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## Cor castum Dei speculum: Emblematics and the Heart Emblem in Jesuit Literature

**Abstract:** This study focuses on the characteristic features of the emblems, the emblematic procedure, and the main functions, goals, and significance of the emblem books in the context of Jesuit spirituality and practice. It points out some prominent authors of Jesuit emblem books with a major influence on the development of this form of art in literature and art. It focuses on the heart emblem as a symbol of heart purification and on the artistic manifestations of “*religio cordis*” (the religious cult of the heart). It introduces one of the most popular books with heart emblems published on the territory of present-day Slovakia in the first half of the seventeenth century, the so-called “heart booklet” of Mátyás Hajnal, a typical sample of Jesuit emblematics devoted to the promotion of Catholic reforms at the time of the Counter-Reformation.

**Key words:** emblematics – heart emblems – Jesuit literature – 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century

**Słowa kluczowe:** emblematyka – emblematy serca – literatura jezuicka – XVII–XVIII w.

## Introduction

Emblematics as a form of art combining words and images into a single, enclosed allegorical unit became one of the characteristic elements of illustration readily cultivated by the Jesuits from the early seventeenth century up to the period of High Baroque. The Jesuits regarded emblems as highly suitable tools for promoting and spreading their ideas and views, and they popularized them to a large extent in the first decades of the seventeenth century. Overall, members of the Society of Jesus, who were one of the most influential teachers and orators of the Early Modern Period, played a crucial role in the pre-1773 development of emblems: as many as one third of the total number of European books of emblems in the Early Modern Period were produced by the Jesuits. This study focuses on the characteristic features of emblems, the emblematic procedure, and the major functions, goals, and significance of emblem books in the context of Jesuit spirituality and practice. It points out some prominent authors of Jesuit emblem books with a major influence on the development of this form of art in literature and art. It focuses on the heart emblem as a symbol of the purification of the heart and on the artistic manifestations of “*religio cordis*” (the religious cult of the heart). It introduces one of the most popular books with heart emblems published in the territory of present-day Slovakia in the first half of the seventeenth century, the so-called “heart booklet” of Mátyás Hajnal, a typical sample of Jesuit emblematics devoted to the promotion of Catholic reforms at the time of the Counter-Reformation.

### Characteristics and Functions of Emblems

Emblems consist of an image, a small woodcut or copperplate, with any motif, scene, icon, symbol, etc. (the so-called *pictura*) and a short explanatory text connected to the image. It should be emphasized that epigrams played a crucial role in the genesis of emblematics: emblems came into being only after epigrams were added to the images. The epigrams were short didactic statements with an apt didactic and allegoric explanation of the image, formulated as either a poem or as prose. Upon applying a model of a combined image and text, emblem makers tried to achieve the most consistent synthesis of these two components. Epigrams represented the deciphering element of the emblem, conveying its meaning to the reader under the image (so-called *subscriptio*). A short motto (so-called *inscriptio*) was placed above the image of the emblem, playing the role of a crucial postulate. This was taken from the statements of ancient authors, Biblical verses, proverbs, or the image itself. In terms of form, it was essential to adhere to the unity of the triple structure of the emblem, i.e., the motto (*inscriptio*), the image (*pictura*), and

the epigram (subscriptio) had uniform dimensions, so that there was only one emblem per page in a book.

These three components of the emblems had two major functions: to depict and to interpret. The epigram was not required to interpret the image literally; rather, its task was to clarify the semantic connection between the motto and the image. The double function of depiction and interpretation, entailed by the triple form of the emblem, was based on the fact that the depicted always represented more than what was illustrated<sup>1</sup> and the recipient played an active part in the translation of the symbols engaging his imagination. It may even be regarded as a sort of allegorical play because the emblematic procedure is based on the idea that the world is full of secret messages and hidden meanings which man keeps discovering. Through images and their symbols, the author propounds the principles of Christian dogmas in an allegorical exposition; he deters, admonishes, and delivers lectures to the recipient to regulate his human behaviour. There is an inner connection between emblematics and symbolic theology<sup>2</sup>. Images have a symbolic character and/or are subject to symbolic interpretation<sup>3</sup>. It should be noted, however, that emblematics, especially the Jesuit one, was not only a symbolic, but also a narrative statement.

The Jesuit and humanist Jacobus Pontanus (1542–1626), co-author of the international Jesuit school rules *Ratio Atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Iesu*, explains in his definition of emblems that while the image is the body of the emblem and delights the eye, the epigram is its soul that delights the ear; in symbiosis, the two fulfil the spirit<sup>4</sup>. In Jesuit schooling, emblems played an important role, as discussed below. The priority of the image in emblems is obvious at first glance: Ideally, the emblematic image had a potential factual value and took preference over the explanatory text.

The main task of emblems was to reach out to the individual on his way to salvation, regulate his conduct, and instruct him on life. Emblematics was sort of a human effort of the new, modern period to come to terms with the chaos of their erratic world, offering hope and calling for orderly thinking (as it used to be in the Middle Ages). This is also the message of emblems in Jesuit literature. The fact that emblematic texts often played the role of an appeal to the

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1 R. Dekoninck, *Jesuit Emblematics between Theory and Practice*, [in:] *Jesuit Historiography Online*, 2016 [online] [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/jesuit-historiography-online/\\*-COM\\_192540](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/jesuit-historiography-online/*-COM_192540) [accessed 31.01.2022].

2 *Emblemata : Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, eds. A. Henkel, A. Schöne, Stuttgart 1976, p. XVI, [online] <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/bfm%3A978-3-476-03056-6%2F1.pdf> [accessed 31.01.2022].

3 R. Dekoninck, ref. 1.

4 A.P. Farrell, *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum*, Washington 1970, p. 125, [online] <https://academics.lmu.edu/media/lmuacademics/centerforteachingexcellence/documents/ratio1599.pdf> [accessed 01.02.2022].

reader's conduct gave them an imperative character. They involved a general wisdom, a moral, or rules based on Christian values, sometimes formulated as a short sermon, which predestined them for being used in tendentious Jesuit literature. Baroque authors, the Jesuits, had the ambition to capitalize on the potential of emblems in religious life and reinterpreted the traditional images in terms of specific religious topics. They used emblems in their catechetical literature very effectively to strengthen the Catholic faith at a time when the Reformation was gaining a foothold. Interestingly, the reformer Martin Luther categorically rejected allegorical explanations as a basis for theological argumentation and tolerated them only in the field of Biblical meditation, where allegory was very popular even among the Protestants. Moreover, not only Counter-Reformation, but also Reformation utilized the artistic form of emblems with a spiritual meaning. In seventeenth-century Hungarian Protestant literature, emblematics as a moralistic genre was developed by the humanist writer Ján Weber of Prešov in the politico-philosophical literature, which he compiled and published. In his writings, which represent mirrors for princes and are critical moralistic works, his emblems show a symbolic mirror to the reign and virtues of an ideal Christian politician and ruler, with epigrams criticising desire for power<sup>5</sup>. Weber had the ambition to thus regulate the life and conduct of rulers in the right direction and to give advice on how to rule<sup>6</sup>. His self-representation in his emblematics should also be noted: it is linked to some important events in his own life (e.g., his appointment as the mayor of Prešov), while he himself is the central motif of one of his emblems. It should be added that the pioneer of emblematic literature in Slovak territory was the humanist Ján Sambucus, the author of the work *Emblemata cum aliquot nummis antiqui operis* (Antwerp, Ch. Plantin 1564), whose central idea was the propaganda of the Habsburgs<sup>7</sup>.

### Prominent Figures, Methods and Aims of Jesuit Emblems

Florentine humanists in the sixteenth century gave a direct impulse to the genesis of emblems as an artistic genre, dealing with Egyptian hieroglyphs and their symbolism, trying to decipher the meaning of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic

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5 L. Lichnerová, *Prínos prešovského lekára a lekárniky Jána Webera do tlačenej produkcie 17. storočia na Slovensku*, "Studia Bibliographica Posoniensia" 2008, Vol. 1, p. 135, [online] [https://www.ulib.sk/files/Publikacie/SBP/sbp\\_1\\_2008.pdf](https://www.ulib.sk/files/Publikacie/SBP/sbp_1_2008.pdf) [accessed 10.02.2022].

6 E. Brodňanská, A. Koželová, E. Juríková, *Ján Weber : Vladárske čítanie*, Prešov 2019, p. 8, [online] [https://www.unipo.sk/public/media/32737/Brodnanska-Kozelova\\_Jurikova\\_final-tlac.pdf](https://www.unipo.sk/public/media/32737/Brodnanska-Kozelova_Jurikova_final-tlac.pdf) [accessed 10.02.2022].

7 A digitized version of the work is available on the Internet: [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=zMc3ec1JX9YC&printsec=frontcover&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=zMc3ec1JX9YC&printsec=frontcover&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false) [accessed 10.02.2022].

writing<sup>8</sup>. The first theoretician of emblematics who adopted the graphic motifs of hieroglyphic art into his emblems was Andreas Alciatus (1492–1550), an Italian jurist from Milan. His book of emblems, *Emblematum liber*, published in Augsburg in 1531, contained a hundred and twelve half-page woodcuts by the graphic artist Jörg Breu the Elder, a prominent member of the Danube School from Augsburg<sup>9</sup>. A large number of extended and commented editions drew on this 1531 Augsburg edition, and we are aware of its several translations into European national languages. Alciatus played a crucial role in emblems as a genre spreading throughout Europe. His emblems were adopted, edited, or reinterpreted by many authors. Alciatus recommended his emblems to craftsmen and artists as templates. The same was done by younger artists, who offered them to poets, preachers, and orators. This practice caused the same emblems to appear in several sources and their origin cannot be determined reliably. Moreover, a uniform interpretation of specific images in epigrams was quite frequent, since emblem makers would return to the same sources or take the emblems over from their predecessors. For this reason, we may talk about a conventionalized canon of emblematic meaning<sup>10</sup>. It should be emphasized that, thanks to Alciatus, the word ‘emblem’ became a general term for its kind in arts and literature and has appeared in all branches of art ever since<sup>11</sup>. By time, various subjects evolved in the emblems, especially spiritual, Biblical, Christological, Marian ones, which were used by the Jesuits to represent their monastic emblematics. In addition, emblematic coats of arms and emblematic genealogies of noble families, and even erotic, courtly/political, and alchemistic emblems became popular. In humanistic circles, emblem production grew into moralistic and didactic picture books. Emblematics was notably cultivated primarily in Germany; about a third of all emblem books are of German origin.

Jesuit emblematics, which the Jesuits developed for religious and educational purposes and for achieving their politico-religious interests, formed an important part of Baroque art. In the emblem culture of the Jesuits, spirituality, education, and visual arts intertwined in a unique way. According to the areas of use, three basic types of emblem books were classified: spiritual, didactic, and heroic (individual or collective), corresponding to spirituality, teaching at schools, and festive occasions, respectively. The spiritual emblem books represented the most numerous category among the Jesuits, suggesting a very close connection between the art of meditation and emblematic art. The

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8 A. Henkel, A. Schöne, ref. 2.

9 P. Voit, *Emblematika*, [in:] *Encyklopedie knihy*, [online] <https://www.encyklopedieknihy.cz/index.php?title=Emblematika> [accessed 02.02.2022].

10 A. Henkel, A. Schöne, ref. 2, pp. XI–XII.

11 *Ibidem*, p. XVII.

spiritual foundations of the boom in Jesuit emblem culture should be looked for in the oeuvre of the founder of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola. His motto “finding God in all things” became a precept for a form of spirituality that discovers signs of divine presence in the real world. The idea that the visible is the sacred manifestation of the invisible encouraged the development of symbol culture, of which the Jesuits were masters. Loyola’s followers acted on his exhortation to achieve salvation by serving God by developing spirituality through a symbolic interpretation of the world in line with the symbolic understanding of an image. Loyola appreciated the importance of visual images as tools and points of departure for (private) religious meditation<sup>12</sup>. Here, a certain analogy may be seen between Jesuit spirituality and emblem culture, manifested as a parallelism between the triple composition of an emblem and the technical framework of Loyola for meditation. The triple structure of emblems offers the possibility of a methodical transposition of the fundamental structures of spiritual experience. Loyola’s meditation and spiritual prayer technique include a psychological structure, which addresses memory, intelligence, and will as the three powers of the soul, and a theological structure, which represents the spiritual path of a Christian as a sequence of three steps: purification, enlightenment, and union. The Jesuits viewed the image of the emblems as an interconnection and a symbolic relationship of the corporeal and the spiritual world, with the concrete, depicted story representing the corporeal plane and the spiritual plane requiring human imagination. This method was called “allegoria in factis”. The aim was to instruct and, at the same time, delight the participating recipient, to capture his attention immediately, and to inspire him to decipher the meanings in a creative and ingenious way. Creating and interpreting symbols led to a reform of both internal and external life and a discovery of the final truths. The teachings of Jesuit iconologists had an essentially moral character, but they tried to spread the message universally in a pleasant and humorous form. The aesthetics of the image was subjected to ethical goals. The joy evoked by mental play had to ultimately lead to “docere” and “ducere” – to teaching the truths of the faith and leading a Christian life. The Jesuits played a role in laying the foundations of modern iconology, whose aim is a synthesis of ancient heritage and Christian tradition, of profane and sacred symbolism. The development of symbol and symbolic image theory went hand in hand with the practice of Jesuit emblems in Jesuit colleges, where emblematics was an important part of teaching rhetoric<sup>13</sup>. The Jesuit school rules, *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum*, with their flexible Jesuit curriculum applied

12 N.J. Crowe, *Jeremias Drexel's "Christian Zodiac" : Seventeenth-Century Publishing Sensation. A Critical Edition, Translated and with an Introduction & Notes*, London – New York 2016, p. 11.

13 R. Dekoninck, ref. 1.

uniformly in all Jesuit colleges throughout the world, included requirements for using emblem anthologies to teach rhetoric to students and pupils of lower classes and for being read by the pupils during holidays<sup>14</sup>. The creation of emblems by students at Jesuit colleges was a part of their exercises at lessons of rhetoric<sup>15</sup>. Emblem and epigram books were recommended reading during vacations and as a substitute for reading historical authors on weekends. To improve erudition and poetic techniques, emblems were used as part of reconditioning rhetoric exercises<sup>16</sup>. Every year, students of rhetoric and poetry at Jesuit colleges organized thematic exhibitions of emblems on the Doors Open Day, which was to promote Jesuit education and schooling in every town. These exhibitions were conceived in a way that was to demonstrate the quality of Jesuit doctrine and teaching to the parents of the students, as well as to high political and church figures. The students learned to insert a maximum of Christian and antique wisdom, truth, and moral theology into the images on a single page. By the gift of words, they were to reveal the meaning of the symbols while applying the logical rules of scholasticism and rhetoric. In this way, students had to learn to translate one medium into another by applying the principle that truth can be seen, heard, and grasped through the theoretical rules of rhetoric. Emblems served as an educational tool for combining entertainment with studying, learning with enjoyment. The guiding mottoes of Jesuit emblematic practice were *alacritas* (alacrity, creativity, enthusiasm) and *varietas* (variety, diversity), the two pillars of Jesuit rhetoric which takes delight in surprising by unexpected metaphors. Not only Catholics, but also Protestants were aware of the educational-propaganda role of art, and this function was manifested in the Renaissance and Baroque emblematics of both confessions<sup>17</sup>.

The most influential Jesuit project in the field of emblematics was the publication of *Imago Primi Saeculi Societatis Jesu* (The Image of the First Century of the Society of Jesus) in Antwerp in 1640 on the centenary of the establishment of the Society of Jesus. It was an elaborately illustrated book on the history of the Jesuits, also containing emblems and poetic and rhetoric exercises. This book was an important milestone in the development of Jesuit emblematics, and it offers an overview of the century-long existence of the Society of Jesus. At the same time, it symbolizes the use of emblems as an occasional and festive genre, which stood at the birth of the tradition of Jesuit festivities for their interpretative and decorative function.

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14 *Ratio Atque Institutio Svdiorvm Societatis Iesu*, Antverpiae: Apud Joannem Meursium, 1635, p. 83 (Regulae Praefecti Studiorum inferiorum).

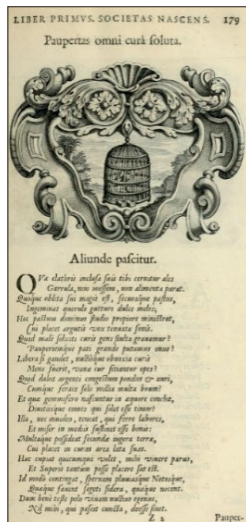
15 *Ibidem*, p. 125.

16 *Ibidem*, p. 126.

17 Z. Dzurňáková, *Úvod do novodobej emblematicy a príklady aplikovaných emblémov v Trnave*, Trnava 2019, p. 90.



Fot. 1a, b, c, d. *Imago Primi Saeculi Societatis Jesu...*,  
 Antverpiae: Ex officina Plantiana..., 1640. Source: [online]  
<https://archive.org/details/imagoprimsaecul00boll> [accessed 07.02.2022]



At the 1640 celebrations of the centenary of the order in Antwerp, the Jesuit college exhibited emblems created by teachers and students, depicting angels modelled after the students. According to existing sources, the depictions were so realistic that parents could recognize the faces of their children in the emblems<sup>18</sup>.

18 R. Dekoninck, ref. 1.



Fot. 2a, b, c, d. H. Hugo *Pia desideria*, Lugduni: Sumptibus Petri Guillimin, 1679. Source: [online] <https://archive.org/details/piadesideriahugo00hugo/page/n4/mode/1up> [accessed 07.02.2022]



The most popular bestseller of seventeenth-century religious emblematics was *Pia desideria* by the Jesuit Herman Hugo, printed in Antwerp in 1624, which saw a hundred and fifty editions and translations in the seventeenth century alone. Of these, forty-eight editions were in Latin, the rest in German, Dutch, English, French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Danish. With over a million printed copies, *Pia desideria* became the most

popular book of emblems in the seventeenth century. Although a Protestant emblem book, Georgette de Montenay's *Emblemes Ou Devises Chrestiennes* (Lyon, 1571), is considered the first book of religious emblems, it was Hugo's *Pia desideria* that had a major impact on the whole continent, including the Protestant England<sup>19</sup>. The emblems' engravings were created by Rubens' collaborator, Boëtius à Bolswert. The great popularity of the book can be attributed to the growing importance of images as a medium in meditation practice, linked to the widespread application of Loyola's postulate to employ all senses in meditation. The purpose of Hugo was "propagatio fidei" and to enhance the Catholic religious identity at a time of growing Reformation. The book, however, exceeded the boundaries of the Catholic faith and became popular even among Protestants. An interesting manifestation of its reception is that it found its way not only to Protestant devotional literature but even to the Protestant churches. This was because its content of ascetic and mystic elegies remained outside the sphere of dogmatism, so it could even be adjusted even to Lutheran devotion<sup>20</sup>.

Great bestsellers of emblematic Jesuit literature also include the works of Jeremias Drexel S.J. (1581–1638), a scholar, priest, and teacher. The most popular of these were his *Zodiacus Christianus* (1618) and *Orbis Phaethon* (1629), both sensations in the seventeenth century, which resonated with readers all over Europe. With these books, Drexel became one of the most published and most read authors of the century. Contrary to Alciatus' model, Drexel (and, following his model, other Jesuit emblem makers, too) used significantly longer prosaic texts in the "subscriptio" part, which is why some theoreticians do not consider these to be typical emblem books. The reason is that these texts were in fact excerpts of Drexel's homilies and, as such, contained all elements of Catholic Baroque homiletics (its typical tools of expression, such as examples, anecdotes, metaphors, similes, analogies, etc.). Not only Drexel, but also other Jesuit authors preferred so-called rhetoricized emblems, in which the subscriptio commented on the relationship between the image and the text according to the model of eloquent homilies<sup>21</sup>. During the seventeenth century, Drexel's emblematic works saw several editions in different languages and in numerous copies not only throughout Germany, but also in the Netherlands, Austria, Bohemia, Hungary (Slovakia), Poland, England, France, and Italy. Between 1620

19 G.R. Dimler, *Herman Hugo's Pia Desideria*, [online] <https://www.brepolsonline.net/doi/epdf/10.1484/M.IFSTU-EB.4.2017104> [accessed 07.02.2022].

20 M. Wislocki, *Hugo wędruje na wschód : Uwagi o recepcji Pia desideria Hermana Hugona w sztuce protestanckiej Europy Środkowej*, "Quart" 2020, No. 2, pp. 17–18, [online] [https://quart.uni.wroc.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/q56\\_02\\_Wislocki-1.pdf](https://quart.uni.wroc.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/q56_02_Wislocki-1.pdf) [accessed 07.02.2022].

21 M. Welion, *Studies in the Jesuit Emblem (review)*, "Renaissance Quarterly" 2008, Vol. 61, No. 2, p. 584, [online] [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236699089\\_Studies\\_in\\_the\\_Jesuit\\_Emblem\\_review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236699089_Studies_in_the_Jesuit_Emblem_review) [accessed 07.02.2022].

and 1639, a hundred and fifty-eight thousand seven hundred copies of his works were published in total in Munich, and almost all were sold out (whereas Munich had a population of only twenty-two thousand at the time). Drexel's emblems were illustrated by Raphael Sadeler I, a Flemish engraver and publisher. Drexel's emblem books were used as a mnemonic device in meditations, in liturgy, in practicing the Catholic faith and in religious education. However, their political aspect was also indispensable. For twenty-three years, Drexel was the court preacher of the Counter-Reformationally oriented Maximilian I at his Bavarian court. Bavaria was the spiritual centre and political bastion of Catholicism, and Maximilian I highly appreciated Drexel (not only as a preacher and writer, but also as his personal confessor). The collaboration of Drexel and Sadeler oscillated between political necessity and Bavarian Jesuit spirituality<sup>22</sup>. Drexel's books of emblems were ultimately so successful that one could conduct research on the piracy practices of publishers in the first half of the seventeenth century only based on them. Essentially, Drexel played an important role in the Catholic reformation of German lands in the seventeenth century<sup>23</sup>, influenced popular piety, and was one of the most influential spiritual writers of his time<sup>24</sup>. Drexel's work also resonated in the Jesuit literature on the territory of Slovakia. In the seventeenth century, Drexel's meditations were translated into Hungarian by Gergely Szentgyörgyi and published in the Printing House of the Jesuit College in Bratislava in 1643 thanks to the publisher Anna Jakusits, the wife of Ján X. Drugeth (Homónai), who was the Superior General of Košice and a curial judge, and a promoter of Catholic Revival.

### Heart Emblems and Mátyás Hajnal's "Heart Booklet" (Vienna 1629, Bratislava 1642)

In Jesuit literature in the Slovak region, Jesuit emblematics boomed, especially in illustrated catechetical writings about following Christ, catechisms, prayer books, liturgical books, and meditations. One of the most popular and most beautiful books with emblems published in the Slovak region in the seventeenth century was M. Hajnal's so-called "heart booklet", titled *Az Jesus Szívét szerető szíveknek ájtatosságára Szíves képekkel kiformáltatott... könyvecske*<sup>25</sup>. This

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22 N. J. Crowe, ref. 11, p. 10.

23 J. Eickmeyer, *Jeremias Drexel, S.J., Iulianus Apostata tragoedia : Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, ed. A. Abele, "Journal of Jesuit Studies", 29 Jan 2020, [online] [https://brill.com/view/journals/jjs/7/2/article-p347\\_347.xml?language=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/jjs/7/2/article-p347_347.xml?language=en) [accessed 05.02.2022].

24 N.J. Crowe, ref. 12, p. 3.

25 A short video presenting its surviving copy at the National Széchényi Library in Budapest is accessible online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBWbSTq2Q28>

book was a model example of Jesuit emblematics<sup>26</sup>. Its first edition was printed in Vienna by the printer Mihály Rickhes in 1629 and its publication was prompted by a Hungarian noblewoman, Krisztina Nyári, the wife of the Hungarian nobleman and regional judge Miklós Esterházy. Its second edition appeared in Bratislava at the Printing House of the Jesuit College in 1642 and was requested by Nyári's sister-in-law, Klára Kapi, the wife of her brother István Nyári, the Chief Captain of Upper Hungary. K. Kapi did so probably in memory of K. Nyári, who passed away at the young age of thirty-six shortly after the delivery of her eleventh child in the previous year, in February 1641. This prayer book in Hungarian, containing Catholic prayers and hymns, had a small 12° format and was elaborately illustrated with woodcuts and Biblical scenes. Eighteen of these (of the first edition) and twenty (of the second edition) introduced emblems with their central scene placed in a large heart. This is why it became known as the “heart booklet”. These heart emblems were engraved by the Jesuit Antoine Wierix of Antwerp<sup>27</sup> and were introduced to the market in his book of emblems, titled *Cor Jesu Amanti Sacrum* (The Sacred Heart of Jesus Devoted to the Believer) around the year 1586/87. This was one of the most significant series of religious emblems altogether<sup>28</sup>. Wierix's book of emblems contained eighteen engravings with Latin verses in two strophes of three lines each. Heart emblems are based mainly on the idea that the heart, not the mind, is the key to spiritual edification. This “religio cordis” (religion of the heart) originated among the Jesuits and represented the basis of their religious mysticism<sup>29</sup>. Heart emblems symbolize the contemplative human heart encountering Jesus's heart<sup>30</sup>.

26 *European Iconography East and West : Selected papers of the Szeged International Conference June 9–12, 1993*, ed. Gy. Szónyi, Leyde-New York-Köln 1996, p. 201, [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=iad500BixGoC&pg=PA201&lpg=PA201&dq=Hajnal+Sz%C3%ADves+konyvecske&source=bl&ots=yfk-c3XAdV&sig=ACfU3U0uoECEx4iGfDNkMfUW7cFPl-3Jng&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjXgPe\\_j-P1AhUHS\\_EDHWpvD9c4KBD0AXoECBQQA-w#v=onepage&q=Hajnal%20Sz%C3%ADves%20konyvecske&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=iad500BixGoC&pg=PA201&lpg=PA201&dq=Hajnal+Sz%C3%ADves+konyvecske&source=bl&ots=yfk-c3XAdV&sig=ACfU3U0uoECEx4iGfDNkMfUW7cFPl-3Jng&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjXgPe_j-P1AhUHS_EDHWpvD9c4KBD0AXoECBQQA-w#v=onepage&q=Hajnal%20Sz%C3%ADves%20konyvecske&f=false) [accessed 07.02.2022].

27 J. Lesti, *Hajnal Mátyás SJ: Szíves könyvecske (Bécs, 1629)*, [in:] *Misztika a 16.-18. századi Magyarországon*. IV. füzet, ed. J. Bogár, Piliscsaba 2013, p. 189, [online] [https://dtk.tankonyvtar.hu/bitstream/handle/123456789/5777/misztika\\_fuzet\\_04.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dtk.tankonyvtar.hu/bitstream/handle/123456789/5777/misztika_fuzet_04.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) [accessed 06.02.2022].

28 R. Grzeškowiak, P. Hulsenboom, *Emblems from the Heart: The Reception of the Cor Jesu Amanti Sacrum Engravings Series in Polish and Netherlandish 17th-Century Manuscripts*, “Werkwinkel” 2015, Vol. 10 No. 2, p. 131, [online] <https://sciendo.com/pdf/10.1515/werk-2015-0016> [accessed 07.02.2022].

29 H. Renders, *A obra Cor Iesv amanti sacrvm de António Wierix: a religio cordis jesuíta no início da reforma católica e a promoção da via mística tripla*, “Imago: Revista para Emblemática y Cultura Visual, Valência, Espanha” 2015, Vol. 7, p. 142, [online] [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293485726\\_7\\_RENDERS\\_Helmut\\_A\\_obra\\_Cor\\_Iesv\\_amanti\\_sacrvm\\_de\\_Antonio\\_Wierix\\_a\\_religio\\_cordis\\_jesuíta\\_no\\_início\\_da\\_reforma\\_católica\\_e\\_a\\_promocao\\_da\\_via\\_mística\\_tripla\\_In\\_Imago\\_Revista\\_para\\_Emblemática\\_y\\_Cultura\\_V](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293485726_7_RENDERS_Helmut_A_obra_Cor_Iesv_amanti_sacrvm_de_Antonio_Wierix_a_religio_cordis_jesuíta_no_início_da_reforma_católica_e_a_promocao_da_via_mística_tripla_In_Imago_Revista_para_Emblemática_y_Cultura_V) [accessed 06.02.2022].

30 J. Lesti, ref. 18, pp. 190–192.

The depiction has an emotional impact on the reader and enhances his mystical experience. The first engraving in the series depicts Jesus' heart, joined in the central part of the image by Saint Francis of Assisi on the left and Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, on the right (the heart is also an attribute of both saints). Both kneel, which is the classic pose of adoration, contemplation, and submission. There are three other figures besides them in the background: two men (laymen) and two women (one of them a nun), of whom the clothing of one man and one woman suggests that they belong to higher, aristocratic circles. This depiction of the same number of men and women and of religious and laypeople in one image may be understood as a reflection of the fact that the Jesuits aimed for a balanced representation of women and men and religious and laypeople in the Society of Jesus. The symbol of the Society of Jesus, the IHS monogram, is in the incipit of the emblem.

The other engravings depict the human heart and most of them have no incipit. The emblems symbolize closeness, love, care, security, virtue, purity, friendship, charity, divine mercy, power, and presence versus sin, opulence, immorality, futile lust, guilt, temptation, vice, evil, diabolical power, and suffering, focusing on affectivity typical for all manifestations of Jesuit piety in the interest of Catholic reforms. They guide human imagination and call for an active path to salvation. With their iconographic language, they invite the reader to become aware of their faults and admit them, since this is indispensable in order to be purified and not to be lost in one's sins. It is a book of Catholic emblems by a Jesuit who taught the spiritual ideal of Catholic reforms by adopting a religious pictorial and textual language. Emblems bear Christological and Mariological elements and contain references even to Greek and Roman mythology<sup>31</sup>. For the first time, Wierix's emblems appeared in the edition of the book of emblems of the French Jesuit Étienne Luzvic titled *Le coeur devot throne royal de Iesus pacifique Salomon* of 1626<sup>32</sup>. Hajnal was familiar with this edition, but did not use Wierix's epigrams in his "heart booklet". Instead, he created his own contemplative texts and Biblical hymns, whose contents were inspired by spousal mysticism and clearly reflected the love style derived from the Old Testament *Song of Songs*<sup>33</sup>. Hajnal was a prominent figure in Catholic reforms in Hungary. He was a disciple of Péter Pázmány, the most renowned Catholic Revivalist of the country, and was credited with the conversion of several Hungarian noblewomen to the Catholic faith. K. Nyári,

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31 H. Renders, ref. 29, p. 153.

32 R. Grzeškowiak, P. Hulsenboom, ref. 28, p. 131.

33 B. Höll, *Hajnal Mátyás elmélkedő könyvének versei*, "Irodalom Történeti Közlemények" 1970, Vol 74, No. 4, p. 525, [online] [http://epa.niif.hu/00000/00001/00268/pdf/itk\\_EPA00001\\_1970\\_04\\_519-526.pdf](http://epa.niif.hu/00000/00001/00268/pdf/itk_EPA00001_1970_04_519-526.pdf) [accessed 10.01.2022].



to whom the first edition of his “heart booklet” is dedicated, was one of them. Hajnal was Krisztína’s friend and converted her to the Catholic faith right after her wedding to Miklós Esterházy, a prominent Jesuit patron in Hungary and a Hungarian palatine, at whose court Hajnal worked as a counsellor<sup>34</sup>. It was Miklós Esterházy, Krisztína’s husband, who stood at the background of publishing Hajnal’s book. He commissioned Hajnal to compile prayers and meditations to strengthen the Catholic faith of his wife<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, Hajnal’s main motivation for compiling his “heart booklet” was this service to his patron and his newly converted wife. It was partly for this reason that he made use of the heart motif for the theological justification of conversion and to approach the psychology of a convert. According to Hajnal’s words in his dedication, K. Nyári played a role in the acquisition of the illustrations for the book<sup>36</sup> and, as Hajnal’s patroness, she undoubtedly contributed to the funding of its publication in Vienna. Hajnal probably acquired the emblems in Vienna, where he made frequent journeys, as his extant correspondence shows. As he reveals in his dedication, he was delighted when he gained the heart-shaped emblems because they “reignited the dormant fire of his spiritual dedication”<sup>37</sup>. In his dedication, he even offers an explanation for some of them, which is essential to understand the ideological message of the work. The heart emblems used by Hajnal were copies of Wierix’s emblems made by the Flemish engraver Martin Baes, which were widespread in Europe<sup>38</sup>. These copies were published for the first time in Charles Musart’s *Cor Deo devotum* in 1627<sup>39</sup>. The series has a contemplative tone and is an iconographic legacy of the Jesuits and a significant manifestation of their religious visual culture. The symbolic, imaginary, mystical, festive, and eschatological horizon of Jesuit doctrine and practice is also present in it.

34 Ibidem, p. 520.

35 S. Körner, *Bibliotheca Esterházyana*, [in:] *Modrá krv, tlačiarenská čerň : šľachtické knižnice 1500 – 1700 : Medzinárodná putovná výstava*, ed. K. Komorová, Martin 2005, p. 107.

36 B. Holl, ref. 31, p. 520.

37 [M. Hajnal], *Az Jesus Szivet Szerető Szivekne Aytatossagara Szives Kepekkel Ki Formaltatott ... könyvechke...*, Nyomtatott Béchben: Rickhes Michal által, 1629, p. a5, [online] <https://books.google.sk/books?id=MSxIAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA18&lpg=PA18&dq=Hajnal+Sz%C3%ADves+konyvecske&source=bl&ots=fsbruRTsZI&sig=ACfU3U0BjUiwd3tpw06mMKQty-RhBB2Y-4w&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjyxs2xi-P1AhVBSPEDHUmTBDS4FBD0AXoECBgQA#w=onepage&q=Hajnal%20Sz%C3%ADves%20konyvecske&f=false> [accessed 10.02.2022].

38 B. Holl, ref. 33, p. 526.

39 *A Régi Magyarországi Nyomtatványok harmadik kötete (1636–1655)*, ed. J. Heltai, Budapest 2000, p. 281.



Fot. 3a. The emblem of Jesus' heart, A. Wierix. Source: S. Luzvic, E. Binet, *Cor Deo Devotvm Iesv...*, Antverpiae: Apud Henricum Aertssium, 1628, [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) [accessed 07.02.2022]



Fot. 3b. The heart emblem: Jesus knocks at a closed human heart, A. Wierix. Source: S. Luzvic, E. Binet, *Cor Deo Devotvm Iesv...*, Antverpiae: Apud Henricum Aertssium, 1628, [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) [accessed 07.02.2022]



Image 3c. The heart emblem: blood flowing from Jesus's wounds as a symbol of receiving Jesus into human hearts and the image of a fountain as a symbol of the purification of the soul, A. Wierix. Source: S. Luzvic, E. Binet, *Cor Deo Devotvm Iesv...*, Antverpiae: Apud Henricum Aertssium, 1628, [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gs\\_b\\_s\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gs_b_s_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) [accessed 07.02.2022]



Image 3d. The heart emblem: the child Jesus as a conductor of an orchestra of angels, a symbol of lifting up the heart into celestial spheres, A. Wierix. Source: S. Luzvic, E. Binet, *Cor Deo Devotvm Iesv...*, Antverpiae: Apud Henricum Aertssium, 1628, [online] [https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gs\\_b\\_s\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=Dx7-9hdVxzAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sk&source=gs_b_s_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) [accessed 07.02.2022]



## Conclusions

Symbolic literature became an indispensable part of the life of Jesuits, who cultivated it for more than a century. Jesuit teachers and preachers regarded emblems as a tool for teaching the faith and morals in public or private, and a crucial component of meditative self-reformation, embedded in his spiritual exercises, *Exercitia spiritualia*, by the founder of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola. For the Jesuits, the emblems were a source of meditative and contemplative reflection on the relationship of the soul with Christ. The Jesuit emblematics was rooted in Jesuit spirituality and boomed in the field of humanistic education. Emblematic posters of teachers and students were the main decoration at Jesuit academic festivals. In the emblems, the Jesuits privileged the visual element to underline the power of symbolic imagination for teaching and convincing the recipient with moral arguments. Popular Jesuit book of emblems, read by Catholics and Protestants, bear witness to the significance of Jesuits as promoters of emblems and their rhetoric theory<sup>40</sup>. Publishing not only in Latin but also in all major European languages, the Jesuits played a crucial role in both the theory and practice of this genre of art. In general, the utmost importance of emblems in tracking the development of poetry in national languages should also be emphasized. They are undoubtedly a significant iconographic and iconological source for learning about Baroque culture.

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