

Alison Adams and Philip Ford, eds. *Le livre demeure: Studies in Book History in Honour of Alison Saunders*.

With the assistance of Stephen Rawles. Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 97. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2011. xxxv + 356 pp. \$48. ISBN: 978-2-600-01523-3.

This rich and varied collection of essays pays a fitting tribute to the scholarly career of Alison Saunders, best known for her work on the French emblem books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The book borrows its title from an emblem by Gilles Corrozet, found in an appendix to his 1543 French version of *Tabula Cebetis* and depicting in its illustration a woman holding a book. The French pun with which Corrozet's verse ends — “la langue meurt, & le liure demeure” — wants us to believe that knowledge acquired from books is more durable than what is gleaned from occasional conversation, but one leaves this particular volume with the impression that the conversation of Alison Saunders has proved to those who know her as stimulating and insightful as her scholarship. Even if, as Saunders explains in one of her many studies, Corrozet put his 1543 emblems together with little effort and less thought, this collection of essays clearly shows that a great deal of patience, knowledge, and critical thinking is required to learn how and why emblem books come about, how they signify, where their illustrations come from, and what fate they subsequently suffer in what seems to be one complex and almost endless process of often-unacknowledged borrowing and lending.

The description of this process, perhaps best characterized as some sort of thick cultural bibliography, forms an important and appropriate theme in the collection. A representative example is Adrian Armstrong's discussion of piracy, layout, and interpolation in the emblematic afterlife of Jean Bouchet, but similar in orientation are Philip Ford's discussion of the role of Marie de Gournay in the editorial afterlife of Montaigne's *Essais*, Els Stronks's essay on the German publisher Lucas Jennis and his participation in the emblem book trade in the Dutch Republic, or Ildikó Sz. Kristóf's tracing of the multilingual publication history of Georg C. Raff's late eighteenth-century *Naturgeschichte für Kinder*, published even in a Slavonic-Serbian version in 1809. As this listing suggests, the scope of the collection is rather wide; while emblem books feature often, the unifying idea seems to be the relationship between the visual and the textual in a variety of genres. Thus James Laidlaw discusses Alain Chartier's *Livre des quatre dames* in relation to the surviving fifteenth-century manuscript illustrations, Daniel Russell explores the link between emblem books and books of hours in the context of “the history of the image” (38), and Paulette Choné focuses on Antoine Le Pois, an interesting sixteenth-century French antiquary and lover of polysemy, whose publication on ancient coins and seals has been criticized for its “dry and verbose method” but praised for “the most exquisite plates which perhaps ever attended a medallic work” (John Pinkerton, *An Essay on Medals* [1784], iv). The justness of Pinkerton's observation is proven by the reproductions given in Choné's article.

Among the collected essays, the most unnerving is probably Laurence Grove's "A Note on the Emblematic Woman Who Gave Birth to Rabbits," of which in one illustration this reviewer has counted no fewer than fifteen. Grove, however, uses the pictorial representations of the rabbit scandal to think about the comic book and its pre-industrial predecessors. Similarly guided by a theoretical question, yet pursuing it in a strict material context, is Ann Moss's discussion of the relationship between commonplaces and emblems as well as the contribution by Denis Drysdall on the interpretation of Alciato's *Emblemata* in relation to Alciato's other writings. Drysdall emphasizes "the profound association between the two disciplines of law and poetry" (92) evident in Alciato's career and in the period more broadly: "the humanist lawyer's desire to integrate literature, or rather rhetoric, into legal discourse" (91). The volume often relies on the rich online archive of emblem books, but it also provides a very instructive discussion by Donato Mansueto of the practical and theoretical problems accompanying a modern digitization project.

Much more is to be found in this fascinating collection of scholarly insight and antiquarian lore, of text and image, of books and *sua fata*. The fate of books is in the reader's hands. This one should find friends among bibliographers, historians, literary scholars, and all those who think that the past speaks to us not just in its texts but, often more eloquently, in its books. With articles in English, French, and German, this book speaks several languages, spans several centuries, and sees no contradiction between the lover of long footnotes (printed on the same page as the text) and the lover of pictures. Is not an emblem, in a sense, a picture with a long footnote? And does not its meaning, like the meaning of scholarly work, reside in the connection the footnote forges with the text it both enables and depends upon?

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