Emblems in the Free Imperial City

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Emblems in the Free Imperial City

Emblems, Empire, and Identity in Early Modern Nürnberg

Edited by

Mara R. Wade
Christopher D. Fletcher
Andrew C. Schwenk

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Preface

This volume grew out of research that Mara R. Wade conducted during a long-term fellowship at the Newberry Library, Chicago, and her identification in their collections of Michael Rötenbeck's "Inscriptiones picturæ et emblemata quae in aula magna curiae Norimbergensis publice extant. …"[1] The Newberry Library, with generous financing from the Kress Foundation, supported additional research by two graduate students from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Andrew Schwenk and Jessica Wells, working under Wade's supervision to conduct further research and to transcribe the Latin and German manuscript texts, and translate them into English.[2] The Kress Foundation, together with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), New York, and the Goethe Institute, Chicago, all contributed generously to an international conference held at the Newberry Library in September 2018, when the website "Emblemata Politica" was launched.[3] The Department of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute Chicago generously hosted the scholars for an exploration of their pertinent holdings as a part of the conference.[4] The Newberry Library also fully digitized the volume,[5] and it was subsequently ingested into *Emblematica Online*, where it can be studied in the context of other copies of Georg Rem's and Peter Isselburg's *Emblemata Politica* (1617), including a copy fully indexed according to Iconclass notations[6] and other works of political emblems by other authors.[7]

The papers assembled here have their origins in the Newberry conference and the participants are gratefully thanked here both for their expertise and for their patience as this volume came together during and after the pandemic. After the Newberry conference and with generous support of an Alexander von Humboldt Senior Research Prize, Mara Wade was able to conduct additional research in the libraries and archives of the University of Erlangen and various

1 Newberry Library, VAULT Wing Ms 279.

2 See the article by Jessica R. Wells in this volume.

3 https://digital.newberry.org/scalar/emblemata-politica/index?path=introduction. Andrew C. Schwenk created the German transcriptions and translations.

4 https://www.artic.edu/departments/PC-13/prints-and-drawings.

5 https://digital.newberry.org/scalar/emblemata-politica/vault-wing-ms-279?path=introduction.

6 http://emblematica.library.illinois.edu/detail/book/emblematapolitic00isel/emblems Timothy W. Cole and Myung-Ja K. Han were instrumental in ingesting this manuscript into the portal.

7 http://emblematica.library.illinois.edu/search/books?Query.Keywords=Emblemata%20politica&Skip=10&Take=10.

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libraries, archives, and museums in Nürnberg in the summer of 2019. During this sustained period of research, she was able to correct her misattribution of the "Inscriptiones …" from Georg Rem, the author of the emblems, to Michael Rötenbeck, the compiler of the Newberry manuscript.[8] Dr. Silvia Glaser is owed particular thanks here for her kind assistance at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg.

The Newberry hybrid book is actually Volume VI of Michael Rötenbeck's so-called "Collectana," six volumes of compilations documenting early modern society in the Free Imperial City of Nürnberg; it includes transcriptions of the texts and descriptions of the images from the storied Nürnberg town hall,[9] with a special emphasis on paintings, including Pirckheimer's and Dürer's *Triumphal Chariot of the Emperor Maximilian* and the political emblems in the famed Great Hall.

The editors wish to thank the Newberry Library, Chicago, in particular, Dr. Lia Markey, Director of the Center for Renaissance Studies, for their unflagging support of this research. Dr. Paul Gehl, Curator Emeritus, offered critical insights and feedback in early stages of this research.

Early modern Nürnberg was awash in emblems, and they informed most aspects of everyday life. The intent in publishing these essays is, of course, to draw attention both to Rem's emblems and to Rötenbeck's compilations, while simultaneously expanding the purview of emblem studies, breaking away from strict iconological approaches to engage innovative and productive collaborations across methodologies and disciplines. The essays presented here focus on the context of Rötenbeck's "Inscriptiones. …" They seek to present a comprehensive view of early modern Nürnberg's visual culture as it pertains to civic virtues and as it relates to the politics of the Free Imperial City and its role in its imperial context. As an alternative to the global turn, these studies deeply explore Nürnberg as a place, as a significant location from which to study the intersection of art and power. The volume seeks to showcase Nürnberg and its emblems and allegories as practices of place-making and "making publics."[10] The goal is to demonstrate how emblem studies can provide a new lens to analyze early modern culture from a variety of perspectives and media. Not just a boutique discipline offering a safe silo for niche scholars, emblematics intersects with current interests in emerging, and established research.

8 Mara. R. Wade, "*Emblematica Politica* in Context: Georg Rem's Manuscript at the Newberry Library," *Emblematica: Essays in Word and Image* 1 (2017): 227–34.

9 Rötenbeck was an inveterate compiler and much of Volume VI, the "Inscriptiones …," is copied from other sources.

10 Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin, *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* (New York: 2010).

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Emblems offer flexible systems of meaning, poetics, and pictorial language which can be analyzed from a multitude of perspectives: communications theory, architecture, archival studies and book history, the study of compilations and collections, networks, visual propaganda and empire studies, translation studies, intermediality, and the study of public art and monuments. The volume bundles perspectives from successful studies of Renaissance allegory and emblemata[11] and on cultural studies of Nürnberg as an urban and artistic center.[12] The volume maintains the humanistic perspective that art and poetry not only reflect and extol civic institutions, they help to create them. These essays advance the argument on the necessity of art and poetry, not just to embellish public life, but to create the shared values of the community.

The essays are grouped so as to lead readers into the topic, the city, and the Town Hall. The opening piece, "Nürnberg in the Seventeenth Century: Seeing an Early Modern City through Emblems," by Christopher Fletcher introduces the volume and opens the perspective on its emblematic culture. In "'Inscriptiones picturæ et emblemata …': How Nürnberg's Town Hall Emblems Came to the Newbery Library, Chicago" Mara R. Wade traces the journey of Rötenbeck's hybrid manuscript from Nürnberg to Chicago, describes and analyzes its contents, introduces the manuscript's compiler Rötenbeck, and then returns the focus to Nürnberg with the manuscript's own context within Rötenbeck's "Collectana," Volumes I–V of which are now held in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum. She also presents the emblematic ecosystem in contemporary Nürnberg and the author of the town hall emblems Georg Rem.

Jeffrey Chipps Smith's "The Exterior of Nürnberg Rathaus and the Art of Good Government" analyzes the exterior of Nürnberg's famed Town Hall, exploring these decorations and literally opening the door to Rötenbeck's contemporary tour through the painted decorations of the Town Hall's interior. His analysis of the exterior space of public art provides a lens for viewing and analyzing the allegories of the interior spaces and decorative arts. Smith sets

11 Karl Giehlow, *Die Hieroglyphenkunde des Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance besonders der Ehrenpforte Kaisers Maximilian I*, in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 32 (1915): 1–232. Karl Giehlow, *The Humanist Interpretation of Hieroglyphs in the Allegorical Studies of the Renaissance with a Special Focus on the Triumphal Arch of the Emperor Maximilian I*, trans. Robin Raybaud (Leiden: 2015). See also Ludwig Volkmann, *Bilderschrift der Renaissance. Hieroglyphik und Emblematik in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen* (Leipzig: 1921); Ludwig Volkmann, *Hieroglyph, Emblem, and Renaissance Pictography*, trans. Robin Raybaud (Leiden: 2018).

12 Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: 1966); Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Nuremberg, A Renaissance City, 1500–1618* (Austin, TX: 1983).

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the stage for the emblematic strategies of analogy and amplification that are evidenced throughout the essays in the volume. Moving the focus into the interior of the fabled Rathaus, in "Images as Language: Dürer, the Triumphal Arch and the Emblem in Nuremberg" Thomas Schauerte discusses Dürer's *Triumphal Chariot for the Emperor Maximilian I*, which was painted onto an entire wall of the Great Hall. He focuses his analysis on proto-emblematic strategies of texts and images by Dürer, Celtis, and Pirckheimer. His discussion of their exploration of "thinking and speaking" pictorially foregrounds his central focus on the *Misterium* at the top of Dürer's triumphal arch. Schauerte situates Dürer's "secret picture" within the context of Nürnberg humanistic circles and their engagement with hieroglyphics: with Dürer's central engraving for Celtis's *Philosophia and* Dürer's travels to Venice and the likely acquisition there for Pirckheimer of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* and for himself of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. This essay provides the segue to Tamar Cholcman's "The Migration of Emblems through Nürnberg's History: From Triumph to Civic Memory," which presents an overview of the ephemeral triumphal arches erected in Nürnberg for imperial visits in 1541, 1570, and 1612, tracing avian motives in the arches' statues and their manifestations in various contemporary media.

The following essays articulate aspects of the material and literary culture surrounding Nürnberg's emblematic production: Silvia Glaser treats the decorative arts, in this case focusing in particular on a set of engraved cups emblazoned with emblems from the period which are preserved in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Her study, "Some Examples of Emblems in Applied Arts from the Free Imperial City of Nürnberg," confirms that Nürnberg burghers lived in an environment saturated with emblems. Victoria Gutsche in her "Rem's *Emblematica Politica* in Context: Political Emblem Books in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century" and Werner Schnabel in his "Old and New Town Hall Emblems: Johann Conrad Rhumelius and the *Emblemata Curialia Auctiora* of 1629" analyze related emblem books that deepen the context of Rötenbeck's compilation, Rem and Isselburg's *Emblematica Politica*, and the Nürnberg Town Hall emblems. Gutsche focuses on the legacy of political emblem books in German-speaking lands later in the seventeenth century, while Schnabel presents emblems by Rötenbeck's colleague at the Altdorf Academy, Johann Conrad Rhumelius. The Altdorf philosopher first wrote new texts to Rem's emblems and then expanded and elaborated on them in a fascinating example of emblematic repurposing. To provide even more context, Jessica R. Wells transcribed the Latin, and translated into English, the biographical chapter on Georg Rem from Siegmund Jacob Apin's history of the

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prochancellors of the Altdorf Academy, *Vitae et Effigies Procancellariorvm Academiae Altorfinae* from the early eighteenth century.[13] A respected Latin poet and jurist, Rem deservedly earned the recognition of his contemporaries. Stephanie Leitch's "Mapping the Hand and Scanning the Forehead: Embedding Knowledge in Astrological Images" expands the spheres of knowledge production with the study of images read as texts. The final paper represents the new life of the Nürnberg Town Hall emblems as part of the digital library and database *Emblematica Online*.[14] Timothy Cole's paper, "Adding the Rötenbeck Manuscript to *Emblematica Online*, A Virtual Corpus for Research and Teaching," presents the digital work and integration of Rötenbeck's manuscript into this international emblem resource and its affordances for pedagogy and further research. The storied Nürnberg emblems now occupy a new position—in the digital ecosystem of emblems and allegories, their study and significance for early modern and postmodern inquiry.

Conventions:

For convenience's sake, the editors have chosen to use Nürnberg, instead of Nuremberg, throughout this volume. We also use the German word "Rathaus" for the Nürnberg Town Hall, since phrases could get quite macaronic when describing, for example, "the Nürnberg Town Hall emblems in the Great Hall of the Nürnberg Town Hall." Those interested in reading this work will fully understand the German nomenclature Nürnberg and Rathaus. In keeping with English usage Nürnberg is referred to throughout as a Free Imperial City.

Similarly, the editors agreed upon the spelling of Peter Isselburg's name, which occurs with great variation, as that entered into the *Nürnberger Künstlerlexikon*.[15] Printer's and publisher's names have been given according to the norms of the CERL Thesaurus.[16]

The editors are deeply grateful for everyone who contributed to this volume and whose work and expertise brought the project to this happy conclusion.

Mara R. Wade

13 Sigismund Jacob Apin, *Vitae et Effigies Procancellariorvm Academiae Altorfinae* (Nürnberg – Altdorf, Tauber: 1721). The chapter is "Vita D. Georgii Remii," 6–9.

14 http://emblematica.library.illinois.edu/.

15 Manfred H. Grieb, "Isselburg, Peter," *Nürnberger Künstlerlexikon*, Vol. 2 (Munich: 2007), 723.

16 https://data.cerl.org/thesaurus.

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Applications of XSD, XSLT, and XQuery (Chicago, IL: ALA Editions: 2018). He has served as principal investigator (PI) or co-PI for grants funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, and the US Army. In 2017 he received the Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology, awarded annually by the Online Computer Library Center, Inc., and the Library and Information Technology Association, a division of the American Library Association.

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Albrecht von Brandenburg, Renaissancefürst und Mäzen", at the Museum Moritzburg, Halle/S. March/April 2007 Guest Curator at the Academy of Arts, Honolulu, Hawai'i. From 2009–2019 director of the Albrecht-Dürer-House, Stadtmuseum Fembo-Haus and curator of the art collections of the City of Nürnberg. Since 2019 director of the municipal museums of Aschaffenburg. 2023 habilitation on "Das totale Kunstwerk. Haus und Kirche des Egid Quirin Asam in München."

W.W. Schnabel

After completing his military service, Werner Wilhelm Schnabel studied history, German studies, sociology, and political science at the universities of Erlangen-Nürnberg, Zürich, and Vienna. He completed his studies by passing the state examination for teaching in higher education and received his Ph.D. in 1990 in the subject of Bavarian and Franconian history with a dissertation on "Österreichische Exulanten in oberdeutschen Reichsstädten" [Austrian Religious Refugees in Southern German Imperial Cities]. He spent years as a researcher on the editing project "Wissenschaftliche Erstausgabe der Schriften Julius Wilhelm Zincgrefs" [Scholarly First Editions of the Writings of Julius Wilhelm Zincgref], a third-party funded independent research project to catalog early modern manuscripts, and in 2000 he earned his postdoctoral qualification (*Habilitation*) with his research on the early history of friendship books (*Stammbücher* or *alba amicorum*). He completed another third-party funded independent project concerning literature of the nonacademic milieu in the seventeenth century. Since 2007 he has been a professor of modern German literature and a researcher at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. Schnabel is the editor of the online database "Repertorium Alborum Amicorum," started in 1998, and researches the overlapping areas of literature and the history of art, culture, and society. He is particularly interested in Franconia and the contextualization of personal histories.

Andrew Schwenk

is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Germanic Languages & Literatures at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Studying under Professor Mara Wade, he is specializing in early modern German literature with a graduate concentration in Medieval Studies. He has additional expertise in digital humanities. His dissertation research focuses on imaginative travel and its relationship to contemporary social change in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century German literature. He was a member of the research team transcribing the Rötenbeck volume and has presented this research at the Newberry Library, Chicago; he has also presented his research at the Sixteenth Century Studies

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Conference and the Renaissance Society of America. He previously worked as a freelance translator, providing English subtitles for episodes of shows such as *Tatort* and *Wilsberg*.

Jeffrey Chipps Smith

Professor Emeritus and Kay Fortson Chair in European Art at the University of Texas, Austin, specializes in Northern European art 1400–1700, especially that of Germany and the Netherlands. Smith's publications focus on Nuremberg and its culture, Albrecht Dürer, German sculpture, goldsmith work, Jesuits, Northern Renaissance art, patronage, and issues of historiography and reception, among other topics. His latest books are *Albrecht Dürer and the Embodiment of Genius: Decorating Museums in the Nineteenth Century* (Penn State Press, 2020), *Kunstkammer: Early Modern Art and Curiosity Cabinets in the Holy Roman Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 2022), and *Albrecht Dürer's Afterlife* (London: Lund Humphries, May 2024). He was articles editor of *Renaissance Quarterly* and inaugural co-editor of the *Journal of the Historians of Netherlandish Art*. Smith served on the board of directors of the College Art Association, Renaissance Society of America, Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär, Historians of Netherlandish Art, and Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. In 2018, he was feted with a *Festschrift* entitled *Imagery and Ingenuity in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey Chipps Smith* (Brepols).

Mara R. Wade

is Professor Emerita of Germanic Languages & Literatures at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is the immediate past president of the Renaissance Society of America.

Her research focuses on emblems, court studies of Germany and Scandinavia, gender studies, and German literature and the arts in the early modern period. She is an associate editor of *Emblematica: Essays in Word and Image* and the PI for *Emblematica Online*. She has held fellowships as a Getty Scholar 2018–2019; Newberry Library long-term fellow 2016–2017; as a fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, Uppsala, Sweden 2023; and she holds a senior research prize from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, a lifetime achievement award in recognition of her work in fostering German-American research networks. She was also awarded the prize for excellence in undergraduate teaching from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois.

An edited volume, *Collections and Books, Images and Texts: Early Modern German Cultures of the Book* was published as volume 49 of *Chloe* 2023.

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Jessica R. Wells
received her Ph.D. in Classical Philology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2019. She completed her dissertation on the epigrammatic corpus of the Roman poet Martial, focusing on the text as a body and the body as a text. She has also written on the daring of Icarus and Daedalus flying away from Crete as a representation of the artist, proxemics in Herodotus, myth and spectacle in modern film, and zombie movies as katabatic journeys. She teaches ancient Greek, Latin, and humanities at Tempe Preparatory Academy in Tempe, AZ.

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