Lugduni Batavorum, ex officina Christophori Plantini

A checklist of Plantin's Leiden imprints, 1583–1586

INTRODUCTION

Since the appearance, over a hundred years ago, of the incomplete and unfinished Annales plantiniennes of Ruclens and De Backer, no separately published work has been devoted exclusively to the bibliography of Plantin's printing. Those wishing to be fully informed as to what Plantin printed must now consult, besides the Annales, a large number of catalogues and other reference works of bibliography — among which the Bibliotheca belgica occupies a prominent position due to its accurate and detailed descriptions — if he is to gain any kind of useful overall picture of Plantin's considerable and various output.

Plantin's Leiden editions, too, have not yet received the bibliographical attention which they undoubtedly deserve. Even a very recent book, when referring to their number, still gives the figure incorrectly as about thirty, an error which arises from Plantin's gift of that number of books to the city authorities of Leiden on 2 January 1585. On the whole, therefore, it seemed useful to compile a checklist of Plantin's Leiden imprints. The compilation of this list immediately revealed a number of notable peculiarities. It at once became apparent, for example, that certain editions, though otherwise clearly printed with the same type matter, occur with either a Leiden or an Antwerp imprint, the former usually reading 'Lugduni Batavorum, ex officina Christophori Plantini', and the latter 'Antverpiae, apud Christophorum Plantinum'.


2 Bibliotheca belgica. Bibliographie générale des Pays-Bas... Rééditée sous la direction de Marie-Thérèse Lenger (Brussels 1964–70), 6 vols. (quoted as BB).


4 E. Hulshoff Pol, 'Boucken op 't sectreet. Plantijndrukken op het Raadhuis te Leiden', Jaarboekje voor de geschiedenis en oudheidkunde van Leiden en omstreken 64 (Leiden 1972), pp. 89–97 (quoted as Hulshoff Pol). I too have been unable to identify the Epistola Remberti Dodonaci ad amicum given there (and in the following list) as no. 28. — No. 3 of Dr. Hulshoff Pol's list is now in the University Library of Amsterdam.
Plantin himself wrote that the books with the Antwerp imprint were not printed in that city but were on sale in his shop there.5

As regards the use of printer's devices we may say the following. Plantin always used the same device in any given format of book, only deviating from this rule where there were clearly definable reasons. In the folios and quartos with the Leiden imprint he almost always used device V. (For the three exceptions in the List see nos. 55–8, 75 and 107.) Political considerations prevented his using this device, a picture of the ‘Hollandsche tuin’ (Dutch, i.e. northern Nether-landish, garden), for copies with the Antwerp imprint, and it was therefore replaced by device VI. Only once did he use device IV with these formats: in the Stanihurst (nos. 97–8 in the list), where neither device V nor device VI would have fitted on the full title-page. For the octavos he generally used device IV except where there was no room, in which case he used device I or II. In three octavos dated 1586 (nos. 20, 80 and 88) he used device III for those copies with the Antwerp imprint. (During this period this is the only use of device III.) For the sextodecimos his rule was to use device I unless there was room for device II.

The following may be said about the period during which Plantin printed in Leiden. Although his first book with the Leiden imprint, Hadrianus Barlandus’s *Hollandiae comitum historia et icones*, bears the year 1584, there are clear indications that it was in fact completed in the previous year: the foreword is dated 13 September 1583 and on 30 September of the same year the States of Holland, to whom the book is dedicated, honoured Plantin with a gift of Hfl 100. The fact that Plantin left Leiden permanently in August 1585 does not mean that the printing works ceased to operate at that time. There are instances of books bearing both the date 1586 and the imprint ‘Lugduni Batavorum, ex officina Christophori Plantini’. It is possible that these are books which were either

5 See Plantin’s letter to Willem van Breugel of 4 May 1586 in *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin, Publiée par J. Denucé*, vol. VII (Antwerp/The Hague 1918), p. 320, letter 1098 (quoted as: Correspondance), especially the passage which runs: ‘... lesdits livres comme ils sont imprimés Antverpiaie Apud Christophorum Plantinum, par lesquels il s’entend que je ne les ay imprimés, mais bien qu’ils sont à vendre à Anvers en nostre boutique,...’. It is conceivable that some books were printed in Leiden but that, for some reason or other, only those copies with Antwerp imprints – ‘Antverpiae, apud Christophorum Plantinum’, in this case – were actually made. The following titles are examples:

Q. Septimii Florentii Tertulliani Opera quae hactenus reperiri potuerunt omnia: ... Cum Iacobi Pameli argumentis & annotationibus ..., 1584, fo. (With a dedication to Pope Gregory XIII); and the series of classics in 24°, without notes: Quinti Horatii Flacci Opera omnia; cum novis argumentis, 1586; D. Iovii Iovellinis Satyrarum libri V. A. Persii Flacci Satyrarum liber I. Omnia nunc operà & iudicio viri docti [= J. Lipsius?] emendata, 1585. (For the ‘vir doctus’ = J. Lipsius, see: C. Iulii Caesaris Commentarii de bello gallico et civili. Eiusdem librorum, qui desiderantur, fragmenta. Omnia nunc operà & iudicio viri docti emendata & edita, 1586, where the ‘vir doctus’ unquestionably is Lipsius. See: BB, I, p. 418, no. C 319); and: *Pub. Virgilii Maronis Opera; Theod. Pullmanni Cranenburgii studio correcta*, 1586.