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The Role of the Emblem and the Fable in the Didactic Literature of the Sixteenth Century

by

John Ewing Shell

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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CHAPTER I

THE PRECONDITIONS FOR A POPULAR
DIDACTIC LITERATURE
The sixteenth century was a period of rapid transition, of religious, political, and social turmoil. Not only did outward forms of life undergo a great metamorphosis, but even the essence of man's view of himself and the world began to change to what we can call modern.

In Germany the century is overshadowed by the titanic figure of Luther and the religious ferment he stirred up. A great deal of study has been devoted to the religious and political factors of the Reformation. Our knowledge of the societal background before which this great drama was played out is not as extensively known. The difficulty is of course that what little is recorded of day to day activities of the mass of people is rarely considered important enough to be preserved systematically. Only through inference can we gain insight into the daily life of the period.

The invention of moveable type in the fifteenth century made the written word accessible to an ever growing segment of the population. Books became inexpensive and convenient. As more people began to read, the demand for books catering to this broad segment of the population grew quickly. More was written and printed and therefore preserved to the present day.
Much of the literature intended for wide dissemination concerned itself with the sectarian disputes between Catholics and reformers. The printing press made it possible to appeal to the population in such matters on a scale impossible a century before. A parallel function was the moral education of the population at large. With printing, the secular sources of Humanistic wisdom had the means to reach an audience which previously had had to rely on ecclesiastical authorities.

Didactic literature, transmitting insights from a great variety of sources, had universal appeal in the sixteenth century. Two important forms were the emblem and the fable. They shared the virtues of being witty, short, and entertaining. They and the lessons they contained were made available through printing and their availability contributed to the growth of the reading public beyond scholarly and ecclesiastical confines. Although they both traced their genealogy back to ancient times and claimed therefore a special authority, neither was pompously erudite or particularly demanding.

Both were immensely popular. With the advent of printing the fable expanded its role as a means of popular education from an illustrative role in sermons to an independent genre collected for the delight and edification of all who could read. Luther himself valued it so
highly that he wrote to Melanchthon, "aedificabimusque
ibi tria tabernacula, Psalterio unum, Prophetis unum,
et Aesopo unum."¹

The emblem was a new invention based on earlier icono-
graphical forms. It combined classical learning, moral
education and the use of illustrations made possible by
printing in catering to an apparently insatiable demand for
witty moralizations. Because of the absence of records,
no precise estimate can be made of how many were in circu-
lation, but Albrecht Schöne estimates that the number of
copies produced before 1700 would involve a seven digit
figure.²

The popularity and wide dissemination of both these
forms gives us the opportunity of seeing what a wide
range of the population of the sixteenth century found con-
genial and instructive. Little of it can claim our atten-
tion because of great artistic merit and we have also
lost the taste for succinctly stated moral precepts today.
The emblem is largely unknown outside of scholarly or
bibliophilic circles and as Karl Meuli laconically states,
"Die Fabel ist gewesen."³ Nevertheless, both are

¹Martin Luthers Werke, Abteilung 2, "Briefwechsel",
vol. 5 Weimarer Ausgabe, 1934 (rpt. Graz: Akademische
Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1969), No. 1552, April 24, 1530,
p. 285.

²"Emblemata; Versuch einer Einführung," Deutsche
Vierteljahresschrift, 37 (1963), 198.

³"Herkunft und Wesen der Fabel," Schweizerisches
Archiv für Volkskunde, 50 (1954), 65.
worthy of our consideration because of the insight they provide into popular morality. It must be emphasized that regarding the didactic production of the sixteenth century in terms appropriate to the creatively independent authorship which we are accustomed to since the late eighteenth century would be a falsification of the role the author played at that time. Wolfgang Kayser explains the relationship between audience and writer then in this way: "Das Publikum, das die Literatur aufnimmt, ist nicht nur rezeptiv, passiv, dem der Schaffende als aktiver Teil gegenübersteht, losgelöst, bestenfalls hinausgewachsen, sondern der Schaffende ist fest verwoben in das Geflecht der Mensch-Mitmensch-Beziehungen; er ist Exponent der Gemeinschaft, bringt in Worte, was sie bewegt, bietet dar, was sie interessiert; steht im Denken, Fühlen, Werten immer in ihr." 4 The literature produced in this situation is therefore an expression not of an individual but reflects the thoughts and aspirations of the society at large. The wide distribution of such books is astounding given the size of the reading public and the exigencies of technology and transportation. The fable and emblem are truly popular phenomena and not the isolated creation of an autonomous author. As such they offer insight into

the tastes and attitudes of a broad and diverse segment of the population which is unavailable through other means.

The very wealth of material proves the popularity of the forms but also presents the problem of sifting out the salient features. Confronted with such a mass, the reader can easily become satiated and pass over important points unaware. A comparison of the fable with the emblem suggests itself as a way of keeping the implications of the attitudes of the two in sharp focus. Throughout the long fable tradition the more popular ones were often recast to suit the attitudes of the particular reviser and his audience. Changes in emphasis and nuance, even a slight alteration of the tone could have a great effect on its impact. These can best be brought into relief by comparison with another treatment of the same basic material. This could be done with fables alone. But the comparison with the emblems based on a single fable adds a further dimension because of its very different manner and form.

The way in which emblem writers treated their themes was greatly affected by their awareness of their place in the iconographical tradition. This included many disparate forms. The influence of the hieroglyph on the emblem will be examined later. It seems likely that the existence of block books in the fifteenth century suggested
the form of the short, illustrated, didactic verse. These earlier books were printed from crudely fashioned wood blocks and were intended as inexpensive aids in the instruction of the illiterate. They relied predominantly on illustrations to represent the lessons and had precepts noted only very briefly in the margin for the instructor. They were essentially visual mnemonic devices.

The emblem was meant to be a witty diversion for a literate and sophisticated audience. This characteristic originated with the Emblematum Liber of Andreas Alciatus, published in Augsburg by Heinrich Steyner in 1531. This is also the first use of the term emblema, originally any ornamental insert, to specify a particular literary form. The varieties of illustrated didactic verses are overwhelming. It will be necessary to separate the emblem from the similar forms before and after this date. This is the topic of a later chapter and the starting point will be the arrangement used by Alciatus. Each of his emblems consisted of a title, a picture, and a short epigram. He also relied exclusively on material from classical sources. This Humanistic tone was carried on by most of the emblem writers of the sixteenth century. Later there were emblem books which were

---

a tour de force of wit but these will not be considered here. The emblems of Alciatus were not designed to give free reign to creative imagination but to transmit ancient wisdom in a palatable and interesting form. The emblem writers of the years immediately following also tended to restrict themselves to transmission and popularization.

The most important element in the definition of the emblem will be the relationship of the three parts mentioned above to each other. This will be treated at length later but for now an instructive example is the emblem on the famous dictum Nosce teipsum by Mathias Holtzwarth. A foliate border surrounds the full page. At the top as a title appears the dictum. Immediately below it is an illustration about half the size of the bordered area showing a running man looking over his shoulder at a village in the background. Below that is the epigram:

Scommata ne iacias, ne tu ludare vicissim,
Si tibi corrumpant nubila fusca diem:
Sed potius meditate, quid ipse peregeris, et si
Liber es a viciis, post aliena notes.

For an outline of the development of the emblem after Alciatus, see Holger Homann, "Prolegomena zu einer Geschichte der Emblemak," Colloquia Germanica, 3 (1968), 244-257.

Emblematum Tyrocinia, Sive Picta Poesis Latino-germanica (Strassburg: Bernhard Jobin, 1581), Emblemata xxxiii.
This is the complete form as established by Alciatus. It contains a moral, an illustrative situation whose relation to the title is rather obscure, and an explanatory epigram. It is not unusual for the admonition to be directed immediately to the reader. It is remarkable in that Holtzwart provides a translation of the moral and verse on the next page: "Schaw dir selb inn busen."
The illustration is not repeated, otherwise it would be a complete German emblem. This arrangement was probably dictated by the logistics of printing the illustration twice, but nevertheless, it makes the reader feel the primacy of the Latin. The German seems to serve only as a complement for those who are unable to read the original. The translation is by no means slavish but treats the same topic in the same sense:

Verspott niemandt lass yeden sein
Wie Gott der Herr hatt gschaffen ihn
Das nitt etwan zu seiner zeit
Da dir missrathen mocht die beut
Man dich verspott und gleich verlach
Wie du vor thest / Drumb thu gemach
Und schaw dirselb in deinen busen
Wurstu finden vil schwartzer trusen
Daran du lang zu fegen hast
Biss du sie alle aussher machst
Drum schilt neimand du seyst dan vor
Gantz rein vnd sauber bey eim hor.

There are of course many variations of the basic three part form of the emblem as the functions of the parts is varied. The epigram can become so long that it far outweighs the other parts and demotes them to a status like that of a Biblical text which provides the basis for
a long sermon. The emblem is not suited to supply the theme of a large work of art, but it could be and often was appropriated to serve decorative purposes or to serve as a commentary to larger works. Then the epigram would be left off and the viewer would have to understand it without commentary. These two extremes are no longer in Alciati's pattern which requires equal importance for each of the three parts. It is their reciprocal relationship which establishes what is felt to be emblematic.

The predominate use of classical sources presume an interest in the Humanistic endeavor and a relatively high level of sophistication in the reader. Already this suggests that an emblem based on a fable will treat the material differently. Written in Latin for a Humanistic audience the emblem might well be expected to reflect a different set of values than the comparable fable. Beginning with Aesop, the fable has always seemed most appropriate to those who must pursue their goals indirectly, with cunning. The Humanists had the self-assurance of their education and social position. They were very aware of themselves as the heirs to an ancient and glorious past which was of great importance to their peers. The individual author's identification with one group or the other is of prime concern, since it will affect the audience he chooses to address, the sources from which he gets his material and the attitudes and lessons he sees
fit to express. By a comparison of the same material in the form of a fable and an emblem, differences and similarities in the morals of two different approaches to the growing reading public can be made clear. Unfortunately, it cannot be determined with certainty in every case whether two distinct levels of society were indeed involved. It will be shown, however, that comments by various authors and internal evidence tend to support this view.

A historical investigation of the use of fables as material for emblems would be unproductive. It would have to be highly speculative since little is known directly about the sources used by the various authors from their own evidence. Little can be gained from internal comparisons because fables exist in so many similar versions. Even after the Roman texts were becoming known, it is impossible to say for sure whether they or a medieval version was the source, since the differences in the outward characteristics are rarely great enough to be distinct after transference to a different form. The possibility exists, of course, that an emblem makes a point like that of a fable which was unknown to the author. Since the number of lessons to be derived from a particular situation is limited, such a similarity might be coincidental. It certainly could not prove the direct influence of a particular
version of the fable on the emblem. Nor does a great difference prove the opposite.

My purpose here is not to undertake such an unpromising task, but rather to investigate how the basic situation of a fable appears and is treated in the different form of an emblem. The author's attitudes and the limitations imposed by the form can be determined. By taking a synchronous view of all versions of a fable it is then legitimate to treat them together whether or not the authors were familiar with the work of those who preceded them. Unhindered by chronological considerations, we can bring into relief those salient characteristics which are peculiar to the sixteenth century. It will be shown that the emblem aimed at a different level of society as its audience than did the fable. Thus a comparison of the two will expand and refine these insights into the mores of the times.

As a preliminary it will be necessary to examine the traditions behind the two forms in detail, since it was they which determined the social role they played. Emblem writers sought prestige by imitating hieroglyphs and many chose Latin rather than the vernacular. The fable traces its origin to Aesop the slave and seems often to speak from the standpoint of society's lowest and weakest members.
From its tradition the fable had acquired a taint of uncouthness and provincialism. Luther was reluctant to ascribe the original fables to Aesop, for he doubted "das solcher Tölpel, wie man Esopum malet und beschreiben, solte solch Witz und Kunst vermügen."\(^8\) This did not prevent him and others from using the fable to reach an unsophisticated audience. In fact this must have been a consideration which recommended it.

The Humanists, on the other hand, were very conscious of themselves as an elite group, possessing a fund of knowledge not yet generally available. Alciatus emphasized that he felt himself to be continuing the use of significant images started by Egyptian priests before Moses to transmit arcane wisdom. It has already been noted that his *Emblematum Liber* relied almost exclusively on classical sources for its material. Later authors used a greater variety of sources and were more freely inventive, but Alciatus had set the tone. Only in the seventeenth century, a hundred years later, did the emblem become very different. Until then the authors' awareness of their place in the tradition was a determining factor in the way they approached their task.

age so conscious of history these must have imposed a particular stance on the authors. They were not absolutely free to create the forms and express entirely personal insights into morality. The tone of the form, either emblem or fable, predisposed it to a particular, limited audience. Bound by the tradition, they were also virtually required to utilize only certain types and styles of sources.

The main concern here will be to derive from these two popular forms a measure of understanding of their readers' attitudes. Their very popularity assures us that they are representative of more than just the author. The comparison will be enlightening since it will be shown that they probably enjoyed the greatest popularity in two different groups of society. But before beginning the comparison itself it will be necessary to trace the traditions from which they came in order to ascertain their accepted role. A second prerequisite will be to determine their formal characteristics, which would also affect the way the themes were handled. The fable is a narrative while the emblem is confined by the static exhibition of a single illustration. The formal requirements are then clearly quite different.

This comparison will require the main stress to be laid on the historical differences between the forms. But I would like to emphasize the underlying similarities
which suggested the comparison in the first place. Both fable and emblem are short, didactic, and place a high value on wit. With the invention of moveable type came the possibility of transmitting to a major segment of the population the knowledge and wisdom only the most highly educated minds gleaned from their study of original texts. Ancient sources were re-discovered and re-edited but of course the general public was unlikely to study them. The emblem and fable to different degrees share with other didactic forms the basic intention of communicating what the new age had brought to light to the largest possible audience. The novelty of being able to possess a portion of ancient wisdom personally and the pleasure especially in having illustrated books was a large factor in their popularity.

There was a new inquisitiveness which was not limited by ecclesiastical dogma and an academic elan to which each new discovery added impetus. Society was in a state of rapid transition and the political scene was a continual turmoil. A symptom of the thirst for a change from old traditions was the expectation of great wisdom in the classical texts being brought to light. A library well stocked with beautiful manuscripts became a matter of pride and patrician families spent huge sums in acquiring and copying ancient texts. Printing made it possible for the man of ordinary means to have at least a mass produced share in this.
The emblem and fable are important forms in the popular literature which appeared in order to satisfy this general audience. Technical quality was not always high, but ownership of a book was a novelty and a source of pride. The popularity of fables and especially of emblem books was undoubtedly increased by the fact that they were illustrated. Through printing it had also become possible for those of modest means to possess works of art in the form of emblems. The execution of some editions is expert indeed and today they are still a delight. Bibliophiles have long recognized their value but scholarly interest has become established only recently. This study of their role in literature will provide an opportunity not only to learn more about the attitudes of the reading public but also to examine an element in an area of literary history which deserves increased attention.

In view of the similarities of the emblem and the fable, it is to be expected that fables would furnish emblem writers with themes. But in realizing how very different they are, the dynamics of their relationship are very interesting and the facile attribution of indebtedness often found needs several qualifications to be acceptable. Also they affected both directly and indirectly other forms. Henry Green, for instance, compiled the images of Shake-
speare which have counterparts in emblem literature.9

Albrecht Schöne has also examined the use of emblematic
imagery in German baroque drama.10 Despite the early
investigations of Henry Green and the bibliography com-
piled by Mario Praz,11 scholarly interest in the field
has been sporadic until recently. Karl Goedecke did
not include any reference to it in his immense biblio-
ography.12 Nor did the first edition of the Realexikon
have an entry under emblem.13 Significantly enough the
second edition of 1958 does.14

No one individual deserves credit for single-
handedly bringing emblems onto the map of historical in-
vestigation, but especially significant contributions
were an article in the Realexikon zur deutschen

9 Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers (1870; rpt.
New York: Burt Franklin, Research and Source Work
Series #103, n.d.).

10 Emblematic und Drama im Zeitalter des Baro.k

11 Studies in Seventeenth Century Imagery (London:
Warburg Institute, 1939); 2nd ed. considerably increased

12 Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung aus
den Quellen, 2nd ed. (Dresden: Ehlermann, 1884).

13 Paul Merker and Wolfgang Stammler, 1 (Berlin:
de Gruyter, 1925-26).

14 Werner Kohlschmidt and Wolfgang Mohr, eds.
(Berlin: de Gruyter, 1958).
Kunstgeschichte\textsuperscript{15} and Albrecht Schöne's "Emblemata: Versuch einer Einführung." The main problem associated with the study of emblems has been the unavailability of texts. Emblem books are of course rare and expensive. Very few libraries in the United States have significant holdings of them. This difficulty has, however, been largely alleviated by the publication of the monumental Emblemata: Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts.\textsuperscript{16} It makes no attempt at the impossible task of completeness but provides examples from a wide range of texts. These are arranged according to subject matter, hence the appellation Handbuch. This is convenient in one respect but makes trying to savor a particular author's work a clumsy operation. One must constantly refer to the chapter "Beschreibung der benutzten Emblembücher," which also serves as the table of contents. In addition, only fragments of some very interesting books are included. A handbook cannot replace the re-edition of the works of most interest. Despite these reservations, the Handbuch is invaluable, a major aid to our understanding of the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the future the task of orienting oneself in this area will be greatly eased. Since this volume will be in every university's collection, I have given a reference to it for the emblems I cite whenever possible.

\textsuperscript{15}Heckscher and Wirth, "Emblem."

The fable has been in the purview of scholars much longer than the emblem, just as its currency lasted long after the emblem had become a quaint curiosity. The secondary literature one can draw on is immense, yet does not adequately describe the role of the fable in the popular education of the time. It was brief and was handled best with a light touch of humor, aiming at the twin goals of *prodesse et delectare*. In this regard it is similar to the emblem, but its social spirit seems to have been quite different. It often appeared to be a model of cunning, typically of the fox, or of passive resistance, like the reed bending before the storm that uproots the oak. We will return to these themes later and examine the usual description of its stance as most appropriate to the little man who does not have the power to confront impending forces directly. For example, Leopold Ranke, in writing of the "hervorleuchtendsten Erscheinungen" of the period, and not just of fables, states: "Und fragen wir dann, welchen gemeinschaftlichen Charakter sie haben, so ist es der der Opposition."¹⁷ He goes on to praise the common sense inherent in "der Tiefe der Nation," which "prosaisch, bürgerlich, niedrig, wie er ist, aber durch und durch wahr, sich zum Richter der Erscheinungen der Welt

aufwirft.\textsuperscript{18} Ranke sees the popular literature as an element in the national uprising in Germany against the corruption of outdated medieval forms. Arno Schirokauer attributes to the fable specifically a critical social function.\textsuperscript{19} In his view it must express a common sense perception of reality. Therefore, he claims, no fables were written during the height of medieval courtly literature. They would have been unacceptably ironic toward the ideals of courtly life. His contentions are very cogent, but there is a tendency for others to extrapolate from such insights an understanding of the fable in other periods without re-assessing the new situation.

The role of the fable, especially in the sixteenth century, needs to be re-examined. Generalizations abound and many of the studies upon which our understanding is based have not aged gracefully. Too often they are distorted by enthusiasm for national popular literature or exhaust themselves in positivistic descriptions. They cannot be relied on for objective judgments of the quality and function of fable literature.

If we were to accept a view such as Ranke's, it would be clear that the social gulf between the emblem and the fable was too great for any large scale interaction. In-

\textsuperscript{18} Ranke, \textit{Reformation}, 2d book, 256.

deed the large discrepancy found by Schirokauer between the vulgar fable and the sophisticated ideals of courtly literature would have been mirrored in the relationship of fable and emblem three hundred years later. The fable did in fact provide the basis for very few emblems. But it will become clear in course that the fable can also be conceived of as a tool for educating the general public used by an educated and established elite, just like the emblem. Both often manifest the same attitudes and the same general social orientation, as will be shown later. There is no obviously adequate reason to assign the fable a lower rank because of its frequently vulgar tone. This tone alone cannot be responsible for the lack of interaction.

The basic similarity as popular, short, didactic forms and the apparent social differences are then two conflicting elements. By seeking to explain the relative importance of the similarity in didactic function and the difference in social status, I hope to make the relationship between the two forms and between the author and his intended audience clearer, thus approaching a better understanding of the roles of fable and emblem in the literature of the sixteenth century.
CHAPTER II

THE EMBLEM AND THE HIEROGLYPHIC TRADITION
The emblematic way of looking at things struck a responsive chord in the sixteenth century. Herder speaks of the period as "das emblematische Zeitalter." But this lasted a relatively short time, for he continues, writing in 1795, "Die Geschichte dieser Zeit und dieses Geschmackes liegt noch sehr im Dunkeln."¹ The taste for emblems seems quite foreign to him. Since he says its history is still in the dark, we must conclude it had already been there quite a while in his estimation.

Though of short duration, the emblematic age was of great intensity and left its mark on other, more lasting works of literature. Emblem books were so common and their imagery so pervasive that no author could have avoided contact with them and any could easily have found himself employing images suggested by them. As mentioned earlier, Henry Green compiled a large number of passages from Shakespeare which could have been derived from emblems. His work is marred, however, by his acceptance of any illustrated book of the period as an emblem book. He treats Brant's Narrenschiff and Boner's Edelstein as of the same genre as Alciatus' Emblematum Liber and says of the Hieroglyphics of Horapollo, presumed by the Humanists to date back to ancient Egypt, "it is certainly a book of Emblems."²


Albrecht Schöne's more recent study of emblems and the baroque drama incorporates an adequate definition of the genre and is thus a more specifically valuable study.

Green's confusion is understandable even though his breadth of selection flies in the face of sixteenth century definitions of an emblem and is thoroughly unacceptable today. The popularity of the emblem can be attributed to the concurrence of two streams of pictorial symbolism. One can be traced through contemporary illustrated books through the earliest examples of wood block printing back to medieval allegory. Such works as the early *biblia pauperum*, which was to communicate Biblical stories to the relatively uneducated through pictures, come under this heading. The other stream was contributed by the Humanists and their appetite for dissemination of ancient wisdom. Information and morals gleaned from classical sources could be presented to a wide audience in a witty and popular manner in the emblem. They also held Egyptian hieroglyphs to be pictographical records of great insight and endeavored to make this wisdom available to their own age. It was a commonplace that art should not only give pleasure but also enlighten its audience. The emblem admirably suited this double requirement. Many emblem books were prefaced by the hope that the subjects contained would provide material for use in the decorative and fine arts. But it must be added that decoration using meaning-
ful objects in books and art preceded the literary emblem and can be considered an iconographical forebear.

The two streams, contemporary and ancient, converged in the *Emblematum Liber* of Andreas Alciatus, which has already been mentioned as the first emblem book. It proved immensely popular. More than 150 editions appeared\(^3\) and it created the entire genre. Alciatus took the idea of an illustration showing a meaningful object or situation and coordinated it with a text drawn from ancient sources. Each emblem was presented on a single page of the book by itself and included a title, which was either a moral or an indication of the application of the lesson being taught. Illustrated books were of course nothing new but it was Alciatus who made this particular three part arrangement an integral unit and gave it the name emblem.

*Emblema*, from the Greek meaning to bring together or insert, referred during the Middle Ages to mosaics or ornaments added to chalices, tablets and the like. Quintilian used it differently when he wrote of orators memorizing especially eloquent clauses which could be inserted at appropriate places to add polish to an extemporaneous speech and decorate it "velut emblematibus" (*Inst. Orat.*, II, iv). The particularly fine

elocution of such passages would stand out and highlight the point the orator wished to make. They were to be not only decorative but also a succinct statement which the speaker wished to have impressed in the memories of his audience. Curtius quotes a curious use of the name in the Middle Ages: Alanus ab Insulis termed the Anti-claudianus a summa of the seven liberal arts. But to it, he says, divine revelation must be added, "theophanicae coelestis emblema." Curtius adds in a note that the "axioms of theology can be called [according to Alanus] not only rules and maxims but also emblemata 'quia puriore mentis acumine comprehenduntur.'" In comparing divine revelation and emblem he describes revelation as something added to rational knowledge. It is a summation and highlights the background of what men can attain with his own faculties. It is not base nor temporal but a direct insight by a "purer" faculty of discrimination into the significance of the world.

Alciatus' Emblemata Liber was in the full stream of the Humanistic desire to make classical antiquity a real factor in the present again. Latin was the language of all educated men, but Greek was still inaccessible to all but a very few. The epigrams of the Emblemata Liber

5European Literature, p. 119.
were in Latin and some fifty of them were translations from the Greek Anthology which Alciatus had prepared several years earlier. Alciatus wished to teach his readers and at the same time transmit classical knowledge in a moralistic form they could put to use in everyday life.

The Greek Anthology is a collection of epigrams which have come down to us in two principal collections. The Palatine Anthology was not discovered until 1606 in Heidelberg and not printed until the second half of the eighteenth century. Although it is now the accepted source, it obviously had no influence on Alciatus and his contemporaries. The collection which they did have had been prepared by Maximus Planudes in 1301. Many of the epigrams in the Planudean Anthology are known from other sources, since epigrams were freely quoted by Greek writers throughout history. Also many were translated by classical Roman authors and such versions are the basis of much of the familiarity with Greek epigrams before and during the Renaissance. But the Anthology is the only source for many epigrams and because of its size and comprehensiveness, including over 3000 epigrams, it became a ready source of reference. The foundation of the Anthology collected by Planudes was various collections of

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6I am indebted for this historical outline to James Hutton, The Greek Anthology in Italy to the Year 1800, Cornell Studies in English, No. 23 (Ithaca: Cornell, 1935).
smaller scope dating back to the first century B.C. Near the end of the ninth century A.D. Constantine Cephalas gathered and arranged them into four books of amatory, votive and descriptive epigrams, plus epitaphs. It was a revised and augmented version which Planudes copied and which Greek exiles brought to Italy.

As it became better known, the Anthology was prized by the Humanists for its insight into Greek manners and morals. The range of subjects and the varied viewpoints give the reader an idea of Greek attitudes which could not be as easily gained from the larger and more ambitious literary works. Often an epigram yields an intimate glance into everyday life and personal feelings. Joannes Lascaris, who was one of the Humanists around the court of the Medicis for twenty years, found it presented such a wealth of information in such an elegant manner "that you might think the genius and judgment of all the wisest of men, rivaling and vying with one another, had been brought together into this single volume."^[7]

The rediscovery of classical literature and its publication in the Renaissance was not solely a philological or historical exercise. The search for old texts was also the search for a new insight that could be applied to the individual's life. The goal was not academic knowledge but the inspiration of a broad reading public and even-

tually the realization of classical ideals in the life of the nation. The Humanists sought "to arrive by a study of the text at an objective understanding of the essence of man, not merely in an intellectual or rational sense, as a phase of thought, but through direct apprehension of the whole range of human capabilities,"\(^8\) and then to spread this insight. The Anthology lent itself admirably to this twofold purpose.

Lascaris edited the first publication in print of the Anthology in 1494 at the Alopá press in Florence. The Aldine edition followed in 1503 and other editions appeared in various presses frequently in the following years. The Anthology grew in recognition and esteem and quickly found its way into the curriculum of Humanistic schools.

The most popular of the selections intended for use in schools was that by Joannes Soter, *Epigrammata Graeca*.\(^9\) To most of the epigrams he appended one or more Latin translations which he gathered from various sources. Among these are eleven by Alciatus which Soter had found quoted in Alciatus' already published works. Translations by Alciatus of a much larger number appeared


\(^9\)1st ed. (Cologne: Soter, 1525); cited by Hutton, *The Greek Anthology*, p. 197.
in Cornarius' *Selecta Epigrammata*. These translations show that Alciatus was involved with classical epigrams years before the publication of his emblem book.

A major factor in the popularity of the pictorial representation of ancient wisdom was the Humanists' interest in Egyptian hieroglyphs. That there was a direct link between this and emblems has long been recognized. Karl Giehlow exhaustively explored this area of the period's widespread fascination for ancient things as early as 1915. Ludwig Volkmann built upon this foundation for his investigation of the links between hieroglyphs and emblems. Heckscher and Wirth also consider the topic at length. This is not unexpected since the list of Humanists who concerned themselves with hieroglyphs at one time or another is quite impressive and includes among others, Ficino, Erasmus, Reuchlin, Pirckheimer, Dürer, Tasso, Rabelais and Fischart.

10 1st ed. (Basel: Bebellius, 1529); cited loc. cit.


12 *Bilderschriften der Renaissance; Die Hieroglyphik und Emblemak in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1923).


The Renaissance in its intense passion for *prisca sapientia* could not have overlooked the references in the literature from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. in which the wondrous land of Egypt was described. Herodotus, Plato and Diodorus Siculus, to mention only a few, alluded to a holy script of the Egyptians in which great wisdom was preserved. References to a syllabic script were thought to refer to an entirely different alphabet than the hieroglyphs, which were considered to be either ideograms or abstract signs. Diodorus Siculus, for example, writes of two scripts taught to priests' sons, the "sacred" and that "used in the more general instruction." \(^{15}\) He writes further that the hieroglyphic writing expressed the concept "by means of the significance of the objects which have been copied and by its figurative meaning which has been impressed upon the memory by practice." \(^{16}\)

The curious work known as the *Hieroglyphics of Horapoll*, mentioned previously, exerted a great influence on Renaissance hieroglyphs. Nothing is known of the author or the circumstances under which he wrote it. From internal evidence it would seem to derive from Alexandria during the


\(^{16}\) Diodorus, Loeb Classical Library, II (1935; rpt. 1953), III, 4.
second or fourth centuries A.D.\textsuperscript{17} Even the name of the
author may be an addition of later centuries combining
the names of the gods Apollo and Horus. The work pur-
ports to give the so-called enigmatic hieroglyphs which
constituted the highest stage in the education of Egyp-
tian scribes. In fact, it is a fantastic mixture of
ideograms borrowed from various sources or apparently
made up. It contributes nothing to the understanding of
the actual hieroglyphs and we can assume that those in-
volved in the history of the text were as ignorant of
their true nature as the readers of the Renaissance.
The history of how the text was handed down is completely
in the dark. A Greek translation was acquired in 1419
by Father Christophorus de' Buondelmonti in Greece and
was brought to Florence. From here it was quickly dis-
seminated among the Humanists and became one of the corner-
stones of their imitative Bilderschriften. Even though
it led away from an accurate deciphering of the hiero-
glyphs, it was accepted as authentic. It agreed in the
interpretation of several depictions with the Physiologus,
which also can be traced back to Alexandria at roughly the
same time. The two works confirmed each other in their
conception of the hieroglyphs and gave the Humanists no
reason to doubt the traditional, if erroneous, idea of
the hieroglyphs as allegorical ideograms. True hieroglyphic

\textsuperscript{17} Volkmann, Bilderschriften, p. 8.
texts, of course, could not be deciphered by these means but new hieroglyphs could be invented and new texts could be written. Thus the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili could use a picture of a dog to represent friendship, a sword held high to represent justice, or a lamp to represent life. 18

In the mistaken idea that hieroglyphs were symbols expressing the qualities of the thing represented lie the roots of the Renaissance tradition of hieroglyphics. Their popularity can be attributed to the presumed accessibility to discerning readers of all ages. Men could communicate by this means even when they spoke different languages. The meaning of the hieroglyphs was not dependent on phonetics or a particular language, but only on the acuteness of observation of the characteristics of things. In the Egyptian hieroglyphs the Humanists thought they had great ancient wisdom at hand if they could but decipher the code completely. Leone Battista Alberti, who was a pioneer theoretician of art in Renaissance Florence and whose Della Pittura became one of the chief treatises on the art of painting, expresses this conception of the hieroglyphs: "The Aegyptians employed Symbols in the following Manner: They carved an Eye, by which they understood God; a Vulture for Nature; a Bee

for King; a Circle for Time; an Ox for Peace, and the like. And their Reason for expressing their Sense by these Symbols was, that Words were understood only by the respective Nations that talked the Language, and therefore Inscriptions in common Characters must in a short time be lost: As it has actually happened to our Etrurian characters. . . And the same, the Aegyptians supposed, must be the Case with all sorts of Writing whatsoever; but the Manner of expressing their Sense which they used upon these occasions, by Symbols, they thought must always be understood by ingenious Men of all Nations, to whom alone they were of Opinion, that Things of Moment were fit to be communicated."\textsuperscript{19}

Volkmann asserts that under Alberti's guidance Humanists all over Europe soon began expressing themselves by means of \textit{signa Aegyptia}.\textsuperscript{20} Such hieroglyphs were used extensively on coins, in books and as architectural ornament. In a small space, they were thought to express wise insights with intriguing wit and in such a form that it was decipherable only by an educated elite privy to the code. This exclusivity enhanced the appeal of the hieroglyphs, for one naturally wished to prove that one belonged to the elite by being able to invent hieroglyphs and publish them. By writing in hieroglyphs some of the


\textsuperscript{20} Volkmann, \textit{Bilderschriften}, p. 11.
power of the **prisca theologia** was to be borrowed. If the insights of Egyptian wisdom had become unintelligible, at least the flavor if not the content of the hieroglyphs could be applied to modern insights. The text at hand could partake in the long tradition of expressing the profoundest truths of God's plan by these means.

In his essay on the cachet of Aldus, Erasmus refers to the "aenigmaticae sculpturae, quorum priscis seculis multus fuit usus, potissimum apud Aegyptios vates, ac Theologos: qui nefas esse ducabant, sapientiae mysteria literis communibus vulgo profano prodere, quemadmodum nos facimus."\(^{21}\) The reader to whom the characteristic "vis ac natura" of the portrayed objects were completely transparent could decipher the enigma expressed in the hieroglyphs "demum collatis eorum symbolorum conjecturis." And it is thus that he understands the Aldine cachet: The circle, because it has no end, expresses eternity. The anchor represents slowness because it is able to hold a ship. The dolphin is the fastest animal and must be understood as speed. By a "comparative interpretation of their symbols" one is able "at last" to understand the motto *Semper festina lente*. Erasmus concludes that this type of script is not only highly dignified but the reader also experiences great pleasure.

\(^{21}\) *Adagia*, II, 1; *Opera Omnia*. (1703; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961.) II, 400.
when he has completely understood the riddle by combining the characteristics of the objects properly.

Erasmus was the foremost advocate of the Renaissance belief in the power of the intellect to bring about moral and institutional improvement. He accorded importance to Renaissance hieroglyphs because they expressed moral truths in a manner which offered the reader no small pleasure. They were not limited to the view of the world defined by dogma. The reader could come to terms with the natural world through them by insight into the characteristics of things, arriving at a fuller realization of Christianity and God's plan in the world. His only regret seems to be the origin of the hieroglyph in the wish of Egyptian wisemen to hide their knowledge from the uncouth population, according to the contemporary understanding of the tradition. Erasmus must have been pleased that the renascence of the hieroglyph was aimed at a much broader audience.

While hieroglyphs were clearly a factor in the popular acceptance of the emblem, Johannes Fischart traces its development from decorative arts. He cites ancient mosaics, coins and jewelry as well as contemporary examples, praising goldsmiths especially. Any object to

which a meaning is attributed is for him a precursor of
the emblem. The images engraved on jewels or woven into
tapestries fall under the heading of "Eingeblömete Zier-
werckren" which includes of course the emblem. All of
these instances are decorative, added to the main body.
The forerunner he says was the "blumwerck," the decora-
tion of columns and arches by wreaths, ivy and bunches of
grapes, as well as bas-reliefs. The Greeks, he mentions,
called such work Emblemata. Then he argues that since
the Greeks used it quite prolifically, this then should
be copied or at least serve as a guide also. 23 Character-
tistically, he derives the form's justification from
classical models.

In this general realm of iconology, the emblem is
but one of many occurrences. Fischart does not distinguish
between the architectural uses and the printed form about
which he was writing. He even includes mention of symbolic
objects used to admonish the possessor. He tells of a
Junker who wore a piece of a millstone set in his ring,
since that stone was more profitable to him than any
other. The bishop of Tours is said to have hung a beggar's
cloak above his table to remind him of earlier days of
poverty.

Besides tracing the origin from the Greeks, Fischart
expounds at length the national German contribution to

23 Ibid., A iii b, A iiij a.
iconology, specifically in the form of heraldry: "dann nieman vnsere liebe Redliche Vorfaren / die der Reden und Worte gewarsam vnd sparsam / aber der Wehr sehr gefarsam waren / für so vnachtsam vă liederlich verdunken soll / als die jhnem vnd jren Nachkömmnen solche täglicly vor augen schwebende Ehr vnd Wehrgemerck verbeglich vnd vngeňhr solten angemasst vă zugeygnet haben: sondernd vil mehr zur auffmanung vnd anreytzung / jrer ererbter vnd vorgebaueter Tugend nachzuben."24 The honor of the nation must be upheld by pointing out that the old German naturally had didactic images to reinforce their inherited and acquired virtue. The model for the Renaissance might be Greek art, but for Fischart in this case it was to be used to expand only what the nation had already developed. And if they were not skilled with words, they were masters of the martial arts and took second place to no one in Tugend. Fischart errs in his view only in his nationalism, for heraldry was undoubtedly one of the main contributors to the development of the emblem.

The influence of heraldry can be better traced from its use in Burgundy and France than from the German side. Courtly fashion knew no boundaries and the use of words and pictures in heraldic devices spread from there throughout Europe. These devices are close relatives to the

Besides the normal spread of courtly fashion, the expeditions of Charles VIII and Louis XII to Italy are events from which we can trace its movement to Italy. The aspect of heraldry of concern here is the use of physical objects to represent ideas, amplified by words or proverbs included in the device. All rigorous histories of the emblem mention heraldry as a prototype, both in the hereditary family coats-of-arms and the form known as *impresa*. This term was derived from the Latin meaning an undertaking and was a temporary insignia for a particular situation. Their use was commonplace during the Renaissance, but Heckscher and Wirth do not think they were an important element which influenced the development of the emblem. The use of illustration and motto together is similar, but they find few cases where a clear relationship between the content of the image and motto exists. Precisely the opposite point of view is taken by Dieter Sulzer, who contends that there was no difference at all between the two. The hallmark of the emblem is the

correspondence between a res significans and the motto which is signified by the illustration. Such a union appears in the impresa only after the popularity of the emblem had made itself felt and was incorporated into heraldry under its influence.

The emblem is a form related to numerous other genres of iconology and its popularity must be understood in relation to the diverse use of symbolic representations. The late Middle Ages and early modern periods witnessed an ever growing use of allegorical illustrations. Often such illustrations were subordinate to the text which could have stood alone. This was especially true before the advent of printing when a special skill and considerable time and effort were required to draw even the simplest figures. Such considerations tended to limit the use of illustrations in a work. But this secondary use of pictures continued after the advent of printing with moveable type. Schottenloher mentions a German Bible of 1475 printed by Jodocus Pflanzmann of Augsburg which used the same illustration of an old man dressed in long flowing robes to represent several different prophets of the Old Testament. He concludes that such repetition caused no annoyance because of the "ausserordentlich stark entwickelten Schaulust der Zeit." 29 Such

illuminations were adjuncts to the text and were added in response to popular taste, which demanded and delighted in even relatively crude pictures.

Printed illustrated books also preceded the invention of moveable type. Indeed they represent one of the earliest forms of printing in Europe. A woodblock the size of the page was cut, inked and the paper pressed upon it by hand. Several such sheets were sometimes bound together and surviving copies are hence known as block books. Because of the technique the accompanying text was kept brief or omitted entirely. Printing a large amount of text in this way would have required a great deal of the most intricate carving, so the allegorical illustration was paramount and the text at most a secondary clue to its significance. Extant block books date from the first half of the fifteenth century and were produced primarily in the low countries. 30 Since the texts were in Latin, the books were not intended for the wholly uneducated, but they also made no great intellectual demands. Schottenloher feels these visually didactic books were produced for "das geistliche Proletariat," who had the task of educating the youth of the general population in matters of faith and dogma and who "dazu gern anschauliche Gegenstände aus dem Gebiete der Heilswahrhei-

Further, we can speculate that they and perhaps similar works of a secular nature were used intensively by students of no great scholarly ambition or accomplishment and that so few have survived because they were literally read to pieces.

Such pedagogical aids exist in manuscript form from before even the simplest wood block printing was used. For example, the origins of the *biblia pauperum* are variously ascribed to the ninth or eleventh centuries. Typically, it presented a series of scenes from the life of Jesus, each flanked by parallel events in the Old Testament. There was also a brief text in Latin to refresh the memory and recall the appropriate Biblical passages. There are manuscripts of the fourteenth century but some ten different block book editions have survived and it is safe to assume that printing greatly increased its availability and use.

There are numerous other forms in which the illustration takes precedence over the text. Heckscher and Wirth devote a long section of their article to "Prototypen," among which they include those already mentioned as well as the lesser forms, rebus, *ars memorativa*, *titulus*, etc. 33

31 Schottenloher, *Das alte Buch*, p. 33.
The burgeoning of such forms shows the delight the age found in pictorial symbolism. The virtual requirement that illustrations be added to an independent text is a similar phenomenon. Both are symptomatic of the "Schau¬lust" and prepared the way for the emblem. But they in no way adequately explain its popularity or influence. Herder did not call it the age of illustrations.

There are other factors which must be considered in order to account for this. Basic, of course, was the advent of printing, making books available cheaply, simultaneously permitting and causing the rapid expansion of the reading audience. Emblems were illustrated morals and all didactic works enjoyed some popularity at the time. The emblem was especially attractive and it was accessible to more than a small wealthy or scholarly elite. People of mean estate could also learn from it and artists could apply it in their work. Many other illustrated forms fulfilled the double requirement of *prodesse et delectare*, but through its reliance on classical texts and its similarity to the hieroglyph, the emblem promised to transmit ancient wisdom. This the others could not do. This distinction was also claimed for the hieroglyph, but it was completely without text and the reader was faced by the perplexing task of discovering the often tenuous and always obscure allusions of its various parts. The emblem differed
from the hieroglyph in that it provided in the title either a moral or an indication of its thrust and a commentary on it in the epigram. It was not an illustrated text nor was the text subordinate to the illustration. The title and epigram fused with the illustration to create a unity quite different from the forms mentioned. The question of form will be considered in more detail in the next chapter, so it is sufficient to say for now that the form of the emblem distinguished it from other, less popular types and apparently struck the most responsive chord for the most people. From the perspective of its historical development it is clear that the emblem most happily combined the two factors of pictorial symbolism and venerable insights. It owed its popularity then to the appealing way this form presented its lessons.
CHAPTER III

THE FORM OF THE EMBLEM
The emblem combined text and illustration in a way unlike any other form. There were hieroglyphs and imprese, in which the major element was the illustration. There were also numerous texts to which illustrations were added. Only in the emblem were the two an integral unit. The reader's eye first falls on the illustration and the title, which is most often a moral. The object or situation shows the veracity of the lesson in reality. If the reader is knowledgeable and quick witted, he can see the relationship. If not, the epigram provides the explanation and a further commentary on the moral.

In this chapter I shall consider several typical emblems in order to show the possibilities and limitations of this form. Only then will it be possible to clarify the emblem's relationship with the fable. Both were short didactic genres which showed the truth of their lessons in practical examples, not in abstract argument. Wolfgang Stammler typifies the sixteenth century as "lehrbegierig."¹ Literature and didactic literature were virtually synonymous in the popular field. The emblem and fable were perhaps the two most popular forms and yet there was surprisingly little interaction. One factor was undoubtedly the form of the emblem and the influence this had on the choice of subject, the manner in which it was treated and the audience addressed.

¹Von der Mystik zum Barock (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1950), p. 28.
One major difference was the emblem's heritage from iconology. Many fable editions included woodcuts, but the emblem was more than just an illustrated poem. Alciatus explained this difference in these words: "Verba significant, res significantur. Tametsi et res quandoque etiam significant, ut hieroglyphica apud Horum et Chaeremonem, cuius argumenti et nos carmine libellum composuimus, cui titulus est Emblemata." Words convey meaning and represent objects, but occasionally objects can also have a significance. It is not surprising that Alciatus mentions hieroglyphs in this connection. Given his Humanistic involvement, they were the most obvious source of inspiration as an entire system of writing using objects to represent ideas and concepts.

Finding significance in objects is of course nothing new. The attitude expressed by Alanus ab Insulis in the twelfth century is still applicable to the emblematic literature of the sixteenth:

\[\text{Omnis mundi creatura}\]
\[\text{Quasi liber et figura}\]
\[\text{Nobis est et speculum.}\]

If all creation is the mirror of God's plan and the physical representation of it like a book or picture, then a

\(^2\text{De verborum significatione (1530; cited by Heckscher and Wirth, "Emblem," Reallexikon, col. 146).}\)

\(^3\text{Cited ibid., col. 129.}\)
book of pictures can also be the mirror of nature. Nature or the depiction of it is not only phenomenon but also a mirror of a higher realm.

The medieval mind saw the world as intelligible and found hints of divine providence in multiple layers of significance. A threefold interpretation of the Bible was possible ad tropologiam, ad allegoriam and ad literam. The interpretation ad literam was concerned with the historical sequence of events. General articles of faith were presented through interpretation ad allegoriam. And finally, moral principles were adduced ad tropologiam. These three levels of communication were all present in the reported actions and it was the task of the skilled interpreter to discern them. The same type of exegesis was applied to non-Biblical texts such as the fable Ec-basis Cuiusdam Captivi. The flight of the calf and its rescue by the farmer and his herd became per tropologiam a praise of monastic life. Tropologically the fable related the story of a monk who left the security of his cloister, was caught by the evil world and had to be rescued by the forces of ascetic purity. Similarly the Physiologus did not content itself with just describing the "natural" occurrences but sought their meaning in terms of twelfth century Christianity. In this context natural history was of no value in itself for "Wert erhält Idisches nur durch seine Zuordnung zu dem einzigen und absoluten Wert, dem
The emblem, like its iconological predecessors, was predicated on a concern for what objects could represent. It treated objects and situations as exemplary of abstract moral lessons. The choice and application of these lessons was of course informed by Christian ethics, but it was typical of the emblem's position in the Renaissance that the particular lessons and the value attached to them were derived from Greek and Roman literature. The ultimate authority for the lessons was not revealed dogma and sacred habit as in the Middle Ages. This was largely supplanted by the influence of the esoteric hieroglyphic tradition and the desire to put the actual occurrences of the world and their essential characteristics as seen in the manner of the ancient sages on display. As mentioned before, the Greek Anthology was a major source for Alciatus. Classical mythology, natural histories, as well as Biblical images, were constant sources of res signification. Similarly, the wide reading of Humanistic emblem writers provided them with proverbs and morals of ancient authority for which they could then seek suitable illustrations in objects and situation in literature or their own experience.

We can take as the basic form of emblem that type which has a moral as its title. The illustration shows a

4 Helmut deBoor and Richard Newald, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, 1 (München: Beck, 1957), 129.
specific instance of the abstract rule in operation. As an exercise in wit, the author may have made the connection between the thing and its lesson quite obscure, or it may depend on knowing a specific passage in ancient literature. Even if this is not the case, the reader may need help in grasping which characteristic of the situation implies the lesson. The epigram, which is the third part of every emblem, explains the connection between the *res significans* and its meaning and may expand upon the moral. For example, Joachim Camerarius, Jr. has an emblem with the title *Violenta Nocent*. The illustration shows a bear which has gotten its paw stuck while robbing a honey tree. The predicament of the bear is a specific, actual case in which the warning of the title is borne out. The epigram then reads:

> Ut favus exitio est urso, sic saepe malorum
> Autorem illaqueant visque dolusque suum.

The "ut ... sic" shows the relationship in which the title and illustration stand to each other: As happened in the illustrated case, so then happens in general, at least *saepe*. The situation of the bear is one of a large number of actual situations which would be specific examples of the truth of the moral and therefore *res significantes*. It is, in other words, emblematic of the trouble

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5*Emblematum ac Symbolorum ethico-politicorum centuriae quattuor* (Leipzig: Vogelinianis, 1605), II, 14. He is not to be confused with his father, Joachim Camerarius, Sr., who will be cited as the author of *Fabulae Aesopicae*. 
the reader may well bring upon himself if he fails to heed the warning.

There are, however, emblems whose titles are not moral precepts or adages. Alciatus has, for example, an emblem entitled simply *Ira*.\(^6\) The illustration shows a lion surrounded by dogs as hunters approach. The epigram reads:

```
Alcaem veteres caudam dixere Leonis
  Qua stimulante iras concipit ille graues.
Lutea cum surgit bilis, crudescit et atro
  Felle dolor, furias excitat indomitas.
```

Here the title is an emotion, aptly illustrated although the didactic applicability is not yet clear. Righteous anger could be thought of as a positive quality in some circumstances. For instance, a lion saves itself from hunters by its anger and threatening gestures in an emblem by Zincgref.\(^7\) Its title is *Sese Terrore tuetur*. Or Camerarius writes as the epigram to one of his emblems:\(^8\)

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Non temere coecam vir fortis fertur ad iram
  Iusta sed indigne laesus in arma ruit.
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Only from Alciatus' epigram does the didactic intent of his emblem become clear. By striking itself with its tail, the lion rouses itself to ungovernable fury. The title

\(^6\) 1531; *Handbuch*, col. 374.  
\(^8\) *Vim suscitat ira, Symbolorum et Emblematum*, II, 5 (*Handbuch*, col. 424).
and the illustration together depict anger. The significance of this depiction is then explained in the epigram. In this instance, there is no explicit lesson in the form of a precept, since a large factor in Alciatus' choice was apparently simply to quote an ancient saying. But the tendency of the emblem becomes quite clear from the terms in which anger is described in the epigram.

In both these types of emblems the illustrations and the titles function together to present the reader with a meaningful object. The epigram then provides a commentary. There is a third type in which the title is an indication of the intended audience. It specifies who should learn and not what should be learned. For instance, there is an emblem by Alciatus entitled In Astrologos. The emblem as a whole is a warning against unbridled speculation, but here the epigram must provide the lesson to be learned.

The history of this emblem also provides an example of the importance of the illustration. In the first edition it showed only a scholar gazing into the night sky. Alciatus was dissatisfied by the artistic quality of this edition in general and apparently by this illustration in particular. All subsequent editions show Icarus falling as the astrologer looks on. Without Icarus there is no significant object and no partnership

1531; Handbuch, col. 1056.
with the text. It is merely an illustrated epigram.
The text is paramount, conjuring up the story of Icarus
and deriving from it the appropriate message. The picture
of the astrologer alone bore the same relationship to the
epigram that the illustrations of the Narrenschiff bore to
the fools' descriptions. These illustrated and very
nicely too, but they did not show the foolishness in
action. They were an adjunct to the text and provided
nothing from which the reader could learn.

In the Augsburg edition the epigram could stand
alone. Indeed it is derived from the Greek Anthology\textsuperscript{10}
which of course had no illustrations. There a wax statue
of Icarus is addressed with the advice not to use his
wings, since wax caused his original fall. The text
makes clear that wax is the crux in both instances. The
epigram by Alciatus applies this warning against flying
too high now to astrologers:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Icare per superos qui raptus et aera donec} \\
&\text{In mare praecipitem caera liquata daret} \\
&\text{Nunc te caera eadem feruensque resuscitat ignis,} \\
&\text{Exemplo ut doceas dogmata certa tuo,} \\
&\text{Astrologus caveat quicquam praedicere preceps,} \\
&\text{Nam cadet impostor dum super astra vexit.}
\end{align*}
\]

This makes clear that the story of Icarus is a model of
the fate which awaits those who predict rashly. But Icarus,

\textsuperscript{10}Anthologia Graeca, ed. Hermann Beckby, Tusculum-
the res significans, was not shown in the illustration of the first edition. He is addressed as the vehicle of the lesson taught "tuo exemplo," and as the later editions show, must be included in the illustration.

This omission completely altered the form of the emblem. In fact, it was no longer an emblem but an illustrated epigram. Even as such it was not entirely satisfactory. The origin of the term epigram was the verse "written upon" an object, such as a wax statue of Icarus. Its purpose was to dedicate or explain the purpose of that object and make a comment about it. When an epigram is then included in a book and is to be illustrated, it is obvious that the illustration should show the original object.

An epigram alone must conjure up the appearance of the thing it concerns with words and then satisfy our curiosity about its intent. Lessing compares this dual task with the situation where one sees an impressive work of art, appreciates it from a distance and then approaches it in order to read the title. When this curiosity is relieved, he says a pleasant satisfaction is felt in addition to the appreciation. He applies this insight to the epigram, not necessarily as a part of the emblem but as an independent form. He concludes "es muss über irgendeinen einzeln ungewöhnlichen Gegenstand, den es zu einer so viel als möglich sinnlichen Klarheit zu erheben sucht, in
Erwartung setzen, und durch einen unvorhergesehenen Aufschluss diese Erwartung mit eins befriedigen."  
It conjures up an unusual object in the mind's eye and arouses curiosity about it. Then with a sudden twist, it satisfies this curiosity.

The epigram of an emblem has a simpler task since the object is already present in "sinnlicher Klarheit." Expectancy is created by the title and illustration and the viewer would be disappointed if this expectancy were unfulfilled by an epigram. The title and the illustration pose a riddle as it were. In the emblem of Camerarius mentioned earlier, what is the relationship between the bear which has caught its paw in the honey tree and the moral "Violenta nocent?" Or in the emblems of Alciatus, what lesson does Icarus hold for astrologers or what does a lion teach about anger? Such questions are answered by the epigram.

It is precisely in terms of riddle that Heckscher and Wirth define the emblem: How is the title derived from the illustration? The riddle is asked to test the knowledge or wit of the person under examination, or when the answer is finally given, as a pedagogical tool. In the emblem the riddle is answered in the epigram. For

instance, Camerarius entitled one of his emblems Neuter Solus. The illustration shows a dog and a goose standing together and the question is immediately, what is the connection between them and the title? The epigram then informs us:

Quid vis fida canis? quid vult sibi candidus anser? Sit monet integritas, sit vigilasque fides.

Does the reader know the dog is the embodiment of faithfulness and the goose, a reference to the story of the Capitoline geese (Livy, V, xlvii, 4), is the symbol of watchfulness? Knowing this, can he then deduce the lesson in the title that the two qualities must always be combined? If he does and can, he passes the test and has the added pleasure of having successfully matched wits with a well-known author. If he does not or cannot, by reading the epigram he is informed of the references made in the illustration and learns the lesson provided by the combination of the illustration with the title. Although the dog has many characteristics (it bites the hand that feeds it), it is chosen as being emblematic of faithfulness. This is common knowledge but the reader must still select the proper characteristic of the dog which fits, in order to solve the riddle. Similarly,

12 Symbolorum ac Emblematum, II, 68 (Handbuch, col. 559.)
the goose is chosen as emblematic of watchfulness. Again
one characteristic of the bird is singled out, but this
time not on the basis of common experience. The reference
depends on familiarity with the Roman story.

This emblem, like many others, depends largely on a
classical allusion. It is not only a test of acute per-
ception but also of classical knowledge. It is not so eso-
teric that it intimidates the uninitiated, and typically
it treats the material lightly though not irreverently.
Its purpose is the transmission of wise dicta in an ap-
pealing way to a broad audience through printing. Of
course, the emblem could not present the classics in a
scholarly manner. A linguistic or historical commentary
was impossible. But it could present precepts gleaned from
ancient sources and make them intelligible and palatable
to its audience. In this way it served the Humanistic
purpose of popular education.

Alciatus established this function of the emblem by
adapting verses from the Greek Anthology for many of his
emblems. In addition, almost all of the others not
borrowed from it were based on some other ancient text.
Some are exceedingly obscure and the riddle they present
can only be solved with an intimate knowledge of the ap-
propriate passage. An example of this is his emblem
"Prudentes Vino Abstant." The illustration shows a vine bearing grapes growing on a tree which is distinguished only by long thin leaves and small round fruit. The reference to wine is clear enough but the connection between this unrecognizable tree and prudent men is unintelligible. The epigram, taken from the Greek Anthology, reads: "Quid me uexatis rami? sum Palladis arbor, / Auferte hinc botros, uirgo, fugit bromium." The tree is apparently an olive but the reader must still be able to make the connection between Pallas and prudence. This admirable quality is not present in the illustration in "sinnlicher Klarheit." The reference must be already known to be clear. The crux of the riddle is not the derivation of the lesson from the illustration, but the relationship of the olive to Pallas and prudence.

A yet more obscure example is his emblem "Amuletum Veneris." The illustration shows a woman placing leaves on a recumbent man beside whom Cupid is standing. The epigram identifies the woman as Venus covering the dead Adonis with lettuce leaves. A curious remedy indeed, but this is explained, "hinc genitali aruo tantum lactuca resistit, / Quantum eruca salax uix stimulare potest." Pliny

131531; Handbuch, col. 192.
141550; Handbuch, col. 344.
(nat. hist. XIX, 127) speaks of a type of lettuce as an anti-aphrodisiac and of all lettuce as "natura refrigeratrix." The lesson contained in this emblem is outstanding in its homeliness. Yet it still brings the full machinery of classical allusion into operation without once cracking a smile. After many pages of emblems illustrating sententious morals, it is incongruously funny to find one which begins with Adonis and ends with a home remedy for sexual impotence, and also potency, if necessary. Like the previous example, not only is this lesson drawn from an ancient text but also the object which illustrates it.

Alciatus also presents emblems which are derived from his wide reading but which are intelligible without specific classical knowledge. A very nice example is the emblem "Amicitia Post Mortem." The illustration shows a vine winding around the base of a tree. The epigram reads:

Arentem senio, nudam quoque frondibus ulmum
Complexa est uiridi uitis opaca coma.
Agnoscitque vices naturae et grata parenti,
Officij reddit mutua iura suo.
Exemploque monet, tales nos quaeerere amicos,
Quos neque disiungat foedere summa dies.

The emblem is derived from the Greek Anthology but speaks directly to the reader without the mediation of classical

151531; Handbuch, col. 259.
knowledge. It does not depend on being acquainted with events from mythology or history nor does it transmit information gleaned from classical works on the nature of the plants. Everyone knows vines grow on trees, so it is an immediately verifiable fact. The qualities of the vine from which Alciati draws his lesson could have been seen by him without the suggestion of the Greek Anthology. And the reader can appreciate it directly from his own experience of the world around him. The emblem draws upon perceptions of an intelligible world. In such a world can be found res significantes and the astute observer can find moral lessons there.

The emblem is well suited to deriving morals from an intelligible world for the illustration presents to the reader a view of reality which the title and epigram then interpret. For instance, Alciatus wrote a series of emblems which showed a type of tree.\(^{16}\) From the qualities of the trees he deduced various lessons. The fir tree grows in the mountains and represents strength in adversity. The mulberry puts out its leaves late in the spring and represents caution, and so on. Some of the emblems depend on classical knowledge, such as the laurel as signifying prophecy because of its connection with Apollo, but the arrangement of these emblems one after another make it

\(^{15}\)550; Handbuch, col. 202–275 passim.
seem like a tour de force in finding res significantes. The illustration of each emblem depicts the tree while the title names it. Then the epigram points out the quality which can teach us something, or at least which has significance.

The function of these two types of emblems and their impact on the reader are quite different. To say an emblem presents a riddle cannot distinguish between them. The difference is the basis on which the reader is expected to be able to solve it. To extrapolate a general lesson about violence from the situation of a bear with its paw caught in a honey tree is to test the reader's insight into the intelligible world where, as Alanus says, all things are a mirror and an example of the eternal order. To use an olive tree to teach prudence requires the recognition of information not contained in the emblem and the actual situation depicted there. The emblem is not self-sufficient since prudence is not there in "sinnlicher Klarheit." This idea is represented by a figure in the emblem to be sure, but the representation is a traditional one requiring previous information. A woman covering a dead man is an absurd act. Nothing can be seen from it unless we are told that they are Venus and Adonis. Most importantly we must already know the erotic background of the myth. In this sort of emblem the figures function only when accompanied with classical baggage.
The situation is unreal and not repeatable. The lesson cannot be deciphered from the reader's experience of the intelligible world. He must know the background of these allegorical representations. Only when these references are familiar is there "sinnliche Klarheit."

In emblems where the classical allusion is the crux we can see the twin motivations of the desire to display erudition and wit and the desire to teach. Together with the direct descent from the fashion for hieroglyphs these were a major element in the attitude of the age toward the form. They are not of immediate relevance here since my task is to try to delineate the relationship between the emblem and the fable. Emblems which require classical knowledge to be comprehensible are obviously very different from fables which generally present us with a clear case which even the least learned can grasp.

Emblems drawn from an intelligible world present an instance like the fable and require no appeal to outside knowledge. This instance is shown in the illustration in "sinnliche Klarheit" and its significance or application is stated in the title. The riddle answered by the epigram is how the lesson can be derived from the particular scene as in the case of Camerarius' *Violenta nocent*, or the tendency of the lesson as in the case of Alciatus' *Ira*. Heckscher and Wirth explain this in terms of a "Zusammenwirken" of the title and illustration.\(^{17}\) They see the

\(^{17}\)"Emblem," *Reallexikon*, col. 88.
title as a "hindeutende Bezeichnung," a hint to the reader, not as an "allegorisch-begrifflicher Terminus von absoluter Qualität." The difference seems to be that the lion is not an allegory of anger because of the limited, factual nature of the situation shown in the illustration. The lion is not the personification of anger in the abstract but rather a case of excessive anger, an actual manifestation. They continue:

Zum absoluten Begriff "Zorn" kommt es beim Emblem erst durch das Zusammenwirken von Lemma und Icon, doch wird dieser einheitliche, in sich abgerundete Begriff—bei der Imprese und vielen Devisen der Endzweck des Gebildes—beim Emblem durch das pointierende Epigramm wieder überwunden.

The illustration of the lion shows the embodiment of anger. It could stand alone as a Devis of anger, with its title of course, but the epigram furnishes a significance, points out the direction of application, the didactic point. It specifies that such anger is bad and is to be avoided.

The importance of this interaction between the parts of the emblem can best be shown by cases where it is lacking. Alciatus, who stressed the derivation from classical sources, has few emblems based on direct observation and reflection. Two examples suffice to show the danger of a faulty interaction between the res significans and title.
The first compares a crab to hangers-on.18 The epigram is in the form of a letter accompanying a gift of crabs and explains the significance of them to the recipient. There is a physical resemblance, it says, for both have round, fat bodies, fast legs to catch the advantage and claws to use against those who threaten or displease them. The Latin title is In Parasitos and points up to the reader an inappropriateness in the image. The various parts of the crab may be applied to this type of person, but it is not a parasite. No essential characteristic of the nature of the crab and how it lives can be related to fawning courtiers. The crab as a whole yields no insight and only a strained and unnatural interpretation could see in the illustration and title together an impræse for hangers-on.

A different fault in the relationship between title and res is apparent in his emblem In Dies Meliora.19 Once again the epigram is in the first person, recounting how a client farmer gave the speaker a boar's head at the new year. The illustration shows the gift being given to the landlord seated at a table flanked by classical columns. In the background is a rising sun and in the foreground a live pig is snuffling along the ground. On its side is written "Ulterius." The epigram describes how the pig

181531; Handbuch, col. 722.
191550; Handbuch, col. 552.
forages, always moving ahead and never looking back. The parallel is then drawn: "Cura viris eadem est, ne spes sublapsa retrorsum / Cedat: et ut melius sit, quod et ulterius." By itself the moral is straightforward enough but the image from which it is drawn makes it somewhat less attractive. The proverbial pig is not well thought of for its discrimination and discretion. Using it as an image of continual progress adds the connotation of blindness, greed and pigheadedness.

There are few emblems by Alciatus for which the Handbuch does not list several possibilities of a source in ancient literature and Humanist derivations. I must applaud his decision to draw on images provided by others. These two excursions into originality are unsuccessful because of a basic incongruence between the thing and its significance. The observable nature of the crab and the pig does not adequately conform to the lesson which they purport to teach. There is the possibility that these emblems are based on letters or writings of others, since both are in direct address. Yet this would not absolve him entirely since he still saw fit to include them.

Heckscher and Wirth speak of the interaction of title and illustration presenting a complete concept and parenthetically mention that this is the final purpose
of the *imprese* and many *Devisen*. This "absolute concept" is then overcome, transcended by the epigram. This formulation, especially with the reference to *imprese* and *Devisen* conceals a tendency to relegate the epigram to a secondary role. It would seem to be a commentary upon the essential matter at hand.

This tendency can also be found in the introductions of various emblem writers to their books. The intention to provide authors and artists with a fund of ready-made images is often mentioned. Within the lengthy title of his book Mathias Holtzwaert announces the aim of his emblems "zu sittlicher Besserung des Lebens und künstlicher Arbeit vorständig und ergetzlich."20 Geoffrey Whitney, who collected and translated emblems from a wide variety of sources, speaks of "such figures, or workes; as are wroughte in plate or in stones in the pavementes, or on the waules or suche like, for the adorning of the place."21 Even the name "emblem" comes from the Greek "putting together," referring to mosaics and inlaid decorations. The didactic component of art, its duty not only to delight but also to improve the viewer, expressed in the formula *delectare et prodesse*, was keenly felt by artists of the period. As mentioned before, Stammer calls the century

20 *Emblematum Tyrocinia* Sive Picta Poesis Latino-germanica.

"lehrbegierig." Many emblem writers then consciously sought to provide artists with a storehouse of images from which they could draw themes for paintings or decoration for their designs.

When such images were used in a place where the decorative and didactic impulses merged, the epigram had to be relegated to a very secondary position or omitted entirely. Such a use of an emblematic figure would still depend on the acquaintance with the epigram. Otherwise the riddle posed by it and the title would be unanswerable. Even if the connection between them were guessed, the viewer would miss the pleasure in the author's confirmation of his wit. In Lessing's terms, the curiosity upon seeing the object would not be fully satisfied by an unexpected disclosure. If the connection between them is too obscure, the viewer feels only frustration. The artist could not reasonably expect the viewer to have the original emblem in mind and so must turn to illustrations whose significance is common knowledge. Personifications, figures from mythology and the like could have been, and were, used but even with an epigram they are weak members of the genre. In their section on "angewandte Emblematick" Heckscher and Wirth bring many such examples, such as the dove returning to the ark, entitled Divinae Nuntia Pacis, or Mercury as "le messager d'amour."

Such emblems can dispense with the epigram because they are wholly clear. If an epigram is included, they still maintain only the outward form of the emblem. Such stock representations arouse no curiosity and an epigram is left little room to provide new insight or transcend the significance of the figure set by long tradition. When the epigram can contribute nothing to the presentation, such emblems, whether used in art or printed in books, properly belong to the border area with allegorical iconology.

There is no sharp borderline between Renaissance allegories and emblems since both featured the use of objects to convey concepts. It was also previously noted that the emblem as a genre was largely a development from hieroglyphs. That allegorical hieroglyphs could be easily adapted to become emblems shows the blurring between the forms. For instance, in the Hieroglyphics of Horapollo a lion sleeping with open eyes is used to represent vigilance. 23 Pliny (nat. hist.XI, 147) mentions that hares sleep with their eyes open. Combining the two sources, Camerarius, Jr. added a single distich to the illustration of a hare to create his emblem Vigilandum: 24


24 Emblemata Ethico-politicorum, II, 73 (Handbuch, col. 482).
Luminibus dormit patulis lepus. Advigilandum est: Insidiis quoniam cingimur innumeris.

Besides this difference in outward form, Camerarius alters the point by referring to the dangers which we must be alert to avoid. This is not so much an "Überwindung" of the allegory in Heckscher and Wirth's terms as an extension of it from a purely abstract statement toward the sphere of real application. Nevertheless, by addressing us directly he shifts the impact to a small degree while maintaining the complete reliance on the authority of his sources. Such a slight change does not merit not calling it allegory anymore. The epigram could have easily been made quite abstract or even more particular without causing any great shift from allegorical iconology or a radical breakdown in the emblematic form.

There are emblems which are clearly allegorical, such as those whose res significans is the fanciful creation of an impossible construction. Each aspect of the concept to be communicated accounts for a particular part of the illustration. The piecemeal exegesis by Alciatus of the crab comes to mind again. There the essence of the crab as a natural phenomenon was ignored and only its individual members considered quite apart from their relationship to the whole. La Perriere has an emblem which shows a young lady sitting upon a large
ball. In her hands she holds a sieve upon which there is a clock. The epigram makes it clear that this is a personification of youth. The ball signifies youth's inconstancy of will and purpose while the clock refers to her main concern of passing the time with pleasant diversions. The sieve then is a warning of the loss of youth and the approach of age without any advantage having been retained. Each bit of the illustration has an inherent significance and these are added together so that a capable cryptographer could deduce the lesson from their sum. The curious juxtaposition of these objects which would be quite impossible in reality demands such an interpretation. In speaking of hieroglyphics, Heckscher and Wirth describe how the Humanists "lösten Folgen von Bildzeichen zunächst in eine Reihe einzelner Begriffe auf, um schliesslich--so erfindungsreich wie phantastisch--aus der Summe der Einzelbegriffe mittels sprachlicher Interpolationen wieder ein sinnvolles Ganzes . . . zu gewinnen."

This is precisely the method invited by such constructed emblems as that by La Perriere. No amount of particularization in the epigram could overcome the allegorical nature of such fanciful creations.

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25 Le Theatre des bons Engins (1539; Handbuch, col. 1535).

If there were for this emblem a "pointierendes Epigramm", Heckscher and Wirth would admit it wholly under the rubric of emblem. Yet it is so clearly a hieroglyph with commentary that I would prefer to exclude it and reserve that term for forms where the concept to be communicated does not bear the full responsibility for the construction of the res significans. I do not deny that there are many cases where the decision between emblematic and allegorical cannot be made so neatly, Camerarius's Vigilandum, for instance. Especially if the riddle presented by the emblem depends exclusively on classical knowledge it can be felt to be an arcane pictogram. If the riddle can be answered either by classical knowledge or the reader's insight into the order of the intelligible world, the res is not a fanciful construction and it is not felt to be allegorical. The relationship between the world and the moral lesson, "ut . . . sic" is unimpaired.

The borderline between the emblem and simple illustrations accompanying the text can be equally clear. Brant's Narrenschiff and Steinhöwel's fable translations function quite well without the illustrations. Between the picture and the text there is no "ut . . . sic" relationship. An excellent example of this is Sambucus' emblem Tyrannus.27

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The illustration shows a king striking down a man held by soldiers with swords. The "absoluter Begriff" of the essential evil of tyranny is the subject of the emblem. The epigram then aims this depiction at all who reign alone:

Regia qui solus moderatur sceptr a tyrannus,
Parendum est quidquid stulta libido iubet.
Ni facias cogit caussam, dextramque minacem
Opponens, misera sustulit atque nece . . .

Quod libet, usque licet, sua pro ratione voluntas:
Judice me tabes pallidus orcus habet.

In the emblem Ira Alciatus draws his example from the realm of animals but applies the lesson of its destructive excesses to man. In this emblem Sambucus points at the evil of one type of man directly, without resorting to the "kunstvolle Verschleierung" of an analogous situation. The res does not signify, it is the thing under discussion. It is an illustration to the text and there is no conceptual interaction between them. But perhaps only at this point does the reader notice in the background a lion standing over its prey. Two lines of the epigram read, "ut leo rugitu crudeles injicit ungues, / Sanguineae tibi sic saeve Monarcha manus." Here is the parallel situation to be found in emblems. The cruelty of the lion is emblematic of the cruelty of the tyrant. As the epi-
gram explicitly states: "Ut leo . . . sic Monarcha."

With this inclusion it is clearly an emblem, while without it, it is only an illustrated poem on tyranny.

28Heckscher and Wirth, "Emblem," Reallexikon, col.93.
It is precisely this "ut . . . sic" relationship which is the core of the symbolism in the emblem. The epigram may not express itself in precisely those terms, but when a moral lesson is derived from an object, this must be the inherent relationship. The object is actually shown in the illustration and together with the lesson, either in the title or the epigram, it constitutes a res significans. Unlike the fanciful juxtapositions of the hieroglyph, the emblem depends in large measure on the apparent actuality of the object. To call attention to the fact that the object has a significance, especially when it appears as decoration and not among others in the context of an emblem book, the lesson is very often expressed in the title. The res significans presents the reader with a riddle and if he does not have the wit to figure it out himself, the epigram provides the answer. The parity of the functions within the emblem of depiction and explanation distinguishes it from a merely illustrated text.

The actuality of the object or situation depicted is the primary criterion separating the emblem from the hieroglyph. The illustration is not a sign representing a concept, constructed solely for that purpose. It should be able to be found in one's ordinary experience. The emblem's derivation from hieroglyphs, however, maintained a very close relationship between them and the borderline
cannot be drawn clearly and simply. The Hieroglyphics of Horapollo purported to be a handbook of stock figures to aid in interpreting ancient Egyptian wisdom. Many emblems also use stock figures drawn from classical mythology. The riddle they present cannot be solved from one's common experience but requires specialized knowledge. For instance, one must know the connection between the olive, Athena and prudence or the story of Icarus's fall in order to understand the emblems of Alciatus mentioned before. These may be accounted for to an extent by appealing to the roots of the emblem in Humanism and its desire to give a broad segment of the population some insight into ancient literature. Nevertheless, despite the importance of the apparent actuality of the illustration, the emblem made use easily and often of allegorical images and stock personifications.

Fables also make use of stock figures yet since Lessing no one would call a fable allegorical. In the comparison of the fable and the emblem the main topic will be to illuminate the differences in the attitudes of their respective authors. But part of the attitude is of course shown in the choice of subject matter. If this choice and the manner of treating the subject required by the two forms were basically different, it would be easy indeed to account for the limited influence the fable had on the emblem. But this is not the case. The
fable, as will be shown in the following chapter, operates under the fiction that the situation related between the animals is real. The moral being taught is to be espoused on the basis of the evidence found in nature. It is also precisely the feeling of discovering something new, a new link between the world as it appears and the inherent moral order, which is at the center of what is felt to be emblematic. In this light the two short didactic forms should have existed in close alliance. After examining several fables and the emblems based on them, the topic of the tendency of the emblem toward allegory as an inhibiting factor will have to be raised again.
CHAPTER IV

THE FABLE AS A RHETORICAL TOOL
Herder might well have called the sixteenth century the fabulistic age. The fable enjoyed great popularity then and also during his own time. Its use was widespread in schools and for informal moral instruction. It is the first truly popular form of secular literature since printing made books available to more people than just the wealthy or scholarly. It pervaded the culture of the time, influencing perceptions and judgments. Even as far removed from this high water mark as we are, who would not react to the laconic admonition "Sour grapes!" or "Don't cry wolf!"

As a long established didactic form, it would be natural that the fable furnished emblem writers with a great deal of material. The emblem was derived from the hieroglyph, an arcane symbolism of a hieratic elite. The fable, on the other hand, traces its origins quite consciously to Aesop the slave. This tradition behind the fable must have affected the writers and their readers of the sixteenth century. The question which must be answered is what impact the actual history of the fable or its legendary tradition had on the attitudes expressed by the writers considered here. In order to evaluate the differences between the two forms, this must be taken into account. An insight gained from the stance of a slave would have to be radically altered to be at all acceptable to a self-conscious elite.
In this section I shall characterize the stance of the fable by a brief history of its development and a characteristic example. The history of the fable is such a large topic, that this stance can be only treated very generally. But this will serve as a starting point and can be refined in the next chapter comparing specific fables with the emblems based on them.

Unlike the emblem, the fable has always been within scholarly purview. But unfortunately the secondary literature is of little help in this task. Fables appeared at the earliest beginnings of literature and were abundantly copied, revised and translated throughout all periods. The textual history presents complex problems of source and derivation, creation and borrowing complicated by the large numbers of manuscripts. This was attractive to an earlier generation of scholars and most of the literature on which one has to rely now is positivistic in method, out of date and incomplete. There is no satisfactory exposition of the full history of the fable. In recent years, however, two significant contributions to this area have been made. Of great help is the handbook compiled by Erwin Leibfried entitled simply Fabel. It gives a clear and compact overall view of the secondary literature in German and the major German fabulists. In connection with the lack of a general history of the fable,

\footnote{Sammlung Metzler, 66 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1967).}
Leibfried comments, "Die verschiedenen Darstellungen sind jedoch alle positivistisch ausgerichtet, . . . zitieren Texte, . . und nennen die rein inhaltlichen Unterschiede."\textsuperscript{2} The most informative article he can name is in the \textit{Reallexikon},\textsuperscript{3} which is symptomatic of the dearth of suitable treatments of the topic.

This situation has been relieved at least for the ancient period by the work of B.E.Perry. His volume \textit{Aesopica} is a critical edition of the texts of fables in Greek and Oriental languages attributed to Aesop.\textsuperscript{4} In addition, his volume \textit{Babrius} and \textit{Phaedrus}\textsuperscript{5} contains fables by or derived from these two major fabulists of the Roman Empire, including translations and a very useful commentary on the men and their fables.

Perry shows that the first collections of fables were in prose and were meant to serve as material for writers to insert into their works when needed. The first of these of which there is a record was compiled by Demetrius of Phalerum. It was a handbook, not a work of literary art, and the fables were in prose. This text, entitled \textit{Aesopia}, was contained in one book roll and ap-

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 41.


\textsuperscript{4}(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952).

\textsuperscript{5}Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).
parently served as the major source for both Phaedrus and Babrius. The text has not survived and the only explicit reference to it is in a list of works by Demetrius contained in the Lives of Eminent Philosophers of Diogenes Laertius (V, 80). With great subtlety Perry still deduces a great deal of information about its content, purpose and style on the basis of other material in the Aesopic tradition. He believes that its purpose as a rhetorical handbook does not preclude the fables having been cast in as pleasing a form as possible. Thus the straightforward, unaffected, simple style associated with the prose fable was probably determined by Demetrius. Thus the earliest fable form of which we can know anything was admirably suited by its brevity and concentration to convey a general moral statement. Demetrius' collection may be the only record of a very popular form in his time, but just how widespread it may have been is purely a matter of speculation. Of the incidence of the fable in western culture before Demetrius nothing can be inferred.

In speculating about its unknown origins many scholars have viewed it as an expression of chthonic wisdom to which material from oral sources of folk literature were continually added. Otto Crusius called the

\[\text{ibid.}, \text{xiii}.
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fable an archetypal form of exposition and understanding, common to all peoples, "eine Urform unserer Geistes-
betätigung." There is, however, no historical evidence
to bridge the gap between animal mythology or epics and
the fable as it first appears in Greece. When Demetrius
made his collection, it was not (or at least no longer)
part of a folk tradition. Even if the legend of its
origin with Aesop were true, it had left the class
which had fostered it by this time and had become some-
thing which men of influence and education could include
in their orations to the plebesians. Then it must have re-
lected their views and not necessarily those of the menial
class to which the fable is so often attributed.

With its rise in status the fable began to have pre-
tensions as an art form. Although the earlier prose com-
piations might have been read for pleasure, the later
collections intended strictly for entertainment were in
verse. This was the service of the two fabulists of Rome
whose manuscripts have survived, Babrius and Phaedrus.
They stand as the ancient culmination of the long tra-
dition of the fable and derived most of their fables
from prose versions available to them. Because of the
gaps in the textual history known to us, it is impossible
to decide to what extent they also invented new material.
They were self-conscious artists, as witnessed by the use

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8Introduction to Das Buch der Fabeln, ed. C.H.
Kleukens (Leipzig: Insel, 1920), iv.
of their names on their works. Prose fables invariably appeared anonymously attributed to Aesop. Even the prose paraphrases of their works reverted back to this practice or used obvious pseudonyms.

Babrius wrote in Greek, but the name is not otherwise testified to in Greek and may be a corruption of the Latin barba. This and the influence of Latin on his language and verse form would seem to place him between the two cultures. Perry determines that he lived in the late first century A.D. from papyri and the appearance of his fables in other, dated works. Babrius' attribution of the invention of the fable to the Syrians, his knowledge of texts otherwise unknown, as well as internal evidence indicate that he lived in the Middle East.

In the medieval and modern periods his fables were known only through quotes or in prose paraphrases. It was not until 1844 that a manuscript in the British Museum was discovered and published of his original versions. This codex is fragmentary and there are many fables attributed to him not included but known only through indirect transmission. This was of course the only source through which the writers of the sixteenth century knew him. Even though the fables we now possess of his did not

9Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, xlviiiff.

10Ibid. Also cf. Otto Crusius, "Babrius" in Realencyclopaedie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, ed. August von Pauly and Georg Wissowa (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1894 ff.).
directly influence them, he stands at the head of a
tradition in which they were working. Avianus used
Babrius' fables as his primary source and through him
and other derivations much of Babrius' material re-
mained current. I do not wish to exclude him from the
considerations here because of anachronism. Direct lines
of influence are not the topic. The existence of a single
fable in many different versions, some of which can be
only roughly deduced on the basis of later revisions,
makes such an undertaking pure speculation and rarely
enlightening. However, Babrius can serve in many cases
as an example of a different attitude or stance conveyed
by a fable.

The other great fountain of ancient fables is
Phaedrus. He was a self-conscious poet and relates a
good deal about himself in the prologues to his books
as well as in the text proper. In the prologue to Book
III he claims birth in the Pierian Mountains of Macedonia.
There also he speaks of his problems in being accepted
into the company of Roman poets and that he was prose-
cuted by Sejanus (d. 31 A.D.) because of barbs contained
in his fables. He writes rather acidly of this powerful
man, so it is a good assumption that this prologue and
the book it accompanies were written after his death.
Several fables are written in such a manner that they
seem to be eye-witness accounts of events during the
reign of Augustus and Tiberius (III, 10; II, 5; V, 7). We can easily imagine that he was brought into the household of Augustus as an educated young Greek, perhaps to serve as a paedagogus. We can deduce a fair amount from such internal evidence in the work, but this is our only source of information. Phaedrus is not mentioned by other extant writers until Avianus speaks of him in the same breath with Babrius in his preface.

Even though it appears Phaedrus did not make much of an impact on his contemporaries, it is from him that a large measure of the medieval Aesopic tradition stems. Perhaps learned Roman writers ignored him because they considered the fable too lowly a topic to be versified and considered serious poetry, or because they preferred Babrius because he wrote in Greek. Another might be that many of his fables are told at length more for entertainment than for any moral or rhetorical value. He usually expands the text beyond the bare minimum, abandoning the style which made the form particularly appropriate for use as a rhetorical tool. His fables then would have been too simplistic to merit serious literary attention but too embroidered and personal to serve rhetoricians.

The history of the fable in the Middle Ages is a topic by itself of great complexity. The text history is

Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, lxxii.
far from complete and in light of the meager fragments which have survived, probably will remain so. It sub-
merged among the other types of rhetorical illustrations, such as parables, anecdotes and bispel. The most ac-
cessible sources of fables seem to have been collections of exempla, which did not distinguish between these var-
iouss forms but included all for the practical purpose of being used in sermons.\footnote{12} In German the word itself suffered in transmission and came to mean merely an en-
tertaining story with the connotation of being untrue, or rarely the source of the story being related.\footnote{13} The
originals of Babrius, Phaedrus and Avian fell into dis-
use and were virtually lost. The carrier of the tra-
dition and the collection which came to be accepted as
Aesop was a prose paraphrase of Phaedrus under the
pseudonym Romulus.\footnote{14} This text falsely purports to be
a translation of Aesop from the Greek and exists in
numerous versions.\footnote{15} These are interrelated in a very
complex manner and no single copy stands out as the


\footnote{14} Cf. Hermann Oesterley, \textit{Romulus; die Paraphrasen des Phadrus}, (Berlin: Weidmann, 1870).

Works Series #99, New York: Burt Franklin, n.d.)
original. The earliest manuscript of it dates from the tenth century and was discovered by Hermann Oesterley. The original paraphrase is, however, attributed by Perry to the fourth or fifth century.\textsuperscript{16} It was a version of the Romulus, now lost, which Steinhöwel chose as the keystone of his \textit{Aesop}. That much has been lost is also shown by the so-called Appendix Perottina. Niccolo Perotti (1430–80) transcribed a defective manuscript containing fables of Phaedrus for the use of his nephew. His source is now lost and his copy, which omits promythia and epimythia, is the only record of some thirty fables.\textsuperscript{17}

This brief outline of the history of the fable makes the complexity of determining its literary and social role in the various periods quite clear. Authorship and derivation were treated very casually and the relationships between the versions which have come down to us are a tangled skein. Much of this is due to the self-effacing adaptors who anonymously attributed their versions to Aesop, thereby claiming to speak with authority no matter what the actual history of their material might have been. But it is also because the fable was not often considered worthy of being included as a form

\textsuperscript{16} Babrius and Phaedrus, p. xcix.

\textsuperscript{17} Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, p. xcvii
of poetry. It did not merit serious attention because of its plebeian appeal.

This "underground" tradition has given rise to the view that the fable is a form of folk literature. It is indeed possible that the fable has chthonic roots, as Crusius suggests and that it was nurtured during the Middle Ages by infusions from an oral folk tradition. But it is not necessary to judge the merits of this possibility here since the fable of the sixteenth century was based entirely on a written tradition rediscovered by the Humanists. Whatever role we might imagine for the fable in folk literature, the stance of the fable on which the sixteenth century editions were based and the use to which it was put can be easily seen to be quite different from that of a descendant of chthonic animal mythology.

My task here is to investigate the relationship between the fable and the emblem and their role in didactic literature. The history of the fable is of concern only to the extent that it influenced the use of the form and its impact in the sixteenth century. It is not so much a question of what the fable was originally, but how the writers of the Renaissance thought of it. An emblem writer was not influenced in his decision to alter a fable by considerations of textual history. Differences in the attitudes, the tone and the intended audience were of much
greater weight. But of course, in order to understand this, some historical perspective is useful.

When the fable first appears in western literature, it is a form for making a statement acceptable which would be offensive if directly expressed. Its essential stance seems to be that of a small man addressing a powerful one, an advisor who has the ear of the king but must tread softly, or an orator trying to sway the sovereign demos. Hesiod is the first historical personage to make use of the fable, but Karl Meuli finds the anecdote, or ainos, of Homer used in a way typical for the fable. On this functional basis he considers it a prototype of the fable. He uses as an example the ainos Odysseus told to Eumaios the swineherd. Odysseus returns to Ithaca and appears as an old ragged beggar. He enjoys the hospitality of Eumaios, who was impressed by the stranger's story-telling. Eumaios prepares an unusually good dinner and is in every way an accommodating host. He far exceeds the requirements of the law of hospitality, even though he does not know he is entertaining his lord and not just a beggar. After the dinner Odysseus approaches his host with this story to get a blanket for the night. While on watch under the walls of Troy many years previous, he faced a cold night without his mantle. After suffering a while,

he roused Odysseus, he says, who used the following ploy. He woke the soldiers in the small camp, explaining that they were in a dangerous situation and that one should return to the ships to get reinforcements. Immediately an eager hero threw back his cloak and ran to the ships. The beggar then tells Eumaios how he took the unused cloak and slept well all night. Eumaios not only enjoys the tale, but also understands the request buried in it. The lowly guest who points out an omission of an already generous host, must reckon with a negative reaction. If he can, however, couch his request in such a circumlocution that his host recognizes the general principle, in this case the need for a blanket on a cold night, it is more likely to be fulfilled than a specific entreaty. His host will not take offense, because the finger of accusation has not been pointed directly. In this story of Troy, the general principle is obvious and Eumaios follows it gladly. He has been entertained not only by a tale of faraway but also by the inventiveness of his guest's tact.

This ainos functions like a fable, or more specifically a chrie, and shares with them and the simile and proverb the characteristics of an illustration in a larger exposition. Originally these were not independent art forms but rather means to an end. An orator could use

a fable as an illustration and be assured that his audience, no matter how uneducated, would perceive the warning or admonition it displayed. He could distill from a complex situation the essential factors and motives. The fable is well suited to being used as a rhetorical device. It fixes itself through its brevity and wit in the mind of the hearer much more easily than a long complex argument. Aristotle discusses the fable not in his Poetics but in the Art of Rhetoric. He advocates placing fables at the end of a logical sequence, for "if they stand last they resemble evidence, and a witness is in every case likely to induce belief." [II, xx] Heinrich Steinhöwel follows this principle in the construction of his fables. He begins with the general lesson, for instance "Gütkait macht rechte väterliche trüw und früntschaft der kind gegen vater und mouter und die geburt." This precept is then proven by the fable: "Daz ze erkennen soll wir disse fabel merken."\(^{20}\) Beginning fables with the moral rather than concluding with them is also the traditional form. At the time when fable collections were handbooks for orators this arrangement allowed quick reference since the user was interested in the practical application, that is, the precept, not the fable. This practice probably

started with Demetrius of Phalerum. But it would not have been retained after fables freed themselves from rhetoric unless the characteristic explained by Aristotle had not remained. Just as the moral of an emblem is embodied in the res significans, the situation recounted in the fable is a model of the precept in action.

The fable has the advantage over the chrie or ainos in that it does not require any characterization and thus invite a difference of opinion. The lamb is recognized by all as innocent, the wolf as rapacious, the fox as cunning. They are pre-determined res significantes. If historical persons were introduced, the orator presupposed familiarity with them, which was not necessarily the case. When the person has a traditional role familiar to everyone, we approach the borderline between chrie and fable. When he is no longer historical but merely a type, such as the corrupt monk, the stupid peasant or the nagging wife, then we have crossed the border and are dealing with a type of fable with its instantly recognizable characters. The chrie and anecdote also presume historical veracity. They are told as if the event actually happened, a specific situation at a specific, verifiable time and place. The fable also deals with a specific event, but there is no historical context into which it is placed.

The rhetorical fable does not deal with the specific situation under discussion and so is well suited to illustrate a critical attitude toward the powerful and important of the world. An orator could avoid offending those at whom his point was aimed by translating it into different terms. It was evidence, not direct argumentation, and indeed pointed the finger of guilt at no one by name. Rather than speak openly of an individual's cruelty, a fable displays the characteristics of cruelty in the actions of the wolf. Each animal in the corpus is a quickly recognizable projection of a human mode of action. Leibfried argues that the fable seeks "die Unabhänglichkeit der Naturgesetze und ihre durchdringende Gültigkeit zu demonstrieren . . ." 22 Both the animals in the fable and the men who read them are subject to the same implacable natural laws and the lesson taught by the fable is immediately applicable to the reader's own surroundings.

The fable in the sixteenth century was not a relic from a by-gone age resurrected to provide historical insight. Besides the first attempts to establish a reliable selection of ancient fables by the Humanists, there were free adaptations and inventions unbehelden to the strictures of real or imagined authority. Of ancient origin and medieval derivation, the fable was nonetheless a phenomenon of such popularity that it must be accounted

22 Fabel, p. 94.
for by more than historical background and in terms appropriate to the attitudes of its contemporary readers. The fable had an importance then greater than in any other time. During his work on the Bible translation, Luther also began a collection of fables as a change of pace. His famous comment, quoted earlier, that he would build three tabernacles, one for the Psalms, one for the prophets, and one for Aesop, shows the importance he attached to its usefulness in educating the populace of his time.

Neither historical nor aesthetic considerations alone can explain the phenomenal popularity of the fable. Something about it must have satisfied the wishes and longings of a large segment of the population. In achieving such popularity, the role of the author as a freely creating poet is of less importance than his ability to recognize and fulfill the expectations of his audience. The attitudes inherent in his works must have been compatible with those of the populace. We can gain some insight into the mores of the time, which appear so confusing when we read contemporary accounts of events and manners, by examining closely this unpretentious literary form.

In the following chapter fables will be compared with the emblems based on them. It is hoped that the comparison will illuminate the factors which influenced the changes
made when the material was translated from one form to another. No attempt will be made to ascribe an emblem to the particular version which the author had before him while writing. Instead several versions will be discussed with the intention of illuminating the differences in the attitudes of the authors. There is no authoritative corpus of Aesopic fables which has come down to us and it is questionable whether there ever was one. The fascination of studying the fable is precisely the variety of purposes a basic situation could be tailored to fit.

Also no attempt will be made to cover the possibilities of all versions completely. The method will be exemplary, not definitive. This lacks a measure of scientifically compelling necessity but will spare the reader the dreariness of a positivistic catalog. The works which will be referred to were chosen because of their popularity among the reading public of the sixteenth century. They must have struck a responsive chord and can be accepted as consistent with a large body of opinion at that time.

In many of the comparisons Heinrich Steinhöwel's "Asop (c.1474) will be the starting point. It holds this position because of its avowed status as an edition and translation in the Humanistic vein. Its purpose was to transmit the fables of Aesop and make them available for
public instruction but primarily because of an academic interest. Steinhöwel had no pedagogical or doctrinal ax to grind and his translations follow his source closely. The second reason for its central position is its immediate success and the influence it had on later fable writers. The bulk of the Ἀσοπ is made up of four books of twenty fables each. The first three books present the Latin prose version from an otherwise unknown manuscript of Romulus, Steinhöwel's German prose translation and the Latin verse of the so-called Anonymus. The last book is made up only of the Latin prose and his translations, because the Anonymus did not contain them. Steinhöwel also included the Vita Aesopi, a Latin translation by Remicius of the Greek brought to Italy from Constantinople in 1327 by Maximus Planudes, and his own German translation of it. There are also his translations of fables by several others, but only those of Avian will be of interest. That accuracy and not instruction was his prime concern is shown in his preface when he claims to translate "nit wort uss wort, sunder sin uss sin, um merer lütrung wegen des textes . . . ." This concern is also the reason


24 Oesterley, Romulus, p. 1.

why he includes the Latin text and in the first three books of Romulus the verse of Anonymus also.

The fables of Erasmus Alberus are an entirely different matter since he was a follower of Luther and clearly intended his work for a broad and uneducated audience. As the justification for his book of fables he writes, "Und solche weise zu leren, wirdt auch darumb so ser gelobt, weil dadurch bey dem albern Volck viel mehr aussgerichtet wirdt, dann durch strenge gebott." 26

The implications of this self-assured pedantry will be discussed in the next chapter in relation to the differences between the emblem and fable, but this prefatory remark makes the gulf between Alberus and Stein-höwel apparent. There will also be differences between them in the form of the fable. Braune demonstrated in his introduction that Alberus used a source which could not have been of the Romulus group. 27 The similarities in order and wording are so great that it is quite certain that he used as his source the collection entitled Fabularum quae hoc libro continentur interpretes atque authores sunt hi. Guillielmus Goudenus . . . [et al]. 28

26Braune, ed. p. 2.

27p. xxxii.

28I have consulted the edition in the Harvard library. On the title page is the information In Libera Argentina apud Matthiam Schurerium. On the final page is the date 1516.
The order of the fables in this collection corresponds generally with that of Romulus but the manner in which the material was handled differs widely and in the translations of Alberus will give us some interesting points of comparison. Of particular interest will be the expanded form which Alberus used for the fable. Rather than restrict himself to a bare recitation of the fable, he invents a specific German locale for the action and often even names the human participants. Such an expansion of the basic fable was a common practice in antiquity and the Renaissance, especially for stylistic practice. However in this case, he may also have been moved by a desire to increase the palatability of the lesson by appropriating some of the characteristics of the Schwank. These two factors of course influenced the way he treated the material and this will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The other great fable translator we shall consider is Burkhart Waldis. Like Alberus he was a Lutheran. Originally a Franciscan, he served as a Catholic delegate to the Reichstag of 1524 in Nürnberg against the growing threat of the Reformation in Riga. Upon his return he was


arrested and released from imprisonment only after he had promised to leave the order and the Church. Tittmann speculates that on the two trips Waldis made to Rome he saw the contemporary abuses firsthand and this led to his renunciation and enthusiastic conversion. He became a travelling tinsmith and his adventures included arrest and torture at the hands of the Catholics in 1536. He did not recant and was eventually ordained as a Lutheran minister. Despite his Catholic beginnings and his forced conversion, his commitment to Protestantism seems firm and his fables often reveal this bias.

While Alberus wrote for 'das albern Volck,' Waldis addresses "die liebe Jugend, Knaben und Jungfrauen." Leibfried is surprised at this and remarks that it is impossible that the book was to be ignored by older readers. He sees that comment as an expression of "eine Tendenz, die erst im 18. und 19. Jh. auftritt. Die Fabel wird auf dem Höhepunkt ihrer Verbreitung in ihrer Wirkung eingeengt." He ignores the fact that the fable even in antiquity was an important element of the syllabus for stylistic as well as moral reasons. Like Alberus, he wanted to convey a set of moral precepts and both choices of audience can be understood in terms of the

31 Tittmann, p. lv.
32 Fabel, p. 61.
growth of literacy and education and the desire of the Lutherans to extend their influence through these new means.

The fables of Joachim Camerarius, Sr. were explicitly written for use in the curriculum of Humanistic, Lutheran schools. Crusius says of this collection that it was the "bekannteste und reichhaltigste lateinische Fabelsammlung, die in der Schule und in akademisch gebildeten Kreisen Jahrhunderte lang die Herrschaft behielt." Camerarius was an important man in both Humanistic and Lutheran circles. He learned Greek as a boy and was already teaching it at the age of 18 while continuing his studies with Eobanus Hessus and Peter Mosellanus in Erfurt. In 1535, at the age of 35, he received a call from the University at Tübingen. He already enjoyed the highest reputation for his scholarship and the friendship of Melanchthon and Erasmus. The Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie stresses the fact that he was offered the highest possible salary by the university, of interest considering the generally lower status of professors of rhetoric compared to those of law, medicine and theology. It comments further that

33 Introduction to C.H. Kleukens, ed., Das Buch der Fabeln, p. xxix.

there "arbeitete er schneller als sein Drucker (Morhard) drucken lassen konnte." He had been sympathetic to the Protestant cause since youth, and at the urging of Melanchthon, Prince Heinrich called him to Leipzig. He was to be in charge of the reorganization and improvement of the university, a task which he apparently successfully discharged. One hundred fifty-three titles are ascribed to him, covering the fields of philology, biography, including Melanchthon and Mutianus, history, theology and homiletics, mathematics and his own poetry. At his death in 1574 he had several projects underway which were published as torsos by his son Joachim, himself the author of *Symbolorum ac Emblematum ethico-politicorum centuriae quattuor*.

The fables were written to teach both good Latin and "praecopta optima." He does not restrict his selection but retells fables from many sources without distinguishing them. He rewrites them in a simple, straightforward style, suitable for those who have not mastered the language but also as an example against unnecessarily turgid style. Many collections and translations of fables aimed at philological reliability in transmitting and publicizing the tradition. But this work of Camerarius is not historical in intent. He does not note the source of his fables. Between two sections he laconically

35 *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie.*
writes, "Hoc finis est earum fabularum, quae Graeca lingua editae, passim in manibus discentium bonas literas habentur. Nunc ad eas accedam, quas diuersarum gentium et etiam earundem, dissimili tamen oratione perscriptas, nos collegimus, atque simplici et inexquisito, puro tamen, si possemus, sermonе exponere studuimus."36 Similarly he does not translate the morals of his sources, but appends his own. So through them we can see which lessons one of the foremost Humanists of the age wished to impress upon his students.

These four fable collections were selected because of their popularity, which is a gauge of how well the author expressed the thoughts and feelings of his audience. For a work to be as popular as these, it cannot be divorced from the values of the society which accepts it. The author must mirror the morals of his audience and recreate in words that which suits its taste and satisfies its needs. Through popular literature we can see the system of values of the age better than through texts which may be of greater esthetic merit. Such texts are the creation of an individual who confronts a passive audience and has freed himself from popular moral structures. Readers who are attuned to the demands of ambitious literary undertakings can respond to them, but this response is of a different order than that to works

which remain imbedded in the predominant system of values of the age. Such works will gain an appreciation among contemporaries and later generations. But they will not achieve the phenomenal success of works whose composition includes the popular taste as an informing factor.

Just as a critique on esthetic grounds does not do justice to popular works, ignoring the influence of their form on the content yields distorted judgments. The fable in the sixteenth century already had a long and rich tradition behind it. This must be considered in its influence on the morals propounded by it. Meuli suggests that the fable should be understood in terms of a small man's veiled request or admonition to a more powerful one, and only in this way. It remains to be seen if this limitation to "Sklavenmoral" is adequate to the fables of these four collections written by men very conscious of their superior social standing. The possibility immediately suggests itself that they put on the mask of Aesop in order to assume the fiction of his humble status. For instance, Luther was the most influential man of his age but constantly emphasized his lowly origins, even to the point of exaggerating the simplicity of his family. On the other hand, at least Alberus' dedication exposes this fiction and in such a way that it cannot be re-established even with the acquiescence of the reader. He places himself high above
his audience and looks down on them condescendingly. It is also instructive that Crusius emphasized that the collection by Camerarius, Sr. remained popular for centuries in academic circles which were far from being able to identify with Aesop the slave.

One strand in the fable's history is compatible with Meuli's suggestion. It is, at least traditionally, the form invented by a slave. Babrius and Phaedrus, both slaves, gained no recognition for their efforts from the literati contemporary with them. However, the first written collection, that of Demetrius, was based on the premise of one man addressing and instructing a crowd. Both Aristotle's reference to the fable in his Rhetoric and in its use in the Middle Ages as a bispel bear witness to the other aspect in its history. The fable tradition includes not only its origin as the instrument of a crafty slave but also its use over many centuries as a rhetorical tool.

In order to understand the attitudes of the fable in the sixteenth century, its social position must be considered. The two disparate elements of its tradition were both in operation at that time. It is simplistic to relegate the fable to the lowest level of society and see in it only the expression of the powerless man. This ignores its popularity in Humanistic education and its use by Humanists to communicate ideas acceptable not only
to their unsophisticated audiences but also to themselves. If the fable had reflected only the views of the most common, it could have had no effect on the elitist emblem. This was not the case and generalizations about its social position are not surprisingly thoroughly unsatisfactory. Only by particular evaluation of fables, illuminated by comparison with emblems, can we approach a more accurate assessment.
CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON OF THE ATTITUDES EMBODIED IN
THE EMBLEM AND THE FABLE
Both fables and emblems reflect the attitudes of the sixteenth century, as shown by their immense popularity. By considering them together, it is possible to get a glimpse into the moral guidelines accepted by various segments of the reading public. To the extent that the fable and emblem had separate audiences with differing attitudes, the moral of a fable would have to be changed when adapted as an emblem. Or if the bulk of fables incorporated attitudes inappropriate to the emblem's audience, few emblems based on them would not be unexpected. This simplistic outlook is implied in much of the literature on these genres. The emblem is considered much more sophisticated than the fable. This is initially true, but a comparison of the various treatments of a particular theme will show the situation to be far from simple.

There are a number of complicating factors which must be taken into account. Whenever a theme found in one form is adapted to another, the requirements of that form will necessitate changes in the content. These changes then may reflect themselves in a shift of emphasis and alter the overall point of the story. Such changes are at first irrelevant in the matter of the social differences. Only those attributable to the author's conscious assessment of the different outlook of his particular audience are of importance. The various formal requirements are of
course important in considering reasons other than social for the apparent lack of emblems based on fables. To the extent the emblem was felt to be a difficult form for treating fable material, the weight of the social factors is reduced. Changes made at the personal whim of the author also have no bearing on the forms' social position.

It will be necessary to attempt to separate those changes required by formal considerations and those based on a different social outlook. However, the traditions behind the two forms, and hence the sort of material and attitude felt appropriate to them, also includes a social factor. The formal requirements may have been partially conditioned by the understanding of the fable as plebeian and the emblem as esoteric. This was not an absolute barrier, as shown by the existence of emblems closely dependent on previous knowledge of the fable. Alberus' condescension and Alciatus' hieroglyphic enthusiasm were not mutually exclusive for all writers.

The difficulty lies in accurately assessing the audience which made the two forms so popular. It was shown earlier that the fable was not as plebeian in usage as one might believe initially. The possibility exists that many people accepted the two forms as co-equal and considered the traditions behind them to be tantalizing fictions. The question then arises that what appear to be socially conditioned changes are actually due to a con-
scious and fictional role both the author and the reader take up, conforming to the stance imposed by the traditions behind the forms. Lacking demographic data, no hard, compelling answer to this can be given. It is not satisfactory to treat the fable and the emblem as socially congruent but any assumption regarding the social class of their audiences must be treated as tentative until no other explanation of the changes can be made.

If fundamental differences in the attitudes toward man's position in the world can be found consistently between the two forms, that would suggest an irreconcilable social incongruity. This would be a difference in their two essences and not based on a fictional stance within the tradition. Karl Giehlow, as mentioned before, amply demonstrated the links between emblems and the hieroglyphic tradition. The hieroglyphic side of the Humanist movement was involved with the esoteric philosophy of Hermes Tresmegistus. The enthusiasm for arcane speculation is in great contrast to the search for historical accuracy to which we owe the rediscovery and emendation of classical texts. Petrarch sought to reconstruct the documents of the Ciceronian Age and to find there his models of behavior. This other attitude, represented best by Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino, accepted Hellenistic works as authentic expressions of a priscia theologia contemporary with Moses. Ficino even attributes the in-
vention of the hieroglyph to Hermes Tresmegistus. It was, he felt, a hidden statement of great eternal truths and an accurate investigation of their history did not interest him.

Frances Yates makes the point very clear that within the Hermetic tradition, man was felt to be a manipulating operator.\(^1\) For Pico man could be a magus with divine power. Through esoteric wisdom it was thought he could use the power of God's divine order for his own purposes. The view of man as a passive pawn subject to incomprehensible divine law and the whims of secular powers was foreign to this view. Thus, to the extent that emblems partake of the Hermetic tradition, we should be able to find the attitude consistently that man is an agent within the world acting to rearrange his situation. This would be a great contrast to the presumed Sklavenmoral of the fable where wisdom is the course of the reed bending before the storm or the fox cunningly avoiding being eaten by the lion. Such an essential difference between the traditions would indeed require considerable alteration of the material. It would also greatly affect the author's choice of material and set limits to his treatment of it and its acceptance by certain segments of the reading public.

One clear case of a difference between the traditions, but a superficial one, is Alciatus' emblem Non tibi sed religioni.² There is a fable in a paraphrase of Babrius which tells of an ass bearing a statue of a god.³ When passers-by bow down in reverence, the ass thinks they are bowing to him and is puffed up with pride. His driver then berates him and beats him with a club. In his emblem Alciatus specifies that the ass was carrying a statue of Isis. We do not know precisely what source Alciatus was following here or whether it specified Isis. But she was not a standard element in the fable. Besides the Babrius' reticence, Camerarius, Sr. states specifically in his version that he does not know which god it was.⁴ Erasmus treats this material in terms of a quote from Aristophanes' The Frogs.⁵ The context is of course Greek and the ass is part of a procession of the Eleusinian mysteries. So there is at least some room to assume that Alciatus made the change to Isis himself because of his consciousness of the Egyptian hieroglyphic tradition.

A shift for apparently personal reasons in the moral derived from the situation can be seen in the emblem Sobrie

²1531, Handbuch, col. 512.
³Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, #182, p. 456.
⁴Fabulae, p. 157.
potandum by Johannes Sambucus. He assumes familiarity with the fable of Phaedrus which tells of the dog which drinks from a river on the run. He has learned that he cannot safely quench his thirst at leisure because the river hides many dangers. He dines dip his muzzle into the water only briefly and so barely keep alive. A crocodile advises him to relax and satisfy himself. But the dog replies he would drink slower if the crocodile did not want to eat him. The epimythia sums it up:

Consilia qui dant prava cautis hominibus et perdunt operam et deridentur turpiter.

The illustration of the emblem shows the running dog and the crocodile but the epigram concerns itself with the young man shown on the riverbank drinking from a chalice. The crocodile is not specifically mentioned and can only be understood through familiarity with the fable. The emblem's lesson is not aimed at false counsel but at those who drink immoderately, so the crocodile is peripheral and serves only to represent the dangers the cautious imbiber wishes to avoid. Sambucus' epigram reads:

6 *Emblemata*, p. 34; *Handbuch*, col. 565.

7 Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, I, #25, p. 221.
The action of the fable takes place between the dog and the crocodile, but Sambucus draws his parallel between the dog and the youth on the shore. The wise conduct ostensibly observed in nature is applied *per tropologiam* to a specifically human problem. The reasons he made this change do not seem to be because of tradition nor his intended audience. He seems to have wanted to take this material and apply it to the problem of immoderation because the opportunity presented itself. The caution of the dog is used as a foil for the bad advice of the crocodile in the fable and the immoderation of the young man in the emblem. The same situation is used to illustrate two different morals.

Such a personal decision sheds no light on the social positions of the two forms. Alciatus' change is a superficial one to make his emblem conform externally to his presumed Egyptian models. Sambucus' moral is also equally appropriate to all levels of society. The various treatments of the next two themes, *Ex damno utilitas* and *Caecus Amor Sobolis*, do show differences attributable only to the audiences they addressed. It is very clear that the emblems were written for people in a different social situation than the fables were, with the exception of those by Camerarius, Sr. being explained by his Humanistic
audience. It is very easy to see in these examples a simple distinction between a Humanist elite and a less educated, less affluent, common audience.

Since the emblem was an avowedly Humanistic form, it usually sought its material in classical sources. Many ancient texts had been preserved in the Middle Ages but not until the Renaissance did they begin to be considered models for emulation. Georg Voigt characterizes the difference between the two ages in this way: "Nicht eine Summe antiquarischer Kenntnisse gibt den Ausschlag, sondern die Lebensanschauung, die Hingebung an die alte Welt, das sehnsüchtige Streben, sie wieder in die Gegenwart zu führen." Humanism devoted itself to reviving the classics and making them important again in an individual's education. The hieroglyph purportedly was the ideographic expression of ancient moral wisdom and a large measure of the popularity of the emblem was due to the reader's feeling a part of an elite which could fathom the secrets of the quasi-hieroglyphic emblem.

It seems to be an unfortunate element of human nature to feel oneself and one's peers in possession of an exclusive body of knowledge and to become smug and condescending to those outside the charmed circle. Erasmus Alberus, a Humanist, exaggerated the common attributes of the fable. He emphasized that it must be folksy and get

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its point across in such a way that even the simplest reader could learn from it. From his pinnacle of learning he talked down to his audience: "Es haben alle versten-dige leute für gut angesehen und gelobt, das man die ein-feltigen durch Fabeln, oder gedicht, und gleichnisse underweise." Today his fables are charming because of their unpretentiousness and we can read them with pleasure. But certainly no one in his audience in the sixteenth century felt flattered by this prefatory remark. He recommended fables because they were used in antiquity and very often in the Bible (he made no distinction between fables and "gleichnisse"). But he thought them especially effective, "weil dadurch bey dem albern Volck viel mehr ausgerichtet wird, dann durch strenge gebott." This condescending tone will be of importance when his fables are mentioned later.

The Humanists had a very ambivalent attitude toward the fable. On the one hand, they were concerned with it as an example of ancient literature and sought to examine its origins with an eye to rediscovering an uncorrupted version. But as a practical didactic tool it seemed fit only for the uncouth. Because of its common use, it was also thought of as a medieval form. While of legitimate philological interest, it was too thoroughly familiar to the population at large. Wolfgang Stammler

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9 Braune, ed., p. 2.
speaks of sixteenth century fable collections as "das letzte Glied in der mittelalterlichen Fabeldichtung."\textsuperscript{10} The fable then was not a new, direct link with ancient wisdom and was only on the fringes of the interest in classical literature. Familiarity breeds contempt and the fable must have seemed tainted by its common usage in the preceding age for serious Humanistic endeavors.

From this point of view it is clear that the emblem and the fable could be addressed to two very different audiences, the emblem to an elite, the fable to the most common. The form of the emblem appeals to the knowledge and wit of the would-be Humanist, while the fable is appropriate to those who could not be expected to understand anything more complicated or obscure. But emblems were based on fables and it will be instructive to investigate the transformation the material had to undergo. In the following examples the traditions from which the forms derived predetermine the audiences to be addressed and the morals appropriate to them.

Babrius tells the fable of the lion and the boar at a little spring arguing over who should drink first. Soon they are ready to fight to the death, but notice vultures waiting to see which of them would fall and then

\textsuperscript{10}Von der Mystik zum Barock, p. 227.

\textsuperscript{11}Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, #338, p. 484.
to devour him. They make peace with the words, "We had better be friends than food for vultures and crows." The same fable is told by Camerarius, Sr., but from the point of view of the vultures. It begins, "Gaudebant vultures, cum cernerent leonem pugnamentum cum apro, et se victum atque occisum depasturos esse sperabant." 12

With the shift in perspective the reason for the fight becomes unimportant, for the quarrel is no longer the center of attention. Instead it is the hope of the vultures for easy gain. Similarly there is no reason given for the lion and boar stopping their fight, "Cum autem vidisset, illos omissa certamine pacem et foedus facere, falsi spe deplorabant vanam expectationem suam." Babrius warns against risking great loss for little gain. Camerarius on the other hand draws the conclusion that "non esse laetandum ob mala aliena." The revision brings an entirely different aspect to light but one which lacks the necessity of the earlier version. It is accidental that the lion and boar cease fighting. In nature this happenstance is easily quite exceptional. One should not rejoice in others' ills, but the vultures merely had bad luck this time. Next time they may well fare better. Indeed their mode of living depends exclusively on others' misfortunes. We must conclude that Camerarius wanted to teach a worthwhile lesson but the fable teaches no such thing.

12 p. 156.
Alciatus treats this material under the title Ex damno alterius, alterius utilitas.\textsuperscript{13} The battle is again seen from the vultures' point of view, and no reason is given for the fight. But there is a great change. The battle is not stopped. The victor will gain glory but the vulture will get the spoils: "Gloria victoris, praeda futura sua est." Held translates this, the last line, so:

Die ehr der Sigent bringt dauon  
Der raub aber tuht jm zustohn.

This fits the situation better than did the moral by Camerarius. The dark side of glorious victory is seen here. The title seems to be in the spirit of the adage "It's an ill wind that blows no good." And indeed, vultures do profit from the downfall of combatants. But the juxtaposition of this idea with the other's gloria makes the implication much more negative, in the sense that there is certainly glory to be won, but from the winning the vultures demand their portion.

The second fable of Erasmus Alberus involves the same action, even though the characters and the outcome are different. After the description of the geographic location which we expect in every fable of his, he writes:\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}1550, Handbuch, col. 788.

\textsuperscript{14}Ed. Braune, p. 22. The second line is glossed: "Der Krieg hub sich gar grausam an."
Es wolt ein mauss zu widder leben,
Eim Frosch, es trauff die pfützen an.
(lines 6, 7)

The fable, including the moral, contains 56 lines, but already in lines 12-16 he presages the outcome:

So wolt gut rath nicht haben stat,
Sie blieben stracks auff ihrem sinn,
Dauon sie hatten kein gewinn,
Ja kamen beid vmb leib vnd leben,
Sölch böser lohn ward jhm gegeben.

The bulk of the fable has to do with the tactics of the mouse and frog and contributes nothing to the final disposition of the moral. But then, Erasmus' pleasure in imaginative "epic breadth" is a hallmark of the entire collection. The mouse uses dishonorable tricks against the frog, but finally both are carried away by a hawk. The implication is that in the stubborn insistence on zwitracht, all parties, honorable or not, come to grief:

Dann eigen sinn, vnd stoltzer mut,
Thun selten, oder nimmer gut,
*     *     *
Für trotz vnd hoffart, hass vnd zanck,
Da hüt dich für den leben langk.
(11. 51, 52, 55, 56)

Burkhard Waldis follows this version of the fable but he treats it much more briefly than did Erasmus Alberus. The outline remains the same. The mouse uses tricks in his war with the straightforward frog, but the
location is not characterized beyond simply being near a small pond. The description of the tactics used is reduced to:

Teten einander gross verdriess;
Die langen binzen warn ir spiess:
Sie zohen an einander dar.

(11. 11-13)

The outcome of the war remains the same. A hawk seizes both combatants. Waldis is more general in the recounting of the situation but more specific in the application of the moral:

Er [der Weih] fasst sie beid mit klauen hart:
Damit der krieg entschieden ward.
Also geschiht oft in einr stadt,
Die zweispaltige burger hat.

He applies the fable not just to personal "eigen sinn vnd stoltzer mut" but to the civil disruption caused by contending factions within a city. One faction trying to gain ascendancy over another brings "unverwindlichen schaden" to both. In this political context the contenders bring ruin not only to themselves but also to the city. Unable to keep peace among themselves, contentious citizens invite the interference of hawks "mit klauen hart." Waldis is not advising the individual how to survive in turbulent times, but is also concerned with maintaining political tranquility. In the turbulence of the sixteenth century, contention was to be feared because its effects were easily seen. Contention between the old political and religious order and the new touched everyone. The social order was
undergoing radical change. What was to emerge was as yet unclear and many people felt threatened by the developments around them. The old ways were more tranquil, or at least more predictable, and the conflict of the new forces at work made old attainments insecure.

Waldis was a Protestant and the Esopus does not fail to represent his sectarian and political standpoint. The political views expressed by the fables are not reactionary and it would be too much to see in this fable a condemnation of the municipal strife attendant to rapid political change. From his own experience in Riga, he knew the Protestant cause had to resort to more than persuasion now and then. Any political change makes some citizens unhappy and the greater the change, the more dissatisfied and cantankerous they will be. The fable must then be seen as a warning against those who foment contention willingly, not for progress (for how effective can a war between a mouse and a frog be?), but for personal aggrandizement. In any turbulent era there are those who thrive on the unsettling of everything established. Lacking a clear and present target, they will magnify or invent grievances. They hope not so much to rearrange the social order in a better fashion, for their feeling is that the old must be swept away. They find pleasure in attack and disruption. Outwardly they profess to follow a high and noble calling, but they exhibit a suspicious glee in their calls to revolt.

See the biographical preface in Tittmann's edition.
Waldis aims his fable at the pettiness of such political imbroglios and pointedly warns that it invites the destruction of both parties at the hands of an outside force. This returns to the sense of the original by Babrius where peace is restored among the potential victims of the vultures. Alberus used the fable to warn against stubborn bellicosity but aimed the fable at personal improvement, while Waldis applies it to politics. Both fables concern themselves with the two combatants and Waldis' version is especially applicable to the squabbling Protestants who must present a united front against outside intervention. Of significance is the representation of the Protestant cause by a mouse and a frog, two small creatures who can easily fall prey to the hawk. The relative weakness of the combatants emphasizes the insignificance of their war in the face of the threat from a far more powerful animal.

The fables of Alberus and Waldis are warnings to persons of modest social status, but do not exhibit the morality of the powerless necessary for survival. These characters do not need to have the cunning of the fox to escape the hawk. They must only not expose themselves by bickering. The course of action advocated in both fables is to avoid the predations of power rather than outwit it. It is significant that both fables differ from Babrius in one essential point. In both the combatants are caught by the hawk. The fable then serves as an example to be
avoided, a negative model. On the other hand Babrius highlights the wisdom of the combatants in making peace, a positive example to be followed.

Camerarius' version from the point of view of the ultimate victors, in his case the vultures, makes no point about the squabbling parties. The subject is the vain expectations of the vultures when the fighters make peace. As a model of reality the figure of vultures is poorly chosen. Ultimately their wait will be rewarded, even if peace temporarily postpones it. As an argument for peace, the fable is not convincing because of this muddled image. What comes out more clearly is a value judgment. Those who wait to prey on the misfortunes of others are repulsive, like vultures. The moral "non esse laetandum ob mala aliena" is aimed at those who are in a position perhaps to take advantage of others' misfortunes because of their station outside and above them. The moral is laudable but of interest to us is that it is aimed at a higher, more powerful level of society than the fables of Waldis and Alberus.

The difference of point of view reflects the difference in the intended audiences. Camerarius' fables were written as a text of good Latinity for use in Humanistic schools. Alberus intended his fables for a less elite audience, "das albern Volck." The fables were in German and liberally supplied with a rustic background to maintain the interest of provincials. The lessons
had to be liberally sweetened with the lore of the countryside in order to make them palatable. Waldis demeans the squabble but not the Protestant cause. He does not place the action in a lower class context and talk down to the reader. His stance seems to be close to that of the orator trying to persuade his constituency of the wisdom of a certain course of action and using the fable as evidence.

Both Alciatus and Camerarius write from the point of view of the vultures. Camerarius uses the vultures to express a moral judgment against those who do not show Christian charity to those in their power. Alciatus stresses, on the other hand, the inevitability which Camerarius chose to ignore. His reader is presumed to be preoccupied with gloria and is therefore like Camerarius' audience a step above slave morality. The emblem of the patient vulture then serves to remind him of the ultimate vanity. Just like the Memento Mori the emblem is addressed to respected, ambitious people. Within the context of the emblem book, which was filled with mottos for ordering one's life better, the effect is not melancholy resignation. This attitude, for instance, is explicit in the emblem In Dies Meliora, which ends with the lines\(^{17}\)

\[
\text{Cura viris eadem est, ne spes sublapsa retrorsum}
\]
\[
\text{Cedat: et ut melius sit, quod est ulterius.}
\]

\(^{17}\)1550; Handbuch, col. 552.
The context of the *Emblematum Liber* makes the emblem of the waiting vultures appear as part of a program of positive improvement, not retirement from worldly concerns.

The origin of this theme was a fable by Babrius which concerned itself with the foresight of two combatants in making peace. In the sixteenth century it appears in the fables of Alberus and Waldis with major outward changes in the treatment and with subtler but no less great changes in the attitude. It has become negative, an example of what to avoid. Alberus talks down to his uncouth audience from a position of prominence. Waldis does not talk down but offers fraternal advice to his fellows of the Protestant confession. Camerarius, Sr. and Alciatus both shift the point of view to that of the vultures and thus aim their works at a higher social level. In this instance at least it is the audience intended which dictated the treatment of the material and not the tradition behind the forms.

Usually the intended audience can be discerned only from internal evidence, but Camerarius, Jr. makes an exception of the 77th of his second book. He addresses the warning *Caecus Amor Sobolis* explicitly at parents:

Saepe et amare nocet. Suffocat simia amando Simiolum. Exemplum hoc o fugitote patres.

The illustration shows a monkey embracing one of its offspring while the other hangs neglected on the mother's back. The first laconic statement of the epigram that love
is sometimes also harmful is very general and objections to it immediately arise. But the monkey is the embodiment of fatuousness. Camerarius need not stress in the epigram the excess of love which suffocates. The characteristic of the monkey and the title exemplify it fully and prevent the epigram's application beyond a foolish excess.

The emblem derives ultimately from a fable by Babrius.\(^{18}\) In the fable the favored child is killed by fierce hugging while the other is ignored and survives on its own. Avian retells this fable but adds a specific event which causes the death of the favored one.\(^ {19}\) She is threatened and carries the one child in her arms while the other must save himself by clinging to her back. The child in her arms hinders her flight and she must abandon it, while the one on her back "invita cum genitrice fugit." This fable is not in the Romulus collection used by Steinhöwel, but he includes it among those he translated from Avian.\(^{20}\) He expands the incident, adding that the mother's terror was caused by hunters and their dogs.

These three fables do not address themselves to parents as a specific audience. Babrius concludes, "This is the nature of many men. Be ever an enemy to such rather than a friend." The fable is not designed to teach parents to avoid such foolishness but is aimed at warning a general

\(^{18}\)Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, #35, p. 50.

\(^{19}\)The Fables of Avianus, ed. Robinson Ellis (1887; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966), XXXV

\(^{20}\)Oesterley, Steinhöwels Äsop, 289.
audience to avoid such people. Usually a fable advises the reader to take or avoid the illustrated course of action. The fable does not concern itself with those who act like the monkey but with those around them. This advice once removed is rather unusual. Steinhöwel follows Avian in terms of the improved situation of the child. The closing line of Steinhöwel's translation reads, "und ward also das lang verachtet daz lieber." Avian concludes, "atque ordine verso spes humiles rursus in meliora refert." These fables are directly applicable to the reader, unlike that of Babrius. The audience is also not restricted to parents. When the emphasis is shifted to the surviving child and his advancement, everyone in a disfavored position can see a future hope in the fable.

Nicolas Reusner took this material for his emblem Caecus Amor Prolis.21 He treats it as a warning to parents and becomes quite specific in his advice on how to raise children: "Et secum celeri morte perire facit: Dum nimis impatienter amans, vitium omne benignus approbat: et rectum, quod facit omne putat." A young person, he says, is better off for leaving such a home and getting praise only through hard work. Camerarius, Jr. completes his emblem incisively with a single distich, which has to be understood in conjunction with the title and illustration. Alone it would be incomplete. On the other hand,

21Handbuch, col. 429.
Reusner's epigram is much longer, sixteen lines. He retells the fable essentially following Babrius, although with one change. Instead of being cast out the second child replaces the first in the mother's affections. Thus the epigram could be independent of the rest of the emblem. The written word has taken precedence over the emblematic character of the title and illustration. He also adds a lengthy sermon to parents full of advice. The form he uses permits such lengthy commentary. In contrast, Camerarius relied on the briefest of explanations, leaving the reader to learn from his direct cognition of the whole emblem. The epigram gives only the basic direction in which the emblem is to be interpreted while the lesson is embodied in the illustration. Reusner does not rely on such "anschauende Erkenntnis" of the three elements of the fable together. The reciprocal relation between the three parts has been dissolved. The illustration is subsidiary to the epigram and functions like the illustrations of Brant's Narrenschiff, which were a pleasing adjunct but not an equal partner to the text.

The only similarity Reusner's emblem has with that of Camerarius is that it is also a negative example to parents. On the other hand, the fables discussed earlier are addressed to all men. Babrius warns the reader to avoid such foolish men. Avian, and Steinhöwel following him, makes the fable positive, an expression of hope for the disfavored.
Reusner and Steinhöwel share a problem which they do not resolve. In Reusner's version the second little monkey is not cast out but rather becomes dearer to its mother by merely being there: "Diuque superstes, fit demum matri carior inde suae." Will it now also suffer the fate of the first? Steinhöwel almost gets into the dilemma when he writes, "sie nam das ander in iere huot und liebet es, wie sie vor ierem bruoder gethon hett." But according to him, the first was not suffocated by love, but rather came to grief because the mother seized it in her flight and then had to abandon it.

Camerarius, Sr. does not avoid this problem in his fable. The favored offspring must be abandoned when the mother is pursued by dogs, but in his preamble he approaches the version of Babrius when he writes that she, by carrying it in her arms "et frequenti complexu saepe numero necare." His moral exacerbates the problem: "Fabula ostendit, unius saepe damna alterius prodesse." One could have suspected he was moving in a different direction than the other versions from the title, which is merely Simia. The fable does not address parents nor does it concern child raising. Criticism of parents might well be out of place in a school book for boys. He shows understandable reluctance to use the opportunity to point out the benefits to the young of being without parental protection, as did Reusner. But then a teacher would not make

22 *Fabulae*, p. 215.
himself popular with parents by advising their sons to run away from home, no matter how great the benefit. As Camerarius interprets the fable, the favored child's downfall profits the other. But is he not now in the same position which caused his brother's death?

Avian, from whom this problem stems, avoided it by making his moral very general. "Sic multos neglecta iuuant." is very different from saying that the second child might well be suffocated by love now, too. The situation is seen here from the mother's point of view. "Atque ordine uerso spes humiles rursus in meliora re-fert," places the emphasis on the hope and expectation, in the sense of self-help, of the second child, or since it is phrased very generally, of anyone "humilis." It may be expecting too much of the others which leave this problem hanging. The fable rests on a series of fictions and assumptions for its efficacy and "epic" consistency may be an unfair demand. The fable tends to present an event without regard to factual surroundings in space or time. The epic breadth of Alberus which describes the locale in specific detail, for instance, is an exception which can be understood as an attempt to make his fables more palatable to the lower class audience he was writing for. In its briefest form the fable is a model of how a particular Lebensweisheit operates. It is an abstract model which does not attempt to take variances of human personality, history or geographical sur-
roundings into account. The application of this abstract situation to his own life is left completely to the hearer. Thus the events which come before and after are quite irrelevant. The concern of the emblem is of course also just as limited in time and space by the restrictions of the illustrations. One scene or event can be shown and no more. The historical background or the future effects of what is shown are not the province of the emblem. Lessing or Luther could take late Roman fables, which were originally pre-classical Greek, and use them to teach their own respective centuries. The philosophical background of the emblem was the idea that iconological symbols of the ancient Egyptians could be used to transmit lessons to men of the sixteenth century. A wolf was a wolf and a fox a fox no matter what century. A monkey was just as fatuous for Babrius as it is for us. Similarly the background within the fable of where the monkey is, who sired the offspring, and such is irrelevant. One cannot expect such information from these forms. But it must be, therefore, considered a failing of these examples that a question about the future is left open. This doubt about the future fate of the second offspring is not central to the fable. It could have been avoided and was by Babrius and Avian. That the other fables and the emblems leave it open is a flaw and shows the abstract quality of the forms was not used properly.
Waldis resolves this problem by not making the mother responsible in the same degree for the death of the favored offspring and the neglect of the other. As the hunting dogs approach, she holds the first in front of her but does not neglect the other, for Waldis writes, "und nam das and er auf den rücken." She actively puts it on her back rather than as in Steinhöwel's version where it must clamber up hastily on its own initiative. Waldis describes further that she fled up a mountain. A large rock blocked her path and as she climbed over it, the favored one in her arms was dashed against it and died:

On gfer das liebe kind dran stiess
Das es sein leben allda liess

The use of the phrase "on gfer" emphasizes the accidental nature of its death. The mother is only indirectly responsible and circumstance bears the greater burden of guilt. However, it still dies because of the mother's preference, so the crux of the fable is unaltered. But the situation is considerably less striking than the mother having to abandon it to the dogs in her flight.

Waldis also aims the lesson he derives from the fable directly at parents who spoil their children. Eventually, he says, they must be ashamed of their children, who become "zu guten sitten treg," and yet they themselves

23Esopus, II, 16.
are the cause. On the other hand, those "welch man hasst und nit leiden mag, Die leben oft ein seligen tag." He implies, but does not express, that they grow up more virtuous, but he seems to overstate the opposite of parental preference. It is difficult to imagine a connection between the harsh words "welch man hasst . . ." and a disciplined upbringing to virtue of any kind. But at this point Waldis leaves the field of pedagogy and bridges the gap with a reference to God's mercy to the forlorn which is reminiscent of the Beatitudes:

Welch man hasst und nit leiden mag,
Die leben oft ein seligen tag
Dass sie zu grossen ern gedeihen
Gott tut in gmeinlich gnad verleihen
Der verlassen er sich annimt,
Mit gnad in stets zu hilfe kümt.

Parents' neglect will be repaid by God's grace. Spoiled children come to a bad end, so in the last analysis God will set everything right. This belief expressed often in Waldis' fables is based on the assumption that there is a recognizable virtue which eventually will prosper. Waldis emphasizes, however, that this occurs only with divine help. Virtue does not bring success of itself nor is reward automatic. Following Lutheran doctrine, Waldis believes that good works are not sufficient. Salvation, or here at least prosperity, is a gift of God to the faithful. God is depicted as the overseer who equalizes in this world the inequalities and injustices inflicted upon the
virtuous. The fable is then both a warning to parents and an inspiration to neglected children. But the ultimate advantage these enjoy is not because they learn to take care of themselves in a harsh environment, as in the version by Babrius, but because God will have mercy upon them.

The final two lines of the fable exhort the reader to thank God for this mercy and conclude with a reference to Jacob:

Davor im sagen dank und lob,
    Den Jacob han wir des zur prob.

Once again an illusion explodes the framework of the main argument. The reference is apparently to the incident where Jacob deceived his father to gain his blessing, which by primogenitur should have gone to his brother. God's hand in this matter seems indistinct. The motive behind that deception seems more to have been the rivalry between two women for the preference for their children. Neglect by parents is not a factor, but deception is. Nor does Jacob gain favor by greater virtue in hardship. The allusion in the context of the fable would make it seem that any methods are proper to gain something which has been denied as long as the person feels that God is on his side. God's grace is granted "gmeinlich" to perceived virtue, supporting and structuring what is recognized as being good.

Camerarius, Sr.'s moral "unius saepe damna alterius prod esse" is reminiscent of "ex damno alterius, alterius
ultilitas," which was the title of Alciatus' emblem on the vultures. It was noted before that Camerarius avoided this lesson in the handling of that fable. In this case the choice of words seems very similar but it must also be seen that their impact is quite different. Alciatus constructed his emblem as a reminder of the ultimate victors of strife and the cost of glory. It was emblematic of the need to reorder one's life and of the vanity of victory. Camerarius treated that fable as a warning against profiting from others' misfortunes like vultures. Now in his fable on "caecus amor" it seems he is saying that there is always such profit. He does not resolve the problems inherent in the fable and so seems to ignore the implications of his moral, making no clear statement about either the mother's foolishness or the advantages of independence. This ambiguous and dubious moral may have been the result of avoiding the pedagogically subversive lesson such as Reusner gives. It is possible he avoided this pitfall only to be trapped by this less apparent but still uncongenial one without realizing it. Stranger things happened in Renaissance translations and adaptations. Because of this unclear situation we may not see here a fable addressed to a common audience giving them a measure of hope.

Babrius, Steinhöwel and Waldis do of course write for the lowly, but there are great differences between them. In Babrius the second offspring is cast out and
must shift for itself. The implication is clear that it benefits because it learns to live by its own wits. In Steinhöwel, who follows Avian, this individual initiative is not as clearly emphasized, but the less favored one still saves itself by climbing onto its mother's back. Waldis explains the eventual pre-eminence of the neglected child as a result of God's grace, not his own wits. If Babrius is typical of the way a man of lowly status can improve his lot, the term "slave morality" is appropriate. But it applies to Steinhöwel only with certain qualifications and not at all in Waldis.

Craftily circumventing the authoritarian powers for one's own purposes can be thoroughly subversive. This attitude is often found in ancient fables but it cannot be said that Steinhöwel was advocating it for his own time. He was a translator and therefore engaged only in an exercise of literary and social history. Through his work his contemporaries could see the ancient age. He operated within the Humanistic tradition and spoke to a Humanistic, scholarly audience. It is impossible to say what he thought of the inherent disruption of the status quo by the fable. He functioned as a neutral medium, and one can only speculate about a certain sympathy with this attitude from his choice of this task.

Waldis does not use the fable to threaten the status quo. He avoids a potentially disruptive attitude by a deep faith in the eventual beneficence of God. His fables
are an encouragement to him who must learn to survive within the status quo. It advocates not revolution but patience. The connection between the fable and the common people influenced his choice of form, but the manner in which he writes is quite different from the traditional stance.

The difference between the emblem and the fable is not simply the social level of the audience. Reusner's emblem, which advocates an independent education for children, is much closer in attitude to Babrius' fable than is Waldis. The salient point is not the cultural level but the attitude recommended in that situation. Babrius and Phaedrus were slaves, as was Aesop according to legend. Because of them, the cunning of the fox seems to be the typical reaction of the fable. It is thought of as the traditional stance of the fable, but in the sixteenth century it has a much more pessimistic tone. When the wolf and the lamb come to drink at the same spot on the stream in Luther's fable, no reasonable, self-effacing reply can prevent the wolf from inventing a pretext for killing the lamb. The lowly are threatened at all times by the arbitrary powerful, from whom there is no escape. One can only hope for eventual divine justice.

It is clear from this example, which can be taken as typical, that the role of the fable in popular literature in the sixteenth century is quite different from what one might expect on the basis of the tradition. The tra-
dition influenced the choice of the form to address the uncouth, but neither Waldis nor Alberus provide a consistent model for circumventing established authority. The history of the fable as a rhetorical device made it adaptable as a means of propagating attitudes among the lower levels of society. But these attitudes were most often also congenial to the aims of the higher levels. In those turbulent times they seem intent on dampening social and political unrest by urging acceptance of the status quo. For the sixteenth century the sly fox is not the topos of the fable.

Theophil Spoerri has suggested the fable of the oak and the reed as typical of the fable in general. In his view the wisdom of the reed bending before the storm is the basic stance taught by all fables. It is the wisdom of the small man who accommodates himself to irresistible forces. The heroic oak stems itself against the wind and is overthrown. Spoerri makes a convincing case and can cite many examples which teach "die schwere Kunst der Anpassung." But he does not distinguish between various eras and applies this model to explain all fables. If the fable of the sixteenth century can be understood in terms of the traditional attitude he describes, then this characteristic would be a major factor in adaptations to emblems. It has been shown at length

24 "Der Aufstand der Fabel," Trivium, 1 (1942), 31-63.
25 Spoerri, p. 48.
earlier that points of contact and similarity in the traditions of the fable and emblem do not exist. The emblem traces its lineage to an arcane iconology of a privileged class and must stand diametrically opposite the social position of the fable, if the only factor involved were the tradition.

Given such differences a lack of transference between fables and emblems in the sixteenth century would not be unexpected. Yet two points need further comment. A form which can be completely exhausted by an explanation of its origins lacks the spark of creativity. It has become epigonal and ossified. Both the fable and the emblem are far too lively in the sixteenth century. They made too great an impact on contemporary readers and future writers to be considered decadent phenomena. So neither will be satisfactorily explained only in terms of their sources. While both are closely bound to their particular traditions and exhibit many characteristics of previous ages and forms, new creative forces operated within the traditions to make both respond to influences not from the traditions. Very briefly, this can be seen in the difficulties in explaining the differences between the fables aimed at a socially low audience and those of Camerarius, Sr. It is also equally obvious that the emblem is not a slavish copy of the Egyptian hieroglyph but a lively form in its own time which contributed to the imagery of other larger forms.
The second comment necessary in this context follows closely from this. Since the fable is a lively form responding to the situation of the sixteenth century, it cannot be adequately understood by applying terms developed to characterize the long history of the fable from Demetrius to Lessing. To discuss the fable as an unchanging entity throughout the history of western culture is to ignore the differences which arise from the varying social context. Much of the secondary literature on the fable deals with it in terms of lessons for the powerless in all ages, that is Sklavenmoral. The fable is a recognizable form in literature for thousands of years and the similarities can be seen without regard for the time, especially since ancient fables were so often transmitted without much adaptation. But such insights cannot be applied without reservation. Words attributed to Aesop repeated in the sixteenth century are of necessity different in their import. What Avian wrote makes a very different impact on the men who read Steinhöwel's edition.

One reason the fable seems not to change much from one age to the next is its extreme brevity. Spoerri speaks of the fable as "reiner Umriss, geometrisch durchgebildete Sichtbarkeit." In the fable's simple delineation a small man can perceive the less visible array of forces around him. In his day to day life these forces are obscured by the multitude of appearances, but in the fable they are stripped of unessentials and stand out clearly. Spoerri does not use the term but it seems

26Spoerri, p. 45.
applicable here: The fable is a model of a situation. It does not include all the detailed description we expect from an epic form. As a model it is a marginal literary form. We saw that Aristotle treated it under the heading of rhetoric and the Roman commentators ignored Babrius and Phaedrus as poets. The fable cannot easily stand alone and threatens to be absorbed into a speech or sermon as a rhetorical tool. It can be treated like a skeleton to be fleshted out into a larger work.

The fable relies on instantaneously recognizable or stock characters to represent types of men. These stock characters are put into a situation in which their actions are consistent with their characters in the simplest possible way, then from this situation a moral lesson is derived: *Fabula docet*. . . . Its original use as a rhetorical tool imposed on the form an economy of means since it was subordinate to the point the orator wished to make. It was, in Aristotle's sense, evidence to support the case. It had to be short and had to be very clear. Since it was an indirect accusation often, or at least a veiled demonstration of certain forces at work, too great a length with too many specifics would have fixed it in a particular historical context and

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27 Emil Staiger in his *Grundbegriffe der Poetik* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1966), p. 107, explains the purpose of the epic poet as a detached, unhurried journey to a pre-determined goal, "um zu schreiten und alles auf-merksam zu betrachten."
would have weakened its effectiveness as evidence.

This model quality lets us read Babrius' fables today with as much pleasure and understanding presumably as his contemporaries, or perhaps even more because since Lessing we accept the fable as a legitimate, serious genre. No adjustment is required of the reader to appreciate very old fables as is the case with other, epic forms. The brevity and clarity enforced by its rhetorical origins prevented its envelopment in historical detail and let it outlive its original historical context. The epigrams of the Greek Anthology were valued in the sixteenth century for the insight they provided into the mores of ancient Greece, but the fables of Babrius and Phaedrus were accepted as being directly applicable to the contemporary scene.

The interpretation of ancient fables as examples of Sklavenmoral or Kunst der Anpassung can also be applied to the fables of the sixteenth century since the form does not limit itself through verisimilitude to a particular period of time. Yet the Humanists were far from being slaves and we should hesitate to apply these terms to them. Erasmus Alberus talked down to his audience and does advocate in his fables a Kunst der Anpassung. But Camerarius, Sr. aimed at a Humanist audience and can modify the fables to teach lessons that are very different from those of Erasmus Alberus. The emblem, which arose from very different roots, can also use fables for its own
purposes. These points make it clear that it is hazardous to lump all fables into one category.

In comparing fables and the emblems based on them, the question arises to what extent the differences between them are due to their disparate traditions. If the broad brush of Sklavenmoral is used to characterize all fables, the emblem could have found little of use in the corpus of fables. If the fable of the oak and reed is typical for the form of the fable, as Spoerri argues, then inherent in the fable is a stance which would be quite foreign to Humanistic emblem writers. Advocacy of the yielding strength of the reed can be found in the fable. Avian's version brings this out quite clearly in the moral, "Haec nos dicta monent obsistere fluxa, / Paulatinque truces exsuperare minas." The eventual victor is the one who yields like the reed, bending of necessity before the brute power of the wind. Yet Hadrianus Junius follows the fable precisely in his emblem ἘΞΑΛ ΝΙΚΑΝ sive Victrix animi Aequitas. The type of tree has been changed but not the praise of the reed. His epigram explains how the ash trees stem themselves against the wind and are overthrown by its strength while "arundo infracta eandem despuit." The reed is disdainful of the wind, or literally, spits upon it. "Fit victor

28Ellis, ed., #16, p. 18.

29Emblemata, #43, p. 49; Handbuch, col. 150.
patients animus cedendo furori." It is not cowardice
nor weakness which makes the reed bend down, but patience
and true wisdom by which it becomes the ultimate victor.

In an age of political uproar it is not surprising
that the brute strength of the tree is seen as less vir-
tuous than the patience of the reed. Junius was a re-
spected and well-to-do Hollander, and a Catholic, and
tutor to the sons of the nobility. But this is quite a
distance from the point of view of Aesop the slave. The
fable was undoubtedly seen as a warning against rebellion
when the destruction of the oak is emphasized. This is
the tendency of Steinhöwel's fable which begins "Welhe
ains hochfertigen gemütès sint und wellent sich gegen
ieren obern nit naigen und demütigen, denen beschicht
als der tannen, die sich nit naigen wolt, do der gross
wind kam."30 In this version the strength of the tree
is the main topic and nothing is said of the wisdom of
the reed. Steinhöwel leaves the impression that the tree
called down the wrath of the wind upon himself by its
prideful boasting, while the reed and "die demütigen
uffrecht belybent." The reed is not shown as the eventual
victor over the power of the wind, hence having the same
goal but different methods from the tree. The reed bend-
ing down is not a tactic in the same struggle to which
the tree falls victim, it is the avoidance of the sin of
pride. Rollenhagen has an emblem in this vein, Noli altum

sapere. 31 It is significant that no mention is made of the reed whatsoever, only the tree and its destruction. The epigram reads

Noli altum sapere, et plus quam mortalia fas est Pectora. Nam Sapere, non nimium Sapere est.

The fable began as an example of the wisdom of survival, but here the emblem identifies wisdom with the tree, and warns against being too wise. The point has been turned 180° around.

Camerarius takes the middle path in his version of the fable. 32 The tree and the reed are given equal emphasis: "... ab horum illa vi eruta et dissipata fuit, arundo autem submissione sua integritatem conservauit." They had been disputing about "fortitudo, robore, et constantia" but when the tree disparaged the reed's flexibility, it remained silent. The proof of wisdom is not in words but in results as the storm soon after shows. Of special interest is the choice of words, that the reed maintains its integrity and that "laudandos eos magis esse, qui tempori servire sciant, et se non opponant valen-
tioribus..." The pride or boisterous nature of the tree is not declared in the body of the fable, but in the moral it is pointed out that the yielding reed is more to be praised than those "qui cum praestantioribus

31II, Nr. 13; Handbuch, col. 151.
32Fabulae, p. 152.
se et potentioribus rixentur atque contendant." The subversive nature of the submission is not emphasized or not recognized. The praise of the reed seems very much like an appeal to a boisterous class to be good boys, a bland admonishment which, if ignored, brings punishment: "Significatur et hoc, quod Herodotus scripsit: Numinis hunc esse morem, vt ardua conuellat."

Avian's fable praised the wisdom of the reed and presented it as a model for emulation, that is, good advice for the little man. Precisely the same attitude is conveyed in Junius' emblem. Steinhöwel's version of the fable treats the oak as the more important element, a negative example. His fable urges avoidance of the sin of pride. Precisely this point is in Rollenhagen's emblem. And a further twist is added by Camerarius, Sr.'s fable which warns against the stance of the tree but does not fully acknowledge the wisdom of the reed. If this fable is typical of the fable in general, it is surprising to find it mirrored so closely in the disparate form of the emblem. Spoerri argues that the fable must inherently take the stance of the reed and speak to those who can only survive by bending. The emblem addresses itself to a very different audience and yet can also take this stance. This indicates that in the sixteenth century the differences in the traditions behind the two forms does not absolutely force them into different stances. Yet the examples of Ex damno utilitas and Caecus Amor did
show a tendency for the emblem to be intended for a socially higher audience than the fable.

I suggest that this tendency, found in a number of cases, has been unjustifiably applied to the rest and distorts our view of the didactic literature of the sixteenth century. Crudely stated this generalization would be that the emblem is a form developed by Humanists in which they could demonstrate their classical knowledge and their wit. The fable on the other hand is a way of pleasantly instructing the lowest classes in the virtues of accepting their lot. And in the case of Camerarius, Sr. where the audience is not of a lower class, it is children who must be instructed and molded to fit the society of their betters and elders. In the sixteenth century the fable is a form to advocate the status quo. Continuing in Spoerri's image, only the bending of the reed seems to be typical for the stance at this time. The reward for docility awaits in heaven. The ultimate victory by outliving the tree has been removed from the mundane sphere and relegated to a metaphysical beyond.

We can accept Spoerri's example as relevant but only with the qualification that it has two aspects. In one flexibility, "die Kunst der Anpassung," is preponderant. In the other, apparent passivity reveals itself as the greater strength and wisdom. This is precisely the strategy of judo, the "gentle way" of self defense, whose central maxim is to pull when pushed, to push when pulled.
The oak pushes back when pushed and a greater strength destroys it. The reed bows down and lets the fury of the storm pass harmlessly over and dissipate. This aspect appears most starkly in the fables where the fox’s cunning overcomes his disadvantages in size and strength. The existence of such a powerful and unpredictable force in society would be clearly threatening to the status quo. The Lutheran Reformation had an immense social impact and the fable was a favored didactic tool. Nevertheless, the first aspect of the fable is stressed by emphasis primarily on education to personal morality and not on models of social critique and evasion. Nor is this surprising in light of Luther’s own ambivalence toward the social disruption unleashed by his theological innovations. Thus the fable and the emblem may have addressed different audiences because of their traditional origins, but because of the conservative stress of the fable in the sixteenth century, their attitudes were not incompatible.

One of the most widely used themes against social innovation common to fable and emblem was that of the borrowed feathers. Babrius treats it with uncharacteristic loquaciousness and richness of description.33 A heavenly messenger announces a beauty contest among all the birds. They hurry to a spring to primp and an old

33Perry, ed., #72, p. 89.
jackdaw gathers up the cast off feathers from all the others to adorn himself with. He was about to receive the prize from Zeus when the swallow showed him up by pulling out the feather taken from her. The other birds realized the deception and joined in completely stripping him of the borrowed plumage. In the broader descriptions the tightly pointed quality of the fable has been lost and it ends with a disappointingly flat moral, "Deck yourself out in fine clothes of your own, my boy." In the Augustana Recension there are two versions which are distantly related to this. In one a large jackdaw tries to pass himself off as a crow.\(^{34}\) They reject him and he returns to his fellows, only to be rejected also by them for his presumption. In the other a crow white-washes himself so that he can get food among the pigeons kept by a man.\(^{35}\) His deception was successful until he opened his mouth. When the pigeons heard him, they chased him off. And when he returned to the crows, they also took him for an alien since he was still white.

It is generally accepted that Babrius did not influence the Augustana fables and here is a piece of evidence for it. The core situation of the deceitfully ambitious bird is the same. The results of the deceit are also similar since in every case he winds up worse off than before. In the Babrian version he is attacked by the crowd of birds. In both the Augustana versions he is

\(^{34}\) Ibid., #123, p. 445.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., #129, p. 446.
rejected by his former fellows. When the version by Phaedrus is taken into account the likelihood of a common source, perhaps ultimately Demetrius, becomes very great. Phaedrus used elements found in both the others. A jackdaw gathers dropped feathers from peacocks, a similar beginning to Babrius, and pushes his way into a group of them and of course is stripped and chased away, similar to the Augustana.

Something not found in either is the direct address of one of the jackdaws to the transgressor with which Phaedrus concludes his fable:

Contentus nostris si fuisses sedibus
et quod Natura dederat voluisses pati,
nec illam expertus esses contumeliam
nec hanc repulsam tua sentiret calamitas.

The preservation of the natural order by acceptance of one's station in life comes directly to light here and will dominate the versions in the sixteenth century.

Steinhöwel translates Phaedrus' version but alters it slightly. Because "er erhob sich in übermuot und ward so truczig," he is rejected by the other crows. But when the peacocks see his presumption, they attack him, tear all the feathers from him and leave him for dead. This is much rougher treatment than he suffers in the originals, but is consistent with his source in Romulus

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37 II, 15, p. 128.
which has "calcibus et morsibus fatigant: semivivus ab eis relictus . . . redire timuit . . ." 

Haecht has an emblem on this theme entitled In Arrogantes et Ambitiosos. He addresses the crows directly to ask:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dic mihi cur plumis alienis corve superbis?} \\
\text{Dic adeo tumido cur aliena placent?} \\
\text{Agnine iam facto repretitum cursitat omnis} \\
\text{Grex avium, plumis undique nudus eris.}
\end{align*}
\]

The speaker sees that the crow will be stripped completely of feathers by the birds surrounding it and will be worse off than before. Here, by the way, the birds are not peacocks, but like in Babrius, of various sorts in the crow's eyes still more beautiful than itself. He continues the direct address, but since it is too late for the crow to avoid the error, presumably he is speaking to the reader now:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nemo sibi dotes furtivas arroget unquam.} \\
\text{Nec decus alterius surripuisse velit.} \\
\text{Quod sis, esse velis, placeat tibi (suadeo cautus)} \\
\text{Sors tua, nunquam alius, si sapis, esse velis.}
\end{align*}
\]

There is no mention of the crow's return to his own kind in the emblem although the further punishment of being "plumis undique nudus" is assumed. When Steinhöwel's crow returns he is met with a calm, moralistic sermon on his faults, but it is not the author who speaks but rather [38#68; Handbuch, col. 884.]
"ainer von den rappen." The conclusion of this speech
and of the fable is "Darum wäre daz best, ieden in synem
wysen benügig syn." The fable has a lengthier action
but lacks the neat epigrammatical summary: "Quod sis,
esse velis." Steinhöwel's general formulation in the
third person is a less acute summation of the crow's ex-
perience, but in this he follows his source.

Zetter's translation of the emblem expands upon the
moral, but not upon the action. The crow loses only its
"Zierde" and the translator addresses to the reader this
moral:

Dann wer jhm selbsten wolgefellt /
Vnd in sein Hertzen von sich helt /
Mehr dann zu halten sich gebürt /
Derselbige / glaub mir / der würt
Endlich müssen zu schanden werdn /
Vnd viel hohns leidn vff dieser Erdn:
*    *    *
Sey / wer du bist / vnd der du bist /
Der sey gerne zu jeder frist:

The last couplet is a very tight phrasing of the moral.
But the impression made by this admirably lean translation
is ruined by the flatness of what follows. Those from
whom the crow stole the feathers will take proper ven-
geance on the parvenue, for it is God's ordering of the
world against which he strives:

Es ist ein schande einem Mann /
Der gerne höher wehr hinan /
Als er von GÖtt hie ist gesetzt /
Der selbe sich selbst verletzt:
Wer still ist vnd mit sein genügt /
Zu allen Tugenden sich fuegt.
What had been in Steinhöwel a transgression of personal pride, avenged by those directly affected, here becomes a revolt of metaphysical significance. The entire political structure of the world is under attack if the individual is not satisfied with his lot. "Wer still ist" and does not make waves, protects the tranquillity of the realm. This proper member of society accommodates himself to all "Tugenden", that is, those virtues impressed upon him by a society fearing change, mobility and freedom. Whoever wants to be higher than the station to which he was born is strutting around in the cast off feathers of his betters. He is not only injuring himself, by inviting God's judgment upon himself, but must suffer the punishment by those appointed to maintain the proper order.

"Sey / wer du bist" is reminiscent of the Delphic admonition "Know thyself," but its intention is diametrically opposed to it, since it does not want to lead to greater freedom, but rather to reinforce the social and political strictures of the God given order.

The fable of Camerarius the elder condenses the description of the event into a very few sentences.\(^{39}\) But the moral does not live up to the power of the description: "Significat fabula, commendicatam speciem neque diu durare, et perleui momento dissolui." The im-

\(^{39}\) Fabulae, p. 164.
pact is entirely personal and refers specifically only to outward appearance. Similarly, Phaedrus wrote that the crow could have avoided this fate "contentus nostris si fuisses sedibus et quod Natura dederat voluiisses pati." In Steinhöwel this becomes "Scharmst du dich nit umb dynen übermuot, daz du dich höher wolt erheben, wann dynem gesclächht zuo gehöret?" Camerarius avoids even this mention of the proper order of things against which the crow transgressed and stays very far from the railings of Zetter. He says the birds are only moved to laugh when they see the crow stripped of its stolen feathers. This version of the moral is in a much lower tone than the previous examples and avoids open social commentary. He has shifted the onus from unpermitted ambition to false appearance, which is consistent with what has been adduced about his audience earlier. Ambition to high station was not culpable for the boys for whom he was writing. Within society's structure they were expected to rise high. Striving beyond their position was expected of them. Camerarius cannot fault the virtue of ambition but does flay the use of false appearances for unfair advantage. He is also very careful not to question borrowing. A budding Humanist learned in large measure by borrowing and appreciating the models of great Latinity. Adorning his efforts with the quoted plumes of his classi-

40I, 3; Perry, ed., p. 195f.
cal predecessors was encouraged. In this fable which others had pointed against false adornment, Camerarius inserts a quote from Horace (Epist. I, 3, 20) "ita illa risum movit omnibus, 'Fortivis nudata coloribus,' ut ait Horatius." [quotation marks added] It was his avowed purpose, after all, to encourage the acceptance of Latin as it had been fixed in the classical age, so he could not discourage borrowing as long as it was proper and not "commendicata species."

All the other treatments of this theme preach the maintenance of the status quo and the evil of ambition. Haecht and Alberus view it in terms of a divinely ordered society. Dissatisfaction with the temporal situation and striving to rearrange it is not just politically dangerous in their eyes, but borders on a sin against God. Much of the controversy surrounding Luther concerned the redefinition and the division of authority in the temporal and spiritual realms. Luther shrank back from the political implications and results and maintained the old position of a divinely organized political system. Alberus, the Lutheran preceptor, also takes a conservative position in this regard, even though the new movement might have been a foundation for innovative thinking. Luther had damned the peasants' striving for greater freedom quite roundly so it is consistent that Alberus, writing fables for the lower classes, preaches the virtue of being satisfied with the position one has inherited.
Similar to the levelling advice against striving is the way acquisitiveness is treated in the fable of the ape and fox. If ambition for social rank is thought harmful, then ambition for economic gain must also be condemned. And yet it is precisely ambitious people in the sixteenth century who would have improved themselves and been interested in continuing to do so who would have made up the bulk of the reading audience. So the fable writers were not in a position to condemn it outright, especially since they were members of this group themselves. A way around this problem had to be found. In Steinhöwel's version the ape asks the fox to give him part of his tail, "unde nates suas turpissimas tegeret."\(^{41}\) The ape argues that the fox's tail is much too large and is a hindrance. Whereupon the fox replies that before he would share with the ape he would prefer to have a much larger tail. Accustomed to the fables against hubris, we expect the fox to get his comeuppance promptly and feel rather disappointed when the fable ends with this pale confrontation. Steinhöwel addresses his moral to the rich man: "Du rycher und gytyger mensch solt dis fabel merken, daz du miltiglichen mit den armen tailest, wass dir ze vil ist, und nit als der fuchs nydig und karg syest." The ape is seen as having the better argument and the fox is a bad example. Camerarius treats

\(^{41}\)Oesterley, ed., II, 17, p. 188.
the fable more briefly but in the same spirit. He changes only the reply of the fox to read: Quod si illam esset necesse plausuro post me subuehi, tu tamen nunquam vno huius pilo vestitior fieres."  

The idea in these versions is that the fox does have too much tail, which is not useful to him and which he must drag through briars, mud and fences. Only his avarice prevents him from sharing.

Sambucus uses this fable as the source for his emblem In Copia Minor Error. Already from the title it is evident that he treats it entirely differently. The ape does not ask to share but rather mocks the tail. The fox replies he would rather have too abundant a covering of his nakedness than to have none at all.

Sambucus writes:

Caussa fuit melior vulpis: superesse quod ornat,
Et prodest, satius quam caruisse nimis.

The situation is the same generally as in the fable, but the interpretation is directly opposite. Here it is the ape who is in the wrong, not the fox. Both the fox and the ape have their God-given appearances and the ape does not, as in the fable, want to change or improve his. But he is wrong to chide the over-abundance the fox displays. The second emblem after this one, Superfluum inutile, reinforces this attitude from a different aspect:

42Fabulae, p. 196.

43Emblemata, p. 16; Handbuch, col. 455.

44Ibid., p. 19, Handbuch, col. 669.
Davitio repute veras quas exigit vsus,
Et sortem insignem, quam dat habere Deus.

* * *

Cuique suum tribuit varium qui condidit Orbem,
Quique dedit totum, parte deesse nequit.

Everything that is truly needed has been provided in God's wisdom. Useless superfluity, we must infer, is to be avoided, and what has been given to others is not to be questioned. Thus it is the ape and not the fox who is the avaricious one for wanting more than God saw fit to give him. Indeed, Sambucus concludes his emblem:

Prodigus in vitio minus est, quam prorsus avarus
Virtutis potius congruit ille modo.

All the versions argue against avarice, but Sambucus' conclusion that a spendthrift comes closer to virtue is certainly unexpected. But the fox is not wasting what he has, he merely has too much. And his abundance was divinely planned. Those of small spirit and means who find fault in great abundance, chide not only the individual but also the proper order of the world.

The fables follow the example and maintain the outline given by Phaedrus whose moral was "avarum etiam quod sibi superest non libenter dare." But in the mobile sixteenth century a distinction had to be made between justifiable acquisitiveness and the condemned avarice. Steinhöwel qualifies avarice as the reluctance to donate

45 Appendix Perottina, #1, Perry, ed., p. 373.
an excess. And for once Camerarius need not alter the
point of the fable. Both versions are addressed to a
relatively wealthy audience for whom stinginess is a
danger. We have seen this before in Camerarius, but
it seems to indicate that Steinhöwel also was concerned
with an educated prosperous audience and not the common
masses which are the stereotyped audience for fables.
Advice to an impoverished, struggling level of society
would treat material excess very differently. For them
every day would be a fight against the established order
of hard work and imminent hunger. Sharing within the
community would be a necessary buffer against disaster.
Neighbors could not refuse help in case of sickness or
a burned barn, for such help was their only protection
when misfortune came to them. Refusal would have caused
the immediate ostracism of the offender and without the
support of the community he could not have lived long.
But neither Steinhöwel nor Camerarius condemns stinginess
as strongly as would have been proper under these circum-
stances. They did not have such a group in mind for the
advice. They make the fable sound more like an appeal
in a sermon for Christian charity which the preacher
knows will be futile but uses as a reminder pro forma.
Because he is a step further away from the source
in Phaedrus, Sambucus can treat the matter more freely.
He draws the consequences which the fabulists did not.
For a rich man wealth is proper, and if he is religiously inclined, it is divinely ordained as his station and lot. Whoever wants to take it away from him is the avaricious man, not himself. The trouble with an appeal to divine planning is that it can justify anything. And because of the tendency to habit in the human mind, most often it is the status quo which is seen as the proper plan. Only if a reformer can convince himself and others that evil men have perverted God's original idea, can providence be used as an argument for sweeping change. For us today it seems as if Sambucus is parodying the divine scheme of the status quo by turning the fable on its head. But in his entire book there is not the least hint of a smile. He was just as serious as the fabulists and made the change because of his penchant for discovery of arcane relationships and his desire for innovation and wit.

If we were to choose a fable which would be immune from criticism of the status quo, it could easily be that of the ant and the grasshopper. The fable has to advocate the morality of an economically hard-pressed and hard working social class. It makes the cruel necessity of labor and thrift abundantly clear. To share in the accumulated hoard one must have contributed, which of course the grasshopper did not. There is a certain smugness on the part of the ant, which in many versions comes out in the neatly pointed rejoinders he makes, even
in the face of the fatal need of the grasshopper.

In Steinhöwel's translation of the Romulus fable the ant has brought grain up into the open air to dry during winter.46 When the grasshopper asks for food, the ant asks what it did during the summer. The reply is at first surprising, "Ich bin nit müssig gegangen." But its industry turns out to have been singing and dancing, so the ant retorts, "Hast du dann den summer gesungen, so spring den winter." The central element of the fable is the passage of time and the change of fortune it brings. Steinhöwel points his fable against the lazy, teaching them "daz sie zuo rechten zyten ar-baiten sölent, ob sie villycht ettwan gebruch haben würdent, daz nieman wäre, der inen ze hilff käme."

The ant was obvious choice for an emblem of industry and Reusner used it for Nocet empta dolore voluptas.47 His epigram is brief and to the point:

Cantus plena cicada, sed est formica laboris: Illa eget, haec frugum semper abundat ope.

But the point here seems quite bland compared to the sharp admonition of Steinhöwel's fable. Under the hypothesis that emblems in general are aimed at a more prosperous audience than fables, it would seem that the

46 Oesterley, ed., II, 17, p. 188.
47 F vj a; Handbuch, col. 936.
advice of the fable would not be of such pressing concern. They would certainly agree about the virtue of thrift but would be more comfortably padded from the straits of the grasshopper. Yet this hypothesis needs the further qualification that Reusner assumes a previous knowledge of the fable. An ant can easily be made an emblem of industry but the combination of ant and grasshopper must refer to our fable. Reusner's audience, if it did not know the fable, would have to be dissatisfied since the emblem contains no explanation of why the grasshopper is in want and the ant not. Such interdependence of the two forms weakens the strength of the division between the audiences of the fable and the emblem.

If Reusner's epigram merely recounts the outline of the situation of the fable and misses the sharp pointe of the fable, Waldis lessens the impact by expanding the fable and the rejoinder of the ant. When the ant says the grasshopper should have helped in the harvest the previous autumn, the grasshopper replies that it had, by entertaining the workers in the fields. The ant is busy drying its grain but interrupts its work and

Da hub die ameis an und lacht:
"hastu den sommer also hin bracht
Mit kurzweil und mit lieder singen,
So magstu jetzund auch wol springen
Und machen dir mit tanzen warm:
Des faulen ich mich nit erbarm."
(1. 27-32)

48I, 84, p. 124ff.
Waldis preaches that labor in summer is necessary for abundance in winter. He then draws a further inference from the lesson:

Das ist, wir sollen in der jugent
Streben nach künsten und nach tugent;
(l. 37-38)

What should be laid in during youth is skill, virtue and "witen", for money and possessions are "farende hab" and are subject to changes in fortune, can be taxed and stolen. Personal qualities are always secure "und [mögen] dir im alter nützen." Thus our aim in youth should be to acquire these virtues, which will sustain us in hard times to come "Wenn du der sachen Gott lest walten." Under these circumstances God will take care of the material questions. But we should also remember the reply of the ant that he shows no mercy to the lazy.

This reply is of special interest because it is the moral of the fable. It is the fabulists' expression of their economic outlook and shows the attitude of the audience for which they were writing. But it can also betray the degree of smug self-righteousness of the writer and by extension of his audience. Steinhöwel is devastating in his brevity, although he is following his source in Romulus in this, which reads, "si estate cantasti, hyeme salta." This is one of those odd fables in Romulus which does not appear in Phaedrus. There are however versions
by Babrius and Avian. The version in Steinhöwel's Romulus is matched in every detail by the fable of Babrius. In reply to the ant's question about how the grasshopper had spent the summer, it says, "I was not loafing. I was busy singing all the time." The ant's rejoinder is then translated, "Dance in the winter since you piped during the summer." No specification of the moral is given. The fable demonstrates in general the necessity of productive labor and the cruelty of fate and fortune, emphasized by the laughter of the ant as he locks up his grain again. The version by Avian follows closely, but shifts the emphasis to saving in youth for the lean year of old age.

Quisquis torpentin passus transisset inuentam
Nec timuit vitae prouidus ante mala
Confectus senior, postquam gravis affuit aetas,
Heu frustra alterius saepe rogabit opem.

The impact of both ancient versions is not the smugness of a class which has arrived but a warning for those whose very existence is tenuous and constantly threatened.

The opposite, sixteenth century view is most clearly stated by Reusner in his emblem. Labor is necessary for abundance. The grasshopper is poor in goods because it abounds only in song. His moral, stated generally, is

49 Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, #140, p. 183.
50 Ellis, ed., XXXIV, p. 37.
that pleasure which must be bought with sorrow is harmful. Art which is unprofitable leads to ruin. The grasshopper's pursuits are sheer profligacy. We must note in passing that Reusner could not have included himself even though he probably thought of himself as *cantus plenus*. His verses were not only for *voluptas*, but were balanced by their profitable didactic content. He is not the solitary poet but rather the humanist, the educator and dispenser of knowledge. Implicit in his view is that a man has a measure of influence on his economic prospects and through work can acquire financial security against possible hard times.

Babrius and Avian, with Steinhöwel to a certain extent, are more fatalistic. "Zuo rechten zyten," in summertime when the living is easy, one should still work hard because bad times come inevitably. Among all these versions, Waldis is the exception which does not treat the material or the idea in strictly material terms. All emphasize thrift, but Waldis adds a less pessimistic note with his belief in divine providence. That the ant acted properly in refusing the grasshopper is assumed by each, including Waldis, who makes divine providence dependent on the industrious acquisition of virtues and skills in youth. Charity is an expensive gesture and there is no room for it in the struggle to provide for oneself. The fables and the emblem of the sixteenth century agree in their attitudes and once again the difference is to be found between them and the old fables.
The tight fisted desire to maintain what has been
collected and the newer version is comparable
to that of Sambucus' *In Copia Minor Error*. He who has,
is not obligated to share with him who has not. The
ant enjoys abundance by his labors and properly so.
The grasshopper is at fault for not having been productive-
ly useful, or in Waldis' terms, for not having acquired
skills which would have been in demand even in hard times.
Singing is apparently not such a skill in his eyes.
The absolute commandment of Christian charity is here not
in force even in the fable of such a pious man as Waldis.
Abundance is gathered by the hard work and farsightedness
of the individual and is sanctioned by the divine order.
Indeed to the man of the sixteenth century it seems
that it is guaranteed to the diligent by the divine order.
Both fables and emblems address the same economic situation
and reinforce the individual's right to keep what he has
without obligation to anyone else.

Our search for intrinsic differences in the stances
of the emblem and the fable has been unsuccessful so far,
but has opened up an interesting problem in the attitudes
of the period. At a time where doctrinal differences
were of major importance in everyday life, the conflict
between economic greed and Christian charity in the fable
can enlighten some of the underlying premises of didactic
literature. The burgeoning middle class naturally would
be interested in maintaining the economic progress it had
only recently won. The fable at this time seems to have been used to reinforce the social and economic status quo. The fable of the ant and the grasshopper could have been an economic manifesto when applied as a model of proper conduct. The fable has long been recognized as a peculiarly Protestant form but this example seems to have no relationship to the Christian ideal of charity. It functions in a secular, economic framework, not as religious admonition.

This split between secular and sacred also appears in the fable of the ungrateful snake. It tells of the results of giving aid in extremity. There are two outlines of the action which were followed in the sixteenth century. Both agree at the outset where a man rescues a snake from the cold. The ungratefulness of the snake is then either that it bites the man or that it befouls his house by spewing poison everywhere. Babrius and Phaedrus both write that he is bitten, but Steinhöwel following his Romulus has the other. Erasmus Alberus and Waldis both use the second also. There is no significant difference between the teachings of the two versions although there are large differences between the individual authors’ attitudes.

Again we can take Steinhöwel as our starting point. He relates that the man kept the snake in his house until

51Oesterley, ed., II, 10, p. 91.
the weather warmed. Then the snake proves ungrateful and he moralizes, "Wer den bösen hilf bewyset, der sol wissen, daz er genuog fast mistuot, und so er im wol getan hat, so würdt er ze lon von im geschediget."

Erasmus Alberus has a version of this fable and typically names the merciful man, his wife and their village. 52 He even gives some background on their marital difficulties and assures us then that the fable he tells actually happened. Since he has broken the convention of the fable and approached a larger epic form, such protestations of veracity have become necessity. It is no longer an abstract model of the moral in action. It is now a particular anecdote and not the general evidence of which Aristotle spoke. The farmer brings the snake in out of the snow and warms it before the fire, whereupon it spews poison everywhere. Alberus does not say one should not help others because of the chance of poor thanks, but rather rails against such ungratefulness. He concludes resignedly:

Noch kompt es offt, das du dem gut
Erzeigst, der dir dann vbels thut,
Vnd du also für dein wolthat,
Empfengst von jhm gar kleinen rhat.

Reusner uses a slightly different version for the source of his emblem Merces anguina. 53 The man warms the

52 Braune, ed., #14, p. 63ff.
53 II, 22, Handbuch, col. 639.
snake against his breast and is bitten for his effort.
The man’s death is the thanks of the title. Like Stein-
 höwel he turns the point against the doer:

   Si benefacta locas male, simplex mente bonusque
   Non benefacta quidem, sed malefacta puta.

He concludes that it is not right to help the thankless
or, he adds, to harm the thankful. The quality of the
act of mercy is to be measured by the response of him who
is helped, “Quod bene fit gratis, hoc solet esse lucro.”

The situation preserved in a prose paraphrase of
Babrius corresponds with Reusner’s emblem. 54 In it the
man asks the snake why it repays his kindness so cruelly.
The snake responds with a question, “Don’t you know that
there is everlasting enmity between my species and man,
and that I hate him naturally?” Both Steinhöwel and
Reusner concentrate on misplaced mercy, but they signifi-
cantly omit any reference of how one is to know before-
hand when it is misplaced. In the Babrius version the
man should have known, because the snake hates all men
by nature. It is his ignorance which is emphasized rather
than his misplaced trust. But the assumption is that un-
grateful men are as clearly to be recognized as is a
poisonous snake.

In the version by Burkhard Waldis it is completely
natural for the snake to spew poison like in Reusner. 55

54 Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, #617, p. 546.
55 Tittmann, ed., I, 7.
But where Reusner takes a self-centered stand, Waldis uses the opportunity to plead for Christian charity. He emphasizes that the snake had no motive in befouling the house and cannot be accused of an evil disposition. It was merely the nature of the snake to begin producing poison again once it had recovered from the cold. The moral points out that thanklessness, "wie jetzt gemein bei jederman," is a common reward for good deeds. He points out that even the heathens are capable of doing good for good and adds:

Ich aber sag euch, dass ir solt
Dem feind vorgeben seine schult
Und in wie einen freund belieben,
Sich gegen im in woltat üben.
(11. 39-42)

The moral is pointed at the reaction of the farmer who took a stick to the snake. He reacted wrongly in punishing it, not because he was punishing a natural characteristic of the snake but because he did not forgive its thanklessness. The error of the farmer is also not that he brought the snake into his house. That that was a good deed and admirable is not changed by the later nuisance. Reusner and Steinhöwel warn against going good to the thankless and Erasmus Alberus resignedly warns us not to be surprised when our good deeds are cruelly repaid. They emphasize protection against such loss. But Waldis urges us to do good to the thankless in hopes of an eventual divine reward:
Solt böse mit gutem widergülden
Auf dass ir moget kinder rein
Eurs himelischen vatters sein . . .
(11. 44-46)

Our instincts may urge us to revenge evil out of self-protection but Waldis reminds us that "die lieb ist des gesetzes kron." (l. 54)

Steinhöwel was, of course, following his source in Romulus in relating that the man's house was defiled by poison. In the version by Phaedrus, however, the man is bitten.\(^{56}\) The snake is then asked by another snake why it did that. It replies, "Ne quis discat prodesse improbis." A hard way of learning a lesson, but again an expression of the necessity for the small man to avoid exposed positions where his tenuous existence is especially threatened. Alberus on the other hand fatalistically accepts such blows and Waldis urges us to seek in such situations a chance to exercise our patience under affliction. Reusner's version seems to be more addressed to the business sense of his readers, to reinforce the profit motive in all their dealings, be they monetary or personal.

Here we do have a difference between the fable's attitudes and that of the single emblem on the topic. In the modern fables however, avoidance preached by the older versions has become imbued with Christian ideals. It is

\(^{56}\)Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, IV, 20, p. 332.
not enough yet to label the fable a consistent argument for such virtues. Previous examples have made that impossible. Nor is it justified to see the fable of the sixteenth century taking the stance of the small man of necessity. Too often it talks down to the reader and seeks to impose the values of the author, situated higher socially, upon his lower order reader. And so far we have found no clear connection between Sklavenmoral and the ideal Christian behavior.

One further fable and emblem complex may throw more light on this problem of Sklavenmoral. The fable of the ass laden with salt was popular and undoubtedly well-known. As Babrius tells it, the ass first falls into the river by accident and having noticed that the load became lighter, collapses on purpose the next time. Since his hoped-for profit is washed away, the driver then decides to bring a load of sponges from the sea to town to sell. The ass stupidly does not notice the difference and after falling in the river, has to bear the weight of both the sponges and the water they picked up. The moral is then that "often one comes to grief by the same means that have previously brought luck."

Joachim Camerarius, Jr. presumes acquaintance with the fable for his emblem Astu solertia maior. He does not relate the change in load from salt to sponges after

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57 Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, #111, p. 144ff.

the ass learns to lighten his burden by falling in a river. He merely says to immerse salt is not at all the same thing as wool or sponges, and concludes, "Quaeque asinus nescit, cernere scit sapiens." Camerarius limits himself to one distich, too small a space to relate the story. The emblem is also limited in its span by the possibility of only a single illustration and cannot portray the succession of events narrated in the fable. The reader must know the fable or the emblem is unintelligible.

Left unexpressed in the emblem is the idea that a wise man distinguishes the difference in circumstances and acts accordingly. Babrius seems more fatalistic and implies that a proven course of action will fail occasionally no matter what. The only hint that there is a lack of perception involved is the choice of the ass as the unsuccessful trickster. The choice could be quite natural since it is the overworked beast of burden, but then there are many fables concerned with the foolishness of the ass. In one the ass puts on a lion's skin and terrifies the neighborhood until he either loses it in the wind and is soundly beaten for his deception or until he begins to bray as he capers. Just as the fox in the fable is almost always cunning, the ass tends to be loud and stupid. This being the case, we can see a

59Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, #139, p. 183 and Appendix Perottina, #188, p. 457.
marked difference between Babrius' fable and Camerarius' emblem. Babrius uses the fable as a model which applies to his readers and warns them with it to expect an occasional failure in their strategy. For Camerarius, the reader is more in control of what his course of action shall be. The ass is an example of not changing plans to suit conditions. His wise reader will take the hint. Perhaps here is a case where the *idees fixes* of fable as *Sklavenmoral* and emblem as aimed at a less oppressed audience are operative. We must also remember that the emblem is derived from the hieroglyphic tradition in which man was felt to be an operative factor and not a pawn of fate and circumstance. One example of such division is not sufficient basis for making a general observation. Such a tendency can again be countered with the fable of Camerarius, Sr. 60 In his version it is not for economic reasons but because he perceives the trick that the driver loads the ass with sponges" *Donec agitator, fraude intellecta, spongias asino imposuit.*" To this he appends the rather bland moral: "*Fabula docet, saepe speratum commodum in detrimentum verti.*" This by no means exhausts the ramifications of the fable and would bring him too close to the fatalism of Babrius. Camerarius saw this and as an exception adds a second moral: "*Docet et hoc, fraudulentos fraude circumveniendos.*"

60 *Fabulae,* p. 167.
The lesson of Babrius was that the same method, or trick, will not always work, as seen from the ass' point of view. The emblem of Camerarius, Jr. also concentrated on the ass, but on his lack of insight which is a negative example for the reader. He was sly the first time when he learned to lighten his load. But his slyness was not combined with the ability to distinguish when to apply his trick. The elder Camerarius, however, shifts the focus to the man and makes the load of sponges a counter-trick. Cunning must be circumvented by cunning. Once again Camerarius has written a fable aimed for the future ruling class, advising them how to manage the affairs of government.

This chapter has been an attempt to illuminate the factors involved when the material of a fable is treated in an emblem. We quickly dismissed personal, external changes while seeking to discover the underlying bases for modifications in the attitudes and lessons of the various examples. Such modifications are indeed great but with such a large amount of material it is difficult to perceive an overall tendency. Each author has, of course, personal prejudices and _idees fixes_ which he wishes to teach. The question which must be answered is when the moral is changed in a later version is it because of personal differences or is there an inherent difference between the stances of the fable and the emblem.
It would have been easy to subscribe to the judgment that the fable was intended for a low audience and teaches how they can weasel through the problems of existence and that the emblem was a more cultured, Humanistic form for those who had a more secure economic position and a measure of dignity and influence. But such a sweeping view levels out the fine distinctions we have found through our detailed comparisons. To see in the fable the same advocacy of Sklavenmoral in all ages is simply erroneous. The reader for whom Alberus and Waldis wrote their fables was assumed by them to be of a low social and economic class. But the wisdom taught by them was not how to exploit that position and gain the ultimate advantage. This attitude can be found in the ancient sources and occasionally in the translations of Steinhöwel. But Alberus and Waldis were free of the constraint of transmitting more or less accurately the original material, which limited Steinhöwel. They were free to adjust the fables to teach lessons for which they could take full responsibility and which were entirely adequate to the situation of the sixteenth century as they saw it. And these lessons were in general conservative and anxious to preserve the status quo. It cannot be stressed enough that both these men were fully conscious of their superior position and the patronizing tone they took cannot be overlooked. Their fables sought to teach contentment not distressed by ambition to improve their
humble situation and the virtue of caution in protecting what material comfort had been gained. For both men the present worldly misery of their readers will be offset by a heavenly reward. This is a morality of resignation and religious dependence on help from beyond which is inconsistent with the cunning associated with the ancient fables.

We have seen that the audiences intended for fables and emblems do differ and with them the attitudes may change. When Alberus and Waldis urge political passivity in the fable "Ex damno utilitas" the emblem of Alciatus avoids complete forebearance but reminds us of the temporary nature of glory won. There is the underlying assumption that the reader will be active in public affairs and will earn a modicum of glory. Rather than continue to use the crude adjectives high and low for the various audiences, it is clear that the fables of Alberus and Waldis concern a powerless man who has little control over his situation and that the emblems are concerned with those who do have a choice. Their fables on "Caecus Amor" treat the possible improvement of the disfavored child. The emblems are addressed to parents, that is, to those who can modify their actions to avoid the bad situation shown in the story. Presented with the model they can take an active role in changing it rather than passively avoiding it or hoping for an ultimate reward for their misery.
Yet even the differences we have seen in the audiences of some fables and emblems do not permit too broad a statement. There are too many cases where the fables and the emblems are both used to reinforce the status quo. There is enough evidence in the examples we have just seen to keep us from saying that the diversities between the intentions of the two forms prevent too close a relationship, just as the differences in the traditions permitted emblem writers to use material from fables. There is for instance the emblem of Junius on the oak and the reed which praises the true wisdom of bending before the fury of the storm. This is still addressed to those who can exercise control over their situation, for everyone is faced sooner or later with a force beyond his capabilities. Junius, however, has gone back to the sources of the fable and is using this image in its original intention. It is the fables of the sixteenth century which diverged from the original stance. But this is apparently an exception among many other examples of emblems which agree with the restorative morality of the fables of Waldis and Alberus. The importance of being satisfied with the present situation and not striving is very clear in Haecht's emblem on the borrowed feathers. Both it and the contemporary fables agree in the proverbial moral, "Quod sis, esse velis."

There are in fact so many cases of such agreement that the reason for the varying choice of audience between
them cannot only be the different moral outlook taught by them. The tendency for the fable to treat its audience as mainly passive and the emblem to treat it as usually active and in control of the situation can be understood as a result of the prior choice of audience and not a condition of that choice. The fables of Camerarius, Sr. corroborate this view since they are altered to suit the situation of an audience of school boys who will eventually be the ruling stratum of society. Thus the use of fable material for emblems was not prevented by the desire to teach a different lesson, since many of the same attitudes were expressed by both forms. The problem of the emblem as a static form and the fable as a progressing narrative was also not prohibitive. The shortest epigrams had to presume acquaintance with the fable, but the longer media could simply retell the essentials. Nor can an appeal to the differing traditions behind the two sixteenth century forms fully account for the differing tendencies. These tendencies are also too clear and too firmly imbedded in our understanding of these forms to be adequately explained by leaving the choice a matter solely of the writers' option.
In the sixteenth century the fable and the emblem were both used for popular education of that growing segment of the population which had access to printed books. While this group was too large to be homogeneous, this similarity in purpose was sufficient to override the disparities in the presumed traditions behind the two forms. As shown in the previous chapter both tended to argue for the status quo in society despite the difference in audience caused by their traditional roles. The fable may have begun as a way for a small man to chide a powerful one without offense, but its function as a rhetorical tool permitted its appropriation by an educated elite lecturing a young or unsophisticated audience. Writing in both forms then was the province of roughly the same sort of people, namely those, who because of their scholarship and interest in education, took advantage of the new medium of printing. The different audiences addressed often dictated changes in the morals but the underlying attitudes in both cases are the same.

Because of this basic similarity in purpose and stance, it is to be expected that emblem writers would have exploited the rich vein of fable material. This is, however, not the case. The comparisons made in the previous chapter include almost all those emblems for which
Henkel and Schöne give references to Aesop in their Handbuch. Among thousands of emblems there is only a handful based on fables.

In this chapter I shall explore some possible causes for this aversion. Fables were used despite the formal difficulties and their morals could be borrowed or revised with little difficulty. It is unenlightening then to ascribe the infrequency solely to the individual author's choice. We could leap to the conclusion that the fable's presumed history as a plebeian form removed it from serious consideration. Indeed, so much of the literature on fables which understands the form in terms of "Sklavenmoral" would support this view. I have tried earlier to show that this is very restricted and applies a term appropriate only to some fables and certain times to their whole long history. To appeal now to such a distorting generalization would be inconsistent. There may have indeed been a socially conditioned prejudice against fables, but there are other factors to be considered before giving this too much weight.

Travel and trade were slow and hazardous. Could it be that emblem writers did not come into contact extensively with fables in their new guise? The span of popularity of the fables and emblems are both short and do not coincide precisely. Perhaps the period when fables and emblems were both popular was too short for
the new appropriateness of the fable to the emblem to be recognized. Could the geographic barriers have prevented sufficient familiarity with fables among emblem writers? And when geography is mentioned in connection with the sixteenth century, the constantly brewing confessional splits must also come to mind. Could the fable and emblem have found themselves in differing doctrinal camps? The third possibility which I wish to consider is that there is a formal deterrent which prevented more frequent borrowing despite the similarities of length and didactic intent.

It has been said that everyday we forget more about previous centuries and that all our scholarly investigation merely slows down the receding of information into forgetfulness. There is every indication that both fables and emblems were immensely popular. But perhaps at that time the differences between them were felt to be so great as to be irreconcilable. These differences however, could not have been solely on the basis of audience or tradition, as I have shown. We do not know just how common the acquaintance with them was through the various areas of Europe and levels of society. What is needed is a market research report. Otherwise comments on such matters have to be generalizations so broad that they are not wholly satisfying despite the most painstaking research and the most scientific sounding language.
From the evidence available we must infer that emblem writers did not fail to come into contact with fables. I have been unable to determine if Alciatus considered the fable a form unworthy of his attention. But only one of his emblems is based on an animal fable.\(^1\) Geography could not have been the limiting factor preventing him access to books of fables as possible source material. Editions of fables were published in many places. Transportation was not so difficult that a book could not be gotten even from a distant press, though perhaps at considerable expense of time and money. For instance, Anthoni Koburger, who began printing in Nurnberg in 1473, was a pioneer of the international book trade and dealt wholesale through representatives as far away as Warsaw, Paris and Florence.\(^2\)

The possibility of dissemination over a large territory can also be demonstrated in the case of Alciatus' Emblemata Liber itself. Every scholar commenting on it stresses its popularity throughout Europe. Yet a glance

\(^1\) Mentem non formam plus pollere, ed. of 1531, C5, Handbuch, col. 454, based on Phaedrus, I, 7; Perry, ed., Babrius and Phaedrus, p. 200. A fox muses over an actor's tragic mask. There are two other for which the Handbuch lists a comparable fable, Aliud, col. 900, which treats the characteristics of a bat, but there are many other possible sources, and Parem delinquentis et suasoris culpam esse, col. 1063, which is not an animal fable.

\(^2\) George Haven Putnam, Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages, II (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1897), 151.
at Henry Green's bibliography of the various editions shows that printings in Paris, Lyons and Antwerp predominated by far over all other locations. If we can accept that acquaintance with the emblems of Alciatus was widespread (and this is as safe an assumption as can be made) then the majority of the copies and translations available throughout Europe came from a severely limited number of presses. Geography was no barrier to it. It is then a safe assumption that if the Emblematus Liber could be gotten easily from far away, others too were accessible, including of course fables. The lack of transference cannot be blamed on a lack of familiarity because of poor transportation.

A second possible hindrance can be imagined from Luther's enthusiastic endorsement of Aesop as an ideal medium for popular ethical instruction. In his preface to his fable translations which finally appeared in print in 1557, Luther writes, "Wiewohl auch noch itzund die Warheit zu sagen / von eusserlichem Leben in der Welt / zu reden / wuesste ich ausser der heiligen Schrifft / nicht viel Buecher / die diesem vberlegen sein solten / . . ." It could be that he commandeered the fable for the evangelical camp with this manifesto. The authors

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4 Willi Steinberg, ed., Martin Luthers Fabeln (Halle: Niemeyer, 1961), p. 82.
of the leading sixteenth century fable collections, Alberus and Waldis, were both of Lutheran confession and openly propagandized for it. Camerarius, Sr. was a close associate of Melanchthon. If a similar Catholic preponderance could be established for the emblem, a certain reluctance to use material tinged with heresy might be understandable. But militating against a complete relegation of the fable to the Lutheran camp is the existence of the Humanistic endeavor of translating ancient texts devoid of doctrinal partisanship. Foremost in Germany was of course Steinhöwel's Aesop but there were also translations of the Speculum Sapientiae, the Panchatantra\textsuperscript{5} and the so-called Aesopus Dorpil.\textsuperscript{6}

On the other hand, the emblem fits even less surely under a general Catholic heading. It is well known that the Jesuits adopted the form in the service of the Counterreformation, but this is a comparatively late phenomenon and throws little light onto the situation of the earlier sixteenth century. From information gleaned from the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie it seems fairly certain that Haecht, Reusner, Taurellus and Camerarius, Jr. had strong sympathies with the Lutheran cause. So even if it were established that the emblem tended to be of a Catholic orientation, these exceptions still did

\textsuperscript{5}See Leibfried, \textit{Fabel}, pp. 54ff.

\textsuperscript{6}\textit{Fabularum quae hoc libro continentur interpretes atque authores sunt hi:} Guilielmus Goudanus, \textit{et al.} (Libera Argentina: Matthias Schurerius, 1516).
not avail themselves of the supposedly Lutheran fable. Such a doctrinal split may have existed between the forms and may have contributed to the lack of transference. But in the light of the avoidance of the Lutheran emblem writers, too, this is insufficient to explain the gap adequately.

There remains the question of an incongruency in the forms which made borrowing unlikely. In its broadest terms the problem is that the emblem tends to be a static form while the fable retells a sequence of events. In the fable of the oak and reed the tree is taken to represent rigidly unyielding strength. Alciatus wrote a series of emblems using trees, each following precisely the same formula. A tree is named and pictured, and from the particular characteristic of that type of tree a moral lesson is drawn. The images he utilizes are all classical so the depiction of the oak as in the fable is not included. But it might well have been, since the oak is "emblematic" of this particular attitude. While this is a necessary element of the fable, the narrative juxtaposes this with the suppleness of the reed and relates a specific incident in which these characteristics are in action.

The difference is that while the fable deals with a specific situation presented as if actually having occurred, the emblem concerns itself with characteristics discovered separate from any particular incident and hence unchanging, timeless. An interesting comparison
offers itself between Luther's fable "Vom Esel und Lewen" and Guillaume de la Perriere's emblem on the judicious exercise of power. In the fable the ass, having become "bauorkündig," meets a lion and greets him without proper respect, "ich grusse dich bruder." The lion is insulted by this intimacy and considers what action he should take. It would bring him no honor to scold or attack this parvenu, so he decides to take no action; "ich wil den Narren lassen faren." The progression of occurrences here, the meeting, the impertinence, the lion's weighing of alternatives, his decision and its fulfillment, provide a model for decision making in comparable situations. The inherently noble and humane action of the lion is set up as an example for emulation and the unthinking exercise of social prerogatives rejected.

An emblem, being limited by the static nature of the illustration, must dispense with the narrative elements of the fable. La Perriere uses the lion as emblematic of the same quality depicted in Luther's fable. The illustration shows a lion turning away from the barking of a small dog and an armed soldier listening calmly.

7 Ed. Willi Steinberg, p. 12; La Perriere, La Morosophie (Lyon: Bonhomme, 1553); #27, Handbuch, col. 380.
to the berating of a coward. The epigram describes the scene in this manner:

Le fort lyon ne veult montrer sa force,
Ne sa rigueur, contre le petit chien:
Semblablement noble coeur ne s'efforce
Contre vn meschant, lasche qui ne vaut rien.

The lion's mercy is related in the epigram as a part of his noble character without development of how the situation came about or the stages in his process of deciding to turn away. The illustration depicts this quality at a moment when the action is complete and can be frozen. This single instant shows that aspect of the lion's character from which the author wishes to draw his conclusions. But in the fable it is the narration which provides the example from which the reader is to learn. La Perriere also provides an analogous situation in human terms, applying within the same illustration the lesson he sees in the lion's actions. What the fable and emblem have in common is that they are both model situations. Both related single incidents, but all feeling of historical veracity or individuality is suppressed. What is of interest is the illustrative aspect of the figures as representative of a particular characteristic, in this case, magnanimity.

The emblem is unusual also because the illustration depicts not only the res significans but also the application of the moral to human affairs. The lion is emble-
matic of the soldier's judicious restraint in the face of the weaker man's taunts. In this case the application to manners and morals is not left solely to the epigram and its "semblablement." A particular instance is shown where the example of the lion applies. In and of itself this is noteworthy but here it emphasizes the attitude of La Perriere. Such restraint is characteristic of the lion and is an integral part of the code of the knight. It is this aspect of the accepted canon of chivalrous action which he wished to illustrate and sanction by displaying the same characteristic in the lion.

In the fable the moral is appended in a "lere" and is worded quite generally: "Wer mit eym drecke rammelt, Er gewnne odder verliere / so gehet er beschissen dauon." Luther's earthiness and humor are more effective in fixing the lesson in the modern reader's mind than the emblem's case in point. It certainly is a striking image. The emblem deals with a quality of nobility prescribed by an acknowledged system while the fable addresses itself to a less courtly audience. It deals in broad human terms and shows the inherent wisdom in a course of action available to anyone of whatever class. The emblem promises no reward for such behavior but treats it as only proper for the chivalrous. It illustrates the high standards of the code which are set and concrete and thus lend themselves to static representation. Luther describes the result of not
withdrawing from such a contest in a manner that would appeal more to a farmer than a courtier. The social milieu in which he was writing was of course very unstable. There was no longer a universally acknowledged set of behavioral paradigms for the various classes of society. In this state of flux he could not appeal to a pre-ordained response but had to show the process by which the lion arrived at a decision which would be applicable to any man.

In this particular instance it is easy to see the incongruency of the two forms. Not only are they outwardly different but the environments from which they arise are mutually exclusive. We have seen, however, several examples where emblems treat the same material in the same way as the fables on which they are based. So this one example does not immediately invalidate any chance of transference from one form to another. But it does point up two formal necessities of emblems based on fables. An example of one would be Reusner's Caecus Amor. The epigram retells the narrative and the illustration shows the embodiment of blind love, namely the monkey and her offspring. The *res significans* functions only when the story is read and the point of the fable has been distilled into the illustration. Thus the three parts of the emblems do not have an equal importance, for the epigram is primary. An example of the other situation is Camerarius, Jr.'s *Asinus Sale Onestus* which assumes
previous knowledge of the fable. Its single distich
does not retell the story. This must already be known
and the epigram serves only to interpret it. Thus the
three parts of the emblem function together as a unit.

It is helpful at this point to compare how emblems
treat other narratives. The infrequency with which this
occurs lends by itself weight to the postulation of a
formal hindrance to borrowing. We look in vain for a
representation of Biblical parables in the books con-
sidered here. Classical stories, however, are frequent.
This does not indicate a reservation toward Christianity
or the Bible, for God and Biblical images occur often
and the spirit which informs the works is the discovery
of the divine order of the world. This preponderance
of ancient material must be because of the new enthusiasm
for it among both writers and readers. The Bible was
familiar to all and its well known morals and the parables
left no room for the exercise of the writer's wit. It
was much more attractive to take such a lesson and invent
a new situation which would teach it. Classical stories
were not yet so much a part of the popular consciousness
and had the required spice of novelty.

Alciatus' emblem Fortuna Virtutem Superans retells
the circumstances which led up to Brutus' suicide. 8

8Handbuch, col. 1181.
Caesareo postquam superatus milite uidit,
Ciüili undantem sanguine pharsaliam,
Iamiam stricturus moribunda in pectora ferrum,
Audaci hos Brutus protulit ore sonos.
Infoelix uirtus et solis prouida uerbis,
Fortunam in rebus cur sequeris dominam?

This event from ancient history was not so well known that it could do without retelling. But the illustration shows only the figure of Brutus. Alciatus extracted from the narrative the emblematic figure showing virtue conquered by chance. Alciatus' epigrams permitted at least a brief recapitulation of the situation, but the illustration had to refine away everything but a central, emblematic image. The riddle posed by the motto and the illustration is answered by the epigram. On the other hand, Rollenhagen requires an acquaintance with the story for his emblem Persequar Extinctum.\footnote{Rollenhagen, I, Nr. 33 (rpt. \textit{Handbuch}, col. 1591).} The illustration shows a woman bending over the body of a dead man. The epigram places the words in her mouth, "Persequar extinctum te, o Pyrame . . ." This is an answer to the riddle only if the reader knows the story of Pyramus and Thisbe behind this emblem. The epigram offers no other explanation for her faithfulness.

Since both these emblems are in Latin, the audience would be restricted to a relatively well educated class and both authors could then assume its acquaintance the outlines of the originals. In Alciatus' case this
familiarity prevented neither the recapitulation in the epigram nor the use of the material at all. In Rollenhagen's case the choice of lessons concerning Pyramus and Thisbe was of course quite limited. The lack of opportunity for free invention still did not hinder him. We can see a large difference between the classical and the Biblical traditions. Narratives from both had an accepted significance within a system of values which lent itself to the emblem's static mode of portrayal. But the classical tradition was certainly not so much a part of the consciousness of even the best educated as was the Biblical. It was not a question of a limitation of invention by the author, for the tendency of the classics was just as predetermined. But the audience could stand to be reminded of the moral significance of the new wealth of ancient material, while Biblical stories were the conscious framework of the moral system.

The emblem must distill from a narrative an image in which the salient characteristics are clearly represented. The lesson must be visible and put on display. If La Perriére's emblem had shown only the soldier and the coward, it would have been unsatisfactory. The moral stance he advocates is obviously embodied only in the parallel scene of the lion and the dog. To reduce a narrative to such a scene requires the characters to be immediately recognizable, though perhaps with the prompting of the epigram. The soldier alone would have been
just an example, not an embodiment of courtly diffidence. Instead of an emblem it would have been an illustrated poem. For this to apply to characters in a narrative they must be treated as if they were so familiar as to have become proverbial. In the case of Biblical parables they were in fact proverbial. Classical stories, on the other hand, were not so imbedded in the popular mind. The author could display his wit and above all his erudition by adapting them. Even though the characters were not always immediately recognizable, the burden was put on the reader. They were handled as if they were commonplace and he was being tested by the riddle of the emblem for acceptance into the fashionable group wholly conversant with classical literature.

There are then two discrepancies between the emblem and the fable which hindered wholesale borrowing. The fable is a narrative, often showing the steps by which a decision is reached. The static portrayal of the emblem could not trace these without assuming prior knowledge or making the epigram the prime member of the tripartite arrangement. This would downgrade the mutual relationship of the title, illustration and epigram and would approach the form simply of an illustrated poem. The two forms also serve different functions for the reader. To the extent that the emblem is a riddle, it poses a barrier to entry into a desirable company of insightful
men. It presumes at least the fictional exclusion of a large segment of the population. There is no distinction in seeing the meaning of a fable. There is indeed nothing to decipher since it strives to be thoroughly apparent to the most unimaginative man. The emblem depends on the significance being discovered in what is portrayed, but if this significance is so common as to have become proverbial, like the wily fox, then it fails in its function of excluding all but a select group.

Since the emblem is the static display of a significant object, it is often taken to be allegorical. This is clearly sometimes the case. No less an authority than Lessing vehemently denied the fable allegorical characteristics, so to the extent the emblem is allegorical, the manner of perception of ideas through the two forms would be different. The emblem does indeed have a different relationship to reality than the fable, but it will be a matter of fine distinction if it should be called allegory and if the two forms are actually incompatible for this reason. On the other hand, there are many emblems which stress the reality of the context from which they draw their lessons. They claim to teach from a direct observation of principles in nature which they apply to human morality. In order to decide this question I would like to try to characterize the manner in which the emblem taught its lessons by comparing it with other visual and didactic media of the sixteenth century.
CHAPTER VI

THE DIFFERING DIDACTIC FUNCTIONS
OF THE EMBLEM AND THE FABLE
Before the advent of printing, illustrated books were extremely rare. While texts could be reproduced by a number of scribes at one time taking down from dictation, illustrations had to be omitted. It is conceivable that the form could have been described in detail sufficient to enable a rough approximation to be added to the text. But this would presume that each of the copyists was also a competent draughtsman, a situation so improbable that if it did occur, it would be an exceptional case. Also, multiple copying from dictation would indicate a demand for a number of copies for study. Less energy would be expended on making the copies beautiful since they were intended for use more than for making a show. Illumination is much more likely to have been the work of a single man working alone from a prototype.

Printing made the reproduction of illustrations possible and the demand for them made it desirable. The first printed illustrations were woodcuts, a form which imposes a certain abstract quality to the work. Shading and detail are impossible to represent naturalistically in the medium. The artist must rely heavily on simple outline. A further contributing factor to the abstraction is the impossibility of color reproduction. Black and white subtracts further from the potential reality of the scene. There are many emblems with illustrations which strike the reader today as surprisingly modern. Because
of the limitations of technique, all that is left is the barest outline.

The remarkable thing about these illustrations in general is their sense of repose. The objects seem to have been arranged carefully on a table, not put there in the course of their normal use. It is unimaginable that someone will soon come to put them away. They seem much more to be on permanent display behind glass in a museum case, as it were. They are divorced from their everyday context, representative but not actual. A good example of this type is the emblem by Hadrianus Junius entitled *Vita Mortalium Vigilia*.\(^{10}\) The illustration shows a candle, an open book and a water clock on a table in a dark, austere room. The table is quite ornate and bears a coat-of-arms showing a sheaf of grain. No door is shown and only two small high windows. Nor is there a chair. The effect is precisely that of a museum or at least a room preserved from the bustle of everyday life. It is meant to represent a scholar's study and the bareness of the room emphasizes its seclusion and self-containment. The epigram reads:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Inuigilare libris, studio metirier horas,} \\
\text{Pars vitae est princeps: otia vita fugit.} \\
\text{Fama vehit vigiles, sepelitque obliuo inertes:} \\
\text{Hoc liber explicitus, clepsydra, lychnus habent.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{10}\) *Emblemata*, #5 (rpt. *Handbuch*, col. 1366).
The objects "have this meaning" and seemingly no other function. They are not items found by chance on a scholar's desk but were placed there on display for the reader. Even the coat of arms seems to have been placed there especially to make a reference to the fruitfulness of the activity.

W.J. Ong sees a relationship between such emblematic illustrations and the increasing use of tables and charts in philosophy.\textsuperscript{11} Renaissance man, he says, became aware of space as geometric and measurable. The advances in astronomy and physics are cited as parallel phenomena. Movable type involved an ordering of letters by the typesetter into a particular space, not once, uniquely, but again and again. The letterstick was filled time and again, and at the end, the component parts of the type were returned to the font to await further use. Further, the text produced could be referred to by page and line number, since all copies were the same. Later, the ordering of the text with headings and \textit{indices locorum}, further breaking it down spatially, became popular.

Ong calls the charts used by philosophers, for example of dichotomies, "the ultimate reduction of the verbal to the spatial: words are made 'intelligible' by being diagrammatically related to one another."\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11} "From Allegory to the Diagram in the Renaissance Mind," JAAC, XVII (1959), 433.

\textsuperscript{12} ibid., 437.
The shift in emphasis from that which is heard to that which is seen is a change in the manner of perception and brings about changes in other areas of mental activity as well. Uniform reproduction by typography created "the new psychic demand for homogeneity." Manuscripts had a texture and individuality which the printed page did not. They were difficult to read because the signs required great effort to be deciphered. The manuscript also enforces a less abstracted manner of perception, for the medium hinders taking a fixed point of view. The reader of the printed book acquires "the habit of gliding steadily on single planes of thought and information." The laborious reading of manuscripts kept the reader close to the rate of speaking, and indeed manuscripts were conducive to the practice of reading aloud. The more uniform, clearer books in print allowed more rapid reading, far beyond the speed at which the reader could subvocalize each word. Many if not all words were recognized by the eyes alone without the aid of an oral component. Marshall McLuhan argues in his book The Gutenberg Galaxy that this increased stress on vision alone was the cultural element from which typography sprang and then which helped to spread and make dominant.


14 McLuhan, p. 28.
A disproportional reliance on the visual sense results in abstraction. Visualization of functions stops them, in the manner of high-speed photography, so that one state is discrete from the one before. It abstracts a sequence of individual segments from the flow which can be logically handled and the knowledge applied. The application of knowledge, or technology, is the prime characteristic of the post-Gutenberg era, in McLuhan's terms. His metaphorical speculations and electronic tours de force have created passionate reactions, pro and con, and it is far beyond our scope here to attack or defend his cultural critiques. But we can see the type of visual abstraction in operation of which he spoke in the emblems referred to by Ong.

Even though many emblems do not fit the description of Father Ong, the question remains to what extent emblems are a phenomenon of the new visual orientation. The popularity of emblems was largely due to the use of illustrations and it would seem that they freeze the action and abstract a moral from that segment. One had but to use his eyes in order to be able to see such scenes around himself in the world. An emblem book is a disjointed sequence of emblems, each self-contained and separate from the preceding. Originally the emblem was intended as a model for the decorative arts. It was meant to be applied and was not solely a literary form. All
of this fits with McLuhan's description of the characteristics of the visually oriented culture.

But this description is not convincing, for the similarity with forms which occur before the invention of printing is too marked. It is possible to trace the development of the emblem from such forms. Of course, printing is essential to the emblem, for it is a popularizing form. But McLuhan speaks of a manner of perception, not the mechanics of reproduction. Typography for him is a result of a change in the way people form their concepts, although it then reinforced and spread this change. Visual orientation can appear before movable type and artifacts of the earlier oral culture can appear in print. There is no distinct boundary between the two types of culture and considerable blurring and mixing of forms is to be expected. It seems that the emblem is precisely such a blurring.

The prime characteristic of the emblem is that it draws a moral from its subject matter, however handled. In this, it is a continuation of the medieval impulse to find links to eternal truth. An argument was always based on an authoritative text and every idea was fixed in a hierarchy where it was discrete from all others. Huizinga describes how "the innate belief in the transcendental reality of things brings about as a result that every notion is strictly defined and limited, isolated as it were, in a plastic form, and it is this form
which is all-important."

We might say with McLuhan here that Huizinga engages all of our senses in this formulation. If an idea seems to have a material reality, is it not then to be expected that objects are inhabited by ideas? Indeed, for Huizinga also writes that "in the minds of the Middle Ages every event, every case, fictitious or historic tends to crystallize, to become a parable, an example, a proof, in order to be applied as a standing instance of a general moral truth." He is considering here how the forms of scholastic thought are naively repeated in life in the late Middle Ages. McLuhan feels that scholasticism was a manifestation of oral culture and was "directly related to the oral traditions of aphoristic learning." The emblem, in so far as it crystallizes an event as a proof, would also be part of the oral tradition. This is not contradicted by the pictorial representation, for parables have always been a favorite subject for artists. Alanus ab Insulis, to whom reference has already been made, expresses himself in visual terms in the twelfth century:

Omnis mundi creatura
Quasi liber et figura
Nobis est et speculum.


16 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 207-208.

The didactic content of the book and image is also to be found wherever one looks. Appearances take on the same authority as the book and are equally worthy of study.

Father Ong found emblems which juxtapose objects and treat them as elements "in a peculiarly neuter space."\(^{18}\) The effect of these emblems is quite different, however, from that of those we have been treating. Perhaps he found the new visual orientation at work, which dissociates the objects from their natural context and by a new spatial arrangement illuminates a new insight. Being put on display weakened the object's connection with its usual function. It has become an artifact from a realm different than the mundane and thus has a new significance. For example, the candle in Junius' emblem is shown shedding light as an expression of the diligence of scholarly efforts and not because it was dark. Set adrift from normal usage a candle can be made to signify a great number of ideas. The ambition of many writers to delight their readers with ever wittier discoveries led to different meanings being attached to the same illustration. Today we feel that the thing depicted had an external significance laid upon it, rather than being the ineffable expression of it, inseparable from the necessary and eternal truth which is

\(^{18}\) W.J.Ong, "From Allegory to Diagram," p. 432.
otherwise inexpressible. Thus this type of emblem is clearly allegory.

This description is not applicable to most emblems and certainly not to those based on fables under discussion here. Father Ong developed his comments on the basis of emblems of the seventeenth century, a generation or two later than our previous examples. In sixteenth century terms there was a difference between allegory and most if not all emblems. The illustrations usually depict plants, animals, artifacts or human undertakings of the contemporary world or derived from biblical or classical models. The events and objects which illustrated the moral were considered to be quite real, either as verified by the undoubted authority of the Bible or ancient sources, or as something which could easily happen under normal, everyday circumstances. There was an insistence that the emblem be "ex historia naturali vel artificiali,"\textsuperscript{19} something which existed or happened or could potentially happen or exist. Schöne calls this the demand for "potentielle Faktizität."\textsuperscript{20} On the other hand, allegory was thought to be something which was at least in part the product of the fantasy. If doubts arise about the potential reality of the subject of an emblem, if it is not immediately accepted as factual, then it is allegorical. The


\textsuperscript{20} Schöne, "Emblemata," p. 204.
earlier writers had not yet yielded to the tendency of displaying witty inventions and sought to convey the meanings to be found in real occurrences or those vouched for by unimpeachable authority, i.e., the classics.

In between the two poles is the type of emblem where real objects are on display. They are actual and yet separated from their surroundings. The extent of this separation governs the degree to which the emblem is felt to be allegorical. The greater the distance, the more it is felt that the object's sole function is to signify. If it is only momentarily caught in repose and is still liable to fulfill its functions in the world, then it is more likely to be experienced as a meaningful object in reality.

The emblems based on fables seem to strive to maintain the fiction of reality. Just as the fable never stops to ask if animals can really talk, the emblems never hesitate to ascribe human motivation to their actions. The emblems depict an actual or potential situation in the real world and derive a lesson from it. The situations are not felt to be merely products of the fantasy nor objects on display frozen in a tableau. What the artist depicts is felt to be at least potentially real. The poet then helps the reader to discover the lesson, to formulate it as a precept.
The reader learns something of value for himself by recognizing a principle in the situation depicted, what Lessing called "anschauende Erkenntnis." He coined this phrase in the course of his disagreement with Breitinger and De la Motte, who claimed a general moral precept was clothed or disguised in a fable. In Lessing's words they thought the fable was "eine unter der wohlgerathenen Allegorie einer ähnlichen Handlung verkleidete Lehre und Unterweisung."\textsuperscript{21} He especially disliked the idea that a precept was disguised since it implied a laborious act of uncovering the hidden meaning. He felt that a fable was quite transparent and that it would be quite a feat to fail to see the meaning. He also objected to the idea that the fable is allegory. For him the situation was pre-eminent, not the precept. The reader must learn by seeing the state of affairs around him. He felt that most of the lessons to be derived from fables concerned "nicht sowohl von dem, was geschehen sollte, als vielmehr von dem was wirklich geschieht."\textsuperscript{22} Given the fiction of talking animals and human motivation for them, the fable should depict the real world and how it operates. He comes close to the formulation of "potentielle Faktizität" which Schöne used in connection with the emblem. Both forms are didactic and both must depict reality and derive their

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Sämtliche Schriften}, ed. Karl Lachmann, XVII, 432.

\textsuperscript{22}\textit{Ibid.}, 428.
lessons from it if they are to avoid becoming secondary to their own precepts. When the objects in an emblem's illustration are on special display, they are divorced from their normal uses and have little "potentielle Faktizitat." They have become subordinate to the precept they signify, when, as Father Ong points out, the very spatial relationship between them, i.e. the fact they are arranged thus in a display, becomes significant also. But this is not a necessary manner of presentation required by the form of the emblem. It can, like the fable, present the reader with a model in which he perceives the way things happen and thus apply this recognition to his own conduct and attitudes.

Of this type is the fable attributed to Aesop to warn the citizens against deposing the ruling tyrant. 23 A fox caught his tail in a cleft and could not move. While he was in this helpless state, a hedgehog passed by and offered to rid him of the swarming fleas. The fox declined since they were already sated by his blood and would not bother him much more, while new unsated ones would be a greater plague. A general precept could be deduced and expressed in the form "fabula docet," drawn from this example of worldly wisdom, but it need not since the implication to the overtaxed subjects of the old tyrant is quite clear. Far from arguing political theory

23 Perry, Babrius and Phaedrus, #427.
in an abstract vein, the fable presents a situation in which the characteristics of the fleas and the predicament of the fox are a model by which the citizens can understand their own situation. There is no argument that they do not have the choice of eliminating the need for a tyrant nor that all tyrants are greedy.

Tyrants are not the subject of the fable and the form does not admit arguments about the characteristics of tyrants. The situation of the fox is presented as real and rebuttal of the insight drawn from it would have to deal in different terms. In contrast we can compare Sambucus' emblem *Tyrannus*, which has already been mentioned. The emblem has as its *res significans* a tyrant. What is said of him, "stulta libido iubet," "laetitiae caussas corripit in gemitus," etc., applies by implication to all rulers: "miltior haud diris regibus est animus." The emblem suffers from the weakness of all arguments from the particular to the general. It invites the reply, "Yes, but . . ." The tyrant of the emblem is not a model but an example. Even the lion in the illustration and the voracious fish (*silurus*) mentioned in the epigram are not like the model of the fable. They are metaphors for the cruelty and greed of the tyrant. A statement about the characteristics of the tyrant is made by comparison with their characteristics. The fable presents an analogous situation, as Lessing says, "eine ähnliche Handlung." The fox is not like the population
of Samos, that is, cunning, wise, or the like. The fable would still make sense if a dog were substituted for the fox. Of course, something would be lost, since Aesop is trying to compliment the citizens in advance on their wisdom. The analogy is in the situation, the motives and actions of the participants.

Neither the fable nor the emblem are necessarily allegorical, so a difference in this respect did not hinder transference. But the emblem can be allegorical if the object from which it derives its lesson is felt to be no longer real but just an incarnation of an idea. The same is obviously true of the fable. If in the mind of the reader and author the situation of the fable is divorced from reality and if the fiction of talking animals is felt to be a fiction and not perfectly natural, then the lesson becomes primary and the fable tends toward the allegorical. The desire to re-establish the fiction of reality may have been one factor in the technique of Erasmus Alberus of specifying the geographical location and sometimes even naming the human participants. This tendency toward anecdote counterbalances the tendency he felt in the fable toward allegory.

When the fable is praised by Luther, Waldis and others as a means of teaching "das albern Volck", it was because of the narrative component which could be more easily remembered. The fable was supposed to pre-
sent a model situation, written strikingly and interestingly enough that it would be retained. The essence of a model is that it is simplified and distilled, so that the central idea stands out clearly. It was intended to be accepted by the reader as a depiction of reality and the forces involved in the world. It is this one step which the emblem writers hesitated to take. The simplification they allowed in order for the lesson to be clear was that of selection. For them the fable was too much a fiction and they had set themselves the task of finding significance in the real appearances of the phenomenal world.

The cunning of the fox is one of the most common themes in fable literature especially since it allows the physically (or politically) weak to resist the strong. Yet among the emblem books discussed here not a single use of the fox in this fable-like capacity is to be found. Two come close. Alciatus uses Phaedrus' fable of the fox and the tragic mask in which the fox comments how majestic the face is but that it has no brains. Here the fox is not cunning. In another, Camerarius, Jr. uses a fox as a wise example of trust and mistrust. It checks the ice of a frozen river before crossing. I have found no fable with this theme but the Handbuch lists Plutarch and Pliny as references. Foxes are indeed wily

241531, Handbuch, col. 454; Based on Phaedrus, I, 7 ed. Perry, p. 200.

25II, 55 (Handbuch, col. 457).
and Camerarius is using the real fact as reported authoritatively, not the fable tradition here. For emblems of cunning Camerarius uses a crab holding a shellfish open with pebbles\textsuperscript{26} and a frog with a reed crosswise in its mouth to keep from being swallowed,\textsuperscript{27} that is, natural phenomena. Thus the formal factor in the hindrance of transference of fable material to emblems was not that the emblem was allegorical but that it was too closely bound to reality.

In the Handbuch is the exception which proves this rule. The emblem by La Perrièrre shows a king leading a fox and a lion on a leash.\textsuperscript{28} The epigram reads in part:

\begin{quote}
Le regnard est de sa propre nature
En tous endroitx, subtil et cauteleux.

The fox is by his own nature
Sly and cunning in all things.
\end{quote}

The advice is that a king should combine the nobility of the lion and the cunning of the fox. This emblem is not an exception to the distinction I just made, since the depiction is not real nor a selection from reality. The illustrating situation is totally fictional and invented, and thus is at the allegorical end of the spectrum.

The reluctance of other emblems to use the fox in this way can still be attributed to the choice of actual phenomena as the res significans. Such an emblem can tend

\textsuperscript{26}Handbuch, col. 725.

\textsuperscript{27}Handbuch, col. 604.

\textsuperscript{28}Handbuch, col. 392.
toward allegory when such a natural object is put on display but this is after the choice of object. In the example from La Perriere the fox is the incarnation of cunning. The idea came first and the thing was chosen only afterwards. In a fable the only characteristic of a fox which is of importance may be its cunning. But of prime importance, as Lessing states, is the insight the reader gains into how things are or should be. The history of the fable as a rhetorical tool makes this emphasis clear. The story Odysseus tells to Eumaios must be interpreted in the context of his present need of a cloak. The ainos is told with only that in mind. Similarly a fable is a hidden admonition and its significance lies in the realm of action, not in that of ideas. Thus one of the major factors in the relationship between the emblem and the fable is the emblem's tendency to be allegorical. Even when both the emblem and the fable depict at least potentially real situations, the emblem's restriction to a static illustration represents an obstacle to wholesale borrowing of themes. This difference prevents categorizing them as complementary forms of popular didactic literature in the sixteenth century.

Such a rubric is far too broad to apply meaningfully. It is likewise too superficial to characterize the differences between them only in terms of the level of society
they were addressed to. Some fable writers did indeed write for a relatively low stratum while emblem writers had a more Humanistic audience in mind, but even this distinction does not go far enough. It has also been necessary to consider the attitudes expressed in both forms as well as the awareness of the tradition behind the forms in order to define their relationship ade-
quately.

We saw that the fable as an illustration of how the weak can avoid the tyranny of the strong is only one possibility of its impact. If this were not so, the lack of a larger amount of fable material treated by emblems would be easily explained. On the other hand, the fable in the sixteenth century is used very often to argue for the acceptance of the social status quo. Since it does address those whose lot on earth was not easy, it emphasizes the importance of personal moral improvement with the expectation of a reward for one's forbearance in heaven. The emblem was able to agree heartily with this defense of the status quo.

In order to account for the differences between the emblem and the fable and the lack of transference be-
tween them two considerations presented themselves at the outset. First is the presumption that the emblem must be allegorical. Second the fable is assumed to have been appropriate only for a low social stratum while the em-
blem appealed to a higher class of people. It is clear now that such broad generalizations are not adequate. This describes neither the fable nor the emblem perfectly and the error is compounded when considering both. Like all generalizations they contain a kernel of truth but upon close examination too many examples fall outside these terms for them to be satisfactory.

The fable was not restricted to a proletarian role. Steinhöwel made his translation as a Humanistic exercise in transmitting a presumably ancient text. Camerarius, Sm wrote his collection for use in the Humanistic education of future leaders in society. Waldis and Alberus did write for readers on a low level of culture but their attitude was also one of maintaining and exploiting the status quo. To understand the fable as an illustration of how the weak can avoid the tyranny of the powerful is only one possibility. At least as frequently it urges personal moral improvement and a reward in heaven while accepting a humble lot on earth.

The fable of the sixteenth century could not unreservedly teach the flexible enduring of the reed nor the fox's sly tricks against the powerful. Even the lowest levels of contemporary society had begun to feel the urge for a direct influence on their destinies and the attitude of the Humanistic fable writer was too conservative to preach circumvention of authority in an al-
ready seditious age. The virtue of forbearance under affliction was to be rewarded in heaven. On the other hand, the emblem addressed an audience which had a better measure of education, affluence and power. Its influence was steadily rising and the middle class which it was beginning to constitute could make itself felt politically. The maintenance of the status quo was definitely in its interest since it included its continually improving situation. While there was a difference in the audiences the two forms addressed, both concurred in large measure in the attitudes they professed.

The true distinction lies in the traditions and histories of the forms. Writers involved in either form were very much aware of these. The emblem especially was a conscious attempt to adapt the ancient wisdom of the hieroglyph to contemporary readers. No effort was spared to depict the world as mundus symbolicus. Ficino had attributed the invention of the hieroglyph to Hermes Tresmegistos himself and saw in it the enigmatic key to a prisca theologia. The emblem is of course not a rigorous essay in Hermetic philosophy, but to the extent that the hieroglyph was the conscious prototype of the emblem, they shared the attempt to gain insight into the macrocosmic order. The view of man as a passive pawn within this system was contrary to the Hermetic philosophy. It was thought that man could gain understanding of the
divine order and use that power for his own purposes. Here is the source of the difference between the emblem and the fable. The emblem, as an heir to the hieroglyphic tradition, shows man as an agent within the world, freely manipulating the factors of his existence at least to a small extent. The fable, on the other hand, had only the promise of a heavenly reward to offer. Virtue, which the emblem expounded for the improvement of personal circumstances, was not a guarantee of success for those who had no power to alter their situation. The two forms could and did teach the same morals but the traditions in which they were written created an atmosphere in which the position of the intended audience was assumed to be different. The same virtues were urged on the reader by both but the expectations of his abilities to respond were not the same. It is then these expectations, and not a difference in the morals themselves, which predisposed the emblem and the fable to audiences of different social standing.

I hope I have been able to contribute in some small measure to our growing understanding of the emblem which was so important a factor in the sixteenth century but is now so foreign. The wealth of emblems which has lain forgotten for so long is of interest both as a literary expression of the age but also as the key to the interpretation of much contemporary imagery. The emblem was relegated to the backwater of didactic (and therefore dull) literature
without realizing how much could be learned about the attitudes of the people who found in it an expression of their thirst for wider knowledge. I hope I have also contributed to the continuing re-assessment of the fable's role in popular literature. I have tried to correct a few of the generalizations and misconceptions which have collected like dust through the years. A generalization contains of course a kernel of truth and will serve when more precision is not required, but only constant research and re-evaluation can expand our knowledge.
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