

LEGAL EMBLEMS AND THE ART OF LAW

The history of the legal emblem has not been written. A seemingly fortuitous invention of the humanist lawyer Andrea Alciato in 1531, the emblem book is an extraordinary pictorial turn in the early history of publishing and in the emergence of modern law. The preponderance of juridical and normative themes, of images of rule and infraction, of obedience and error in the emblem books is critical to their purpose and interest. It is no accident that the history of this highly successful scholarly genre is dominated in authorship and content by lawyers. *Legal Emblems and the Art of Law* is the first study of the emblem tradition as a juridical genre. It argues that these picture books of law depict norms and abuses in classically derived forms that become the visual standards of governance. Despite the plethora of vivid figures and virtual symbols that define and transmit law, contemporary lawyers are not trained in the critical apprehension of the visible. This book reconstructs the history of the emblem tradition so as to evidence the extent to which a gallery of images of law already exists and structures how the public realm is displayed, made present, and viewed.

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PETER GOODRICH

Cardozo School of Law



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PREFACE

The history of the legal emblem has not been written. That the emblem book was a legal invention and genre is occasionally acknowledged but has not been explored. It is as if by accident, a pure fortuity that it was a lawyer, Andrea Alciato who in 1531 devised this extraordinary pictorial turn in the early history of publishing, and as if the preponderance of juridical and normative themes in the emblems was incidental to their purpose and interest. There were elements of the accidental in the emergence of the genre, to be sure, and the emblem is by definition a mode of *serio-ludere*, both solemn and playful, but it was equally recognized by its principal authors, lawyers of both traditions, ecclesiastical and civil, that the devising of imagery was crucial to government and connected most closely to justice in its Aristotelian sense as the banding and bonding of friends. This book therefore tells a very different story from that of nugatory images and parlor game pursuits. It is that of a much longer tradition of legal images, of heraldic devises, armorial insignia, notes of dignity, signs of office and honor that the lawyers in particular developed and promulgated. The emblem book was at base a mix of military and theologico-legal inventions that rapidly set out to use the printing press to make law visible, manifest, and present in the newly enlarged public sphere, in the republic of printed letters and graven images. If this thesis is correct, then lawyers played a crucial role in the structuring of vision, in making power visible and so providing models, patterns, and in short accessible exempla, emblems of the licit modes of disposition and behavior.

Law is historically a dual form, both theological and political in origin, and so it is fitting that within the Christian tradition the emblem is structured as a trinity. It is typically composed of a motto, usually a Latin and occasionally a Greek theological or legal maxim, accompanied by a woodcut image, and a Latin and later a vernacular explanation, often in verse. A quick example can be taken from the lawyer Gabriel Rollenhagen's successful selection of emblems of 1611.¹ The image depicts a divine hand emergent from

¹ Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum selectissimorum* (Cologne, Germany: Jansonium, 1611) emblem 83. Jean Jacques Broissard, *Emblemes latins* (Metz, France: Aubry, 1588) at 13 has a variant on this emblem, and George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes Ancient and Moderne* (London: Allott) at 95 reproduces it with a more expansive explanatory verse.

PREFACE

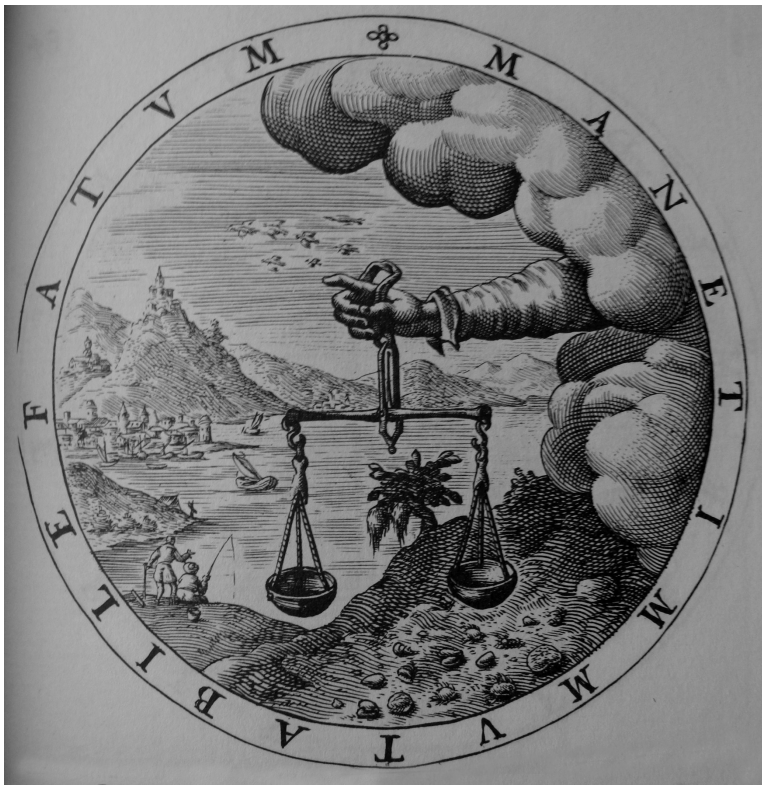


Figure i An immutable fate remains (*manet immutabile fatum*), from Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum selectissimorum* (Cologne: Jansonium, 1611) emblem 83. (Permission granted, P. Goodrich.)

knotted clouds, holding firm a pair of scales. The Latin motto – *manet immutabile fatum* – translates as: an immutable fate remains (Figure i). Below, the Latin text explains that it is eternal law that decrees our fate. Divine providence, here defined juristically, inexorably dictates our future. Nothing can change the higher law, and the picture, although highly coded, makes this reasonably apparent. The lay viewer of the engraving would undoubtedly associate the clouds with the heavens and the protruding hand with some species of angelic and possibly divine intervention. The scales that hang by a thread also visibly connote the dependency of the human on a justice and judgment both above and beyond. The basic norm portrayed, that there is a divinity, here a providential scale of justice, that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we may, is easy enough to apprehend, even if it is only a small part of the complex symbolism conveyed.

Although it might seem easy to view the emblem as mere painted words, and thus as a book for the illiterate, a popularizing genre, it is clearly much more than this. The three facets of the emblem appeal to distinct classes of

spectators and offer different models of apprehension. The Latin belongs obviously enough to the clergy and the lawyers, to the two faces of Rome, the Church and the State, and in its enigmatic way it serves to legitimate the norm conveyed. The image is popular and to a degree autonomous. It can be viewed on its own and apprehended in senses that explain, contradict and exceed the words, and specifically the limitations of any one language. The image, according to the humanists, was never subject to the catastrophic confusion of Babel, and so could serve didactic, moralizing, and publicizing purposes that words cannot. Finally, the explanatory verse is what we would now term political. It offers an exposition and interpretation that both responds to and develops the image in a literary fashion while extrapolating a moral, a norm that the viewer is to observe and obey. In our example from Rollenhagen, the spectator sees a providence emanating from a realm beyond death, commonly symbolized in emblems by knotted clouds, and the scales indicate the justice and necessity of divine law. Were I to continue, the background of the image shows birds – storks – flying, a Pythagorean symbol of an “aereal” fate and of the need to interpret all of nature’s signs as they impact on the direction of our everyday lives.

The picture is the primary avenue of transmission and obviously enough the most novel feature of the emblem book. To believe, according to the emblemist Matthaeus Merian, you have first to see, because “men believe much more in the eyes than the ears” and he continues “it is through the eyes that the great truths are imprinted upon the human soul.”² Taken together, as a “trinity,” to borrow a phrase, the emblem is expressly a manner of inserting something, a law, a norm, a moral, into the interior of the subject. The earliest juristic definitions of the emblem define it as something sown, ingrafted, and planted in the interior of something else, a vase, a floor, a wall, and by expansion a person.³ Antonio de Nebrija in his early and “most holy” lexicon of civil law – *Sanctissimi iuris civilis lexicon* – uses the verb *intersero*, to interpose, in his discursive definition of *emblemata*, and suggests that emblems sow the law in the people. Recollect that for the emblemists images were active agents, theatrical devices on the stage of reflection and memory.⁴ They were expressly termed *imagines agentes*, the phantasmata on

² Matthaeus Merian, *Emblematum ethico-politicorum centuria* (Cologne, Germany: Joharín de Bry, 1619) commentary to emblem 88 (Oculata fides).

³ Antonio de Nebrissensi viro doctissimo, *Sanctissimi Iuris civilis lexicon* (Venice, Italy: Zalterium, 1612) 348r provides an excellent summary of the classical sources and of the early modern view. After tracing the origins of emblems in the ornamentation of vases, as additions and subtractions, it defines *emblemata* as things inflicted upon, imposed, or sown into their subject (*impono sive intersero*).

⁴ On the etymology of emblem, and on the theatrical roots of the term *pegma*, see Valérie Hayaert, *Mens emblematica et humanisme juridique* (Geneva, Switzerland: Droz, 2010).

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which thought and action were based. The emblem was thus conceived as a mnemonic and didactic promulgation: it plows and plants the populace as a juridical genre. What is most striking is that in the *mens emblematica* – the emblem tradition – it is the image, the implant, the visibility inserted that takes priority over both word and text. The image, in making visible, in bringing the dead letters of the law to life, is itself a form of legislation, a making of the rules, an enactment of the norm. In the old language of law, the emblems can be viewed as *interpositae picturae*, by analogy with legal drafting, and in a similar fashion can be understood not to write but to paint the law.⁵ The image is here conceived to be the most immediate and direct mediation of legality and, as studied in detail in this book, the picture is the affect that attaches the subject to its place in the hierarchy, to its social position, office, dignity, and role. Whether lineal, administrative, or more obviously legal, whether familial (*oeconomic*) or public (*iconomic*) the emblematic image is conceived as being active and generative, a theatrical performance that indicates the justice of both player and plot.

A later English author, the Cambridge scholar Thomas Philipot, and I am concerned in this book most directly with the common law tradition and uses of emblems, derivative though these often are, talks of *icunculae*, of little icons, holy images planted in the subject and so helping him to see and observe the law.⁶ I trace this history and trajectory, from Rome to London, from civil to common law, from pictorial to verbal signs, but want here briefly to introduce the project with a grander schema of what, borrowing from our very own and most illustrious Sir Edward Coke, we might term the “visial lines” of law, and in my neologism the visiocracy of justice.⁷ What we see leads us to what we need to know. The visual is the more universal mode of apprehension and it is also the more immediate and effective. It gets under our skin, it fascinates and terrifies, it intimidates and pleases, portends and persuades. It is for this reason that law is defined, at root, as being manifest and visible, there to be seen and apprehended with only the initial aid of

⁵ The analogy is with the concept of the interpreter, the judge, the draftsman as *interpositae personae*, as makers of law. This theme is developed well in Ian Maclean, *Interpretation and Meaning in the Renaissance: The Case of Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), at 62–3.

⁶ Thomas Philipot, *A Brief Historical Discourse of the Growth of Heraldry, Demonstrating upon What Rational Foundations that Noble and Heroick Science Is Established* (London: Tyler and Holt, 1672), at 7. Early poetic theory, though I will not engage with the details, also sometimes discusses verbal figures as *imagunculae*.

⁷ The “visial line” is taken from Sir Edward Coke, *The First Part of the Institutes of the Lawes of England: Or, A Commentarie upon Littleton, Not the Name of a Lawyer Onely, but of the Law Itselfe* (London: Society of Stationers, 1628) Preface. On visiocracy, see P. Goodrich, “Visiocracy” 39 *Critical Inquiry* 498 (2013).

the eyes. Knowledge of law, jurisprudence, is “the image of the public good,” according to one systematizing emblemist’s definition, and this message was visible in many early emblems of justice and law portrayed as a Janus-faced deity.⁸ The common lawyers were most fond of the two-faced divinity as the proper emblem of their tradition, and Selden indeed titles his history of common law *Jani Anglorum facies altera* and inserts an emblem of Janus as the frontispiece of the work.⁹ Janus is for Selden the double face of common law because this divinity uniquely can look both ways, has four eyes, and so symbolizes the juristic jointure of past and future, precedent and judgment, image and rule. The two faces are striking not only for being able to look in opposite directions, but also, as the motto to Selden’s emblem suggests, translating loosely as “one face looks to the public sphere, one to the soul,” an animated duality.¹⁰ The bifurcated common law watches inside and outside, the affective and the exterior, spiritual and temporal, and so can cast its universalizing gaze both on morality and on the exterior norm, on justice and on law.

Other versions of this emblem, and particularly on the continent, show Janus with three faces, looking to past, present, and future, a more Trinitarian and proper representation, accompanied by the motto *omnibus praesens*, present to all, and so manifest everywhere.¹¹ Alciato the aforementioned author of the earliest book of emblems, the *Emblematum libellus* of 1531, is the exemplar. He uses the emblem to illustrate a spectral reason that floats above and overlooks the city.¹² This image is repeated in a variant form in the first vernacular emblem book, Perrière’s *Theater of Fine Devices*. This emblem is later reproduced in Thomas Combe’s English translation of Perrière, and is also manifest as the defining motif of law in Whitney, Selden, and then the barrister, emblemist, and sometime execrable poet George Wither. All of

⁸ François Menestrier, *L’Art des emblems ou s’enseigne la morale par les Figures de la Fable, de l’Histoire, & de la Nature* (Paris: Caille, 1684) at 3, discussing the “modern” jurists’ view of emblems as painted morals. A similar view, strongly and succinctly expressed, can be found in Thomas Combe, *The Theater of Fine Devices, Containing an Hundred Morall Emblems* (London: Field, 1614) “To the Reader.”

⁹ John Selden, *Jani Anglorum facies altera* (London: Helme, 1610). For other emblems of Janus, see Andrea Alciato, *Emblemata* (Lyon, France: Bonhomme, 1549); Guillaume de Perrière, *Le Théâtre des bons engins* (Paris: Janot, 1540) emblem 1; Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems, and Other Devises* (Leyden, The Netherlands: Plantyn, 1586); George Wither, *A Collection of Emblems Ancient and Moderne* (London: Allott, 1635), at 138.

¹⁰ Selden, *Jani Anglorum*, title page, *Haec facies populum spectat, at illa Larem*.

¹¹ As, for example, Antonio de Lorea, *David pecador, enpresas morales, politico cristianas* (Madrid, Spain: Sanz, 1674), at 242.

¹² Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum libellus* (1531). The modern edition, edited by Peter Daly, is based on the 1621 edition produced by Tozzi in Padua. See Peter Daly et al. (eds.), *Andreas Alciatus, The Latin Emblems* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), volume 1 of *Index Emblematicus*. Janus, under the heading *Prudentes* is emblem 18.

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Figure ii Janus, from Guillaume Perrière, *Le Théâtre des bons engins* (Paris: Janot, 1540) emblem 1. (Reproduced courtesy of the University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.)

these early authors place great emphasis on Janus as the guardian of precedent and of the image of law. Whitney uses the motto *respice et prospice*, look behind and ahead, where Selden refers to public and private, to iconomy and oeconomy, both of which must be looked on, kept under surveillance by a law that penetrates, through vision, into the interior, and so is inscribed on the heart. Perrière uses the additional symbols of sun and key to reinforce this message of visible and invisible.

His Janus is looking to the face of the divinity, represented in the heliotropic, optical form of a scepter with a sun atop (Figure ii). The sovereign sun has a face, more eyes one might say, while he looks, assuming the *prospopoiea* of the sun for these purposes and at that time to be grammatically masculine, toward the future where a key to the kingdom, *clavis regni*, awaits those who have followed the law – stayed in the sun – and learned their lessons well.

The importance of the pictorial, of the emblem as image, is not just that it is visible but also that it allows the subject of law to observe and apprehend the divine law that is evident and visible in nature. The *iconomus*,

to borrow again, and I apologize in advance, from the continentals, is the government of images, and it is this licit and visible order that the emblem tradition taught the subject to see and to observe.¹³ Here we can note that the common lawyers always viewed nature as the origin of their law, as the immemorial expression of custom and use, as the avenue of the passage back to divine law, according to Fortescue, and as the best inheritance we have, to lean on Coke a little bit more. That said, and the references can be sought elsewhere, the emblem tradition is the closest that jurisprudence gets to the direct expression of the sources of law and the majesty of their origin. Janus is the principle and principal, the lesson of nature but one that is offered in a somewhat abstract and coded mode, in a classical image, one of the *graeculae tenebrae*, the Greek shadows, which enigmatically encourage obedience – observance – rather than and certainly in excess of understanding. And so, there is a third prefatory image, a triune depiction of a threefold law.¹⁴

Pride of place, a better image and norm of the *iconomus*, can be taken from a mid-seventeenth-century emblemist who nicely captures how common law is *via regia*, a terrestrial path marked over time by custom and use, written with the feet, visible over time and in accordance with the higher norm, the divine and providential decree.

The image (Figure iii) is a remarkable one and beautifully captures a perception implicit in much of the earlier discussion, particularly in Selden's account of the common law Janus. Custom and use, in the theory of common law, return us to nature. She is the pattern and image of the divine source. Common law moves in nature, is itinerant in the pathways of the earth, and is expressly the *lex terrae*, the law of the land, the lines on the map, the chorographic inscription. The motto that Bornitius uses, custom is a second nature, could almost be taken directly from Selden, who of course terms it a second face. Janus shows – can see – the other face of law, the sun, the blinding light of sovereignty as expressed in nature, in a *ius quaesitum alteri*, a law sought, desired, inscribed, and learned invisibly, before and elsewhere. So here the armless gentleman is seated on a stump, outside the city, in nature, and is recording, which is to say writing with his right foot. His is a remarkable intelligence, a law and a half and in Coke's terms a sesquipedalian

¹³ The distinction between *iconomus* and *oeconomus* is taken from Antonio de Nebrija, *Vocabularium utrisque iuris* (Venice: Zalterium, 1612) at sig. 151r. (*Iconomus* dicitur ille, cui ecclesiastica res gubernanda mandatur). On *iconomus*, iconomy and iconocracy, see Mondzain Baudinet, *Image, Icon, Economy: The Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).

¹⁴ Jacobus Bornitius, *Emblematum ethico-politicorum* (Heidelberg: Bourgeat, 1654) emblem 45.

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Figure iii Custom as second nature (*consuetudo est altera natura*), from Jacobus Borritius, *Emblemata ethico-politicorum* (Heidelberg: Bourgeat, 1654) emblem 45. (Reproduced courtesy of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.)

jurisprudence if we appreciate properly that the emblem shows another quill awaiting the writing of the left foot.

Nature precedes writing or, better, it is a higher form of scripture, an *acheiropoietic*, which is to say handless inscription. Nature is the primary law, the first chirography, and its most immediate form is that of images, the visible world with all of its of paths and marks. Nature imitates divinity, and humanity, in imitating nature, responds to and observes the divine. That is the underlying principle of hierarchy and law, an order ordained, *nomos* put in place by the imaginary. I do not, however, want to turn the tables just yet. The story of the legal emblem needs to be told and although it may seem to relay a mythical tale, that narrative, properly understood, has extraordinary force both then and now. We can play Janus ourselves and address the image, the medium of the woodcut depiction of norms, in the era of the emblem book and in the age of the Internet, behind and ahead. The digital has inaugurated a new era of the visual, and law is surprisingly pivotal,

practically intrinsic to this development. We may not be very conscious of the legal structure of the visible but we are increasingly aware of the visible structure of law. It is to the origin, the tendrils and roots of this structure, to the emblematic form and lexicon of the images that lawyers invented, that this study is directed.

I now proffer a final couplet of prefatory and so playful remarks. Bornitius's armless scribe has learned to write with his feet. By minor extension, we can infer that the feet write, that it is our actions and not our words that are most believable, that are law for us. What we do, the path we tread, is the best judge of our interior state. The emblem is thus termed mute eloquence, silent speech, and this tradition of *muta eloquentia* precedes and dictates the oral and then written law. We can speak while we walk, in motion, but we cannot write while ambulant. Ambulation is then the mark of prior law, the inscription of a higher cause, the archetype of writing, and it is by showing the truncated subject inscribing with his right foot that Bornitius expresses the power of a law that appears without the intervention of any human hand, a law of nature herself. This is what is classically meant by an unwritten law – *ius non scriptum* – that is inscribed invisibly on the heart, in memory alone, without any need for writing. Once pattern and path are established, once the *lex terrae* emerges, the foot has writ: “and having Writ, / Moves on; nor all thy piety nor wit / Shall lure it back to cancel half a line, / Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it ...”

That the emblem shows quill and ink, page and lines inscribed without the use of the hand, suggests a subtle authorization of written law, of *ratio scripta*, of Latin, as the impress and mark of nature. Writing, for those scribes who have hands, is a human artifice, a second order of law reflective of the other decree, the prior order of images in nature itself. To think is to reflect on images, *intelligere est phantasmata speculari*, according to one maxim, and it is law that promulgates the images, the very visibilities and forms on which subject and sociality are founded. The image precedes writing and the written is thus but a secondary mode of imaging: the printed word is simply another figurative sign, a species of hieroglyph, if you will, that hierophants, or we say learned lawyers, the bretheren, will interpret and unpack. The image then is part of what Derrida termed “writing in general,” an aspect of the custom and use, the immemorial practice that common lawyers call the *lex terrae*, a realm of prior images, of emblematic patterns that legal training and here the art of interpreting *obiter depicta*, things seen along the way to legal judgment, can help us apprehend.

And so, I come to a final preliminary point. Although early lawyers extol the virtues of the image in the promulgation and pedagogy of law, there is also an ambivalence, a fear of the demagogic power and lure of image and the

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imaginary that it unleashes – a fear predicated on the contemporary religious wars, of idols and idolatry. It is a lengthy story, a crucial background to the *mens emblematica*, and so deserves a brief reference here. The lawyers were aware that the image works, that it has effects, that it disseminates more propitiously than the dead letters of the text. In being effective, in doing what it depicts, it is dangerous and so in religious contexts should be used sparingly or, for the Reformers, not at all. Politically, however, the image was recognized as being crucial to governance and as being licit provided its use was circumscribed, and its dissemination authorized and legitimate. Take a final prefatory example, that of the figure of Error in the 1643 edition of Ripa's *Iconologia* (Figure iv), and here I am using the French translation with commentary by the lawyer and essayist Baudoin, with woodcuts by Jacques de Bie.¹⁵

The picture shows Error as a blindfolded man, groping his way along while tapping the path ahead with a stick. My interest here, in the preface, the *prae-ludium*, is in the blindfold, a common Renaissance symbol and one whose meaning is plural and often confused, as seen later and most particularly in relation to the blindfold on the figure of Justice. Here the image is self-confessedly of error as blindness. Those that cannot see, the moralizing accompanying text explains, cannot stay on the straight and narrow path. Without sight, we are lost, abandoned and condemned. It is evident here that blindness, the inability to see, the failure to look signifies incapacity, loss, and radical limitation. Explained more broadly, to be prevented from seeing is to be withheld from the world and to be unable to comprehend the signs through which providence expresses itself and law communicates. The visual marks, the lines of rectitude and law would be ignored and ineffective if people could not see them. This is a simple message but an important one – a motif for the *mens emblematica* and for a re-emerging visual jurisprudence alike. It is through sight that law is first apprehended, by means of vision that oeconomy and sovereignty, the rules and regularities of custom and use both intimate and exterior, are disseminated and inculcated. Not to see, in the heliotropic universe of the legal emblematisers, meant not to know. Blindness and error were synonyms.

As with all emblems, the meaning of Ripa's figure of Error is not quite so simple. Immediate apprehension of the injury and limitation of blindness does not exhaust the meaning of the image. Blindness as incapacity corresponds in interpretative terms to a literal reading. There are also

¹⁵ Cesar Ripa, *Iconologie ou les principales choses qui peuvent tomber dans la pensee touchant les Vices et les Vertus, sont representes sous diverses figures* (Jean Baudoin edn., Paris, 1643), at 59.



Figure iv Error (*erreur*), from Cesar Ripa, *Iconologie ou les principales choses qui peuvent tomber dans la pensee touchant les Vices et les Vertus, sont representes sous diverses figures* (Jean Baudoin edn, Paris, 1643) at 59. (Permission granted, P. Goodrich.)

allegorical, moral, and spiritual meanings to this depiction of an erring and blind pilgrim. The allegorical meaning is that of the human journey, of the path that we cannot see in the shadow of the valley of death, with merely mortal eyes. Figuratively we are all blind, we are all incapacitated, we are all on a journey, seeking truth and salvation. The allegory is that of the passage from image to an imageless eternity, from darkness to light. This expands into the moral meaning, which is that the senses cannot be trusted, that faith and not sight will direct us to the true path. Common in depictions of justice, blindness here is a species of injunction, both a punishment for being distracted by sight and by the senses, by worldly things, and an exhortation to trust what cannot be seen, what in theological terms has no being and is not, namely divinity.

The final sense of the image is anagogic or spiritual. The figure is pedagogic and salutary. Mortality is blindness, spirituality is vision, and justice inhabits a realm beyond all worldly images and desires. The anagogic lesson

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of error as blindness is that we start in ignorance, unseeing and unknowing. Blindness and error are the human condition and therefore we have to learn the path to truth and justice by turning away from the world of appearances and in Pythagorean style, ascetically and lengthily, slowly and painfully we need to be taught how to see. The ultimate lesson is that the plurality of appearances deceives and that the multitude of images misleads. The proper path to sight, to the vision of the eyes of justice, is inculcated, learned, through the word, by means of the true signs of faith, the icons of divine decree. There lies the paradox and possibility that this book inhabits and explores. Error is portrayed as an image of blindness and the verbal aspersion of errancy. It remains the case, however, that the injunction not to look is transmitted through the medium of an image. It transpires that there is not only an irony but also a certain satirical content to Ripa's depiction of Error. It is only through the image of blindness that we learn that we cannot see. The tapping of the blind pilgrim's stick is not audible on the page. We have to see it, we have to apprehend through sight and at the same time appreciate that sight is not everything, that there is a certain blindness to our vision, an unseeing that accompanies every untutored gaze. It is to the formulation and history of this paradox, to the disinterring of the rules of sight, the *ius imaginum* or law of images that the early lawyers systematized and promulgated in their emblem books, that this study is devoted.

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I here take a brief excursus by way of thanks to a multitude. This has often seemed a quixotic project, archaic, anachronistic, syncretic – perhaps simply “old school.” To the contrary of such appearances and doubts, the project has been that of drawing out the history of images in law, the long term of law’s use of visiocratic means of governance. The emblem tradition subsists and functions today, even if it is in the main overlooked, assumed, and unthought. I have gained sustenance and comfort over the several years of this project from those who continue to value scholarship, the reworking of the tradition, and art for its own sake. David Rudenstine and more recently Matthew Diller kindly provided financial and decanal support. I am grateful for their appreciation of the useless. By way of heartfelt and necessarily disparate thanks, I simply list my fellow travelers, the axioms of accolade and the *arbitrium* of acclamation is in their hands: Oren Ben-Dor, Christian Biet, Anne Bottomley, Oscar Chase, Bradin Cormack, Dennis Curtis, Christian Delage, Marinos Diamantides, Bill Eggington, Piyel Halder, Anselm Haverkamp, Valérie Hayaert, Lorna Hutson, Desmond Manderson, Tom Mitchell, Nathan Moore, Julie Stone Peters, Uriel Procaccia, Paul Raffield, Judith Resnik, Richard Sherwin, Igor Stramignoni, Chris Tomlins, Gary Watt, Bernadette Wegenstein, and Thanos Zartaloudis. Thanks to Neil Duxbury for his dyspeptic but invaluable advice on the title, and, *inter omnes*, to Linda Gayleforce Mills for her ontology of the emblematic. The photo-shopping of the images was done by Martin Burga of Smashrocks; acquisition of sources and permissions was greatly aided by Danielle Fein and Lynn Wishart. *Exeunt*.