

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

Sist oppdatert 08.12.20

Emblembok

(_sjanger) Fra et gresk ord for “innlagt (arbeid)”. “Emblemata” er bøker med samlinger av emblemer, symboler, merker, deviser, epigrammer og lignende. Tekst-bilde-kombinasjonene kan fungere som mottoer og uttrykke en moral (Zima 1995 s. 136).

“A type of illustrated book, popular from the early 16th century to about 1700, containing a collection of symbolic engravings or woodcuts called emblems, each expressing a moral adage or principle, accompanied by an epigram, motto, proverb, or brief explanatory text in prose or verse. Included in this category are books with the text arranged in symbolic designs, for example, crosses. The form was revived by the poet William Blake in *Gates of Paradise*. Emblem books are studied as cultural artifacts providing information about popular culture, the use of allegory, the relationship of word to image, reading practices, and printing history.” (Joan M. Reitz i http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm; lesedato 30.08.05)

“Emblems can be defined very crudely as a composite literary/artistic form in which figure and text together convey a meaningful moralizing message which could not be conveyed by one or the other form in isolation. [...] It is now accepted that a recognition and understanding of the emblematic mentality is central to an understanding of early modern culture and society across Europe, and emblem studies have become a truly interdisciplinary subject, of interest to art historians, architectural historians, political and social historians, educational historians, medallic historians, theologians, as well as to book historians and – not least – literary scholars.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 18.04.16)

Et emblem i vid betydning har blitt definert som en “moral fable, allegory, or abstract quality expressed pictorially, sometimes with an accompanying motto or verse. Also, a figure of an object (or objects) representing symbolically a person, family, people, or nation, as on a heraldic device (coat of arms) or image of a saint or hero.” (Joan M. Reitz i http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm; lesedato 30.08.05)

Et typisk tredelt emblem består av overskrift (latin: “*inscriptio*”), bilde (“*pictura*”) og hovedtekst (“*subscriptio*”) (Groddeck 2008 s. 250).

Bildet har et bestemt, relativt éntydig innhold, og teksten under bildet bekrefter dette innholdet og gir det en didaktisk (belærende) betydning (Souiller 1988 s. 197). Teksten kan være eller inneholde et dikt. “[T]he picture might be the pre-text (in both senses of the word) for the poem, as it generally is in the Renaissance emblem book” (Janzen Kooistra 1995 s. 189). I motsetning til i allegorier er det ikke vanlig med personifikasjoner i emblemer (Szyrocki 1968 s. 16). Abstrakter blir ikke gjort om til konkrete individer.

Emblemer ble til en egen kunstform og egnet seg dessuten som en slags tolkningsnøkler for den svært bilderike litteraturen på 1500- og 1600-tallet (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 196). Noen lærde humanister lagde emblembøker som et bidrag til å finne en forklaring på de egyptiske hieroglyffene (som ingen klarte å lese før på 1820-tallet, etter funnet av Rosetta-steinen) (Groddeck 2008 s. 250).

“[A]lthough an emblem is usually expected to comprise a visual element (woodcut or copperplate engraving) and a textual element, both of which complement each other in conveying the message of the emblem, in fact a significant number of early emblems do not include illustrations. Similarly emblem and device are traditionally distinguished by the fact that the emblem conveys a generally applicable (usually moral) lesson which can be decoded via a careful reading of the motto (*inscriptio*), the figure (*figura*) and the verse (*subscriptio*), in juxtaposition with each other, whereas the device is a more challenging, intentionally hermetic form, whose aim is to allude indirectly, via the medium of a more stylized figure and a short motto, without additional verse, to the personal aspirations of its individual owner. While in many cases, such distinctions do apply, many works do not conform to these patterns, among which notably Montenay’s emblem book whose title – *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes* – includes both terms, *emblem* and *devise*.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 27.04.16)

“[J]esuiterna var långtifrån ensamma att upptäcka emblemkonstens pedagogiska potential. Francis Bacon hör till de många uppfostringsfilosofer genom tiderna, som har tillskrivit bilder stor betydelse i undervisningen: “Emblems reduce intellectual conceptions to sensible images, and that which is more sensible more forcibly strikes the memory and is more easily imprinted on it than that which is intellectual.” Hos honom rör det sig dock om mnemoteknik och pedagogisk förenkling i stället för symboladdning, men andra kunde utmärkt väl förena tron på emblemens hermetiska karaktär med pedagogisk effektivisering. Amos Comenius, den store böhmiske uppfostringstänkaren, utnyttjade flitigt bilder i sina läroböcker” (Jonsson 1983 s. 60).

“[I]llustrated emblem books were intended to make an impact on one’s memory. The term was first coined by the Milanese jurist Andrea Alciati (Italian, 1492-1550), whose *Emblematum libellus* (Little book of emblems; Augsburg, 1531) is credited with the invention of this genre. Such illustrated books continued to be enormously popular throughout Europe at least until the end of the eighteenth century. The layout of an emblem-book page usually consists of three parts: motto,

emblem (image), and epigram (accompanying poem). The emblematic artist was encouraged to create the most unusual image possible in order to make the strongest impact on the reader's memory. The interaction of bizarre allegorical imagery with moralizing mottoes and poetry became the source of some of the most creative artistic uses of visual symbolism in early modern Europe. The emblematic formula was applied to any number of early modern subjects. Through their imagery, Christian morality was reinforced, ancient fables were memorized, elementary legal terms clarified, famous academics immortalized, and arcane scientific notions popularized. Increasingly, as the art of the emblem book evolved, artists employed them as dictionaries of allegory and iconography, transforming the symbolic language of the visual arts." (http://getty.edu/research/special_collections/highlights/emblems/index.html; lesedato 15.12.14)

Andrea Alciato (eller Alciati – faglitteraturen har begge variantene av navnet) sin emblembok inneholder 98 tresnitt med overskrifter og latinske epigrammer (dvs. korte dikt). Hos Alciato finnes essensen i sjangeren: en tett forening av en verbal tekst og et bilde, der både bilde og tekst er nødvendig for forståelsen av en devise, et fyndord eller motto (Blasselle 1998a s. 89). Den verbale teksten består av korte latinske versestrofer (Quinsat 1990 s. 174). Bildene viser et bestemt sted, en plante, et dyr, en hendelse, bibelske scener, mytologiske scener osv. Epigrammet til hvert emblem kalles "subscriptio" og forklarer bildet og gir det som vises på bildet dets egentlige betydning (Szyrocki 1968 s. 16). Et ørnerede som invaderes av maur som ødelegger eggene til den "kongelige" fuglen, var et emblem for herskeren som trues av sitt folk. Krokodilletårer er i dag fortsatt forståelig for de fleste, mens en salamander i en flamme var emblem for et menneske i lidenskapens flamme. Boka kom i mange opplag (Szyrocki 1968 s. 16).

Hos Alciato er kameleonen et bilde på smiger. En mann som står i vannet og ser opp på grener fulle av frukt, er et bilde på Tantalus, en mytologisk skikkelse fra den greske antikken som fikk nettopp en slik uoppnåelighet som straff. Mange av antikkens figurer og fortellinger (f.eks. fra diktere som Petronius Arbiter og Horats) ble "emblematiske moralisert" (Kayser 1973 s. 76) på denne måten.

Alciatos' bok kom i 150 opplag, samt at han fikk over 600 "etterlignere" (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 196).

"En av de mest kjente "Emblemata", av italieneren Andrea Alciato, ble trykket i 1531. Utbredelsen var så stor at bare fra det 16. århundre kjennes 125 forskjellige utgaver, bl.a. fra Aldus' [den italienske trykkeren Aldus Manutius sine] sønner og Plantins presse. Av andre emblematikere kan nevnes Jean-Théodore de Bry, Jean-Jacques Boissard og Joachim Camerarius. Deres bøker kom alle ut i 1590-årene. Beslektet med den emblematiske litteraturen var impresenlitteraturen, som er litteratur om de merkene og emblemene som ble brukt som "bumerker" på rustninger, våpen, klær osv., og også i bøker som forløpere for ex libris. De ble ofte brukt sammen med deviser og som et supplement til slektsvåpen. De har sammen

med emblemene hatt stor innflytelse, spesielt på ettertidens boktrykker- og forleggermerker og papirfabrikkenes vannmerker.” (Davidsen 1995 s. 87) “impres (n): heraldic device, emblem.” (<http://www.elizabethanauthors.org/glossary.pdf>; lesedato 15.02.13) Impresenslitteratur forklarer sammenhengene mellom heraldiske tegn og de korte tekstene (valgspråk, deviser) som hørte til tegnene/tegningene.

“In recent years, scholars in many disciplines have recognized that the literally thousands of engravings, wood blocks, and etchings in emblem books constitute an unparalleled source not only for the study of daily life of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but also for extraordinary insights into what the intellectuals of the times viewed as a necessary adjunct to heraldry, social life, politics, philosophy, and moral behavior. The English emblem books [...] are cultural artifacts frequently used in the analysis of reading practices, printing history, Elizabethan popular culture, the use of allegory, and the relationship of word to image. An emblem combines a picture and text for the striking presentation of a message. For example, an emblem titled *In astrologos* alongside a picture of Icarus may at first seem mystifying, but the epigram beneath the picture explains that astrologers like Icarus get into trouble because they are overreaching their human limitations. The emblem text concludes that humans should not inquire into the mysteries that God has reserved for himself. In an exhibit of Penn State’s emblem books in 1993, Daniel Russell, head of the French and Italian department at the University of Pittsburgh, wrote that “these compact little compositions could be displayed on the reverse of medals, in festival decor, on costumes, and in all kinds of programs of political propaganda or religious pageantry. They were considered so effective in communicating pithy public relations messages that their composition was actually part of the curriculum of the upper classes in Jesuit schools in the first half of the seventeenth century. Emblem books provided moralizing and explanatory commentary that made these figures easier to read when they were encountered in the commerce of everyday life.” ” (Sandra Stelts i <https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/digital/emblem.html>; lesedato 11.12.14)

“[T]he earliest emblem book, Andrea Alciato’s *Emblemata*, was written in Latin by an Italian, first published in Augsburg (1531), and thereafter in numerous editions in Paris, Lyon and Antwerp, variously in Latin, French, German or Spanish, and in some cases in bilingual combinations. The earliest English emblem book, Geoffrey Whitney’s *Choice of Emblemes* (1586) was published not in England but in Leiden. Georgette de Montenay’s *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes* (1567) was first published in France in French, but fifty years later, in 1619, it was published in Frankfurt in a polyglot version making the text available simultaneously in five different European languages, plus Latin, as well as the original French. In the seventeenth century emblem books published in the Netherlands commonly appeared in polyglot form.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 25.04.16)

Emblemer var viktige i barokkdiktningen, som påvist av bl.a. Albrecht Schöne i boka *Emblematikk og drama i barokkens tidsalder* (1964; på tysk). Mange henspillinger og sentenser i barokkdiktning blir bare forståelige hvis leseren har kjennskap til mer eller mindre kjente emblemer. Emblematiske bilder kunne også fungere som gåter i et underholdende spill for dannede mennesker (Zima 1995 s. 136).

“Emblem books are a genre of illustrated books that was popular from the 16th to the 18th centuries in Europe. Emblem books contain illustrations that often visually represent or illustrate a moral fable or an allegory. The illustration is often paired with a phrase of text, like a motto or an epigram, that further explains the image. Many emblem books serve a didactic purpose and explain virtues, vices, religious principals etc. through words and image. Many significant artists, authors, and engravers contributed to the creation of emblem books and the texts compiled by Andrea Alciati and Cesare Ripa are celebrated examples of the genre.” (<https://archive.org/details/dulemblem>; lesedato 19.12.14)

“[T]he earliest French emblem books [are] Corrozet’s *Hecatombgraphie* (1540), La Perrière’s *Theatre des bons engins* (1540) and *Morosophie* (1553) as well as Claude Paradin’s influential collection of *Devises heroiques* (1551) and Montenay’s *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes* in the earliest then-known edition of 1571. In France the Paris publishing house Aux Amateurs des Livres specialized in producing facsimiles of seventeenth-century French emblem books including Jean Baudoin’s 1659 *Recueil d’emblemes divers*, Albert Flamen’s 1672 *Emblemes ou devises d’amour*, and the 1619 polyglot edition of Montenay’s *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes*.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 27.04.16)

“[I]n the thirty years after Alciato’s emblem book all the subsequent writers of emblems were French (Guillaume de la Perrière, Gilles Corrozet, Barthélemy Aneau, Guillaume Guérault, Pierre Coustau). Not until the mid 1560s did the Low Countries enter into the field with the publication by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp of the Latin emblem books of the Hungarian and Dutch humanist writers Joannes Sambucus (1564) and Hadrianus Junius (1565), and the rest of Europe followed suit even later. [...] The 1980s saw the publication in France of two volumes of collected essays on the European emblem (by M. T. Jones-Davies and Yves Giraud), and of Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani’s study of *Emblèmes de la mort*, and the 1990s the publication of Paulette Choné’s monumental study of *Emblèmes et pensée symbolique en Lorraine (1525-1633)* and Jean-Marc Chatelain’s *Livres d’emblèmes et de devises: une anthologie (1531-1735)* with useful accompanying commentary.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 19.04.16)

“Applied emblematics is a clumsy but appropriate phrase to embrace the European-wide use of emblematic forms in architecture, embroidery, tapestry, and painted ceilings [...] Another major area of applied emblematics is in court and civic

festivities, and political propaganda. The important contribution made in this domain in the seventeenth century by members of the Society of Jesus has been increasingly studied, and in particular that of the prolific Jesuit polymath Menestrier. Emblematics were also used by the Jesuits as a teaching device in their schools, and – in a very different way – emblems were also exploited by the Jesuits as an effective meditational tool. Produced by other Catholic writers as well as by Jesuits, the emblem became a major player in Counter-Reformation devotional literature, but interestingly the form was exploited equally effectively by Protestant writers, and the religious emblem book has recently become the subject of much scholarly attention, notably by Ralph Dekoninck and Agnès Guiderdoni-Bruslé [...] Protestant emblem books of Montenay, Théodore de Bèze and Jean-Jacques Boissard, *Webs of Allusion*. While love emblems and divine love emblems have traditionally been seen as an essentially Dutch creation, developing in the early seventeenth century, and rapidly spreading across Europe in polyglot editions, rendering them easily accessible to any literate person, the recent discovery of an early sixteenth-century French emblem book on the nature of love has raised an interesting question mark over the Dutch origins of the form.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 18.04.16)

En kunsthistorisk sett svært innflytelsesrik emblembok ble utgitt av italieneren Cesare Ripa i 1593. Hans emblemer inspirerte blant andre maleren Antonio Cavallucci. Francis Quarles ga ut verket *Emblemer* i 1635, Jean Baudoin *Forskjellige emblemer* i 1639-40. Antoine de La Fayes bok *Emblemer* (1610) hadde kun verbal tekst, ingen bilder (Quinsat 1990 s. 175).

I perioden 1531 til 1699 har det antakelig blitt gitt ut over tusen forskjellige emblembøker i Europa (Souiller 1988 s. 197). En av grunnene til sjangerens store suksess var sannsynligvis folks fascinasjon for merkelige bilder (Quinsat 1990 s. 175).

Den engelske dikteren Samuel Daniel oversatte Paolo Giovios emblembok til engelsk med tittelen *The Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius* (1585) (<https://episteme.revues.org/916>; lesedato 02.06.16).

På 1600-tallet var det i Tyskland mange dramatikere som brukte emblemer som inspirasjon til å skrive tragedier (sørgespill). “Utsagnene” i emblemer ble brukt som argumenter som hadde en utvilsom gyldighet (Szyrocki 1968 s. 200-201). Emblemene fungerte dessuten som tolkningsnøkler til verkene, og garanterte at verden er meningsfull. Middelalderens menings-/ordenstenkning varte ved til slutten av 1600-tallet, og var forankret i emblemene (Szyrocki 1968 s. 201).

Under fester og feiringer i Tyskland på 1600-tallet hendte det at deltakere framstilte ulike emblemer (med klær og rekvisitter som passet til emblemene). Portaler som disse personene gikk igjennom, minnet tilskuerne om dekorasjoner/tegninger i emblembøker (Szyrocki 1968 s. 202). Slike emblemskikkelser var også vanlig i

barokkens teater, som f.eks. tematiserte verdens forfengelighet. Hele verden kunne oppfattes som et “Theatrum emblematicum” (Szyrocki 1968 s. 202).

George Withers *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, Quickened with metricall illustrations, both Morall and divine: And Disposed into lotteries, that instruction, and good counsell, may bee furthered by an honest and pleasant recreation* (1634) inneholder 200 illustrasjoner lagd av Crispin de Passe som “originally appeared in the *Emblemata Sacra* of Rollenhagius, 1611-1613.” (<https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/digital/emblem/bibliography.html#Wither>; lesedato 19.02.16). Illustrasjonene har tekster med rim på denne måten:

“Illvstr. I. By Knowledge onely, Life wee gaine, All other things to Death pertaine.
Illvstr. II. The Man that hath true Wisdom got, Continues firme, and wavers not.
Illvstr. III. The Law is given to direct; The Sword, to punish and protect
Illvstr. IV. Occasions past are sought in vaine; But, oft, they wheele about againe.
Illvstr. V. By Labour, Vertue may be gain'd; By Virtue, Glorie is attain'd.
Illvstr. VI. Though Fortune prove true Vertues Foe, It cannot worke her
Overthrowe.
Illvstr. VII. A fickle Woman wanton growne, Preferres a Crowd, before a Crowne.
Illvstr. VII. This Ragge of Death, which thou shalt fee, Consider it; And Pious bee.
Illvstr. IX. Before thou bring thy Workes to Light, Consider on them, in the Night.
Illvstr. X. An Innocent no Danger feares, How great foever [sic] it appeares.
Illvstr. XI. A Fool, in Folly taketh Paine, Although he labour still in vaine.
Illvstr. XII. As, to the World I naked come, So naked stript I leave the same.”
(<https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/digital/emblem/books/wither.html>; lesedato 02.03.16)

Et eksempel i *Emblemata: Håndbok om sinnbildekunst i det 16. og 17. århundre* (1963) av Albrecht Schöne og Arthur Henkel (gjengitt fra Groddeck 2008 s. 251-252) viser et bilde av et nakent lite barn med englevinger som berører hodet til en ung kvinne som rekker fram en blomsterbukett. Hun har ikke hår på hodet bortsett fra en pannelugg. Til venstre på bildet vokser en eføy rundt en gammel trestamme. Oversatt fra latin lyder overskriften til bildet: “Overalt er anledningen beredt.” Hovedteksten på latin er omtrent denne: “Slik eføyen overalt finner noe den kan gro fast i, slik tar den forelskete alt han møter som et tegn fra den elskede.” Det skapes altså en analogi mellom eføyen og en forelsket person. Englefiguren på bildet framstiller Amor, og at han er et barn indikerer at kjærlighet har lite med fornuft å gjøre. Hans nakenhet er tegn på både uskyld og sanselig glede (Groddeck 2008 s. 252). Hans vinger kan oppfattes metaforisk: kjærlighet gjør en person lett og flagrende, den bevinger. Kvinnen som Amor griper tak i panneluggen til, er kjent fra andre emblemer. Hun er en personifikasjon av en gunstig anledning (“occasio”). Det er bare ett sted å gripe tak i kvinnens hode, nemlig i panneluggen. Når hun nærmer seg, må du straks gripe tak i det lille hun har av hår, ellers er det for sent. Den gunstige anledningen forsvinner fort. Man må gripe anledningen, slik det heter i et stående uttrykk. Emblemet tematiserer begjær, og varig kjærlighet

som begynner med en gunstig anledning. Occasio-kvinnens blomsterbukett synliggjør en overflod av lykke og fruktbarhet.

“Emblem literature by its allusiveness and secrecy is ideal for a special communication amongst friends. Whitney’s *Choice of Emblemes* [1586], with its dedications to particular individuals is a kind of play on the album amicorum. In the interleaved emblem book, the friend writes on or near the page that has a special meaning to him. In Whitney, the author himself indicates, at the top of the page, to whom the emblem is dedicated, and therefore significant. So *A Choice of Emblemes* might be seen to be a kind of reverse album amicorum, a public, because printed, manifestation of private relations.” (William Barker i <https://www.mun.ca/alciato/album.html>; lesedato 05.05.15) Et “album amicorum” (vennskaps-album) var en bok til å skrive private eller kollegiale hilsener i.

“Significant indicators of the burgeoning awareness of the importance of emblematic studies in the 1980s include: the institution in 1984 of an international Society for Emblem Studies; the creation in 1986 of a specialist periodical, *Emblematica*, published in New York by AMS Press; the launch in 1987 of the first of an ongoing series of triennial International Conferences of the Society for Emblem Studies, held roughly alternately in North America and Europe [...] The 1990s saw the creation in Glasgow of a Centre for Emblem Studies, capitalizing on the riches of the Stirling Maxwell Collection in Glasgow University Library, which is the most important collection of emblem books in the world. Since 1996 the Glasgow Centre for Emblem Studies has published thirteen volumes of essays on aspects of the emblem in its series *Glasgow Emblem Studies*, many of which include items on French emblems.” (Alison Saunders i <http://fs.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/455.full>; lesedato 19.04.16)

Alison Adams og Stanton J. Linden redigerte i 1998 boka *Emblems and Alchemy*, som “explore the relationships between text, image, and alchemical practice. [...] the medical uses of alchemy which, along with the transmutation of base metals into gold, was the pseudoscience’s primary function. [...] parallels between Shakespeare’s poem and the alchemical texts of Maier and Elias Ashmole, and gives precise textual analyses which draw interesting comparisons between “sexual conjunctions” and “chemical weddings” (143).” (<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=modlangfrench>; lesedato 04.04.18)

Alle artiklene og litteraturlista til hele leksikonet er tilgjengelig på <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no>