

nate in inclusion (*Works*) and on the other for being overly zealous in criticism (*Lives*).

Other chapters deal with literature as it finds its way into the curricula of schools, Dryden's sense of literary tradition, the canon of literature by women, and the opposition between classical and gothic models for English literature. Terry's achievement is in part encyclopedic, for he discusses a great many books and in so doing creates something like one of the dictionaries that he describes. Fortunately, he does a fine job of tying his material together. He subordinates well and is neither indiscriminate in inclusion nor overly zealous in criticism. He may miss a book or two, and I was surprised not to see Horace Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors* among his biographical dictionaries. He also is perhaps a little off base when he says that he hopes he has been successful in changing the view that the eighteenth century is characterized by its suppression of women's literary voices. Many would say that there was plenty of suppression but that significant numbers of women managed to overcome it. These, however, are small problems. *Poetry and the Making of the English Literary Past* is both an important study of literature as an idea and a pleasant read. It is at the same time a serious and reliable reference work, to which I expect to return from time to time.

John Manning: *The Emblem*. London: Reaktion, 2002. ix + 398 pp. + 150 illus. \$35.00. Review by WILLIAM E. ENGEL.

John Manning is well known to scholars working on the connection between poetry and the visual arts. Here at last is the culmination of decades of his research and ruminations, the result of his careful scholarship and irrepressible jocundity. This book is one of the most provocative and substantial books on literary criticism and art to appear in a long time, and it is destined to be a pacesetter for years to come.

Manning begins his study of the emblem by situating its origin, as near as can be determined, in the festive, coterie environment of

Alciato's circle of friends. Just as we might say things among dinner guests that we might not declare in public, so too with the first collection of epigrams published without the creator's approval (42). This becomes an emblematic moment for how Manning subsequently treats the genesis and development of the form, focusing less on the austere and more on the ludic aspects. This is true with respect to his style as well, which ably matches the content.

Among the delights of this book are the author's apt colloquialisms ("the very riddle of the Sphinx, that dies when answered"), his echoes of great literature folded into his text ("stale, flat and unprofitable"), and his always impeccable scholarly approach to various reinventions and mutations of the emblem up to the present day. Throughout are displays of wit and intellectual verve that complement his never-flagging and cheering study. For example the concluding chapter, aptly entitled "Last Things" tells the story of the emblem up to the modern age while surveying popular seventeenth-century works concerning, well, last things: Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven—the "chiliastic horror" which gave shape to many of the emblem books, reflecting the extent to which "their attitudes are shaped by an acute *post mortem* consciousness"(275). Along the way, many important presuppositions about the age are opened up to critical scrutiny; many are debunked and then recast in a way that renders Manning's analysis fresh, fullsome, and profitable.

In particular, this book is critical of the well-intentioned efforts to bring emblem literature to a wider, contemporary audience through facsimile reprints. Manning implicitly warns us against resting too easily and readily with new print and digital technologies because they tend expensively to "preserve the errors and typographical idiosyncrasies of individual copies, even down to the accidents at the press, the ink blots and scribbles left by early readers, which render, on occasions, the printed text illegible" (17). And yet, on the other hand, in the service of his larger argument, this study puts to good use several popular assumptions associated with history of the book research as it pertains to the performance of culture; specifically, the view that the "printed book had a life of its

own, and its shape and destiny was controlled by various hands—booksellers, printers, artists, composers and editors” (46). All of this contributes to Manning’s effort to breathe new life into the ever-growing body of emblems studies.

It is in this regard that the thirty-six page Introduction is indispensable, and should be required reading for anyone interested in gaining a deeper and more thorough understanding of how to approach the study of emblems and visual regimes of early modern culture. This is made possible though because, in the Introduction, Manning wisely warns against any simple definition of the emblem while also cautioning against overly pedantic ones. He points out, most importantly, that the very question “What is an emblem?” is not even a good question, because it implies that the answer lies “in the same eternal present as the question, and that there is *an* emblem, a normative type” (21).

Although it is a long book by contemporary academic publishing standards, it is a very important book, page for page. It is not so much to be considered a reference work as an exemplary reminder of how a responsible scholar thinks about literary criticism before setting out to practice it. And while the reader with some knowledge of the key texts discussed will learn new things about the main sources usually cited in emblem studies (from Alciato and Giovio, through Whitney, Wither, and Quarles, to Vænius and Valeriano, and even some of the less well known writers of the later seventeenth century), the reader new to emblem studies will find here many avenues of research worthy of future pursuit.

And for the emblem-savvy reader as for the newcomer alike, there is much to be mined from the second chapter entitled “Towards an Emblematic Rhetoric” (which considers such perennial themes as the primacy of the word, the primacy of the image, and iconographic redundancy), as is there from the Appendix, consisting of facsimile pages from three emblem books which “deploy representative strategies by which word and image relate to one another.” Chosen for the exemplarity, we are presented with an edition of Alciato, a book derived from the French Court culture of Louis XIV, and a late edition of Quarles that “shows an accommodation

of Protestant and Catholic traditions of meditation" (321). The sixteen-page index, three columns per page, is invaluable (including a complete listing of all of the mottoes cited). As an earlier review noted in this regard, this book is unique among emblem studies for its frank indexing of anatomical body parts including the most private, male and female. But we would expect no less, given the unshrinking and unapologetic tone of the entire volume which seeks to set new standards for what we think about and what we do with emblems.

Though a light touch may characterize this book, it is not all, "as the Erasmian motto warns us, simply fun and games" (144). Notwithstanding the joyous ethos of this volume, Manning's virtuoso performance owes a great deal to his previous experience as a scrupulous editor of rare and, in some cases, unique archival materials. And the result is a festive celebration indeed, with chapters including "Children and Childish Gazers," "Carnal Devotions," and "Licentious Poets and the Feast of Saturn." The gamesome aspect of the emblem, long recognized by scholars by virtue of explicit references such as Wither's lottery at the end of his celebrated collection, at last is extended to take into account a much larger part of the tradition than previously had been considered decorous. This provides—indeed restores—a context for thinking about, and for rethinking, the culture of emblems and ingenious displays of wit in its many forms so prevalent during the seventeenth century. In the end then, as Manning maintains, the emblem should not "be used as a peep-hole into the cultural assumptions of the period"; but rather, "the emblem itself can only be understood in terms of the broad cultural assumptions that produced it" (9).

Henk van Os, Jan Piet Filedt Kok, Ger Luijten, Frits Scholten *et al.* *Netherlandish Art at the Rijksmuseum 1400-1600*. Amsterdam and Zwolle: Rijksmuseum and Waanders, 2000. 279 pp. + 194 col. pls. + 139 b&w illus. \$65.00.