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The Combination of Emblematics and Natural History:
Botanical Emblem Books for Meditational Uses

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In the second half of the Sixteenth century, the two genres of emblematics and natural history became so closely related that the empirical knowledge of natural history provided the reader a key for uncovering the disguised meaning of emblems. Within the blurred boundaries between emblematics and natural history, it was not strange for naturalists such as Conrad Gesner (1516-65) to compose their nature studies on the basis of emblematics.[1] For example, in his study Historia Animalium (Zürich, 1551-58) Gesner viewed animals in terms of their moral meanings, and transformed his knowledge of science into an emblematic contemplation. In some instances, he even brought Italian writer Andrea Alciati's (1492-1550) emblems into his *Historia Animalium*.[2]

The interaction between emblematics and natural history is also found in botanical emblem books, in which plants can be seen as a means of meditation. Botanical emblems are, in fact, found in most sixteenth-century emblem books, beginning with Alciati's *Emblematum Liber* (Venice 1546), which includes fourteen tree emblems. The emblematic approach to plants is, however, most thoroughly evident in three botanical emblem books by Joris Hoefnagel (1542-1601), Joachim Camerarius the Younger (1534-98), and Thomas Palmer (1540-1626). This study thus investigates the emblematic component of plants as well as the scientific approach to flowers represented in these botanical emblem books, focusing on their didactic and meditational use of floral images.

1. Wolfgang Harms points out that "the boundaries between natural history and emblematics are fluid." See Wolfgang Harms. "On Natural History and Emblematics in the 16th Century." *The Natural Sciences and the Arts* (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1985), 82.
2. For this specific example, see Harms 69.

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I. Joris Hoefnagel

The Flemish artist Joris (Georg) Hoefnagel began his career as a miniaturist in Antwerp in the 1570s. Soon after the Spanish occupied the city in 1576, Hoefnagel fled Antwerp and entered the court of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria in Munich. Hoefnagel continued to work as court artist for Duke Wilhelm V after Duke Albrecht V died in 1579. In 1590, while living in Frankfurt, he began his service as court painter for Emperor Rudolf II. During his Frankfurt period, Hoefnagel must have met Carolus Clusius (1526-1609), who was living there from 1588 to 1593. Clusius, one of the most famous botanists in Europe, maintained a broad network of artists specializing in natural history, collecting and exchanging their works of art with his correspondents. Hoefnagel would certainly have shown the botanist his botanical illustrations, including his four-volume manuscript entitled *The Four Elements-Ignis* (Insects), *Terra* (Animals), *Aqua* (Fish) and *Aier* (Birds).[3]

Hoefnagel illuminated *The Four Elements* in watercolor and gouache on vellum between the years of 1575 and 1582. In this manuscript, thousands of living creatures are organized according to individual concepts of the four elements. Hoefnagel made many of his drawings from life, but also based his images on earlier pictorial sources, including woodcut illustrations from Gesner's *Historia Animalium* and nature studies recorded by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) and Hans Verhagen.[4] For example, Dürer's watercolor drawings *Hare* (1502, fig. 1) and *Stag Beetle* (1505, fig. 2), and Verhagen's *Beech Marten* (fig. 3) appear in the volume *Terra* (fig. 4), *Ignis* (fig. 5), and *Terra* (fig. 6), respectively.[5] These earlier nature studies rendered in

3. These four volumes of *The Four Elements* contain 277 illustrations and are now in the National Gallery of Art (gift of Mrs. Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1987. 20. 5-8) in Washington, D.C.
4. For more discussion about Verhagen's influences on Hoefnagel, see P. Dreyer. "Zeichnungen von Hans Verhagen dem Stummen von Antwerpen, Ein Beitrag zu den Vorlagen der Tierminiaturen Hans Bols and Georg Hoefnagels." *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 82-83 (1986-87): 115-44.
5. For more study on these images, see Lee Hendrix. "Natural History Illustration at the Court of *Rudolf II." Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City.* ed. Eliska Fucíková. (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 157-71; Fritz Korney. *Albrecht Dürer and the Animal and Plants Studies of the Renaissance*

astonishing detail and vibrant color provided Hoefnagel's manuscripts with a lifelike quality, as evident, among other sheets, in *Hares, Raurakl, and Squirrel* (*Terra*, fol. XXXXVII, fig. 4). In this page, Hoefnagel copied Dürer's nature study Hare, imitating his short, rhythmical brushstrokes and details of the coloring with the final touch in white pigment that created a realistic impression of the animal as drawn from a living model.

Despite their naturalism, Dürer's nature studies not only sought to please the eye of the viewer, but also to encourage a spiritual approach to nature, in which the smallest creatures were seen to represent the essence of God's creation. Dürer's *Madonna with a Multitude of Animals* (fig. 7), for instance, depicts the holy family with diverse specimens of animals and plants, suggesting the Garden of Eden. These animals and plants-such as the parrot, dog, owl, leashed fox, irises and peonies-have symbolic meanings in the Christian tradition. The parrot symbolizes Eden; the owl, a wedding; the dog, faithfulness; a leashed fox, evil tamed; and irises and peonies the virtues of the Virgin. (Korney 114-18) Many of these small creatures are also found in Dürer's individual nature studies.

Hoefnagel admired Dürer, not only for his skill in drawing and coloring, but also for his way of conveying the spiritual quality in the guise of realistic nature studies.[6] Hoefnagel followed Dürer's approach to nature, and even went a step further, in *The Four Elements* by including emblematic inscriptions in Latin from a variety of literary sources such as the Bible and the *Adagia* of Erasmus.[7] In the *Hares, Raurakl, and Squirrel*, for example, he

(Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988), 114-19, cat. 35, 124-25, cat. 38, 130-31, cat. 41, 136-37, cat. 43, and 138-39, cat. 44; Thea Vignau-Wilberg. "Naturemblematik am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts." *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 82/83 (1986/87): 146-47, abb. 152 and 154.

6. Dürer's "Academic ideals" stimulated Hoefnagel's philosophical approaches in his manuscripts. Hoefnagel's extreme admiration of Dürer is well represented in his poem dedicated to the German artist. For more study of Dürer's impact on Hoefnagel's philosophical approach to nature, see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann. *The Mastery of Nature: Aspects of Art, Science, and Humanism in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 79-99.
7. Recent studies by Lee Hendrix and Thea Vignau-Wilberghave have examined Hoefnagel's works not only with scientific naturalism, but also with larger philosophical perspectives. In this regard, Vignau-Wilberg discussed the devotional elements in Hoefnagel's manuscripts, also focusing on their symbolic

included an emblem "*TUTE LEPUS ES ET PULPAMENTUM QUAERIS*" ("You are a hare and yet hunt for game"), a quotation from the Adagia (1.6.7) that warns readers that they must know who they are. Also, in Iris (fig. 8) from *Ignis*, Hoefnagel carefully surrounded an iris with several different flies. This image was accompanied with the emblem "*HABET ET MUSCA SPLENEM*" ("Even a fly has a spleen"; Erasmus 3.5.7). The text is a warning that no enemy should be despised, even if it is weak and insignificant like a fly or a flower. (Riley 141)

Because it includes such emblems, Hoefnagel's *Four Elements* can be considered to be a fusion of art, science, and emblematics. The purpose of Hoefnagel's work is clarified in a letter from the German traveler Philip Hainhofer in the early 1610s, in which Hainhofer describes the manuscript as an object of "*contemplirn und meditirn*" ("contemplation and meditation").[8] The emblematic qualities of Hoefnagel's manuscript were admired by his contemporaries, including Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612), who later purchased it.

In 1592, Hoefnagel's son Jacob (1575-c. 1630) published a series of emblematic prints of plants, fruits and small animals-*Archetypa studiaque patris Georgii Hoefnagelii* (Frankfurt, 1592)-patterned after his father's manuscripts.[9] The series consists of four sections consisting of twelve leaves. Each section begins with a title page. Each leaf includes a composition of flowers, plants, and insects, and emblematic quotations are inscribed in both the upper and bottom portions of the leaf. As Hainhofer identifies this series of engravings as "*4 bucher die nach deß, hueffnagles bluemenbuecher*

and emblematic contents. See Lee Hendrix, "Joris Hoefnagel and the 'Four Elements': A Study in Sixteenth-Century Nature Painting," Diss. (Princeton U, 1984); Thea Vignau-Wilberg, *Archetypa studiaque patris Georgii Hoefnagelii 1592: Nature, Poetry and Science in Art around 1600* (Munich: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, 1994); "Devotion and Observation of Nature in Art around 1600," *Natura-Cultura*, ed. Giuseppe Olmi et al. (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2000), 43-56; "Die Emblematischen Elemente in Werke Joris Hoefnagels," Diss. (Leiden University, 1969); "Naturemblematik" 145-156.

8. Chr. Häutle, ed., "Die Reisen des Augsburgers Philipp Hainhofer nach Eichstädt, München und Regensburg in den Jahren 1611, 1612 und 1613," *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg* 8 (1881): 37; quoted in Vignau-Wilberg, "Devotion and Observation" 53.
9. Reprinted in Vignau-Wilberg, *Archetypa*.

auff miniatur art vom Hertzog" ("four books by Herzog in miniature after Hoefnagel's flower books") in his letter of 1612, it is clear that Hoefnagel's primary focus was on flowers.[10] In the depiction of a bouquet of flowers in Pars II, 6 (fig. 9), a vase of spring flowers is surrounded by frogs, a snail, cherries, peas, and a variety of insects, including butterflies, dragonflies, and beetles. A lily of the valley and a globe flower flank both sides of the image. These flowers, animals, and insects provide symbolic references to spring: for instance, the frogs, which sleep through the winter and awake again in the spring, symbolize birth. The motto above and below this image reads "*Una hirundo non facit ver*" ("One swallow does not make spring"), indicating that one day is not enough time to acquire virtue or education, and "*Omnia vere vigent, et veris tempore florent et totus feruer Veneris dulcedine mundus*" ("All things flourish in spring, and in springtime all things are in flower and the whole world glows with the sweetness of Venus").[11] These are warnings that spring is but a fleeting moment in life. In Hoefnagel's manuscript, even the smallest creatures, such as flowers and insects, can be seen as objects of nature through which people can meditate upon God.

Evidence of Hoefnagel's spiritual approach to nature is further found in the *Archetypa*: "*Hoc variare decus mundi est; haec Gloria summi Artificis*" ("Abundance and wealth of nature reflect and give evidence of the glory of its creator, the Highest Artist); and "*Dedit mihi Dominus Artem mercedem meam, et in illa laudabo nomen eius*" ("The Lord gave me art as my reward, and I will praise his name with it").[12] Along with the character of the images themselves, this emblematic component of Hoefnagel's manuscript was admired by his contemporaries, including nobles, botanists, publishers and artists. In particular, his impact on the first generation of flower still-life painters, among others Roelandt Savery (1576-1639), who arrived at the Prague court in 1603, was significant.[13] The Archetypa made Hoefnagel's

10. Hainhofer's letter in 1612; quoted in Vignau-Wilberg, *Archetypa* 9.
11. Vignau-Wilberg, Archetypa 68. Vignau-Wilberg identified the source of this text is Erasmus's *Adagiorum* (Antwerp, 1564), 262 (1.7.94).
12. Hoefnagel, *Archetypa* Pars IV, 1; quoted in Vignau-Wilberg, *Archetypa* 48.
13. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *The School of Prague: Painting at the Court of Rudolf II* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 228; and Joaneath. A. Spicer-Durham, "The Drawings of Roelandt Savery" Diss. (Yale U, 1979), 1:19.

imagery further accessible to those early flower painters, serving as models for their own works.

II. Joachim Camerarius the Younger

A physician from Nuremberg, Joachim Camerarius the Younger, the older son of humanist Joachim Camerarius the Elder (1500-1574), was also renowned as a botanist.[14] Educated first by his father in Nuremberg, Camerarius gained more knowledge of botany during his medical studies in Wittenberg, where he was able to build a broad network of highly esteemed botanists, such as Conrad Gesner and Carolus Clusius. Not long after he had edited Pierandrea Matthioli's herbal *Compendium de Plantis Omnibus* (Frankfurt, 1586) Camerarius wrote his own *Hortus Medicus et Philosophicus* (Pharmaceutical and Philosophical Garden; Frankfurt, 1588) where, as evident from the title, his interest in combining botany and philology is well demonstrated.[15] In this catalogue of his garden, he proclaims that a garden should be a museum for the purpose of instruction and adornment. Camerarius's use of classical and biblical quotations to achieve emblematic qualities in natural history was further developed in *Symbola et Emblemata* (Nuremberg, 1590-1604).[16] Based on some of his own manuscript (1587) in the Stadtbibliothek Mainz (Hs. II/366), the Nuremberg emblem book consists of four hundred emblems concentrated in four collections. Each

14. Camerarius is introduced as a "Doctor et Botanicus celeberr" in his portrait engraving in the National Museum, Nürnberg (P.167). For the image as well as his biography, see Wolfgang Harms and Ulla-Britta Kuechen, ed. *Joachim Camerarius, Symbola et Emblemata* (*Nürenberg 1590 bis 1604*), 2 vols. (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1986/1988), 2: the facing page 1* (no number) and 1*-41*; Jan Papy, "Joachim Camerarius's Symbolorum & Emblematum Centuriae Quatuor: From Natural Sciences to Moral Contemplation," *Mundus Emblematicus: Studies in Neo-Latin Emblem Books*_4, ed. Karl A.E. Enenkel and Arnoud S.Q. Visser (Turnhout: Brespols, 2003), 201-234.
15. *Hortus medicus et philosophicus: in quo plurimarum stirpium breves descriptions [. . .] autore J. Camerario* (Frankfurt, 1588).
16. The first collection of plants in Camerarius's *Symbola et Emblemata*, one of original copies is currently collected in the Glasgow University Library (SM260). It is reprinted in the first volume of Harms and Kuechen.

contains one hundred cuts of plants, animals, birds and insects, and fishes and reptiles. Each plate is illustrated with a copper engraving in a circular border by Hans Sibmacher (d. 1611).[17] A motto and a two-lined poem in Latin are included above and below each image. Camerarius's commentary on each emblem is inscribed in Latin on the facing page.

Camerarius devoted the first collection of one hundred emblems, titled *Symbolorum et emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum* (1590), entirely to plants. In his dedication letter to Jacobus Kurz à Senftenau, head chancellor of the empire, Camerarius mentions the reason why he chose plants as the first subject of his emblem book:

> "There can be no doubt that the souls of men will be advised in the first place by such a compendious and at the same time ingenious teaching, and that they will be instructed in various ways as well. For in this way moral precepts, packed up in certain wrappers and artistic inventions, are indeed impressed more easily and even in a better way (especially with the common people), the more because at once even qualities of wonderful natural things and memorable from history are explained with various examples."[18]

Considered as the most pure creations, plants were selected in the first place to praise and celebrate God the Creator. Camerarius further emphasizes his admiration of God's creation by including new discoveries of the New World such as the crown imperial (fig. 10), aloe and tulip. In the crown imperial, for example, Camerarius presents botanical knowledge of this, at that time, hardly known species. Moreover by including the motto "*Modesta iuventus, honesta senectus*" ("a modest youth, an honest age") above the

17. For more information about Hans Sibmacher, see Mason Tung, "From Natural History to Emblem: A Study of Peacham's Use of Camerius's *Symbola & Emblemata*," Emblematica 1 (Spring 1986): 54 and note 5.
18. Camerarius 1590, fol. A2r-A2v: "*Nec ulli dubium esse potest per ejusmodi compendiosam ac simul ingeniosam doctrinam anioms hominum inprimis moneri, ac multis modis instrui. Nam haerent profecto, (praesertim apud vulgus) hac ratione sub quibusdam involucres et artificiosis inventionibus praecepta de virtute ac bonis moribus eo facilius ac melius, quod simul etiam rerum Naturalium proprietates admiratione dignae, nec non rerum* gestarum memorabiles eventus variis exemplis exponantur"; quoted in Papy 203-204.

image, he defines the plant as an object for contemplation. A poem written below the image explains the meaning of the emblem: "*Disce puer virtutem ex me, nec flore superbi: Matura tollat fruge senecta caput*" ("Learn, my age of the plant: Learn, my youth, from me the virtue, and not from the flower of the arrogant: old age may carry his head upright, with ripe fruit of the mind").[19] These spiritual qualities of plants were regarded as most suitable to teach "the souls of men." Here again Camerarius' interest in the combination of natural history and emblematics is successfully revealed.

Mason Tung rightly describes Camerarius' emblem book as "an emblematized natural history," as it drew fully from the botanist's encyclopedic knowledge of natural history. (53) Camerarius gained his botanical knowledge from his own observations of nature as well as from his study of books by natural historians, such as Conrad Gesner, Otto Brunfels and Hieronymus Bock, among others. In particular, Camerarius' botanical studies after[s1] life are illustrated in his flower drawing book, the so-called *Camerarius-Florilegium.*[20] It consists of 469 drawings of plants on 193 sheets, where Camerarius worked diligently with all the different colors and patterns of each species of flower: for example, in *Violets* (fig. 11) and *Irises* (fig. 12). His professional knowledge of botany gained while working on *Camerararius-Florilegium* must have been the basis for his botanical emblem book *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum.* His studies of sunflowers (fig. 13) and tulips (fig. 14), both introduced in Europe in the mid-Sixteenth century, were used in the emblem "*Non inferior secutus*" ("following not the inferior"; I: 49) and "*Langvesco sole latente*" ("without the sun, I will languish"; I: 88).[21]

In the collection of *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum*, a variety of plants appear, but only one species is selected for each emblem. Camerarius' choice of plants depended solely on how

19. Quoted in Vignau-Wilberg, "Devotion" 47.
20. The manuscript is in the Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg (Ms. 2764). The original size of these drawings is 35 x 24 cm. See Konrad Wickert, *Das Camerarius-Florilegium* (Erlangen: Kulturstiftung der Länder, 1993); "Süddeutsche Gartenkultur in der Zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts und das 'Camerarius-Florilegium'," *Natur im Bild: Anatomie und Botanik in der Sammlung des Nürenberger Arztes Christoph Jacob Trew* exh. cat. (Erlangen: Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1995), 74-97.
21. For both emblems, see Harms and Kuechen 1:49 and 88, respectively.

effectively they represented the emblematic meaning. For example, he chose the heliotropes to illustrate the emblem "*Sidere 'mens eadem' mutate*" ("the stars change [but] the mind [remains] the same"; fig. 15), because the flower's consistent response to the sun, as portrayed with its blossoms and upper stem bending toward the sun, best fits into the intended spiritual meaning of the soul's sincere response to God. In this emblem, Camerarius explicates that the soul must always be oriented towards seeking God.

Camerarius's *Symbola et Emblemata* was so popular that a variety of editions were published not only in Nuremberg, but also in Frankfurt, Heidelberg and Mainz, and distributed throughout European countries.[22] Because of the spiritual and the natural historic value placed on Camerarius' emblem book, this work was esteemed by nobles, scholars, preachers and botanists, and used in various ways, for example, as references in their publications and in the decoration of public and private buildings.[23]

III. Thomas Palmer

While little is known about Thomas Palmer, he is the author of the so-called 'vegetable emblem' books made at the end of the Sixteenth century.[24] There are two known botanical emblem manuscripts by Palmer, including the first collection of *Ashmole 767* in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and two volumes of *The Sprite of Trees and Herbes* in the British Library (Add. MS. 18040).[25] The Sprite of Trees and Herbes is the amplified and revised

22. For those different editions of *Symbola et Emblemata* printed between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, see Papy 221.
23. Papy 222. For example, Camerarius' emblems were used for decorating the ceiling of the Knights' Hall of the Castle of Dillingen. His emblems designed for the purpose of meditation at the Lady Drury's Oratory in Hawstead Hall will be further examined under the section "The Meditational use of Botanical Emblems" below.
24. Thomas Palmer's manuscript *Ashmole 767* has been known as the 'vegetable emblems' since the description appeared in the Bodleian catalogue.
25. Percy Simpson first identified the author of *Ashmole 767* as Thomas Palmer and dated in 1598. For details, see Percy Simpson, "Two Emblem Books: Thomas Palmer's Emblems in Ashmole MS. 767," *The Bodleian Quarterly Record* 6 (1930): 172-173. The *Ashmole 767* consists of two collections of emblems. The first manuscript of 200 emblems has 127 completed watercolors

version of the badly mutilated *Ashmole 767*.

Comprising 223 emblems in two volumes, the British Library manuscript was created as a New Year's gift for Lord Burghley (1520-1598) in 1598.[26] However, the gift was dedicated instead to his son Robert Cecil (1563-1612) in 1598/99 because of Lord Burghley's death in August of that year. In his letter to Cecil, Palmer mentions the title of this manuscript: "The worke I have intituled the sprite of trees, & herbes, which I thinke fitte to be bestowed uppon your honour, being the sprite of that tree, from whence I have to my no smale comforte, gathered so often, & so good fruite."[27] Each of these emblems consists of a handwritten motto or Bible quotation in Latin, commentary in English, and a hand-painted illustration in a square between them.

Palmer adapted many of these emblems in *The Sprite of Trees and Herbes* from the works of others, such as Joachim Camerarius the Younger. For example, Palmer's bending reed (fig. 16) is illustrated similarly to the reed in Camerarius' *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum* (fig. 17), but with some slight alterations.[28] In order to achieve the effect of a 'pure' vegetable emblem Palmer eliminated Camerarius' detailed landscape and allowed his plant to occupy all the space available in the square. He also replaced Camerarius' emblematic motto "*Flectimvr non frangimvr*" ("bending not broken") with a quotation from 2 Corinthians 12:10: "*Cum infirmor, potens sum*" ("For when I am weak, then I am strong"), and added

of flowers, trees, herbs and fruits along with poems and mottoes attached. The second manuscript, which English poet William Browne of Tavistock (c. 1590-c. 1645) adapted after the first collection, is mostly identical to the first except for the arranged order. For details of *Ashmole 767*, see Gillian Wright, "The Growth of an Emblem: Some Contexts for Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 767," *Emblems and The Manuscript Tradition*, ed. Laurence Grove, Glasgow Emblem Studies 2 (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 1997), 81-99.

26. An index by plant name and the author's explanations in Latin are attached at the end of the manuscript. It has been generally assumed that *Ashmole 767* was also dedicated to the same Lord. See Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 235-236; Wright 84.
27. *The Sprite of Trees and Herbs*, British Library (Add. MS. 18040), fol. 2.
28. For these illustrations, see Harms and Kuechen 1: 105, no. 95; *Ashomole 767* in the Bodleian Library, fol. 7v. Due to the badly mutilated condition of the British library manuscript, I would like to use its revised version *Ashmole 767* for the comparison. Both images are found also in Wright 91-92, fig. 1, 2.

commentary under the illustration:

> "The whistlinge reed that in the marish growes
> Is bent and bowde with euerie winde yt blowes,
> And for it giues and yeilds it is not seen
> It by those windes hath euer broken been.
> Right soe the Church of some one did personate
> That worldinges check but neuer giue't the Mate".

By selecting the plant that applies to the Bible and including his own contemplation Palmer stresses how plants relate to spiritual teachings.

Palmer's *The Sprite of Trees and Herbes* is an ideal example of the emblematic interpretation of nature. In his dedication to Lord Burghley, he associates the political power of his dedicatee with trees and herbs by naming plants after powerful kings. For instance, he cites the "*telephium*" named after *Telephius*, king of Mysia, and the "*gentian*" named after *Gentio*, king of Illyria. He also refers to the virtues of plants in classical contexts; for example, focusing on "the association between certain plants and the gods of Greece and Rome: such as Apollo and the laurel, Bacchus and the ivy, Venus and the myrtle" (Wright 88). Moreover, Palmer notes how such association between great leaders and botany existed in the Bible, pointing out that Solomon was the wisest man of all and was especially knowledgeable about botany. He quotes Matthew 7:20: "*De fructu arborem cognosco*" ("by their fruit you will recognize them").[29] For Palmer, the potential of plants for teaching moral and spiritual lessons was crucial to his approach to the vegetable emblems. While most other printed emblems were intended to be targeted at the local and expatriate public, Palmer's handmade manuscripts, accompanied by Bible quotations and his own commentary, would have instead appealed to his dedicatee for private and devotional contemplation.[30]

29. Wright 90. All English quotations from the Bible follow the New International Version (NIV).
30. Palmer's vegetable emblem manuscripts were never printed.

IV. The Meditational use of Botanical Emblems

During the Counter Reformation, the symbolic nature of emblems was widely exploited in Roman Catholic devotional art and literature as a tool for enhancing people's devotional practice. Catholic devotional emblem books were also widely circulated among non-Catholics, as is evident in the extremely popular *Zodiacus Christianus* written by German Jesuit and preacher Jeremias Drexel (1581-1638). This emblem book was extremely popular so as to be published in several different languages and versions. The original Latin version, which was engraved by Raphael Sadeler (c. 1560-1628), was published in Munich in 1618, and the earliest English version *The Christian Zodiack* was printed without pictures in Rouen in 1633.[31] Among the many different versions of this book, the English version entitled *The Christians Zodiacke or Twelve Signes of Predestination unto Life Everlasting*, which was etched by Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-77), first appeared in 1643. Accompanied by a motto and a biblical quotation, each of the twelve emblematic images-a candle, a skull, a golden pyx, an altar, a rose bush with thorns, a fig tree, a balsam tree, a cypress tree, two spears and an olive wreath, a scourge and rods, an anchor, and a lute-is a symbolic representation of God's word. The emblems appealed to readers because of their widely known moral and spiritual meanings.

Drexel's choice of four different plant species-rose, fig tree, balsam tree and cypress tree-denote a contemporary spiritual emphasis on botanical subjects in particular. (Young 172-75) For instance, the thorny rose bush (fig. 18), illustrated with the motto "Patience in Tribulation" and the Bible verse "Blesed are yee yt weepe now for yee shall laugh" (Luke 6:21), represents God's blessing promised to those who endure a painful earthly life. A fig tree (fig. 19) with the motto "Frequenting Sermons" symbolizes a wise man who listens to God's word: "the wise man shall increase his wisdome by hearing" (Proverb 1:5). A balsam tree (fig. 20) represents a man of charity as reinforced in the motto "Almes deedes" and the verse "And hee gaue [gave] euery [every] man comadement [commandment] concerning

31. For more about the popularity of Drexel's works in England, see Alan R. Young, "Wenceslaus Hollar, The London Book Trade, and Two Unidentified English Emblem Books," *The English Emblem and The Continental Tradition*, ed. Peter M. Daly (New York: AMS Press, 1988), 151-202.

his neighbour" (Ecclesiastes 17:14). A cypress tree (fig. 21) symbolizing a man of integrity is illustrated with the motto "Selfe-Contempt" and the verse "Except yee become as little Childeren, you shall not enter into ye kingdome of Heauen [Heaven]" (Matthew 18: 3).

Along with religious meanings, moral messages are also found in botanical emblems. For example, in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586) the motto "*Vitae, aut morti*" ("For life, for death") is illustrated with flowers and small creatures (fig. 22). Flowers were seen to represent both life and death, because bees and spiders suck from the same flowers, but one makes honey and the other, poison (Whitney no. 51). In another motto "Turpibus exitium" ("Destruction for the wicked") in *A Choice of Emblemes*, a rose with thorns (fig. 23) becomes a symbol of the wicked as its scent draws a beetle sitting on the flower to its death (Whitney no. 21).

Such spiritual meditation of nature was encouraged by the Bishop of Exeter and later of Norwich, Joseph Hall (1574-1656), who was renowned for directing his contemporaries' spiritual lives. In his book *The Art of Divine Meditation* (1606), Hall emphasized the importance of spiritual meditation in the medieval tradition.[32] This medieval "*libro della natura*" ("biblical book of nature") encouraged people to meditate on God as He was revealed in nature, including the plants and creatures people encounter on a daily basis. In his book *The Devout Soul; or Rules of Heavenly Devotion* (1643), Hall emphasizes the importance of the meditation of God in nature:

> "Every herb, flower, spire of grass, every twig and leaf, every worm and fly, every scale and feather, every billow and meteor speaks the power and wisdom of their infinite Creator. Solomon sends the sluggard to the ant; Isaiah sends the Jews to the ox and the ass; our Saviour sends his disciples to the ravens, and to the lilies of the field. There is no creature of whom we may not learn something. We shall have spent our time ill in this great school of the world, if, in such

32. Reprinted in Frank Livingstone Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall and Protestant Meditation in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study with the texts of the Art of Divine Meditation (1606) and Occasional Meditations (1633)* (Binghamton: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1981).

store of lessons, we be non-proficients in devotion."[33]

In particular, Hall describes the spiritual lesson to be learned from garden flowers in his *Occasional Meditations* (1633): LV. Upon the Sight of Tulips and Marigolds, etc. in His Garden.

> "These flowers are true clients of the sun. How observant they are of his action and influence! At even [s2]they shut up as mourning for his departure, without whom they neither can nor would flourish; in the morning they welcome his rising with a cheerful openness; and at noon are fully displayed in a free acknowledgement of his bounty. Thus doth the good heart unto God. 'When thou turnedst away thy face I was troubled,' saith the man after God's own heart [Ps. 102:2]. 'In thy presence is life, yea, the fullness of joy' [Ps. 16:11]. Thus doth the carnal heart to the world; when that withdraws his favor he is dejected and revives with a smile. All is in our choice; whatsoever is our sun will thus carry us. Oh. God, be Thou to me such as Thou art in Thyself. Thou shalt be merciful in drawing me, I shall be happy in following Thee."[34]

Holy images, formerly forbidden in churches or homes after the Protestant Reformation, were now replaced by depictions of a variety of creatures found in nature. This iconographic transformation changed the character of people's spiritual lives. As meditating on God through 'seeing' nature became a crucial part of their devotional lives, the sense of 'seeing' began to be considered the supreme of the five senses. This idea is expressed by John Davies of Hereford (c. 1565-1618) in his poem *Microcosmos. The Discovery of the Little World, with the Government Thereof* (London, 1603):

> "Amonge the *pleasures* which are sensuall,
> The vilst is that we *feele*, by that we touch;

33. Reprinted in Joseph Hall, *The Works of Joseph Hall* (Oxford: D.A. Talboys, 1837), 6:482; quoted in Huntley 34.
34. Quoted in Huntley 151. For more about Hall's meditation on flowers, see chapters LXXXV: "Upon the Vision of a Lily" and XCIII: "Upon the Smell of a Rose," both quoted in Huntley 168-69, 174.

Because it is the Earthli'st *sense* of all:
The Tast's of better temper, though not much:
Smelling is light, and lightely more will grutch
At Vnsweete Savors, then in sweete will ioye;
The *Hearing* is more worthie farre then such,
Sith it's more *Airey* and doth lesse annoy,
Whereby we gaine the *faith* which we enioy.
But *Seeing*, (*Sov'raigne* of each outward *sense*)
Holds most of Fire, which is in nature neere
To the *Celestiall Nature*'s radiance;
Therefore this *sense* to *Nature* is most deere,
As that which hath (by *Nature*'s right) no peere.
Thus much for *pleasures* which these *senses* giue,
Whereof the *best* must needs most *base* appeare
Compared to the *worst* our *Soules* receave,
Whose *powres* haue much more pow'r to take and giue."[35]

Sight, as praised in the poem, "holds most of Fire, which is in nature neere to the Celestial Nature's radiance." Because men depended primarily on sight to appreciate nature fully, the accuracy of pictures became more important for conveying images of nature. The naturalism of images in emblem books thus grew in significance for delivering symbolic and allegoric meaning, as Henri Estienne, a French publisher, points out in *The Art of Making Devices* (1646): "The chiefe aime of the Embleme is, to instruct us, by subjecting the figure to our view, and the sense to our understanding: therefore they must be something covert, subtile, pleasant and significative."[36]

Emblematic images were now important for everyday meditation, as illustrated by the painted closet of Lady Anne Drury (1572-1624). In this little room (seven feet square), three of the walls contain seven panels of mottoes at

35. Quoted in Norman K. Farmer, Jr., "Lady Drury's Oratory: The Painted Closet from Hawstead Hall." *Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 78.
36. Henri Estienne. *The Art of Making Devices.* trans. Thomas Blount (London: W. F. and J. G., 1646), 7; quoted in Michael Bath, *A Collection of Emblemes; George Wither* (Hants: Scholar Press, 1989), 3.

the top and fifty-eight emblematic paintings below in four levels (fig. 24). Originally built in the Hawstead House of Sir Robert and Lady Drury, the room was used for her meditation, encouraged by Joseph Hall, her chaplain and spiritual director at Hawstead.[37] Sir John Cullum describes the Hawstead Panels in his *History and Antiquities of Hawstead and Hardwick* (1784):

> "Contiguous to one of the bedchambers was a wainscoted closet, about seven feet square, the panels painted with various sentences, emblems and mottoes. It was called *the painted closet*; at first probably designed for an oratory, and from one of the sentences "NVNQVAM MINVS SOLA, QVAM CUM SOLA" (never less alone than when alone) for the use of a lady. The dresses of the figures are of the age of James I. This closet was therefore fitted up for the last Lady Drury, and perhaps under her direction. The paintings are well executed; and now put up in a small apartment at Hardwick House. As some of these emblems are perhaps new, and mark the taste of an age that delighted in quaint wit, and laboured conceits of a thousand kinds, I shall set them down, confessing myself unable to unravel some of them."[38]

While little is known about the painter of these panels, it is highly probable that Lady Drury, a niece of the court painter Nathaniel Bacon, made the paintings on its walls herself. In 1610, Sir and Lady Drury lost their daughter Elizabeth, aged fifteen. In their grief, they commissioned the renowned poet John Donne (1572-1631) to write an elegy to commemorate her death.[39] While we do not know if there is any link between Donne's

37. The Hawstead panels were dismantled and moved to the Hardwick House, Suffolk, around 1612, and are currently situated in the Christchurch Mansion in Ipswich. For further studies on this room, see Farmer 77-105; Heather Meakin, "Lady Anne (Bacon) Drury, Photograph of her closet (c. 1612)." *Reading Early Modern Women: An Anthology of Texts in Manuscript and Print, 1550-1700.* ed. Helen Ostovich and Elizabeth Sauer (New York: Routledge, 2003), 480-481; a booklet by Mary Halliwell, ed., *A Guide to the Hawstead Panels at Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich* (Ipswich: The Friends of the Ipswich Museum, 2006).
38. Quoted in Farmer 78-79. The feminine singular used in the sentence, which is inscribed in the third upper panel, indicates that the room was used by a lady.

writings and the Hawstead Panels, this little room certainly provided Lady Drury with a place for her contemplation and devotion, as clearly inscribed in the first-"*FRUSTRA NISI DOMINUS*" ("In vain without the Lord")-and fourth upper panels -"*PARVA, SED APTA MIHI: NEC TAMEN HIC REQUIES*" ("small, but fit for me: and yet there is no rest here").

Lady Drury's meditational use of the Hawstead Panels is further evident from their pictorial sources, which were derived from the contemporary emblem books including Joachim Camerarius' *Symbolorum et Emblematum* and Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems*. For example, a honeycomb surrounded by bees illustrated on the emblem "*Patria cuique chara*" from Whitney (fig. 25) appears in one of the Hawstead pa[s3]nels (fig. 26) accompanied by a motto "*Cum melle aculeus*" ("With honey a sting"), meaning that good things come with difficulties. A camel muddying some water with its foot with a motto "Pura juvent alios" ("Let pure things delight others," fig. 27), in the Hawstead Panels finds its pictorial source from Camerarius in his emblem "*Turbata delectat*" ("I love to drink out of troubled water," fig. 28), a warning against ignorance of the impurity.

While Latin mottoes appear in all of the paintings in the upper three registers, the fifteen panels on the bottom level contain only floral images (fig. 29). Each of these fifteen panels consists of two or three species of flowers and herbs, including a rosemary, columbine, borage, strawberry, honeysuckle, ivy, cowslip, lungwort, orchid, gladiolus, gillyflower, buttercup, anemone and pansy (fig. 30). While the pictorial sources for these botanical images are unknown, they could have been from Lady Drury's manuscripts, since her choice of plants includes most of the species of flowers and herbs found in the floral borders of books of hours[s4]. Illustrated in a lively fashion, these botanical images in the Hawstead Panels are depicted, like garden flowers, as growing from the earth. In this way the images provided Lady Drury with the feeling that she was in her garden where she would have meditated on God amidst the plants, and found her piece of heaven as stated in the fifth upper panel: "*AMPLIOR IN COELO*

39. Titled "An Anatomy of the World, wherein by occasion of the untimely Death of Mistris Elizabeth Drury, the frailty and decay of the whole World is represented," the poem was printed in 1611. A second part called "The Second Anniversarie of the Progresse of the Soule" was added in the second version of 1612. See Halliwell 1.

DOMUS EST" ("A larger home in heaven").

The important role of nature in spiritual meditation revitalized the flower motif in contemporary arts and literature. Both the weighty symbolism-in relation to the Virgin Mary and to death and resurrection-as well as the easy accessibility of flowers made them ideal for spiritual meditation. Reading the Psalms, which mention a variety of plants, was a favorite activity for women during meditation. For example, the Psalms liken a blessed man to a tree or fruit:

> He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psalm 1:3)
> But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love forever and ever. (Psalm 52:8)
> The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green. (Psalms 92:12-14)
> Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. (Psalm 128:3)

Along with these trees and fruits, flowers are often found in Psalms, referring to the transience of life: "For like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away". (Psalm 37:2)

> They are like the new grass of the morning?though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered. (Psalm 90:5b-6)
> As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. (Psalms 103:15-16)

References to plants are also found frequently in the New Testament. Jesus, for example, used fig trees to foretell the last days of the world: "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near" (Matthew 24:32). He also introduced himself as a vine and its branches: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener" (John 15:1).

As an ardent reader who had an enthusiastic passion for spiritual learning, Lady Drury must have been aware of the moral and spiritual meaning of plants mentioned in the Bible. While praying in her oratory, she would have meditated on the spiritual lesson of God's creation that is represented in each plant illustrated on the walls.

The combination of close scientific observations of plants and the devotional approach to nature as God's divine creation helped Joris Hoefnagel, Joachim Camerarius and Thomas Palmer when conceiving their botanical emblem books. In these books they demonstrated their emblematic way of looking at plants as an aid to meditation as well as their botanical knowledge in detail and accuracy, encouraging the audience to appreciate fully both the aesthetic beauty and the symbolic and allegoric meaning represented by each plant. Thus, these botanical emblem books represent their distinctive worldview of the late Sixteenth century, with its combination of art, science, and emblematics.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1. Albrecht Dürer, *Hare*, 1502. Watercolor on paper, 250 x 225 mm. Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.

Fig. 2. Albrecht Dürer, *Stag Beetle*, 1505. Watercolor on paper, 142 x 114 mm. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

Fig. 3. Hans Verhagen, *Beech Marten*. Watercolor on paper, 215 x 394 mm. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

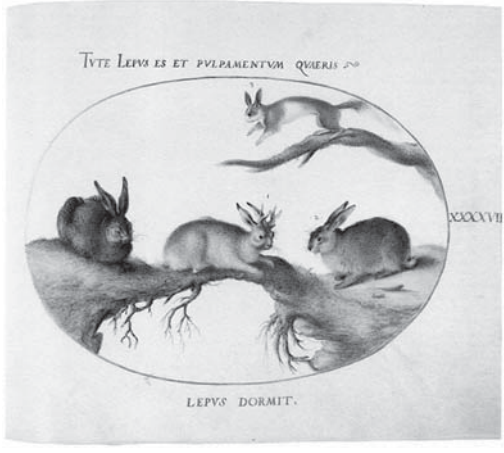


Fig. 4. Joris Hoefnagel, *Hares, Rauracki, and Squirrel* (*Terra*, fol. XXXXVII), from *The Four Elements*, 1575-1580. Watercolor on vellum, 143 x 184 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

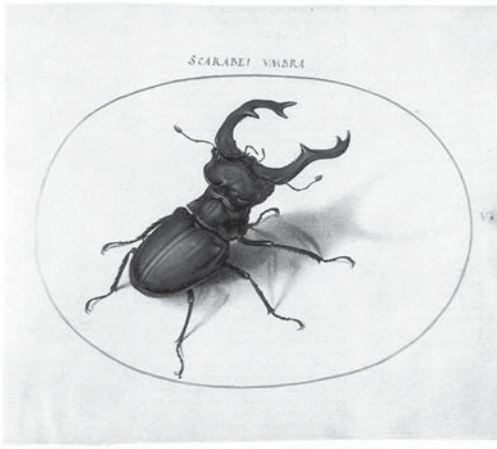


Fig. 5. Joris Hoefnagel, *Stag Beetle* (*Ignis*, fol. V), from The Four Elements, 1575-1580. Watercolor on vellum, 143 x 184 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 6. Joris Hoefnagel, *Marten* (*Terra*, fol. XXXXVI), from *The Four Elements*, 1575-1580. Watercolor on vellum, 143 x 184 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 7. Albrecht Dürer, *Madonna with a Multitude of Animals*, c. 1503.
Pen and ink on paper, 315 x 241 mm. Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.

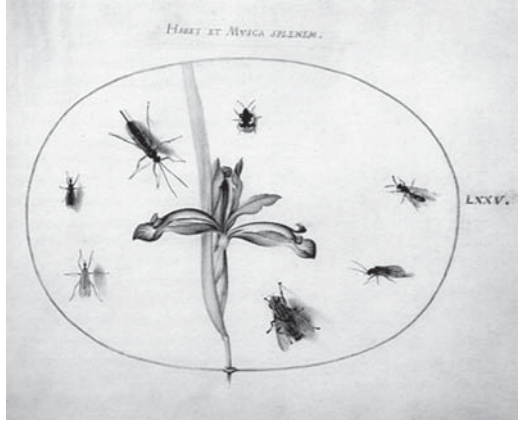


Fig. 8. Joris Hoefnagel, *Iris* (*Ignis*, fol. LXXV), from *The Four Elements*, 1575-1580.
Watercolor on vellum, 143 x 184 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 9. Jacob Hoefnagel, Pars II: 6, from *Archetypa studiaque patris Georgii Hoefnagelii* (Frankfurt, 1592). Engraving, 245 x 338 mm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 10. *Crown Imperial* (71), from Joachim Camerarius, *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum* (Nuremberg, 1590).

Fig. 11. *Violets* (fol. 9v), from Joachim Camerarius, *Camerararius-Florilegium*, 1576-1590. Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg.

Fig. 12. *Iris* (fol. 36r), from Joachim Camerarius, *Camerararius-Florilegium*, 1576-1590. Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg.

Fig. 13. *Sunflower* (fol. 130), from Joachim Camerarius, *Camerararius-Florilegium*, 1576-1590. Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg.

Fig. 14. Tulips (fol. 3) from Joachim Camerarius, *Camerararius-Florilegium*, 1576-1590. Universitätsbibliothk Erlangen-Nürnberg.

Fig. 15. *Heliotropes* (72), from Joachim Camerarius, *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum* (Nuremberg, 1590).

Fig. 16. *The Bending Reed*, from Thomas Palmer, *The Sprite of Trees and Herbes*, 1598/99. British Library, London.

Fig. 17. *The Bending Reed*, from Joachim Camerarius, *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re Herbaria Desumtorum* (Nuremberg, 1590).

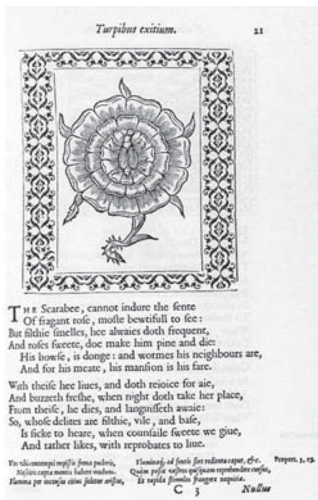
Fig. 18. *Rose*, from Jeremias Drexel, *The Christians Zodiacke or Twelve Signes of Predestination unto Life Everlasting* (London, 1643).

Fig. 19. *Fig Tree*, from Jeremias Drexel, *The Christians Zodiacke or Twelve Signes of Predestination unto Life Everlasting* (London, 1643).

Fig. 20. *Balsam Tree*, from Jeremias Drexel, *The Christians Zodiacke or Twelve Signes of Predestination unto Life Everlasting* (London, 1643).

Fig. 21. *Cypress Tree*, from Jeremias Drexel, *The Christians Zodiacke or Twelve Signes of Predestination unto Life Everlasting* (London, 1643).

Fig. 22. "*Vitae, aut morti*" from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586).



Turpibus exitium. 21

THE Scarabee, cannot indure the ſente
Of fragant roſe, moſte bewtifull to ſee:
But filthie ſmelles, hee alwaies doth frequent,
And roſes ſweete, doe make him pine and die:
His howſe, is donge: and wormes his neighbours are,
And for his meate, his manſion is his fare.

With theiſe hee liues, and doth reioice for aie,
And buzzeth freſhe, when night doth take her place,
From theiſe, he dies, and languiſſeth awaie:
So, whoſe delites are filthie, vile, and baſe,
Is ſicke to heare, when counſaile ſweete we giue,
And rather likes, with reprobates to liue.

C 3 *Nullus*

Fig. 23. "*Turpibus exitium*" from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leiden, 1586).

Fig. 24. Lady Drury's oratory. Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

100 *Patria cuique chara.*

To Richarde Cotton Esquier.

THE bees at lengthe retourne into their hiue,
When they haue suckt the fweete of FLORAS bloomes,
And with one mynde their worke they doe continue,
And laden come with honie to their roomes:
A worke of arte, and yet no arte of man,
Can worke, this worke, thefe little creatures can.

The maifter bee, within the middl dothe lie,
In fairell roome, and moft of ftature is,
And cutrie one to him dothe reuerence giue,
And in the hiue with him doe liue in blifs:
Hee hath no thinge, yet none can doe him harme,
For with their ftrengthe, the reft about him fwarme.

Lo, natures force within thefe creatures fmall,
Some, all the daye the honie home doe beare.
And fome, fame off on flowers frefhe doe fall,
Yet all at nighte vnto their home repaire:
And cutrie one, her proper hiue doth knowe,
Although there ftande a thoufande on a rowe.

A comon

Fig. 25. "*Patria cuique chara,*" from Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (Leiden, 1586)

Fig. 26. Bee scap, "*Cum melle aculleus.*" Lady Drury's oratory. Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

Fig. 27. Camel muddying water with its foot, "*Pura juvent alios.*" Lady Drury's oratory. Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

Fig. 28. "*Turbata delectat,*" from Joachim Camerarius, *Symbola et Emblemata* II (Nuremberg, 1595).

Fig. 29. Lady Drury's oratory. Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

Fig. 30. *Pansy* (center). Lady Drury's oratory. Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

Abstract

This study investigates the interaction between emblematics and natural history, focusing on sixteenth- century botanical emblem books, in which plants can be seen as means of meditation. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the two genres of emblematics and natural history became so closely related that the empirical knowledge of natural history provided the reader a key for uncovering the disguised meaning of emblems. In particular, botanical emblem books, which appeared in the mid sixteenth century, demonstrate the combination of close scientific observations of plants and devotional approach to nature as God's divine creation. This didactic and meditational use of botanical emblems is most evident in three botanical emblem books by Joris Hoefnagel (1542-1601), Joachim Camerarius the Younger (1534-98), and Thomas Palmer (1540-1626). In these books, Hoefnagel, Camerarius and Palmer demonstrated their emblematic way of looking at plants as an aid to meditation as well as their botanical knowledge in detail and accuracy, encouraging the audience to appreciate fully both the aesthetic beauty and the symbolic and allegoric meaning represented by each plant. Thus, these botanical emblem books represent their distinctive worldview of the late sixteenth century, with its combination of art, science, and emblematics.

Keywords: Botanical emblem books, Emblematics, Natural History, Joris Hoefnagel, Joachim Camerarius the Younger, Thomas Palmer

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