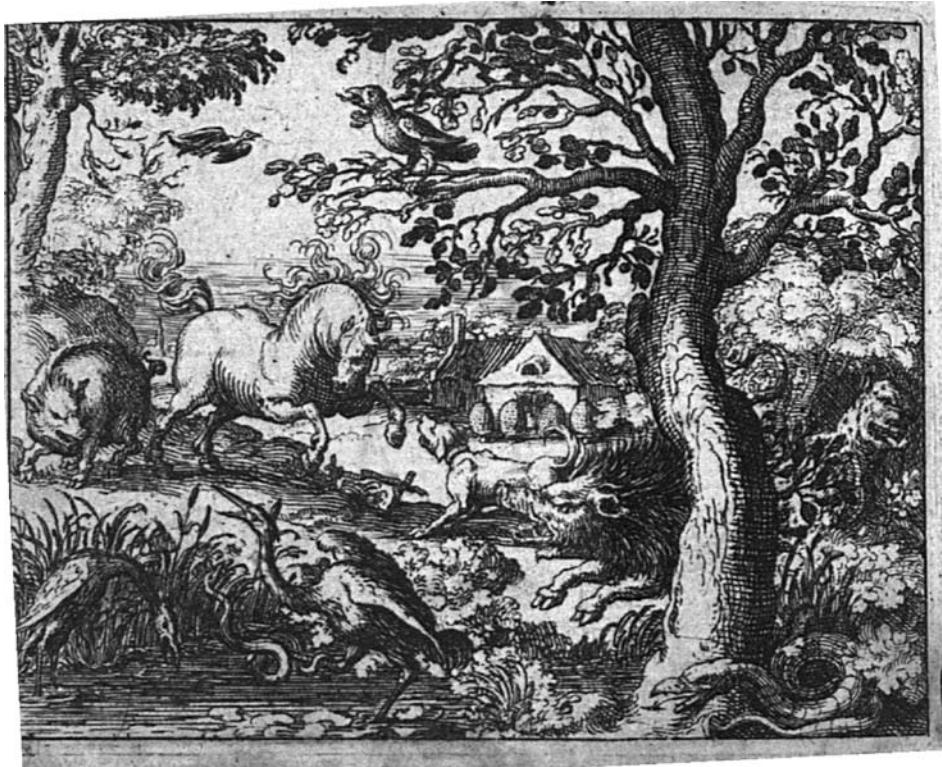


Fig. 12: Antonius à Burgundia, *Lingvae vitia & remedia Emblematice expressa* (Antwerp: Jan Cnobbaert, 1631), pictura of the opening emblem, 4. (Photo: Heverlee, Park Abbey, PrJIX/1).

de baeren'), is turned into a place where even one's virginity can be safeguarded ('Men vindter die oock daer den maeghdom wel bewaeren') (page 117).

References to the discourse of the worldly god of love, as a kind of sounding board in the emblems, turn out to be spread all over the volume. The *pictura* on page 196 in book II of the *Af-beeldinghe* (Fig. 13), with its laughing Cupid – in the *Imago* on page 321: 'parve puer risit'; *iocus* and *risus* as the companions of Venus! –, visualizes the Latin motto in terms of the well-known Ovidian truisms on love's omnipotence being the world's driving force: 'Fac pedem figat, & terram mouebit' [give me place where I can stand and I will be moving the world], a statement on the force of levers by Archimedes. The opening lines of Poirters's Dutch texts even seem completely in tune with the tenor of the profane love lyrics: 'Wel, wat doet hier dit kleyne kindt, // Dat heel de werelt opwaerts windt?' [Ah, what is this small boy doing here, he who is winding up the whole world]. His activities *finally* – by means of the *simulatio* as a rhetorical figure – turn out to be a metaphor for God who uses the Jesuits as his instrument to bring light to the world and to uplift the

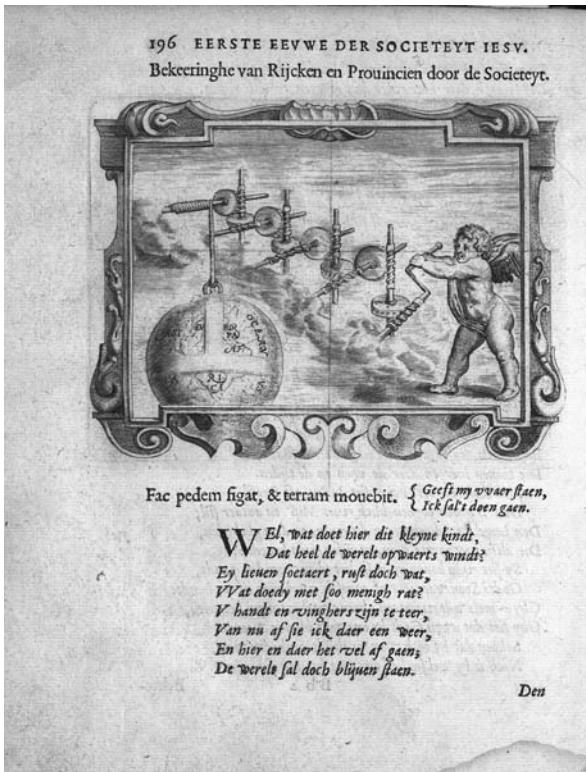


Fig. 13: *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt* (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), 196. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

heathens in Japan, China and all other foreign countries. In the *pictura* of the final emblem in book 2 (dealing with the young Stanislas Kostka) the sun is ripening a bunch of grapes under a glass jar (Fig. 14) (*Af-beeldinghe*, 212-213). The first half of the Dutch *subscriptio* describes how an impatient Cupid loves to use his gardening tricks in order to accelerate the maturing process. His impatience provokes some clear negative connotations: 'Als ghy soo de Liefd' hoort spreken, // Peyst het zijn maer minne-treken' [If you hear Love talk like that, bear in mind that these are but love's tricks]. They contrast sharply with the reliability of the Jesuits's house that forms a warm and save surrounding in ripening the soul (and more precisely young Kostka's soul).

The specific discourse of the profane love emblem and more in particular its preoccupation with the fire of love became in the *Imago* and in the *Af-beeldinghe* a most prominent vehicle that expressed the Jesuits's self-confident spirituality labelled by a pun on the name of the founding father of the Jesuit order. Ignatius's name was indeed quite often linked to the Latin word *ignitus* (he who burns) or *ig-*

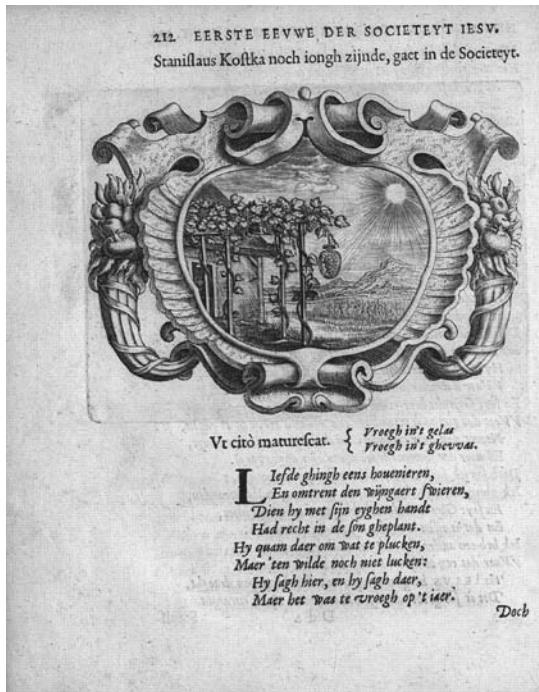


Fig. 14: *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt* (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), 212. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

nis (fire). In this way in 1650 the students from the Brussels's Jesuits's college would assemble their *affixio* in honour of Saint Ignatius on the basis of the element fire. Occasionally the *Imago*-emblems function as a source of inspiration for the Brussels's *affixiones*.²⁷

It even seems as if the *Af-beeldinghe* quite consciously sharpened this idea. The frontispiece for the Dutch edition of the *Imago* (engraved by Michael Natalis [1609-1670] after Abraham van Diepenbeeck [1596-1675]) did not just render in a reduced size the engraving from the Latin edition but was conceived completely anew, inserted new pictorial elements and stressed the idea 'that the whole world was [set] ablaze with the fervent propaganda of the Company' (Knipping).²⁸

In the emblems themselves the elements of fire and flames become a most dominant pictorial motif, not least in those emblems devoted to Ignatius. A burn-

27 Porteman 1996a, 114-115.

28 Knipping 1974, I, 143. On the Latin and the Dutch frontispiece, see Salviucci Insolera 2004, 109-117. The Latin frontispiece is also being discussed in Fumaroli 1986. On the iconography of the frontispiece in the Dutch edition see as well the preface 'Aen den leser' [To the reader] in *Af-beeldinghe* 1640, fol *3v°-[*4]v°.

ing candle, its light shining into the dark, becomes a symbol for Ignatius's early accomplishments.²⁹ In the sixth emblem of book II God, speaking from heaven, sees his servants as a bright fire that even excels the powers of Venus.³⁰ Or according to Poirters's Dutch verses:

Ick hebb' een krachtigh vier, ick hebb' een vlam bereet,
Die Venus vier verdooft al waer het noch soo heet.
Ick laet mijn sluysen toe, 'kwil vier met vier verwinnen
Niet dat daer steden velt, maer Godt meer doet beminnen.
Loiola sal het doen, hy is daer toe ghestelt.

[I have made a bright fire, I have kindled a flame
That extinguishes the flames of Venus, as hot as these may be.
I keep the sluice gates closed, I want to beat fire with fire.
It will not be a fire that destroys cities,
but it will make people love God intensely.
Loyola will do this, it is equipped for that.]

But here as well, further resonances to the profane love discourse are inserted in the Dutch texts. I give one more example. In the *pictura* on page 522 in the *Af-beeldinge* (Fig. 15) (page 726 in the *Imago*) the Jesuit martyrs killed in Japan are being represented by some festive fireworks. Each of the braziers full of flames symbolizes the Jesuit martyrs who gave their life. The burning fires become an image of triumph and victory ('Haec signa triumphi').³¹ In Poirters's Dutch text the *scriptio* is introduced by a supplementary emblematic image based on Cats's *Maechdenplicht*, an emblem that completely fits in with the tradition of Cupid's trade (Fig. 16).³² Poirters's own text reads as follows:

De kuyper gaet in 't eerst met spaender-vier de duyghen
Versaemen inden reep, en dwinght haer om te buyghen;
En gaen de saecken wel, soo komt men nae der handt,
Men steltse op den staeck, en viert voor 't vader-landt: [...]
Een die Godts liefde voelt nu seffens in hem branden,
En sich vrywilligh buyght, en sluyt in vaste banden,
Al komter een tyran die hem in kolen stelt,
't Is teecken dat die brandt blijft meester van het velt.

29 *Af-beeldinge* 1640, 192-193 (*Imago* 1640, p. 317).

30 *Af-beeldinge* 1640, 202-203 (*Imago* 1640, p. 325).

31 On the prominent topic of the joyfulness of the Christian martyrs 'trumpeting the triumph of a universal Christian religion', see Verberckmoes 2003.

32 Cats 1618, 9.



Fig. 15: Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eevwe der Societeyt Iesv voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver Societeyt (Antwerp: Balthasar I Moretus, 1640), 522. (Photo: K.U.Leuven, BIBC 4A 6033).

[At first and by means of a small fire the barrel-maker will fix the Wooden staves within the iron hoops and he bends them. And if all things go well, one can attach at the end the small barrel to a stake, as a bonfire for the nation. [...] Someone who feels God's flames burning inside And who bends out of free will and lets oneself be fixed in firm ties, He will always conquer, even if a tyrant would put him amidst a coal fire.]

And this idea leads to the concluding lines: 'Der Martelaeren bloedt maeckt altijdt vruchtbaer landt' [The blood of martyrs will always render the land fertile] (page 523).

It is time to draw some conclusions. In this article I presented the *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Jesu* in the first place as a highly self-confident and above all quite festive book, in which the *Provincia Flandro-Belgica* commemorated quite proudly the achievements of the Jesuits's order according to its specific spirituality. The result was an impressive volume in which specific emblematic traditions



Fig. 16: Jacob Cats, *Maechden-plicht, ofte ampt der Ionck-vrovvven, in eerbaer liefde, aen-ghewesen door Sinne-beelden. Officivm puellarum, in castis Amoribus, Emblematum expressum* (Middelburg: H. van der Hellen, 1618), 9. (Photo: University of Utrecht, University Library, 132 B 1:4).

not only influenced the process of selecting and encoding the emblematic images but were also steering, often by means of the rhetorical technique of the *admiratio*, a dynamic process of decoding at the side of the reading public. I grouped my examples around the tradition of love emblematics but other emblem traditions were at stake here as well.

The jubilee year 1640 was the culmination point and for this reason a Dutch version of the *Imago* had to be completed under great pressure of time. But the order remained faithful to its own principles: the Dutch version in any case was certainly not a cheap and mercantile trick just to recuperate the high costs for the production of the superbly executed visual material. The volume undoubtedly meets with the order's own standards as well as with the specific expectations of the 'ongestudeerde ghemeeynte'. Further research will be needed to describe this specific public more in detail. In this article I also could only partially dwell upon some aspects of Poirters's techniques of encoding the emblematic images and on his quite creative use of the profane love emblem tradition. Both Poirters's highly versatile reading of the emblematic images on the one hand and his inclusion of

the emblematic tradition on the other hand are highly successful in creating less learned texts (mythology e.g. is less prominent than in the Latin texts). But these texts on the other hand were still full of wit, humour and didacticism and as such a successful attempt to establish a Dutch variant of the *pia hilaritas*.³³ Or, as Daniel Papebrochius remarked about Poirters's Dutch verses: 'hoc quidem adeo eleganti, ut Latino nusquam cedere videatur' [these were as elegant as in the Latin texts and were not exceeded by the latter ones].³⁴

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33 Porteman 1998, 9-10.

34 Mertens and Buschmann 1845-1848, IV, 414.

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