

**AGAINST METAPHOR:  
STEPHEN BATEMAN'S *A CHRISTALL GLASSE***

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STEPHEN BATEMAN'S *A CHRISTALL GLASSE*  
AS SPIRITUAL POLITICS**

**By  
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## Abstract

I am interested in how *A christall glasse* takes up the notion of Reform – how Bateman both deploys and writes against the notion of reform: multiply political, epistemological, spiritual, linguistic. Writ small in this one text are signs of the tectonic cultural shifts that resulted from England's separation with Rome. In content Bateman's book is concerned with ridding the English spiritual imagination of any vestigial faith in the popish church; and through the form of *A christall glasse*, Stephen Bateman works to instruct his audience in a new kind of reading as a means of rhetorical persuasion. In this thesis, I hope to successfully demonstrate how *A christall glasse* deploys medieval modes of expression to articulate a position on late 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformist ideas, a position that seeks to move away from the practice and traditions of Roman Catholicism towards a Protestant and monarchical envisioning of Christianity in England. In its expression, however, one can detect, within *A christall glasse*, a degree of anxiety surrounding the instability of meaning and truth generated by such reform, by the shaking of the foundations of how faith is understood and politically organized in England which this book, in its small way, performs. I will be reading *A christall glasse* as a text which is at once dependent upon devices of the emblem genre while at the same time uneasy about the viscosity of the form.

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## Foreward

My aims for this project are modest, and were made the more so as I began to familiarize myself with what has been written in the field of emblem studies in the past thirty years. I am indebted to the thinking and seminal writing on emblems by Mary Silcox, Peter M. Daly, Michael Bath, and John Manning. This thesis has been my effort to enter into the conversation they and others have engaged in on the subject of early modern emblems in England and Europe since Peter M. Daly reintroduced the emblem book to scholarship in English with his 1978 book, *Literature in Light of the Emblem*. Stephen Bateman has been a peripheral if not a virtually absent subject of early modern English emblem studies during this rebirth of emblem scholarship, much of which has been dedicated to the rediscovery of texts and the working to define the field in terms of history and genre. I am interested, here, in situating Bateman's *A christall glasse* within larger contemporary debates of emblem studies and in building upon certain lines of Mary Silcox's thought and argument concerning the text, as she articulates them in her essay, "A Manifest Shew of All Coloured Abuses': Stephen Bateman's *A Christall Glasse of Christian Reformation* as an Emblem Book". Throughout my thesis, I pursue a question raised by Mary Silcox in her essay on Bateman's book, in which she asks what might be gained in reading *A christall glasse* as an emblem book. Here, I consider how modern emblem scholarship illuminates a critical reading of *A christall glasse*. I also hope my work on Bateman's text might enrich contemporary emblematics, specifically in terms of current thinking on figurative modes of thought and how such representations are at work in emblems generally.

## Introduction

I was introduced to early modern English emblem books in a graduate seminar focused on rhetoric and devotional poetry. Until then, I had heard nothing of this curious textual practice wherein images and words are combined to form something of a moral puzzle for their readers. These books proved intriguing to me in several ways. What immediately struck me in looking at emblem books was the sensation that through their combinations of words and images I was glimpsing some secret or now forgotten ways of knowing. Most appealing ciphers, these books seemed to capture, encoded in images and symbols, the most ancient of our Western cultural knowledge. Although I could not easily interpret the images before me, I could identify bits and portions of them. Here was a skull, connoting, no doubt, death; there was a book for knowledge; a lily for the Virgin Mother, perhaps; but what narrative this image told, I could not reconstruct. I felt the promise of becoming reconnected with a tradition of philosophical, religious, and literary knowledge I have both inherited and yet have somehow never known.

While my initial enthrallment with emblem books might be derided as akin to a child's belief in magic and the alchemist's hope in his philosophy and inappropriate for a graduate student's critical, objective attitude toward a text, what initially sparked my interest in emblems – the striking sense of mystery one has in glancing at the pages of such a book – is, I suspect, not so far from the appeal of emblem books in 16th and 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe and England. The pleasure of the emblem is indeed that of the puzzle, one that seems to hold not merely some trivial solution to a silly riddle, but one that, if understood, promises to open up a clearer, truer understanding of the nature of the world.

While I hesitated before here mentioning the above, wondering if such an admission appropriate, I realized that this pleasure and sense of the mysterious potentiality of books to reveal otherwise hidden truths is an important aspect of their cultural and political history. This sense is renewed whenever one goes through the process of learning to read in a previously unknown language or genre, when black marks and images on a page gradually resolve themselves and open up new worlds of meaning to the reader. Noting this is not to indulge in some romantic notion of books and reading; rather, this sense of mystery, a mystery revealed once the peruser of the text gradually begins to read, is central to both Bateman's *A christall glasse* and to my thesis on it.

Bateman's book is directly and vehemently political. *A christall glasse* was written in a post-Reformation politics and spirit and speaks directly to the religious conflict in England and against all things Roman Catholic, in the hope of pushing its readers forward, towards a more peaceful, Protestant England. In it, Bateman addresses the ongoing struggle between Catholics and Protestants in mid-16<sup>th</sup> century England, with the first half of his book dedicated to the Catholic embodiment of the seven deadly sins and the latter half extolling Queen Elizabeth as a near Christ-like

avatar or earthly keeper of God's love and divine truth. The book depends upon more pictorial and analogic modes of expression and thought than would be known in the era it was heralding.

I am interested in how *A christall glasse* takes up the notion of Reform – how Bateman both deploys and writes against the notion of reform: multiply political, epistemological, spiritual, linguistic. Writ small in this one text are signs of the tectonic cultural shifts that resulted from England's separation with Rome. In content Bateman's book is concerned with ridding the English spiritual imagination of any vestigial faith in the popish church; and through the form of *A christall glasse*, Stephen Bateman works to instruct his audience in a new kind of reading as a means of rhetorical persuasion. In this thesis, I hope to successfully demonstrate how *A christall glasse* deploys medieval modes of expression to articulate a position on late 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformist ideas, a position that seeks to move away from the practice and traditions of Roman Catholicism towards a Protestant and monarchical envisioning of Christianity in England. In its expression, however, one can detect, within *A christall glasse*, a degree of anxiety surrounding the instability of meaning and truth generated by such reform, by the shaking of the foundations of how faith is understood and politically organized in England which this book, in its small way, performs. I will be reading *A christall glasse* as a text which is at once dependent upon devices of the emblem genre while at the same time uneasy about the viscosity of the form.

Considered within its 16th century context, the moral reading of words and images promulgated in Bateman's *A christall glasse* becomes central to my consideration of how his book functions rhetorically and politically. While the question of the impact of the shift from visual to verbal and from analogic to literal ways of perceiving and representing the world on one's spiritual self-identity is difficult to answer, I believe *A christall glasse* suggests some possible responses to it.

Bateman introduces his book to readers as a mirror through which they might better see the "coloured abuses" of their times and so avoid falling prey to them. I argue that the notion of seeing on which the title of *A christall glasse* depends is synonymous with reading in the broad interpretive sense of the word and in the more specific sense of reading – or creating meaning, the correct meaning – in his text. While he deploys a mode of expression characterized by polysemousness, his project is to offer his readers a singular "right reading," first of his book's images and, by extension, the coloured abuses of his time.<sup>1</sup>

In this thesis, I argue that reading becomes an emblematic rather than a metaphoric attempt to rein in the power of words and images. This notion of reading is opposite to that conceived of in most considerations of how emblem books function to create meaning. As Peter M. Daly notes in *Literature in the Light of*

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<sup>1</sup> In her essay, "'A Manifest Shew of All Coloured Abuses': Stephen Bateman's *A Christall Glasse* of Christian Reformation as an Emblem Book," Mary Silcox asserts an intended connection between the woodcuts' representation of vice and the recognition of vice in the world.

*the Emblem*: in emblem books, “the manner of communication is connotative rather than denotative” (8). I am suggesting that Bateman’s book functions in the reverse. Uneasy about the connotative possibilities of language, both verbal and visual, Bateman works to denote one reading alone. His particular use of the emblematic form amplifies what Bateman implicitly suggests is the form’s unreliability and potential for deception. Bateman is left to struggle with a form that both assists and threatens to undo his purpose in making clear to readers that they must guard themselves against the coloured abuses promulgated by the Catholic Church by arming themselves with the steadfast truth of Christ. This move away from reading as a figurative or connotative act to a denotative one is, I shall contend, involved in the process Mary Silcox describes in her essay, “‘A Manifest Shew of All Coloured Abuses’,” where she suggests Bateman’s book functions beyond the printed page to teach readers how to read not only words and images, but the world (223). The notion of authority and the extent to which the authority to generate meaning is shared between author and reader must be addressed in an effort to explicate this process. Specifically, through the content and emblematic structure of *A christall glasse*, Bateman constructs an author and positions his reader in such a way as to exploit and deny the mutable, metaphoric meaning of images and words, as a means, I argue, of cautioning his readers against the religious instability of the times and of guiding them toward an anti-Catholic Christian faith. While Bateman introduces the reading of his text as a “godly exercise,” he is equally interested in both the spiritual and political status of his reading subjects.

*A christall glasse* becomes particularly interesting not only when read for the mode of perception and thought (*qua* reading) it promotes, but for the vision it offers of its time. In the first chapter of my project, I attempt to place Bateman’s *A christall glasse* within its historical context, as a means of introducing how it addresses the political and theological turmoil of the times and in order to develop a sense of how it can be understood as participating within specific writing traditions. This first chapter takes up several of Mary Silcox’s points regarding the structure and function of Bateman’s *A christall glasse* as considered within the contexts of emblem history and the cultural history out of which Bateman’s book grew and in which it participated.

While the focus of my reading of Bateman’s book is on the rhetorical effects of its content and structure – I am particularly interested in how these elements instruct the reader in a certain experience and understanding of reading – *A christall glasse* cannot be read in isolation from its time, for it is a book whose intention it is to speak to the political and religious climate in which it was written and published. Placing *A christall glasse* within its historical context, one defined by the uncertainty of reform resulting from a succession of rulers and shifting royal support for varieties of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism allows one to better understand both the nature and motivation behind Bateman’s argument and the stylistic means used to present it to a specific audience. What is remarkable about the aesthetics and rhetoric of *A christall glasse* is that Bateman uses the genre of the emblem book, one

that possesses great potential for interpretive flexibility and playfulness, to say that such flexibility is in fact an instability the devil deploys, a trick that will tempt the wavering mind. From this premise, Bateman attempts to reinscribe certitude of meaning in both his text and the world out of which it was written.

From this brief consideration of context arise several questions pertaining to the book's reception. What kinds of acts were denoted by the verb 'to read' in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century? If there is no material record of even one reader's reaction to *A christall glasse*, how might one formulate an argument regarding reader-response? What kinds of intratextual evidence and what quantity of such evidence is sufficient to attempt to reconstruct Bateman's intended reader? While these questions cannot be fully addressed in this project, they do motivate the latter chapters of my thesis, which are focused on notions of reading, authority, and interpretation.

In the second chapter of my thesis, I consider *A christall glasse* as a hybridized text, one written within the medieval Christian tradition of a book of vice and virtue and as an emblem book. There is some irony here, in Bateman's choice of using a traditionally Catholic form to take a stand opposite the Roman Catholic church as he argues for a nationalistic, essentially Protestant Christianity. By following Bateman's argument through the woodcuts and words depicting wrath, lechery, gluttony, sloth, envy, pride, love, faith, hope, charity, justice, truth, wisdom, and peace, one realises that within this spiritually oriented text, *A christall glasse* is a very politically motivated text, one concerned with warning its readers of the "coloured abuses" of, specifically, the practices and practitioners of the Catholic church.

It is from here that I argue, in the third chapter of my thesis, that, thanks to the truth and clarity offered by *A christall glasse*, Bateman is specifically interested in teaching readers how to read themselves in the world, through offering them a newly envisioned sense of their own subjectivity, both spiritual and political. Bateman, I suggest, strives to accomplish this by directing his audience toward a particular understanding of Christian truth which carries with it calls for political conduct. What is interesting about Bateman's project is that he deploys his chosen medium to great effect as a means of supporting his claims. By working to instruct his readers in a particular mode of reading, Bateman argues his position for a new, Protestant religious subjectivity that recognizes Queen Elizabeth as spiritual sovereign.

The latter half of my thesis is dedicated to looking more closely at how Bateman encourages a particular manner of reading his text through the interpretive power assigned to the authorial voice of *A christall glasse* and through the anxiety he creates around a reader's interpretation of images made independently of the author's own interpretation. *A christall glasse* is intriguing as an example, an embodiment, really, of the discouraging of metaphoric thought.

While I agree with Mary Silcox that "the emblems of *A Christall Glasse* engage the reader's mind in unmistakably emblematic fashion, with interplay amongst familiar iconography, strikingly memorable images, and verbal riddles and applications" (215), I would like to suggest additionally that Bateman proceeds to generate a nervousness, an unease, around this interplay. Although Bateman's

creative work as a writer depends upon the metaphoric realization of connections among emblem elements, Bateman's epistle to his readers expresses reluctance that such metaphoric potentiality of meaning be available to them. I shall demonstrate that through his deployment of the rhetorical structure of the emblem, Bateman forcefully closes off all meanings but one, that which is expounded in his exposition: his own right and moral reading. For Bateman, reading is a process of discerning the correct, true meaning amidst a vast choice of distracting, even dangerous, "coloured abuses". He does not encourage readers to take pleasure in the verbal and visual riddles of his emblems; rather, he works to destabilize a reader's confidence in his or her ability to read the images in relation to their verbal frames, in order that his readers come to depend, increasingly, on his explication of the truths hidden in the text's images.

What I argue in the fourth chapter of my thesis is that Bateman uses for himself, as author, the metaphoric potential of the emblem images in order to encourage in his readers a fearful, anxious response to that very metaphoricity. Through the emblematic elements of his book, Bateman works to refuse his readers the interpretive play essential to the emblem form's metaphoricity. This refusal and delimiting of meaning potential is, I argue, how Bateman warns his readers against wavering mindedness as he seeks to direct them toward an anti-Catholic Christian faith. At a linguistic level, this plays out the broader religious and politically oriented argument of Bateman's book and reveals his desire to warn his readers of the spiritual dangers of religious and devotional uncertainty. In this chapter, I consider more closely the rhetorical mechanisms at work within Bateman's text, in light of Michael Bath's *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*, John Manning's *The Emblem*, and recent reader-response theory. Where Bath considers the "emblem as simile" (45–47) and Manning speaks of the genre's vernacular of images as "an emblematic rhetoric" (82), I study this rhetoric in relation to the intended reader's reception of the text. In terms of this, I am particularly interested in how *A christall glasse* both posits a reader and seeks to reposition that reader in relation to his or her reading practices to the intended end of having that reader reimagine him or herself as a Christian subject, both spiritually and in relation to the world.

My thesis concludes with my proposing that it is from this destabilized position that readers become vulnerable to Bateman's aim of encouraging them toward the process of "self-fashioning" that Greenblatt speaks of in *Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, a process that links both the literary and social conceptions of selfhood and self-fashioning (3). I contend that when read as a cultural artefact, Bateman's *A christall glasse* can be seen to function as a link between the interior devotional self and the ideologies of a nation still in the midst of redefining itself religiously. Stuart Hall's discussion of the linguistic and cultural inscription of subjectivity and Louis Althusser's claim that "the category of the subject . . . is the constitutive category of all ideology" (31) illuminate the connections between the rhetoric of Bateman's early modern emblem book and the constitution of an early modern English devotional subject amid the political and theological changes around

the year 1569, the year Bateman's book was printed. Thus, while Bateman speaks of the act of reading – or perceiving – *A christall glasse* as “godly exercise,” he is not speaking of this as a solely interior or spiritual endeavour. His concern is for both the spiritual and political sense of self of his readers.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Reading *A christall glasse*: Historical and Theoretical Considerations

Much of my analysis of *A christall glasse* centres upon the content and structure of the text and how these guide the reader toward an experience and understanding of the reading act; however, Bateman's book is one that cannot be critically considered only intratextually, for it is one that takes as its acknowledged subject and as its interlocutor the religious and political tumult of its own time. In order to appreciate the argument of Bateman's *A christall glasse* and the means by which he forwards his argument through anxiously deploying a medium – that of the emblem book – that possesses traits which in Bateman's eyes are the devil's devices, it is necessary to set his work within a context largely defined by uncertainty and the attempted reinscription of certitude. Central to this contextualization are questions of reading practice. What are the demographic profiles of early modern English readers? How were early modern readers instructed in reading? While these questions invite book length responses themselves, I shall address them only insofar as they pertain to my project.

#### POSITING A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEXT AND CONTEXT

To study an emblem book such as Stephen Bateman's is largely a process of situating the book in its historical context. Thus, the act of reading *A christall glasse* becomes an historicizing gesture that raises questions central to historiography. Worries arise as to how we, as 21<sup>st</sup>-century readers, are to engage with Bateman's book. What theoretical mechanisms and frames can legitimately be applied to our analytical and interpretive work? What historically contemporary texts and events are to be deemed relevant? Are we to avoid reading an early modern text through 21<sup>st</sup>-century interests, and if so, how are we to do so? What one can do as a means of gaining insight into a text is to explore the dynamic between a text and its context, querying how one informs the other in the eyes of a postmodern reader.

In speaking of the richness of an historical approach to the study of emblems, Peter M. Daly, in *Literature in Light of the Emblem*, remarks that “[a]ny attempt to contextualize the emblem necessarily brings us into contact with semiotics and communication theory, the sociology and aesthetics of production and reception, in addition to the more traditional questions of history of all sorts, i.e. literary, philological, cultural, political, social, religious, and intellectual” (70). Of the numerous disciplines and analytic approaches historical contextualization invites, I should like to focus on the aesthetic and rhetorical aspects of *A christall glasse* to delineate the signifying processes at work within the text and proceed to expand this reading of *A christall glasse* in order to consider how the text communicates meaning to its intended readers within its cultural (that includes its political and theological) context.

Peter M. Daly distinguishes between two terms – background and context – as a means of clarifying the more productive consideration of the relationship

between an emblem book and its context and how such a context may participate in the generation of the scholarly interpretation of emblem books. He writes: “Today we speak of ‘context,’ recognizing an interplay between work and surrounding world. However, the work should not be regarded as a mere reflection of the context, but rather as part of that discourse which, in fact, helped to create the very reality that the emblem may also be said to reflect” (*Literature in Light of the Emblem* 69). The richness of Daly’s description here rests in the relationship posited between a book and its surrounding. Daly recognizes the mutually reflective dynamic involved in seeking to understand and appreciate a book’s meaning through reading it with a mindfulness of the historical milieu of its creation and circulation. A book, according to Daly, is to be understood through its context and to be seen as possessing the potential to illuminate – and even contribute to the historical and literary reconstruction of – that very context.

John Manning’s model for reading is somewhat stricter, somewhat more rigid, although the anxiety motivating this rigidity is certainly valid, and the cautionary note he rings is worth remembering. Whereas Daly describes an interpretive dialogue in the relationship between an emblem book and its context, Manning asserts that it is too much to ask of an emblem book that it “be used as a peep-hole into the cultural assumptions of [a] period” (9). To do so, he continues to explain, “surely places too great a burden on the narrow shoulders of a form that began life as no more than a series of terse epigrams” (9). The minimizing of the emblem’s fortitude that Manning forwards as a reason for any emblem book’s inability to shed light on its times is one that I shall write against. While one of the defining features of the emblem as a visual and verbal form of expression is its high degree of dependence on classical and biblical thought communicated through symbolic and iconographic images, to postulate that the emblem “can only be understood in terms of . . . broad cultural assumptions” renders emblem books always derivative rather than generative. Yet the generative quality of emblem books can be seen in the particular case of Bateman’s *A christall glasse*, in his propagation of a notion of Christianity quite particular to mid 16<sup>th</sup>-century England.

Thus, part of the work to be accomplished through close historical readings of emblems books such as Bateman’s is one of recovery; for, as noted in his essay, “The Emblem as Literary Genre,” Alistair Fowler remarks that “Renaissance processes of thought will not have been like ours” (8). Part of my project on Bateman is inspired by the thinking that a rhetorical analysis of his text, one that explores how the author seeks to situate his readers in relation to his argument and the means by which Bateman deploys various visual and verbal discourses, can help us catch a glimpse of the “processes of thought” of which Fowler speaks and which Debora Shuger calls “habits of mind”. A rhetorical approach such as this allows for a consideration of what Bateman expresses concerning his own thoughts on the religious turmoil of his time, and it also allows for an appreciation of how he uses the emblem as a mode of thought and means of expression.

In speaking of the rhetorics of Bateman's *A christall glasse*, some qualification of terms and approach is necessary, to guard against John Manning's trepidation that anachronistic readings of emblem books may result from searching in an early modern text for ideas derived from twenty and twenty-first century scholarship: "We must be wary, too," he cautions, "of applying a post-Romantic or Postmodern critical theory to a period that constructed visual, lexical, and typographical space in radically different ways to our own" (21).

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TIMES

*A christall glasse* was imprinted in 1569 by John Day of London. To appreciate the world in which it was written and the political and religious turmoil it addresses and seeks to affect, it is useful to situate the text within the far broader context of the Henrician Reformation and its aftermath. The following brief historical survey of English politics in the decades preceding the publication of *A christall glasse* draws upon Claire Cross's *Church and People: England 1450-1660* and her evaluation of the evolution of English Christianity through the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, under whose rule Bateman's book was published.

The religious unrest manifested by Lollardy and the Lutheranism that grew within the universities was the atmosphere in which Henry VIII's successful efforts (for well-known reasons) to separate English Christendom from Rome were achieved over a five year period (Cross 51). A result of this reform was a layperson's ability to experience the Bible for him or herself rather than through a priest speaking Latin: "the 1530s marked the emancipation of the laity since then, for the first time, they could legally read and possess the Bible in the vernacular," notes Cross (59). The year 1535 saw the publication of Coverdale's English language Bible, and in 1539 came what was called the Great Bible, a work approved by the government and one that comprised both Coverdale's and Tyndale's English translations (Cross 59). Part of Bateman's anxiety over interpretive freedom available to his readers stems, I shall argue, from this new reality. For while a layperson could, as Cross notes, now own and read an English Bible at home, the question arose as to the moral consequences of this. What kinds of reading and interpretation practices would the laity engage in when unguided by ministers called and trained to preach the word of God? What kinds of spiritual confusion and sin might be the consequence of such independent reading? Cross notes that "conservative clergy . . . still prophesied dire effects for the nation if laymen had free access to the scriptures" (59).

One answer to these concerns was to produce a heavily annotated English Bible, and in some ways, *A christall glasse* might be read as a biblical gloss, a companion to the Bible, one intended to organise a reader's engagement with Holy Scripture around vice, virtue, and right conduct. To glance at the pages of Bateman's book, one cannot help but notice the way in which his writing is framed by biblical references (see fig.1). The margins of *A christall glasse* are filled with citations to books from the Old and New Testament. Proceeding into Bateman's text, one

## The description



**S** in the two chapters of Lechery and fornicatio, is described the wretchednes of þ horrible sinne: so in adultery and rape, shall be rehearsed þ wonderfull calamities and losse of countreyes, with the overthrowing of kingdomes, to the cleane secludyng or cutting of, of all such as haue bene maintainers of the same. Adulterie is the violation of the fayth promised in marriage, the which thing is forbidden

*Exod. 20.* vs: Thou shalt not breake wedlocke. Adulterers are stoned to death. *Susanna* had leauer die then to committe adultery with the two false Judges. Adultery is cause of procuring of other mens death, as it appeareth in the 21. chapt. of the second booke of kinges. *Dauid* the King comitted adultery with *Bethshabe* the wife of *Urias* the *Hethite*, and also caused *Urias* to be put to death, being slaine in þ forefront of *Joabs* hoste. The Prophet *Nathan* being sent of the Lord, reprovned the king because of his wickednes. Also *S. John* the Baptist reprovned *Herode* for lying with his brother *Phillips* wife, saying: It is not lawfull for thee to have her. *An harlot* will make a man to begge his bread, and a woman will hunt for the precious life. All bread is sweete to a whoremonger: hee will not leaue of till hee haue his purpose. So lyke wyse the wyllie craftes of *Sathan* doth to skere the mindes of the disobedient sort, that they are careles, minding neither to amend their folly, nor suffer others to auoyde the same, but headlong goeth forth in the demoniacall lawes as brute beastes, and at no tyme satisfied.

Proverbes,

Fig. 1. Page with marginalia from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). E1v.

discovers that much of his own composition speaks intertextually with several books, classical and Christian, but with the Bible above all. Indeed, some sections of *A christall glasse* make little sense when the attempt is made to read them narratively. Several sections read sensibly only as short hand notations to further reading to be pursued in the Bible. The vast majority of Bateman's writing on the seven sins is, essentially, a concordance, where biblical episodes are collected under the various vices. Bateman thoroughly covers the seven sins and eight virtues, with the entire book pivoting around the notion of 'Truth'. This Truth is the divine and eternal Truth of God and one that is, I contend, according to the rhetoric of *A christall glasse*, to be gleaned through reading rightly to avoid the deceptions of Satan. Whether the text under study is *A christall glasse*, the Bible, oneself, or the world, Bateman is concerned with misperception and devilish deception, and it is to guard against this that, as a church minister, he writes.

In much the same way that Henry VIII twenty-four years earlier assumed his position of royal supremacy in the English church, against some Protestants who felt that his doing so was to recreate the very kind of interposition between an individual and her or his relation to God as had been the case in the Roman Catholic church (Cross 69), Bateman, in 1569, sets Elizabeth I in the position of ruler over the virtues that will guard all English readers against the deceptions of Satan. The virtue that begins the second half of Bateman's book is that of love, which, based on the number of pages dedicated to it, receives the greatest attention of all virtues and vices. As Mary Silcox has observed in her 2006 McMaster Humanities Lecture Series on Bateman's book, while the figure is not explicitly identified as that of Queen Elizabeth, its details suggest this. Set within a large nimbus is the figure of a crowned female figure in 16<sup>th</sup> century dress. Where the women in all of the text's woodcuts leading up to this one are made to represent sin and deception, here is a woman who, as Bateman explains in the image's accompanying text, "signifieth Gods love" (K1). I shall demonstrate in subsequent chapters that while Bateman has created a text intended for a newly reading laity, his book encourages these readers to defer to figures of religious authority, such as Minister Bateman himself, on things spiritual and to recognise the higher authority of the queen in matters both religious and political. This is to say, Bateman is not encouraging a spiritual or political democracy of voices. His book continues to express the anxiety around broad interpretive freedoms the laity might acquire in having independent access to the Bible, an anxiety that was manifested in the introduction of the obligatory use of the First Prayer Book in 1549, a year which saw continued religious turmoil (Cross 69, 71).<sup>2</sup>

Any effort to achieve a Protestant religious uniformity with the First Prayer Book of 1549 and the Second Prayer Book, published under Edward VI, was

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<sup>2</sup> For an interesting argument regarding the way in which the Books of Common Prayer were attempts to politically unify and control the laity, see Ramie Targoff's *Common prayer: the language of public devotion in early modern England*. Chicago: U Chicago P, 2001.

undone by the accession of Queen Mary and her call that England unite again with Rome during the years of her reign, from 1553 to 1558. Mary's advisors similarly understood the need to unify religious thought, and various Catholic texts were prepared for the laity: a Catholic New Testament in English as well as books in English of Catholic homilies and the catechism (Cross 89).

As Claire Cross notes, "[b]ecause of the reversals of religious practice in the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary, it was only after 1558 that Church and State had time to undertake the long-term task of implementing Protestant Reformation" (107). Thus, despite what might initially appear to be a late date of publication, it may be said that Bateman's *A christall glasse* of 1569 very much participates in this effort to fully effect an English Protestant transformation in the minds and spiritual subjectivities of a reading laity. Specifically, it is a text that seeks to unequivocally establish that sinfulness resides with the papal church and that the truth, the verity, of Jesus Christ is with the English church under Elizabeth's reign.

### THE EMBLEMATIC NATURE OF 16<sup>TH</sup> C. ENGLAND

While emblem books might be looked upon by our 21<sup>st</sup> century eyes as curiosities – for their images are almost immediately suggestive of some hidden sense, just beyond our comprehension – emblem scholars John Manning and Peter M. Daly have emphasised that what we as postmodern readers might find intriguing about them – the enigmatic motto, the image that seems to capture some important truth of life – could be witnessed in a variety of settings in virtually any English village or town.

In the same way companies of today utilise the immediate non-verbal communicative power of a company logo, so too did booksellers, pub owners, and bakers announce themselves to the market by way of ensignias or signs. To a mid-16<sup>th</sup> populace just growing into literacy<sup>3</sup>, representing one's business both verbally and pictorially was essential. When, in *The Emblem*, Manning writes that "[n]o domestic or public space was left unfilled by some appropriate emblematic decoration" (25), he is not speaking hyperbolically. Cultural communication achieved via a combination of word and picture was then, in many ways as now, everywhere. Perhaps the most remarkable site for this mixed mode of communication was in the church that, prior to the whitewashing and iconoclastic efforts of Reformists, embodied in its architecture and design this emblematic mode of silent speech. The twelve stations of the cross in stained glass; sculptured embodiments of the apostles standing victoriously on the heads of beasts; doorways engraved with the protective graces of the Virtues are but a few examples of the pervasive emblematic presence in early modern England.

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<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of literacy in early modern England, see David Cressey's "Education and literacy in London and East Anglia 1560-1700." Diss. University of Cambridge, 1972 and Eugene R. Kintgen's *Reading in Tudor England*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996.

Although the ubiquity of emblems in early modern Europe of which Manning speaks might be understood comparatively to our own – one need only attend to the omnipresence of symbols when walking down the street to recognise this – what distinguishes the way in which emblems were so thoroughly a part of early modern English culture from the way companies today use the icon or the symbol is the degree to which this mode of communication represented *a way of thinking about the world*, a way of perceiving and making sense of the world. Manning goes so far as to say that “Life was essentially emblematic” (29), insofar as the emblems, ensigns, devises, icons of the book, textiles, and jewelry bespoke a way of thinking about the world, a mode of thought unlike our own and one which, to be understood, must be set in its own history of intellectual thought. To comment on it briefly here, we might continue to follow Manning’s line of thinking. He writes that “human history, legend and myth needed to be taught and remembered, because these fictions and constructions of the past repeated themselves in essence, and could, in turn, throw light on present events and happenings. Time has penned its lessons; men and women repeated them” (29-30). Captured here is the sense in which the emblem, through its structure and mode of representation, posits a certain kind of relationship between past and present, nature and humans, the moral and the physical, between the temporal and the eternal; and I would venture to say that it is this, ultimately, which distinguishes the early modern emblem’s sense and function from our contemporary near equivalents.

### BOOK TRADITIONS AND EARLY MODERN EMBLEMS

A specific context in which to consider the early modern English emblem book is that of the book traditions out of which these texts grew. Rosemary Freeman, in the first modern commentary on English emblem books, writes that “Emblem writers in England did not create the taste which they satisfied; they imported the fashion from abroad” (37). This claim is rooted, most likely, in the supposition that “the taste” of which she speaks derived from the appearance and popularity of a book out of Italy, *Emblematum Liber* by Andrea Alciato, published earlier in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Freeman’s claim is based on a limited notion of literary influence and sees the early modern English emblem book as growing strictly out of a relatively new and narrow emblem tradition begun by Alciato. In contrast, Daniel Russell, speaking within the Renaissance French context, posits emblems as growing out of a rich and much wider tradition of a predominantly image-based culture of communication. Through tracing how *A christall glasse* is indebted to both the specific tradition engendered by Alciato and how it participates in the broader tradition of a visual print culture turning, by Bateman’s time, more and more to a primacy of words over images, I hope to offer some sense of how Bateman depends upon established book traditions to communicate to his readers.

Peter M. Daly sees the question of the book tradition of which the emblem book forms a part as being more complex and of a more far reaching history than does either Freeman or Russell: “The various kinds of illustrated literature that

preceded the emblems books and were assimilated by them in varying degrees contribute in large measure to their richness and variety, and also complicate any discussion of the origin and definition of emblem books” (*Literature in Light of the Emblem* 4-5). From the Renaissance illustrated broadsheet back to the medieval *Biblia pauperum*, bestiaries and further still to the Egyptian hieroglyphs, among numerous other sources and exemplars spanning over thousands of years, Daly does indeed trace a rich and long history of the emblem (*Literature in Light of the Emblem* 10).

While I agree with the argument for reading Bateman’s book as an emblem book presented by Mary Silcox (2005), to read it solely as such (and this is not something Silcox does) would threaten to diminish a reader’s appreciation of its richness of form. One of its defining structural traits is that of the tripartite emblem; yet it is also many kinds of books: it is an emblem book; it is a book on the vices and the virtues (a speculum); it is a gloss on the bible; a commonplace book. In fact, even this effort to identify the multiple traditions of which *A christall glasse* is a part shows the problem, the difficulty, of such efforts at identifying the literary origins of *A christall glasse*. One vivid and material way in which the early modern emblem book can be seen to belong not to any one category or tradition of books but to many is to understand its place in libraries and on bookshelves. John Manning, in *The Emblem*, offers this indirect proof that we must read the emblem book within a broad tradition of books: “*Emblemata* or ‘emblem books’ formed no discrete category in Early Modern libraries. Some books of emblems were shelved in the poetry section, others catalogued as legal or medical, still others as ethics, or politics, or divinity, or natural history. Occasionally in early libraries multiple copies of the same book were each classified in different sections” (20). Through its subject matter, Bateman’s *A christall glasse* can be seen to grow from both the broader visual and book traditions outlined by Bath, Daly, and Russell and the more specific genealogy noted by Freeman, as well as out of what Daly and Silcox refer to as “the intellectual and spiritual traditions which inform [emblem books]” (*The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem* 1).

### THE IMAGE-TEXT RELATIONSHIPS OF EMBLEM BOOKS

In her essay on *A christall glasse*, Mary Silcox focuses on Bateman’s “The Epistle to the Reader” as a site at which to explore Bateman’s own conception of his book. Silcox notes that while Bateman does not specifically refer to his book as an emblem book, “his understanding of the interaction of reader, picture, and text . . . is that of emblems” (213). The question anterior to this is the question of what an emblem *is*. In the same way Peter M. Daly offers a dynamic model of the interrelation between the emblem book and its cultural context, so too must any emblem book be understood against the backdrop of its generic norms and history and also the ways in which it creates for itself a new and original understanding of what the emblem book is. Michael Bath, in his figural reading of the emblem, concludes on a cautionary note: “[W]e would be wise to attend to the evidence that

the emblem was not a stable system of genre relations or signifying practices, but a set of terms whose function and meaning contemporary readers and writers were themselves struggling to define with the received epistemological systems of their own day” (“Emblem as a Rhetorical Figure” 59).

What marks an emblem book as such are its component parts and how those parts participate in the generation of meaning by the reader. As John Horden notes, in his exploration of the connotative value of symbolic forms in the emblem, upon first glancing at an emblem book, one’s eyes will almost certainly alight upon the book’s images, and only after, perhaps quickly following, glance to the epigraph or motto. The eye’s preference for the pictorial is not simply because of the eye’s affinity for the visual, but because the nature of emblem book images tend to invite the eye and mind into their enigmatic, puzzling natures. This notion of the emblem book image as a puzzle is captured in John Manning’s description of these images as iconographic, rather than naturalistic or mimetic, in expression: “The image becomes a puzzle, which teases its putative observer into speculation as to its metaphysical meaning” (xv). Horden, in continuing to account for the signification process of the symbolic elements of emblems goes on to note that “the impression which has then been made [via the image] – no matter how fully or how imperfectly it is at first understood – is only secondly interpreted and refined by the text” (71). This site of interaction between image and text is, among emblem scholars, one of the most intriguing points of exploration in terms of semiotics and reader response theory.

In reviewing the work of German emblem scholars who have written on the subject of how the interrelation of image and text functions to create meaning in the emblem, Peter M. Daly refers to the writing of Jöns, who aptly describes the image-text relation as being one of tension (*Literature in Light of the Emblem* 57). The ways of articulating this tension vary; however, descriptions seek to capture a process of translation, transformation, or invention of meaning that occurs as the medium of expression shifts from the pictorial to the verbal. Peter M. Daly bases his essential definition of the emblem on this interactive locus: “emblems are composed of symbolic pictures and words; a meaningful relationship between the two is intended; the manner of communication is connotative rather than denotative” (*Literature in Light of the Emblem* 8). For its brevity, this definition is rich in ideas and pulls together much thinking on the image-text relationship in emblem studies. Speaking of “symbolic” pictures addresses the distinction Manning, and others, have made regarding emblem pictures’ iconographic rather than naturalistic natures. In this definition, Daly expresses another model or means of understanding the dialectical relationship between image and text, one that proves central to my reading of Bateman’s text. Where Daly claims the dialogue between image and text to be of a potential multiplicity of meanings, I shall argue that Bateman works very much in a denotative mode of expression, working to fix the images in his text with a single and correct signification.

John Horden’s thinking on the image-text relationship complicates Peter M. Daly’s argument as to the connotative meaning function of this pairing. Horden

writes that “Between picture and text there is often incompatibility, especially since so many emblem writers borrowed their plates from the works of others” (71), suggesting that part of the emblem’s connotative flexibility or multiplicity – or tension as Jöns puts it – might not derive from anything ‘inherent’ in image and text, or even from an author’s grand design, but simply from the pragmatic, material limitations of working within the medium. In studying the images and text of *A christall glasse*, Mary Silcox hypothesizes that, unlike some emblem writers who had to work with woodcuts or engravings designed entirely by others, Bateman might well have participated in the preparation of the woodcuts that appear in his work: “Because of the very close relationship between picture and text in *A Christall Glasse*, it seems likely that Stephen Bateman played a strong part in the conception of the woodcuts” (212, fnote 5). The difficulty of discerning the production history of an emblem book can be seen in studying the relationship of Bateman’s words to his book’s images; for while the framing texts of the inscriptio and subscriptio speak to the particularities of the woodcuts, generally, the expository sections of *A christall glasse* do not. Where the inscriptio addresses a chosen theme and where the subscriptio speaks to the particularities of the image, the expositions tend to function as something of a sermon on a vice or virtue. Indeed, in Bateman’s text, one very much sees Jöns’s and Schöne’s thesis that the emblem book is a progeny of the exegetical tradition on the page, for virtually every commentary Bateman offers his readers is framed by references to biblical verses, and much of the commentaries are themselves dedicated to explicating selected verse.

Questions regarding the interrelation between image and text lead to questions of how one is to read an emblem book, given its arrangement of visual and verbal elements. How a reader is to discern meaning from images in which, to quote John Horden, “there can be discrepancies and ambiguities” and where “there may be conflicts of inherent and required meaning” (71) echoes Michael Bath’s reminder that one issue to address in considering a book such as Bateman’s “is whether the emblem book depends on the invention of original but arbitrary connections between image and meaning, or whether the relation between sign and referent depends on some deeper and more intrinsic (‘natural’) affinity” (3). Whether an emblem book explicitly depends upon the wit of its author to generate the significance of the book’s images or whether the emblem book author works to create the sense that he is not inventing but discerning meaning written into Nature speaks to the intended world view the writer wishes to communicate. Rosemary Freeman, in arguing that the emblem image functions as a poetic symbol, claims that an emblem’s pictura “is not to be interpreted literally but figuratively” (23). This symbolic mode of representation in the emblem’s pictura, which is then elaborated upon in the text, suggests a particular way not only of perceiving the emblem and interpreting it but a way of thinking about the world. Peter M. Daly and Mary V. Silcox highlight “the symbolic mode of thought which underlies the emblem” when speaking of Schöne’s discussion of the representational and symbolic aspects of the emblem (12). Daly and Silcox proceed to introduce to scholarship on the English

emblem with a distinction made within the German context by Jöns, that there are two quite different ways of viewing the emblem book. Jöns, writes Daly and Silcox, “took the theoretical discussion a stage further by making the important distinction between emblem as understood as a mode of thought (“Denkform”) and as an art form (“Kunstform”)” (13). It is with respect to understanding the emblem “as a mode of thought” that I shall frame my reading of *A christall glasse*.

In seeking to consider the nature and rhetorical effect of its images, however, I arrive at a methodological roadblock, for to consider the rhetoric of the woodcuts, I must posit a reader, knowing that one cannot speak of ‘an’ early modern English reader. Yet as there is not, to my knowledge, an extant glossed copy of Bateman’s book or any preserved record to indicate how at least one 16<sup>th</sup> century reader experienced *A christall glasse*, I am forced to cautious speculation, a creative exercise of the intellect in imagining ‘a typical’ reader, an exercise that I do not believe is entirely without merit. Though clearly a somewhat faulty approach, I think it worthwhile to consider, to envision, possible reactions to the text as a way of appreciating Bateman’s use of the emblem genre to communicate with his particular readership, which was quite probably made up of those who knew their Bible well and could read in English, to varying degrees of competence. In speaking of new theoretical approaches to emblem studies, Daly and Silcox also note that “the concerns of the ‘new historicism’ are . . . being applied to the study of emblems” (17). Where an intratextual analysis of *A christall glasse* can suggest the text’s ideal readership, a new historical analysis can offer some insight into the likely actual readers of Bateman’s book and could, like the “sociological approach” of which they also speak, clarify “the purposes of the emblem writer” and “the societal function of the emblem” (17). It is to these topics that I now turn.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *A christall glasse: Reflections of Vice and Virtue*

Stephen Bateman writes within the medieval Christian form of a book of vice and virtue, the *speculum*, as a means to argue against the hierarchy and practices of the Catholic church of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century and for a more nationalistic English Christianity with Queen Elizabeth as its sovereign. In tracing Bateman's visually and verbally rendered argument through the seven vices of covetousness, wrath, lechery, gluttony, sloth, envy, pride and the eight virtues of love, faith, hope, charity, justice, truth, wisdom, and peace, one can observe that while Bateman calls his work an invitation to 'godly exercise,' it is in fact as much a political as spiritual project, one intended to caution his readers against Roman Catholicism and to encourage them toward a particular response to the religious instability of their times

In *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (1994), the most recent and most comprehensive survey of the English emblem tradition, Michael Bath reaches further back than Alciato into the history of the book to locate the inspiration for the emblematic mode of expression in the medieval "sense of the book as microcosm" (44), noting that the "pictorialism" of the emblem book "invites the reflective, mimetic analogies" similarly at work in medieval conceptions "of the book as mirror, microcosm, *imago*" (44). The medieval influence of which Bath speaks is apparent in both the subject matter of *A christall glasse* and its means of presentation. Interestingly, similar to Alciato's representation of the four cardinal virtues and the seven deadly sins,<sup>4</sup> Bateman's text dedicates itself, also, to rendering in images and words the sins and virtues; however, for reasons of rhetoric and argument to be explored momentarily, his presentation offers them in the obverse, beginning with multiple renderings of each of the deadly vices, or sins, and ending with the virtue of peace.

Regarding Bateman's schema for speaking of the virtues and vices, Mary Silcox notes that: "Most of the pictures rely to some degree on the traditional associations or accoutrements of that sin or virtue, but they all require the Signification in order that a correct interpretation can be drawn from them" (215). This observation suggests the transitional nature of Bateman's *A christall glasse* and draws our attention to the manner in which Bateman depends upon the book traditions and history of thought of the medieval allegory, yet deploys this tradition to his own contemporary needs of affirming the corruption of the Catholic church and calling for his fellow English folk to be patient and virtuous, not violent, in responding to evil of Roman Catholicism.

The very title of Bateman's work speaks to the spiritual politics of the times. In calling his book *A christall glasse of christian reformation wherein the godly maye beholde the*

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<sup>4</sup> For a description of Alciato's book, see Michael Bath's *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*. New York: Longman, 1994.

*coloured abuses used in this our present tyme*, Bateman suggests his topic, purpose, and his audience. In “The Epistle to the Reader,” the concept of reform is developed in reference to two interrelated spheres of signification, the inward spiritual and devotional sphere and the outward public and political sphere. In the outward sphere, the English populace had lived with the back and forth of the religious inclinations of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth. Bateman addresses the spiritual sphere of Elizabethan reform through inviting his readers to see clearly into this upsetting time of change, for the betterment of their souls. The pages subsequent to the Epistle work to make clear its thesis: that a reader misaligning himself or herself with the wrong Christian church, the papal, will suffer dire spiritual consequences, while aligning oneself with the right Christian church of Elizabeth’s England will affirm one’s own godliness and preparedness for the Day of Judgement, which is the point of reference by which Bateman evaluates sinful and virtuous choices available to his readers.

That this is a text intended for the godly suggests, too, that while Bateman may not here have intended to preach to the converted, he was addressing himself not to Catholic Englishwomen and men but to those who had already embraced the unique Protestantism that had, in the ten years since Elizabeth’s ascension, begun to flourish on English soil. There is no room, I suggest, in Bateman’s text for an English Catholic to be reformed into Protestantism, as throughout *A christall glasse*, the Catholic church consistently embodies sin, in all its representatives, from the “popishe Antichrist” (A2) to murderous monks and lecherous nuns. In all these figures, Bateman’s book suggests, Satan’s efforts to deceive the godly may be witnessed by one able to see the world clearly and therefore rightly.

That Bateman posits his book as a “christall glasse” (see fig. 2) begins already the rhetorical work of his writing, which is to establish the truths within *A christall glasse* as not construed by Bateman himself but as divinely and eternally true. In calling his book a christall glasse, Bateman creates no barrier between its lay reader and God, nor does the book’s meaning or significance depend upon the biblical interpretation and thinking of a man or woman. Metaphorically transformed into a mirror offering its reader the perfect vision of divine truth, *A christall glasse* becomes almost a talisman, an object derived from and belonging to the next world yet which exists in the mortal realm. In the Epistle, Bateman position his book as such an object: “This christall glasse wherein we may learne godly reformation, whose brightnes shineth not to the beholders therof in this world, a light to euery christian man, but in the world to come a most precious and euerlasting brightnes in endles felicity” (A3). This notion is reinforced by Bateman as he metonymically links the book, as a christall glasse, to the heavenly virtues of which it speaks. Bateman describes his book as “a manifest shew of all coloured abuses that raigne in euery state . . . . The substaunce wherof is the perfect glasse of godly reformation, beautified with y<sup>e</sup> christall sight of all celestial virtues, right fruitfull for euery man to cary, and most nedefull for this our present tyme” (A3). Through this linkage, the

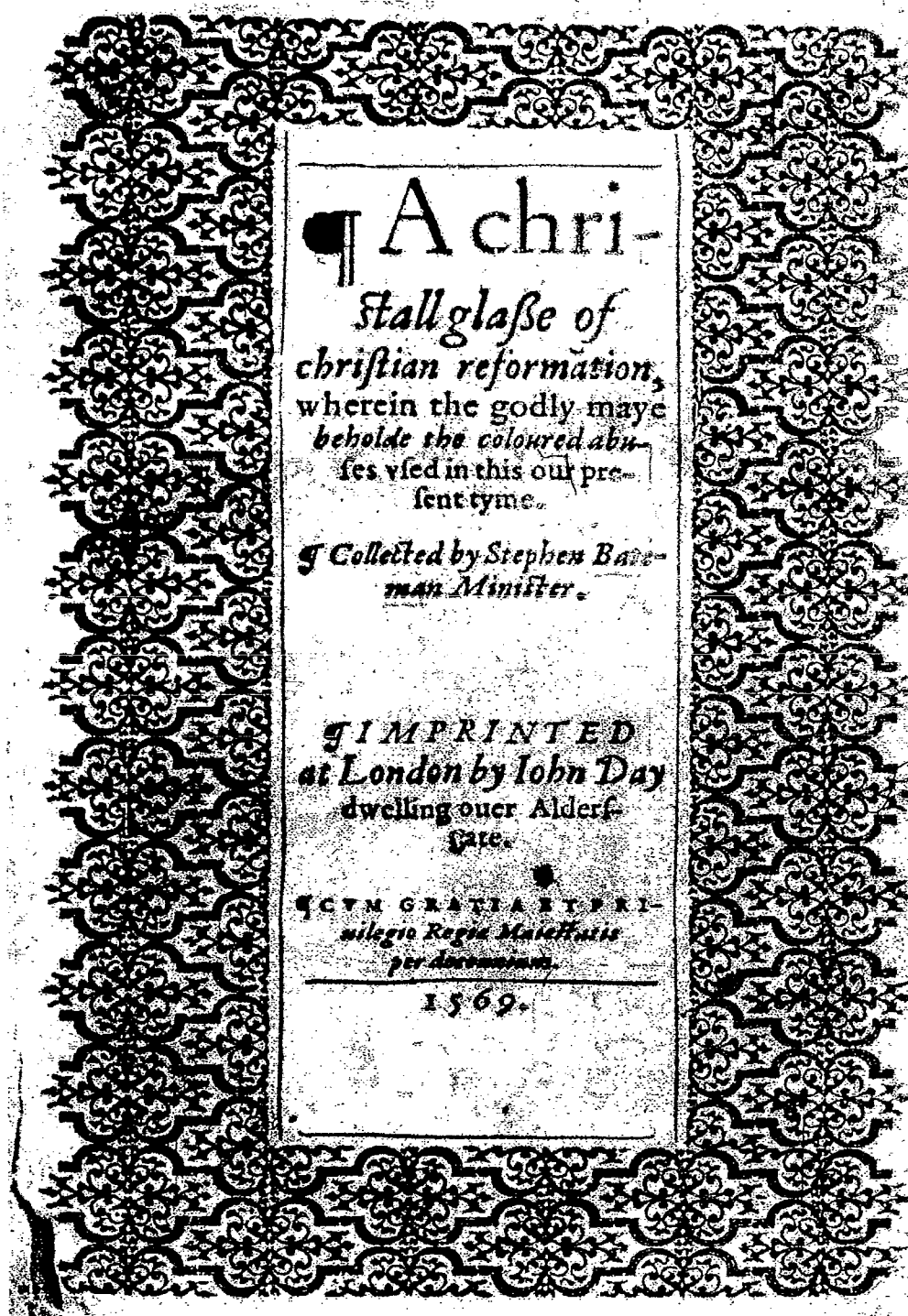


Fig. 2 – Title Page from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse...* (London, 1569).

book's substance transforms from paper into glass, and becomes a necessary device for those who wish to live rightly in the world.

With the book transformed in this way, readers can access the heavenly light of God and so prepare themselves for the ascension on the Last Day. The transmutation of the book gives it an apparent neutrality in terms of its own argument, as it is likened to a medium the defining quality of which is perfect clarity. This emphasises Bateman's efforts largely to absent himself as author of the text as a means of reinforcing the notion that what is contained within the book's pages are not Bateman's truths but God's. We see this action toward absenting himself in how Bateman identifies himself on the title page, not as the author or composer or creator of what follows but as its mere Collector. This seeking to remove himself from the author's role is even more convincingly effected in the ending of his Epistle. When he signs off on this introductory note to the readers with the words, "By me Stephen Bateman Minister," there is a sense in which he is offering them a final farewell. Bateman strives to maintain the near total self-effacement through the Epistle's penultimate line, in which he bids his readers adieu, saying, "Thus gentle reader I bid thee most hartely farewell in him that liueth for euer" (A3) – as if to say that it is not his voice to be heard in what follows but God's. The reason for this, I contend, is to encourage his lay readers towards an understanding that while the Bible is now theirs to read, it is not for them to decide its meaning, for God's truth needs no deciphering. It merely needs to be rightly perceived.

One of the first ideas introduced in the Epistle is that of the constancy of God's truth which is to be depended upon against the dangerous variability of man's "owne wretched will" (A2). In God, "the father of light," (A2v) writes Bateman, "there is no variableness," (A2v) whereas, according to the wisdom of the Epistle, "a waueryng mynded man is vnstable in all his wayes" (A2v). The implicit terms of the argument forwarded through the images and words of *A christall glasse* are set out in the Epistle's association of words with God and images with Satan. In his Epistle, Bateman reminds his readers that while God "begate vs wyth the *worde* of lyfe," (A2v) readers are invited to "*see* the disordred abuses which daily raueth among vs" (A2v).<sup>5</sup>

A second structuring principle to the text is that of the pairing of oppositional hard and soft, fixed and fluid images, which assume a metaphoric function in relation to Bateman's argument. Against the softness and lechery of the "sectes fleshly" (A2v) of the ungodly, such as the Catholic monks, priests, and nuns whose sinful selves are captured in so many of the woodcuts on vice, Bateman commands his readers: "so arme your selues with the armour of God," (A2v-A3) so that, "armed with godlines" (A3) they may be "vigilant" (A3) against any distractions that may keep them from "aspectyng the great and second commyng of our Lord Iesus Christ" (A3).

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<sup>5</sup> Italics mine.



Fig. 3. Of Wrath, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). C2v.

What is developed with great consistency in the woodcuts of the vices is an association of all things Roman Catholic with the vice and sin of Satan. While the relationship between the woodcut images and Bateman's signification of them often suggests it is difficult to accurately read or discern the corruption of a represented monk, nun, or priest, it is always the case that they practice vice and through this lead others to harm. Examples of such an association between figures from the Roman Catholic Church, sin, and ruin can quite readily be drawn from any set of woodcuts.

An example of this is seen in the first image *Of Wrath*, which features three figures moving, it seems, in procession (see fig. 3). The leftmost figure is in the midst of stabbing himself in the chest and pulling at his hair while blood gushes from his body. The middle figure sits atop a boar and carries a flag of the pope in his right hand and a sword in the other. The third figure is the first representation of a female in the text; this figure has her eyes set upon the flag and her arms raised up and out to it. While the Catholic presence is far subtler here than in other cuts, the representation of the pope on the flag echoes back to Bateman's warning, in the Epistle, of the dangers of a wavering mind and such a mind's vulnerability to devilish deception as opposed to the steadfastness of those dressed solidly in the armour of God and his love. That the Pope is here marked on a flag, on a thing whose purpose is literally to waver, suggests that the Pope's position is opposite to God and aligned with Satan's deceptions.

More direct and obvious anti-Catholic statements are to be witnessed in the third and fourth woodcuts on *Wrath*. The third features a monk handing over to a man a chalice out of which flies the winged beast from earlier woodcuts that is associated with Satan and temptation. This image encourages readers to infer that to accept the monk's offering of the blood of Christ is to drink in the devil. Behind the monk offering the chalice, two men battle, and one is in the midst of stabbing the other in the back. Blood pours from the wound (see fig. 4). How this image of literal backstabbing relates to the monk's offering might allow a reader to clarify his or her understanding of the image, to arrive at the conclusion that the offering of wine as the blood of Christ is to destroy man's body, and soul, and certainly Bateman's description of the image affirms such an understanding.

The figures of the fourth and final image "*Of Wrath*" include that of a pope raising a sword toward a man who himself has a sword raised against man on his knees. The question of whether the pope is calling for the cessation or continuation of harm against the kneeling man is answered by the fact that the pope's foot is resting on the head of a man wounded or dead. In the distance, three men kneel in prayer toward Yahweh (see fig. 5). Where elsewhere, especially in the expositions, true English Christians (i.e., Protestants) are likened, as a persecuted people, to the people of Israel, here we have an image designed by analogy in which we are intended to read those kneeling in prayer as like the true practitioners of the Christian faith while the pope, distracted from God by the violence he is encouraging and participating in, embodies the vice of *Wrath*.



Fig. 4. Of Wrath, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). C4v.

## *The description*

Are lyke such dogges in fury,  
That at stones doe barke and bite.



## *¶ The signification.*

**T**He Pope is oppression : the mā which killeth is cruelrie:  
those which are a killing constant religion : the three  
kneeling loue furtherance and truth to the Gospell. &c.

**Amongest**

Fig. 5. Of Wrath, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). D1v.

A similar pattern of meaning continues to be created in the section of *A christall glasse* on Lechery, where the woodcut of a friar and a nun caught in an intimate embrace as they are greeted or goaded by the devil in monk's clothing. The Catholic Church is again on the side of the devil, not on the side of virtue and truth. The images representing the vices of Gluttony, Sloth, Envy, and Pride contribute to the development of this pattern, the only consistent system of symbolic representation in *A christall glasse*, that all things Catholic are corrupt. Within *A christall glasse*, a book intended to be read and experienced as offering its readers a true and right vision of the world, there is a priest with arms outstretched, waiting to receive the offering of grapes and wine brought to him by one of the plump and barreled Dionysian figures representing "vnsatiable desire," (F1) while a nun, rosary in hand, calmly looks on. The final image on Gluttony features a "Popishe priest" standing for "careles dyet" (F2). Thus, 'reading' the images has come to depend upon an understanding of this one-to-one correspondence between Catholic figures and sin. Reading the images of Bateman's book, which he has intended as an act to train the godly in discerning the deceptions of their times, becomes an act of recognizing this pattern of meaning. What complicates this reading act is how variously corrupt are the representations of the Catholic Church, its monks, nuns, and priests.

The final image of Sloth returns to a now familiar image of a friar. Here represented is a sleeping friar riding an ass. With *A christall glasse* having trained its readers to beware the "coloured abuses of this our present tyme" witnessed in the members of the Catholic Church, a general sense of the sleeping friar may be understood without guidance from the text; yet Bateman assigns meaning to the friar nearly impossible for the reader to independently determine. Once a reader of *A christall glasse* moves from reading the image of the friar to reading the Signification of it, he or she is made to realise the numerous obscure deceptions embodied by this Catholic figure, including sloth, hypocrisy, and "lothsomnes of the truth" (G2). Striving to read the world rightly, to see and so not be persuaded by Satan's deceptions would, *A christall glasse* suggests, be most difficult to accomplish when it comes to the Catholic Church. The continued difficulty with which that reader must struggle to understand the images of nuns, priests, and friars carries over into the first images "Of Envy". The significations of images containing figures of the Catholic Church remain complex and difficult to anticipate without finally depending upon Bateman for a clarification of meaning and true insight or clear vision. In one instance, a friar represents "the enemies of Gods word" (G4), in another "murther" (H2). In the second of these images, as the friar occupies the place of "murther," it is a dragon that "signifieth the enemy to all that professe the worde of God" (H2), a notion that in the first image is represented by the friar.

In the same way that Bateman develops a consistent association between vice and things Roman Catholic, to an equal degree, yet far more implicitly, Bateman associates Queen Elizabeth with the virtues. While this correspondence, this equivalence, between the Roman church and vice was established primarily through

images in the book's first section on vice, the equating of Elizabeth I with the virtues and, I shall argue, with Jesus Christ is established primarily through the sermon-like pieces of writing that form the body of *A christall glasse's* second section. However, before the preponderance of the printed word over visual representation is recognised in this second section of the book, the association between Elizabeth I and virtue and can be witnessed *visually* in the first image presented in the second section of *A christall glasse* (see fig. 6).

As Dr. Silcox demonstrated in her 2006 McMaster Humanities Lecture Series discussion of Bateman's *A christall glasse*, the female figure that introduces the virtue of love, and all the virtues, can, according to her appearance, quite readily be read as Queen Elizabeth. Details such as the figure's crown and, most tellingly, her period-appropriate dress suggest this. While Bateman signifies the woman as representing "Gods loue" (K1) in the image's subscriptio, details from the female figure in the woodcut encourage the fleshing out of a syllogism that runs something like: Elizabeth I is the woman represented; "The woman signifieth Gods loue;" therefore, Elizabeth I represents God's love.

Additional observations that support this reading of the female figure in this woodcut are several. The first is the radical transformation in the status of women begun in this cut and achieved in this section. Where in the section on the vices, women represented such states and sinful acts as madness and lechery, here, in the section on virtue, the female figures are positively associated with love, justice, and in the image of Peace, "the spouse and congregation of Christ" (T3v). Most remarkable in this positioning of women in this section is that Elizabeth I becomes not only a figural representation of God's love, as the first cut's signification indicates; she comes to represent God's love as the earthly embodiment of his divine grace. Startling as this may sound, I believe that one can observe various details which encourage a direct reading of Elizabeth as Christ-like.

The association between them is strengthened by the paired presence of a female figure and a lamb in the cuts on Love and Peace. In the first, the woodcut on Love, the lamb stands above the female figure, just outside her earthly sphere; in the second, the cut on Peace, she carries him. In this cut, the two stand before a plainly clothed minister, who "signifieth quietnes and peace to the church of God" (T3v), as the woman and the Lambe, which Bateman explicitly signifies as Christ Jesus, are married. Through the pairing of the female figures and the lamb representing the divine source of redemption from sin on earth, the female, dominated by the first image resembling Elizabeth, becomes associated with salvation. This idea is reinforced by the placement of the cut on love – and what Mary Silcox argues to be the image of Queen Elizabeth I at its centre – in the transitional position between vice and virtue.

The intimacy of this connection between the female figure, Elizabeth specifically, and Christ is further reinforced through spatial and geometric similarities in the layouts of the woodcuts on love and on truth. As noted, the former cut holds at its centre a woman, crowned and in 16<sup>th</sup> century finery, holding a heart. She stands

## Of Love:

put me now in remembrance, for we will reason together, & shewe what thou hast for thee, to make thee



### The signification.

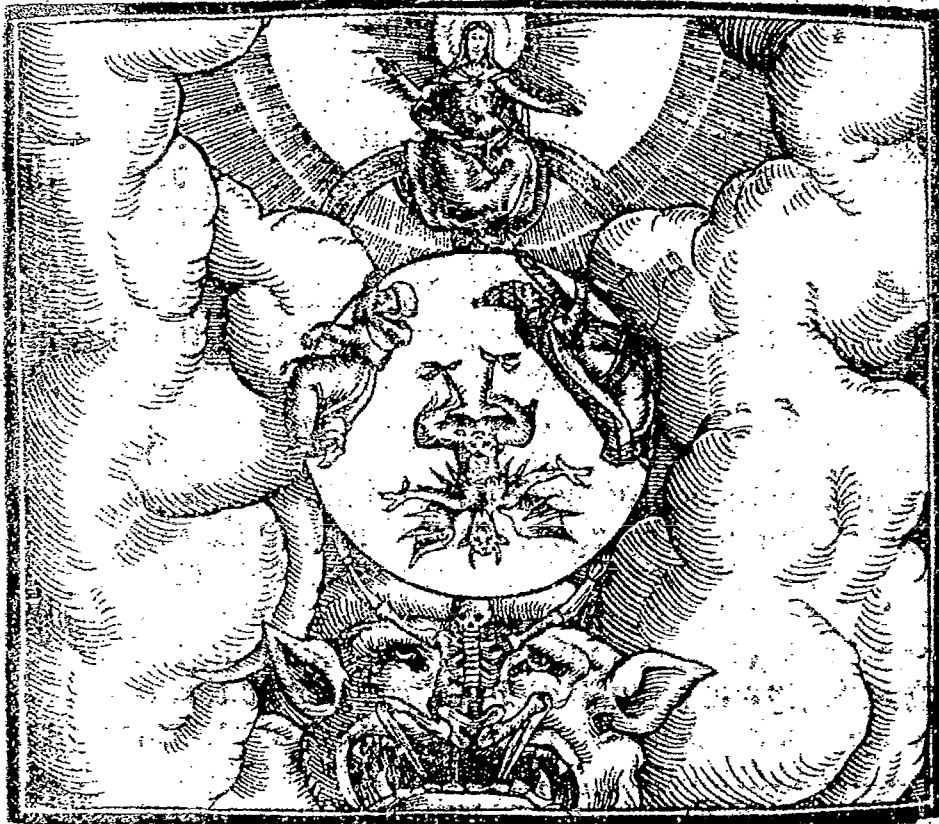
The woman signifieth Gods loue: The hart continuance of the same: Hell vnder her signifieth death and destruction vnto the careless liuers of this world: the lambe signifieth the quiet conscience of the faithfull: And death vnder him signifieth the change of life, vnto all the good to immortalitie, the bad to destruction.

R. J.

righteous,

Fig. 6. Of Love, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). K1.

*The description  
Of Veritie.*



*The signification.*

**H**E which sitteth on the raynebowe signifieth Christ, and the sworde in his hande signifieth his wrath against the wycked, the round compasse, the worlde, and those two climbing, the one a Pope, and the other a Cardinall, strinyng who shall be higher, and the Diuell which falleth headlong downe is Lucifer, whiche through pride fel, he which holdeth the worlde, is death, standing in the entrance of hell to receyue all such superbiuous liuers.

were

Fig. 7. Of Veritie, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). Q2v.

foregrounded within an earthly sphere against a backdrop of the sea and sailing ships drifting in the distance. Framing and illuminating her is the word 'LOVE' and a nimbus, the beams of which reach beyond the woodcut's frame. Beneath Elizabeth's earthly sphere or realm are represented beasts with mouths agape, and on top of which Elizabeth stands. The lamb above her himself stands atop the breast of a human skeleton, victorious over mortality (Silcox 2006). A complementary image to this is that on Veritie, in which a winged Christ, framed by a large nimbus as is the image of the woman in the Love cut, sits atop a sphere, which might be read as a voided or null earthly realm, for within it, there is no sea, no sailing ships, or signs of the shore that we see in the image on Love. Instead, the sphere is blank save that in it two figures of the Roman church try hopelessly to climb upward toward Christ, not realizing, it seems, they are bound within a world in which Christ's love is not present, as was the case in the image of love and Elizabeth. Rather, here Christ sits above and apart from the world of the Roman Church, whose only supernatural guest is Lucifer himself (see fig. 7).

These two images' geometrical and spatial similarities – in each, one sees three spheres or realms in vertical relation – and the differences between them express visually and in brief the argument of vice and virtue forwarded by *A christall glasse*, which runs, I suggest, something as follows: In the world of the Pope and cardinals, there is nothing but the devil and the fall into Hell; in the world illuminated by Elizabeth, there is the grace of God's love embodied in her and that love's power over death.

A second linkage of the woodcuts of the virtues occurs between that on Veritie just described and the image of Justice. Parallel to the image and idea of Christ sitting in judgement on the Last Day is that of Lady Justice sitting as arbiter in the daily affairs of men and women. The equal role of Jesus and Justice is enforced by the symbol of the sword held by both. Of the image of Justice, Bateman writes that the sword held opposite the scales is "to cut of all rebellious persons and offenders" (P1v) while in the signification of the image of Veritie, Bateman says that "the sworde in his [Christ's] hand signifieth his wrath against the wyked" (Q2v). From this pairing of images comes the conclusion that the "wyked" are the "rebellious persons and offenders" of the State, over which Justice wields her sword and scales. The parallel here between Christ and Lady Justice both sitting in the role of decider of fates, combined with the metaphorical link between the Elizabethan figure and God's love embodied in Christ, and thirdly, the close spatial association between female figures and the lamb/Christ suggest that Elizabeth be read as the source, arbiter, and guardian of Christian virtue against the corruption and vice embodied in the Catholic church.

Through this correspondence between Elizabeth and Christ/God's love, Bateman forwards, in the explication of these images on virtue, teachings that are at once spiritual and political. In his writing on love, Bateman says, quoting Exodus: "Thou shalt loue thy Lorde thy God, wyth all harte, and with all thy soule, and wyth all thy minde" (K3). Taken within the context of the pictorial connections noted

above, specifically through the metaphoric equation of Elizabeth with the divine, this biblical verse speaks not only of one's relation to and right conduct toward God but also to the queen and state. Bateman is, thus, calling his readers to love both God and Elizabeth "with all harte, and with all thy soule, and wyth all thy minde". This doubling of the text's sense that results from the symmetry and echoing of images occurs yet again in Bateman's writing on Veritie, in which he quotes John: "Christ is the truth, and he is also called the spirit of truth" (Q1). Having experienced the visual equating of Elizabeth and Christ, this line also reads that Elizabeth is the truth and the spirit of truth.

While, in the Epistle, Bateman expresses concern for the state of his readers' souls, that their attention be properly directed at the Day of Judgement and that they not be distracted by Satan's coloured abuses, throughout *A christall glasse*, Bateman shows an equal concern for England, speaking of the vices both in terms of one's spirit and in terms of the consequences of sinfulness to the State. The image of the four-armed man of covetousness is followed by the claim that: "There can be no greater mischief in a commonwealth then vnsatiable or dissembling justice" (B2v). Similarly, following another woodcut representation of covetousness in which three men on horseback are reaching for the netted offering of a flying beast, Bateman creates a series of analogies between a man's body, a man's soul, and the state of the commonwealth, saying, in effect, that in the same way covetousness proves harmful to the body, so too does it prove harmful to the Soul and State:

Like as couetousness is enemy to the body, by meanes of cares, in desiring still aboundaunce, and thereby neuer satisfied: So is it most deadly to the soule & hatefull before God. For in what nation or country so euer it be eyther suffered or maintayned, nedes must grow out of the same such encombrances amongs the common wealth, that without foresight in time it cannot otherwise chuse but grow not only to the bodies of those instruments vexation of mind but also to the soul of endless destruction. (C1v)

Despite the clear distinction between Catholic Christianity and its association with the vices, and a more nationalist English Christianity and its association with virtue, and despite Bateman's warning that both Jesus and Justice shall wield their swords against the wicked and rebellious, in the end, Bateman's *A christall glasse* calls for a non-violent response to the truths therein revealed. While the intention of *A christall glasse* is not merely to spiritually enlighten its audience but to illuminate the right association between true Christian faith and English politics, his book is not a call to arms. Again and again in the explications on virtue, Bateman returns to calls for peace, assuring his readers that God and Justice will punish sinners against the faith.

Bateman spends much time discussing the second of Christ's commandments that one love one's neighbour as oneself; he cautions his readers: "Yf thy neighbour be an offender, and such a one as will not be reformed, then let the lawes provided serue for his punishment, but be thou no imaginer of euill" (L4-

L4v). In lieu of difference and separation, Bateman calls, in his concluding thoughts on the first virtue, for unity through love, a unity both spiritual and political: “keepe the vnitie of the spirit in the bonds of peace, being one body and one spirit, euen as ye are called, in one hope of your calling, let there be but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, one God and father of all, which is aboue all, through al, and in you all” (M1). To emphasise this point, Bateman depends upon its repetition and offers his readers a virtual catalogue of biblical references that speak to this notion of neighbourly love and peace. He reminds readers that “We ought to loue our enemies” (M2) and that, echoing the Bible, they should “blesse them which curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which do you wrong and persecute you” (M2). Bateman ends his discourse on the virtues, in speaking of Peace, on the same note with which he began his discourse on Love, warning readers that “He that hath not peace of the hart, the mouth, and the acte, ought not to be called a christian man” (U1).

### CHAPTER THREE

#### A New Way of Reading

As seen in the preceding chapter, Bateman seeks to guide his audience toward a specific sense of Christian truth, spiritual exercise and political conduct. Complementary to his explicit argument regarding Christian faith is the means by which he forwards this argument through implicitly instructing readers in a particular mode of reading. Bateman's book turns on ideas of deception and truth. Through the series of woodcut images and their accompanying text commentaries, Bateman works to aid his readers to distinguish between the "coloured abuses" of their time and the eternal truth of Christ. As the deceptions of the devil are, in Bateman's text, so often represented through the figures and accoutrements of the Roman Catholic church (such as vestments, rosaries, and friars' frocks), the right practice of Christian faith that Bateman is calling for is one that is not Catholic. Thus, the implied argument suggests that to know true Christianity is to know that the devil's work can be witnessed in things Catholic, from its violent Pope hopelessly grasping at heaven, to the Roman church's lustful nuns and murderous friars. Bateman indicates in the Epistle of his book that the reading of *A christall glasse* is to be an experience of spiritual exercise, a means of strengthening one's wavering mind against its susceptibility to vice and of working to develop, as a defense against a reader's own vulnerability, "the armour of God" (A2v-A3). Bateman's cautioning his readers against wavering mindedness and exhorting them to prefer in its stead the rigid constancy of God's armour plays out politically as a call to deny Catholicism in favour of a nationalist Christianity. In this chapter, I shall argue that at the level of language, Bateman's argument encourages a denial of the inherent metaphoricity of the principal genre within which he is working, that of the emblem book, a denial resulting in Bateman encouraging his audience toward a particular way of reading the book's images and the world which those images are made to represent. This is to say, the concern Bateman has for the vulnerability of wavering mindedness translates into an anxiety regarding metaphor. In the same way Bateman calls his readers to don the 'armour of God' as a means of steadying themselves against Satan, so too does Bateman offer his readers *A christall glasse* in the hope of disinclining them from metaphoric readings of the world.

Bateman begins instructing his readers as to the particular mode by which to read *A christall glasse* in the very title of his book, his epistle to his readers, and in his transition from his exposition of the vices to his writing on virtue. In the title of *A christall glasse*, Bateman posits his book as the medium by which to see the world rightly. Reading thus becomes an act of seeing and understanding. However, Bateman's delimiting of a reader for his book and his defining a particular intention for his book function to narrow the nature and possible outcomes of engaging with the text. By noting, in the book's title, that this is a book "wherein the godly may beholde the coloured abuses vsed in this our present tyme," Bateman creates the sense that the reading of his book is something of a litmus test. When one picks up

the book, from the time one reads the title, one is caught in a reading condition posited by that title: if one is godly, one will see the world as the book presents it, with the Catholic church as the agent of vice and Elizabeth as the ruler of Christian virtue and the emissary of God's love. If one were to disagree with these tenets, then one would, *ipso facto*, be among the ungodly. This very limited way in which the title positions a reader and judges his or her own goodness exemplifies the very limited range within which readers may negotiate meaning.

"The Epistle to the Reader" performs numerous rhetorical functions. It continues the positioning of a reader begun by the title page; it establishes *A christall glasse* as derived from heaven; and it implicitly works to tell readers how the images and words to follow are to be read. The most direct expression of how Bateman wishes his text to be read can be found in what I assert is the clearest expression of Bateman's purpose. In his Epistle, Bateman writes: "Therefore, I wishe all faithfull christians to foresee and so to prouide in tyme, that neither popishe Antichrist, nor any rable of false vsurped powers shall once be able to spurne or kicke against the veritie and true professours of the same" (A2). The expectation is established at the outset that readers' experiences of the text will take them to Bateman's vision of the world:

Herein is plainly shewed vnto all, the estate of euery degree by order of picture and signification to the intent, that therby euery christian Reader may the better see the disordred abuses which daily raueth amongst vs, and also the state of obedience by euery picture in like sorte signified, that thereby euery Christian may the better beware the deceiuable suggestions of Sathan . . . . (A2v)

Bateman here exerts pressure on how his readers are to engage with and understand the text by noting exactly what it is that a Christian reader will see. The implied logic is that if the reader is truly Christian she will see what Bateman dictates, and if she does not, then she is not among the godly for whom Bateman intends his work.

The Epistle guides the reader toward accepting the restrictive interpretive conditions by suggesting that one's place in heaven or hell might well be determined by one's reading practices. Bateman suggests that time be read as nearing the Last Day, and if one is deceived by the devil's "coloured abuses," one might be forever lost to the truth of Christ: "But ye beloued, remember the wordes which were spoken before," warns Bateman, "of the apostles of our Lorde Iesus Christ, how that they tolde you that there should be beguilers in the last tyme, which should walke in their vngodly lustes" (A2v). Bateman says to his readers: "so arme your selves with the armour of God" (A2v-A3) as the means of resisting such beguilers, for "Sathan is moste busiest and full of rage in this oure tyme, as Saincte John in hys reuelation dothe manifestly expresse: That we all being armed with godlines may bee able to resist in the day of our triall, and to be found vigilant watchmen aspectyng the great and second commyng of our Lorde Iesus Christ" (A3). So while Bateman, in drawing his Epistle to a close, says, "I haue put forth vnto your gentle considerations this my simple trauayls" (A3), he continues from this invitation to note that "in perusing [his

book] you [the reader] shal well espy to be in effect as I haue named it” (A3) further establishing that reading *A christall glasse* will be an experience of recognizing the author’s precepts rather than an imaginative, highly interpretive experience. This controlled direction as to how Bateman’s book is to be read is maintained through the first half of the book which is dedicated to pictorial representations of the vices and expostulations against falling victim to them. The act of reading is framed differently by Bateman as he takes his reader from an exploration of the vices through his writing on the virtues. Somewhat strangely, after so adamantly restricting his reader from any degree of interpretive reading, he invites an equal participation between himself and the reader in understanding the nature of the virtues. His first words to his reader in this second section of *A christall glasse* express an invitation to an act of reading intended to be a mutual endeavour: “put me now in remembraunce,” he writes, “for we wil reason together, & shew what thou hast for thee, to make thee righteous” (K1). It would seem that where reading vice is too dangerous an act to permit the reader independence, Bateman will allow his audience the opportunity to read and reason their way through the eight virtues, and so author, to a much greater degree, meaning.

Of central interest in this chapter is how throughout Bateman’s text one can observe an author using a variety of visual and verbal modes of representation to influence how a reader engages with the text. It is my contention that Bateman is interested not only in arguing for a certain spiritual identity and political response to the years of religious uncertainty in England in the years preceding the publication of *A christall glasse*, but that his text also shows an equal interest in guiding his audience toward new reading practices, practices that support the spiritual and political interests of his work. The section on covetousness, for example, demonstrates the transitional patterns of the new reading practices I am suggesting are at work in *A christall glasse*. The moral injunction of the first image on covetousness is quite readily decipherable, even without Bateman’s commentary, based on the familiarity of symbols making up the composition (see fig. 8). A horned, winged man-beast with a face protruding from belly and bottom and with clawed hands and feet holds three swords, a filled bag, and a globe, his arm outstretched to a man dressed in fool’s clothing. The picture seems to say that a fool accepts gifts from the devil or perhaps that one is a fool to accept worldly gifts from Satan. Once our eyes scan away from the image to the inscription above the woodcut, we see that our quick reading is reinforced by Aristotle’s words, quoted by Bateman: “To delight in treasure is a dangerous pleasure,” (B1) and indeed, when we read Bateman’s own explication of the image, we learn that: “the man in fooles weede signifieth carelesse couetousnes” and that the man “that is not able to rule himselfe” will find his “ende is death” (B1).

The specific argument of the second woodcut of covetousness is not as clear in meaning as that which preceded it. This image is of a four-armed man seated on a throne. Two of his hands are receiving coins and two of his hands are distributing letters or pamphlets. The doubleness of the image suggests some duplicity and a

# ¶ The description of *Couetousnes.*

Aristotle. { *To delight in treasure is a dangerous pleasure.*  
Seneca. { *In a tyer doubtles, there neuer was goodnes.*



## ¶ The signification of the picture.

**T**He deuill is Enuy, the swords in his hand betokeneth mischief, the purse couetousnes, the globe the world, the man in fooles weede signifieth carelesse couetousnes, a man being ouercome with Enuy and couetousnes, may be likened to a foole that is not able to rule himseife, and so the ende is death.

B.i.

Fig. 8. Of Covetousness, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). B1.

hunger to take in double one's due. In the third image, two men on horseback in the garb of the gentry and nobility face each other. From either side of a chasm, they grab for a bag that floats over the abyss separating them. Out of the bag flies the horned, winged man-figure of the first image. Clearly there is danger in the covetous grabbing at the bag, for both horses, if driven forward by their masters will fall into the deep. The fourth image features an overburdened man on an elephant, whose ringed and roped nose allows him to be pulled along by a man with locks on his vest. The man on the elephant has bags fastened around his generous waist, and he carries money chests on his back and under his arms. He also carries in one arm a banner on which a wolf is devouring a sheep. In the final image on covetousness, the winged, horned man-beast of images one and three holds from around his neck and with outstretched arms a large net in which towns and churches are contained. Each of three men on horseback, their horses on their hind legs, reaches out an arm to the beast and his bag.

Against the uncertainty of meaning generated by the progressively plainer, less religiously iconographic, and more secular images paired with often enigmatic inscriptions, Bateman offers his reader a clear signification of each element of each image, the effect of which confers upon each image a sense of clarity. Not only does Bateman's signification identify what is important in woodcuts comprised of a high degree of representational detail, but it also illuminates the whole by setting each element into narrative and moral relation. For example, in clarifying the image of the two men on horseback reaching for a bag that floats over a rent in the earth (see fig. 9), Bateman writes: "The two on horseback signifieth both estates striving for spirituall promotions, with sufficiency not contented, the bag in their handes is unsatiable desire, the deuill flying out is temptacion, and the ground opening vnder the is destruction. For when couetousness is most desired, then is death soonest stirred" (B3). The first part of the signification, the naming of parts, implicitly functions to suggest the difficulty of reading images and, by extension, the world.

While the images of and writings on covetousness present, in compressed form, the way in which Bateman moves from familiar symbols and visual metaphors to images denuded of such recognizable signification, I would like to consider how this evolution of images and their signification develops through the whole of *A christall glasse* to support, at the level of form, Bateman's politically and spiritually focused argument.

In the book's series on vices, many of the classical and medieval symbols retain their familiar meanings, which Bateman builds upon and modifies to suit his purposes. Notable is how Catholic figures and symbols are reinscribed with new meaning. *A christall glasse* opens with an image that would have struck readers as familiar for its use of known symbols, such as the swords, the bag, the globe, and the fool's dress. Elsewhere, the classical figure of the wine god Bacchus is represented wearing a vine leaf crown, yet denigrated as a pagan god fallen to the status of servant to corrupt priests, friars, and their "vnsatiable desire" (F1) of gluttony. Another figure whose meaning remains constant and which would have been

## Of coueteousnes.

Diogenes. { The seruants serueh his master.  
The wicked serue coueteousnes.



### The signification.

**T**He two on hors back signifieth both estates striving for spirituall promotions, with sufficiency not contented, the bag in their handes is vnsatiabie desire, the deuill flying out is temptacion, and the ground opening vnder the is destruction. For when coueteousnes is most desired, then is death soonest stirred.

Fig. 9. Of Covetousness, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). B3.

familiar to readers is that of the dragon that “signifieth the enemy to all that professe the worde of Gode” (H2) and the lamb, which remains associated with Christ and God’s love. The woodcuts of *A christall glasse* communicate also through the logic of the medieval bestiary, whereby animals metaphorically represent particular human traits and tendencies. In the section on covetousness, an elephant stands for strength. The wolf signifies “all such greedy oppressours as do oppresse the poore and indigent” (B4). The use of animals in this tradition is consistent throughout the first half of *A christall glasse*. Bateman signifies a boar as embodying the vice of wrath, an ass as the “wrathfull iustice” (C3v) and elsewhere as sloth; a goat for lechery. Bateman also deploys stereotypic representations of women, with female figures appearing most frequently in the images pertaining to lechery; elsewhere, they are associated with madness, gluttony, and the pride of vanity.

None of these uses of classical, medieval, or gendered representations of vice is original; all continue well-known visual and moral discourses. When, however, Bateman signifies elements associated with the Roman Catholic church, he depends upon established associations of meaning only insofar as he uses them to invert and deny them. As discussed in the previous chapter, Bateman reinscribes the friars, vestments, nuns, rosary, Pope, cardinals, and friar’s cloak with new meaning. In the second woodcut Of Wrath, for example, an ass is dressed as a prelate and sits on a throne, passing judgement on a man signified as representing Truth. Beside the ass is a friar, representing lies. The reinscription of things Catholic continues in the next woodcut, in the act of a friar offering a man a poisoned chalice. In the very next image sits the Pope, signifying the oppression of wrath. *A christall glasse* represents lechery in the act of a friar and nun in an amorous embrace, as a robed horn-headed and claw-limbed figure watches and goads them. Reading Catholic images is thus patterned by Bateman according to their close association with spiritual corruption. As a reader approaches the end of the first section of *A christall glasse*, he witnesses a priest accepting the indulgent offerings of Bacchus and a friar representing sloth and lowliness, whose “weede and Beades signifieth hypocrisie and lothsomnes of the truth” (G2). The teaching in Bateman’s book, that friars, priests, cardinals, and the Pope represent threats against God’s truth is captured in two of the book’s most powerful, active images. In the second woodcut representing Envy, a friar and priest are said to be “the enemies of Gods word” (G4), a fact captured in their attack of (judging by his simple head covering and attire) a Protestant preacher (see fig. 10). The final image of Envy, a Catholic embodiment of vice occurs in the last woodcut of envy, in which a reader is made to clearly see representatives of the Catholic church as doing the work of the devil. In this cut, a cardinal and a friar are slaughtering lambs. The cardinal sits atop a dragon, under whose feet lies a sheep. Next to the cardinal and beast stands a friar, slitting the throat of a lamb. Bateman signifies the sheep as representing “the professors of Christ, from the beginning of the worlde to these present dayes” (H2); the cardinal represents persecution and the friar, murder (see fig. 11). To read the images of things Catholic rightly becomes a

## Of Enuie.

Where Gods word preached is in place : unto the people willingly :  
Woe be to them that would deface : for if such cease, the Stones will crie.



### ¶ The signification.

**H**E which preacheth in the pulpit, signifieth godly zeale, & a furtherer of the gospel: and the two which are plucking him out of his place, are the enemies of Gods word, threatening by fire to consume the professors of the same: and that company which sitteth still, are *Nullifidians*, such as are of no religion, not regarding any doctrine, so they may bee quiet to live after their owne willes and mindes.

reho

Fig. 10. Of Enuie, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). G4.

## Of Enuie.

{ To Serpent like I may compare : those greedie wolues that lambes deuoure.  
A wayting still to catch in snare : all such as gette they may by power.



### ¶ The signification.

**T**He Dragon signifieth the enemye to all that professe the worde of God : the Cardinall persecution, or a persecutor of the same : the Fryer murtherer : the sheepe which are a killing, signifieth the professours of Christ, from the beginning of the worlde to these present dayes.

H. ii. Enuie

Fig. 11. Of Enuie, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). H2.

process of awaiting the reinscribed meaning of them. The following chapter will explore in more detail how Bateman establishes a formidable authorial voice in *A christall glasse*, one that does not invite dialectical engagement so much as a didactic relationship of instruction from author to reader. Hence, in response to the dangers aroused by the devil and the coloured abuses intended to distract the godly from true Christian practice, Bateman's text tells its readers that the friar's frock does not represent modesty or chastity or humility but deception, and that what is offered in the chalice is not Christ's blood but poison. To read vice properly then is to follow the guidance of the authorial voice and to recognise the constant association between Catholicism and the devil, such that by the time readers arrive at the final woodcut of *A christall glasse*, which is another Catholic image, they see it as innocuous if not slightly ridiculous. The intention is that, girded by exposure to the virtues, readers are to find the last woodcut of friars fishing souls (well, heads, actually) out of a river of burning hellfire and its frame of untranslated Latin phrases strange and foreign (see fig. 12).

Added to the classical and medieval vernaculars of images whose meanings are retained and the Catholic imagery whose meanings are transformed is a third set of images that I will simply call secular. The inability of a reader to decipher these images further complicates the act of reading Bateman's book. Bateman takes his readers through a process of resignifying Catholic images with a constancy that allow readers to anticipate with at least a general accuracy the hidden meaning of a cardinal, pope, or nun, the meaning of the secularized images remains so highly variable as to make reading them, without relying entirely on the text's authorial voice for understanding, virtually impossible. Bateman's signification of secularized images participates in the new reading practice with which he is trying to engage his readers. These images represent a modern, complicated world of "coloured abuses," where Satan's deceptions might well prove quite difficult to recognize.

The title of Bateman's book and its controlling metaphor – that it is a mirror in which one can see the "coloured abuses" of the day, and thus more rightly see the truth – suggests that reading is an act of perception, of discerning, of seeing deeply and rightly. Equating his book to a "christall glasse" establishes this understanding and expectation of what it means to engage with the book, to read it perceptively. However, the significations Bateman ascribes to the secular images preclude this type of reading. Reading becomes instead an activity of confusion, guesswork, and ultimate reliance upon the text's authorial voice. To speak of this through examples, I shall turn to the section "Of Lechery," where non-religious images dominate the cuts. These images would be difficult to read without the guidance of the subscriptio, if reading is understood as discerning the true meaning of images and words, which is what Bateman both implicitly and explicitly indicates it to be. The third image in this section, of two armies at war, could be understood any number of ways. What the action represented in the image has to do with lechery is far from immediately clear. In studying such images, one does not experience the pleasure of confronting a puzzle or riddle with the best of one's mind and wit, as is often the

## Of Purgatory.

*Non habemus hic manētē ciuitatem sed futuram inquirimus. Heb. 13.  
Beati qui ad cenam nuptiarum Angeli vocati sunt. Apoc. 19.*



*Verbum Dei comburens gladius.  
Omnia parata venite ad nuptias. Math. 22.*

bemus apud deum Iesum Christum iustum, ipse est propi-  
tatio pro peccatis nostris. If any man sinne, yet haue  
we an aduocate with y father Iesus Christ, the righ-  
teous

Fig. 12. Of Purgatory, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). U3.

intended effect of an emblem book. Instead, the experience of independent reading tends toward bafflement, such is the paucity of clues within the images themselves. The one image of Lechery that does quickly suggest its sense, even when taken in without the aid of the words surrounding it, is that of a friar and a nun engaged in a passionate embrace while being watched by a horn-headed man with clawed hands and feet.

A similar degree of confusion in discerning a right reading of woodcut of images arises in looking at the first woodcut of gluttony, in which the reader glimpses, as if from inside a tavern, a brawl in mid-action that has left a man on a floor with blood gushing from his side and another poised with a long knife over his head, about to attack another man, who is trying to escape the knife-wielding man's grasp (see fig. 13). Wine pours onto the floor from a carafe held by another man, trying to stop the would-be murderer, and the table is strewn with a platter of food, plates, and goblets. While a general meaning of the woodcut can be deduced, following a logic that might run something like, 'Excess of appetite for drink and meat leads to destruction,' both the particularities and 'rightness' of this reading are beyond the signifying properties of the non-iconographic, non-Catholic images. To read this scene with discernment, to safely see through its potential deceptions, one must depend upon the confidence and knowledge of the author, who follows this image with a very detailed interpretation of it: "These which are fightyng, signifieth incontinence : he which is slaine hazarde : and death : and the one which goeth out with hys sword in hys hand *andax*, one past grace, or a murtherer" (E3). Thus, by the end of the vice section of *A christall glasse*, Bateman has created, primarily through the form, that is, the structure and style of his book, a sense of reading as a negotiation between the reader and three systems of meaning or symbolic representation – the classical / medieval, the Roman Catholic, and the secular. This negotiation results in the sense that reading is a dangerous, uncertain act, considering all that is at stake (the state of one's soul and how one will be judged on the Last Day) and the great difficulties the text presents in reading rightly. As Bateman has cautioned his readers in the Epistle, while God is associated with the word, the image is associated with the devil. Where Bateman hopes that through his book, his readers "may the better *see* the disordred abuses which daily raueth amongst vs," he also reminds his readers that it was God who "[o]f his own will begate he vs wyth the *worde* of lyfe" (A2v).<sup>6</sup>

The most significant and most obvious observation to be made in comparing Bateman's representation of the vices to his representation of the virtues is the way in which the medium of presentation shifts between the two. After subtly establishing in the Epistle the association between God and the word and the devil and the image, Bateman depends upon this set of opposed pairs in the representation of his argument. Bateman deploys words strategically in the section on vice as a

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<sup>6</sup> Emphases mine.

## Of Gluttonie.

Where murther is suffered not scene to in time,  
 There mischiefe encreaseth and bringeth to woe:  
 As such as to Bacchus doth honour diuine,  
 Shall soone bee bereft their goods to forgoe.



### The signification.

These which are fightyng, signifieth incontinence : he which is slaine hazarde : and death : and the one which goeth out with hys sword in hys hand *under*, one past grace, or a murtherer.

C. liij.

In

Fig. 13. Of Gluttonie, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). E3.

means of destabilizing the reliability of the image and its signification, and it is images that occupy the central place and are the primary means of representing vice. The moment Bateman turns his reader's attention to the virtues, words, words, words fill the pages, and suddenly images become relatively scarce. The shift is striking to the eye. In the section on vice, verbally framed images introduce various expositions on the vices; however, in the book's second section, on virtue, images are used only infrequently to complement the text.

The distribution and use of visual and verbal means of representation in *A christall glasse* speaks to the larger cultural shift in modes of religious representation going on at the time and reinforces the larger Reformist inclination to move away from Catholic iconography as part of a desire to return to what Reformers described as the true and literal biblical word of God. *A christall glasse* reinforces a reading practice that initially depends heavily upon images to forward an argument that casts doubt on an image's ability to speak reliably. Again and again the woodcuts on vice suggest the potential for duplicity in images and the power of words to reveal the images' deception and speak rightly of virtue. Emblem book structure – its signifying principles – aids in advancing this sensibility regarding word and image, and it is to this that I next turn.

In the first part of *A christall glasse* on vice, Bateman offers his reader a clear signification of each image in words, the effect of which is to confer upon the woodcuts a sense of clarity. Bateman's significations identify what elements in each woodcut are important. They also function to set each element into narrative and moral relation. For example, in describing the image of the two men on horseback reaching for a bag that floats over a rent in the earth, Bateman writes:

The two on horseback signifieth both estates striving for spirituall promotions, with sufficiency not contented, the bag in their handes is unsatiable desire, the deuill flying out is temptation, and the ground opening vnder thē is destruction. For when couetousness is most desired, then is death soonest stirred. (B3)

The first part of the signification, the naming of parts, implicitly functions to suggest the difficulty of reading images and the world. Bateman's use of the emblem genre is here seen to further his purpose with great effectiveness. Typically, an emblem introduces a puzzling but decipherable image to its reader, who plays and struggles to realise its meaning before deferring to the knowledge of the author, who through his writing explains hidden meanings the reader could not discern. While an emblem invites a reader's participation in the generation of meaning, the reader's interpretation remains always secondary to that of the author, as it awaits confirmation or correction by the author's words. Bateman uses this dynamic between reader and text and between reader and author to advance, through the formal qualities of his book, the central claim of his Epistle: the world is difficult to read and understand and can easily be misread, making one horribly vulnerable to Satan's deceptions. Not only is Bateman capable of identifying what is of import in the image and what each part means; he also has the ability to 'read' the interrelation

of parts, to moralize the world, and so knows what a reader without his help would not: “when couetousness is most desired, then is death soonest stirred” (B3).

In Bateman’s demonstration of the dangerous “coloured abuses” of the times through emblems, one sees the reading habits encouraged by form settle into a pattern of expression that both uses and works against the interpretive expectations of the emblem genre. Throughout *A christall glasse*, Bateman depends upon the defining emblematic feature of placing an image within a verbal frame. How this frame impacts upon interpretive acts is illuminated through Wendy Katz’s discussion of a 19<sup>th</sup> century emblem book written for children.<sup>7</sup> In writing on a very different kind of emblem book composed in a different era, Wendy R. Katz explores the relationship between the emblem book as a genre and the effect of generic elements upon reading strategies. What makes Katz’s observations regarding Gatty’s book useful in thinking about Stephen Bateman’s religious emblem book of the 16<sup>th</sup> century are her observations as to Gatty’s use of form, specifically how Gatty works within and pushes against the emblematic structure of her book as a means of generating meaning and reading strategies. In her essay, Katz forwards the claim “that Margaret Gatty’s emblems can be curiously contradictory, both exploiting and subverting the structural conservatism of their form” (235). This is to say, according to Katz, that Gatty deploys the denotative, deictic nature of the emblem to promote a reading style that encourages readers not to conform to Gatty’s text but to resist it. Katz continues: “Although [Gatty’s] *A Book of Emblems* is hardly a radical text, it nonetheless did encourage Gatty’s young audience to cultivate reading strategies that led some steps beyond the moral and religious margin of its emblematic ‘lessons’” (235). A similar manipulation of form is at work in *A christall glasse*, yet where Katz argues that Gatty’s book encouraged a way of reading that might subvert the moral lessons that were the subject of the book, Bateman’s functions in the opposite way. His book works to encourage a continuation of reading text, image, and the world in a manner that conforms to the interpretive parameters established by Bateman. Where Katz speaks of the “free interpretive decision-making” (236) that Gatty’s book teaches its readers through the emblem genre, Bateman instructs his reader toward a highly delimited interpretive process, one that stays within the margins of his text’s own argument and way of reading.

Seeking to understand the rhetorical impact of *A Christall Glasse* on the reading processes of an early modern reader and what those processes suggest is the author’s argument regarding the nature of the world and what he desires to be the nature of his readers’ engagement with that world is difficult, at best. What further complicates the matter is how Bateman’s text resists efforts to discern in it a unifying logic, a tidiness of method. Unlike a poem or a novel, where a certain degree of coherence and artistic intention can be fairly assumed, in *A christall glasse* one senses a

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<sup>7</sup> See Wendy R. Katz’s “Emblematic Form and Reading Strategy in the Emblems of Margaret Gatty.” *The Art of the Emblem: Essays in Honour of Karl Josef Hölzgen*. Ed. Michael Bath, John Manning, and Alan R. Young. New York: AMS Press, 1993. 235-249.

unity and coherence that work seemingly more according to the principles of pastiche than tidy design. As I have worked to describe Bateman's book and what patterns I do see at work in it, I hope I have also made it sufficiently clear that these patterns exist within a text that has the look and feel of a well-organized commonplace book that includes classical quotations lengthened by Bateman's own epigrams, notes to sermons written to varying degrees of fullness and one might say completion, and set within these writings, woodcuts intended to capture the eye and create a mnemonic key by which Bateman's lessons might be remembered.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Authority and Interpretive Anxiety

Through the emblematic structure and style of *A christall glasse*, Bateman constructs himself as author in such a way as to both exploit and deny the mutable, metaphoric meaning of images and words, as a means, I argue, of cautioning his readers against the religious instability of the times and of guiding them toward an anti-Catholic Christian faith. He deploys the metaphoric meaning of images in order to refuse his readers interpretive access to the flexibility and range of meaning potentially in metaphor, lest it leave them vulnerable to the “coloured abuses” of the times. Where the overarching argument or intention of *A christall glasse* is concerned with cautioning his readers against the religious instability of England circa 1569 and guiding his readers toward an anti-Catholic Christian faith, Bateman seeks to effect his purpose in part through rendering metaphoricity as fraught with danger and by working to generate anxiety around the ways in which an image or figure might be read. To explore how Bateman establishes an author who is didactic and discourages dialectic between himself and the reader, I shall first consider how Bateman positions himself in relation to the text, and specifically in relation to the role of author.

I find it intriguing that although it is Bateman’s name that appears on the book’s frontispiece and although it is Bateman who welcomes readers to *A christall glasse* in the Epistle, he very soon seeks to absent himself from the text and works to establish that the voice speaking to readers is not his own but one from the heavens. He does not reappear in the text until the opening of the second section of the book, a visual and verbal exposition of the virtues, where he, in a dramatic shift of approach and attitude toward his readers, invites them to reason their way through the virtues, author and reader together. The voice that speaks in lieu of Bateman’s own for much of the book, most especially in the section on the vices, is, I argue, divine; and by this means, by establishing *A christall glasse* as very much a godly book in the sense that it is of God, Bateman establishes a text with which a reader may not readily interact or argue. With this intransigent authorial voice, Bateman uses the emblematic structure of image and word to guide readers toward his intended ends, of demonstrating the wickedness of the Catholic Church and of guiding his readers toward spiritual and political attitudes of right conduct toward both God and Queen Elizabeth. What is of particular interest to me in considering *A christall glasse* as an emblem book is the way in which Bateman deploys this genre’s elements, which are so inviting of readerly engagement and interpretive play, to instill in his readers trepidation around the interpretive act. And yet, according to *A christall glasse*, the state of a reader’s soul and status as a political subject are at stake in that act of interpretation.

In modern emblem studies, the source and authority of meaning in Renaissance emblem books is most often understood as deriving from one or a combination of two primary sources, both of which reflect the episteme of the

period. Emblem books of the 16<sup>th</sup> century often play with a tension between these two sources of essential meaning, the first, the Book of Nature, wherein God's truth is written, and the second, man's wit, capable of both discerning subtleties of meaning in the world and imaginatively realising truisms where none apparently exist. A discussion of how Bateman works rhetorically with these notions is a productive place to begin developing an understanding of how Bateman constructs an authorial voice within *A christall glasse*. He starts by conferring authority upon his book by associating it, in the introductory "The Epistle to the Reader," with divine illumination. The light which illumines the virtues and lays bare the abuses with which Bateman is concerned comes not, he says in his introduction, from his own wit or wisdom, but from heaven: the "perfect glasse of godly reformation," which is Bateman's book, is "beautified with y<sup>e</sup> christall sight of all celestial virtues" (A3). However, from this point on, Bateman complicates this seemingly simple relationship between book and reader.

Michael Bath very nicely describes these two broad signifying mechanisms of the emblem book when he writes that: "the emblem was conceived both as an art of rhetorical invention in which novel or witty connections were suggested between signifier and signified, and at the same time as an art which used inherent meanings already inscribed in the Book of Nature by the finger of God" (3). During the early modern period, as the inherent meaning of Nature was recognized as more tenuous and less certain than it had been in the medieval period, how one read the world, never mind images and words on a page, began to shift. "Representation," Daniel S. Russell argues in his essay "Perceiving, Seeing and Meaning", moved "... to supplant symbolization as a function of the image in Renaissance society; the ways of science were beginning to replace the Book of Nature" (88); the effect of this, notes Russell, is that "images now needed to be framed and explained in order for them to function as images from the Book of Nature" (88). Bateman uses this tautology to great effect. In the fourth woodcut on Wrath, which features a sword-bearing Pope engaged in a violent scene, one can see how in the verbal framing of an image, Bateman seeks to inscribe the woodcut with the same inherent surety of meaning associated with the idea that the divine, incontrovertible meaning of things was inscribed into Nature. This is accomplished through analogy and the pairing of scenes within the single woodcut frame. While in the foreground, the Pope (according to Bateman) both condones and participates in violent acts, in the background, three men kneel in prayer to God, whose name is, in the woodcut, written in the sun. Throughout *A christall glasse*, Bateman likens the plight of persecuted 'true Christians' at the hands of Popish corruption to the suffering and exile of the Israelites. Here, in this woodcut, through a spatial and analogic reading of the image, Bateman again invokes this notion to suggest that while the Pope seeks to destroy "constant religion," true Christians – men and women like Bateman and his intended readers – are devoting themselves to God. The unquestionable rightness of his message is reinforced through the Hebraic inscription of יהוה in the sun, suggesting the true Judeo-Christian God. With this incontrovertible, natural and

yet supernatural, truth in place, Bateman can then build on it to create for the reader other, similarly weighty and absolute truths, such as the Pope's corruption and cruelty.

John Manning's claim that the early modern period was one in which "Nature was observed through 'the spectacle of books', for reading could only be useful if it moderated and shaped understanding" (*The Emblem* 26-7), assists in understanding the meaning-generating mechanism Bateman deployed. By presenting his text as a christall glasse, or mirror, by which one might more clearly and truthfully see the world, Bateman is seeking not only to offer his readers spiritual exercise but also to alter how they see and perceive the world. The perception most consistently communicated to readers is that Catholic authorities, be they monks, priests, or prelates, all participate in the devil's attempts to deceive and corrupt virtuous Christians.

In *The Emblem*, John Manning speaks of the slow movement of the shift away from the medieval reading of the world as the 'Book of Nature' to reading its details more imaginatively. In this new reading, says Manning, the "symbolic process" of meaning-making was recognised as "originat[ing] within . . . the human mind. It was not a gift from God" (30). The light and hope of clear vision that Bateman promises his readers in his text's opening, however, suggests the anterior, Book of Nature, model of truth: truth is there, given by God, and all one has to do is open one's eyes. There is some small irony that in seeking to take his readers forward, toward English Protestantism, Bateman deploys what may be called a more medieval (and Catholic) means of understanding the source of meaning in the world. This irony, particular to *A christall glasse*, gives way to one more interesting: that while broadly concerned with providing autonomy and power to the individual in her or his relation to God, and while claiming that such intermediaries as priests and some argued even the church should be abandoned,<sup>8</sup> Protestantism in this period in England also demonstrates an anxiety and strong desire to collectively guide people toward particular understandings of the Christian faith and right conduct.<sup>9</sup> The emblem genre, with its pairing of images and text in puzzling combination, allows for the amplification of the tension between these two sources of knowledge. John Manning describes "the very essence of emblematic wit" as "when the [wood]cut becomes the bearer of a hitherto unsuspected significance made explicit in the emblematic verses" (85), a process of meaning-making that may be presented either as one of perception or invention (or some combination thereof).

The degree to which Bateman depends upon this expectation of "emblematic wit" varies, but what is significant is that he does not invite his readers to engage

<sup>8</sup> See Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. 1971. Penguin: London, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Ramie Targoff in her study *Common Prayer: the language of public devotion in early modern England* considers the ways in which the Book of Common Prayer exerted a hegemonic force with the mid-sixteenth century churches, reducing, again ironically, the autonomy English Catholics had known before the Reformation.

their own wit as they read the images and words of *A christall glasse*. The notion of self-reliance suggested by the use of wit to create meaning is what Bateman underplays in the semiotics of his emblems. He allows himself the play of wit, the play of metaphor, to ‘realise’ meaning in the woodcuts, but *what* he realises dissuades his readers from applying the same kind of wit, a similar habit of mind, to their world. How quickly Bateman problematises reading, how quickly he upsets what would have been conventional habits of reading images (as learned from reading the iconography of church sculpture and stained glass) can be seen in the radical representational shift that occurs between the first and fifth woodcuts of *A christall glasse*, those which begin and end the section on Covetousness. Bateman’s book takes its readers into the world of images and “coloured abuses” through a woodcut that deploys an iconography of the beast for Satan, swords for power, a bag for riches, and a sphere for the world. The fifth image, however, is stripped bare of all such symbols, save the beast. In this woodcut, which I describe as highly secularized for the absence of symbols traditionally associated with a medieval or Catholic symbolic system, Bateman himself metaphorises or reads figuratively its details, rather than depending upon an established iconographic key of signification. Yet this act imparts upon the reader a sense of some anxiety, for the right reading of the image becomes suddenly ambiguous and arbitrary. Bateman asserts that the “three on horsebacke signifieth the state of mē worldly minded: as Makeshift, Flattery, and Desire to have” (C1); however, there is no detail that leads the reader to discern them as such. In this way, the reading of images (and by implication, of words and the world) is threatening, even dangerous, through the confusion images cause in the minds of readers struggling to see the truth. From the beginning of *A christall glasse* through to its last pages, Bateman warns against the “waueryng mynded mā”: “a waueryng mynded mā is vnstable in all his wayes” (A2), he cautions, and through this wavering-mindedness becomes a potential vehicle through which Satan can lead men and women away from God, as, Bateman argues, does the Pope. Toward the end of this book dedicated to demonstrating the ungodly ways of the Roman Church, Bateman forwards the idea that to read the world imaginatively, by means of free interpretation, is to act popishly. Bateman likens the Catholic, “imaginative” reading of the Word of God” to the Catholic “invention” of purgatory. In condemning both the Pope and purgatory, by implication Bateman also condemns the very act of imaginatively engaging with text: “. . . in like doth the Pope and his fraternity, beholde the scriptures but nothing at all vse them as they ought to do, but altogether to their owne imaginations, in as much as they haue done and do mayntayne a purgatory . . . which is nothing but mere falsehood and deceit” (U2v). To use one’s imagination in reading Scripture, claims Bateman, is to engage in the “falsehood and deceit” of “the Pope and his fraternity”.

Where much discussion surrounding the mechanisms of meaning in emblem books has been based on the medieval notion of the Book of Nature as inscribed with God’s truth and the Renaissance esteem for man’s wit, capable of inventing meaning where none need necessarily be, David Graham’s recent typology of

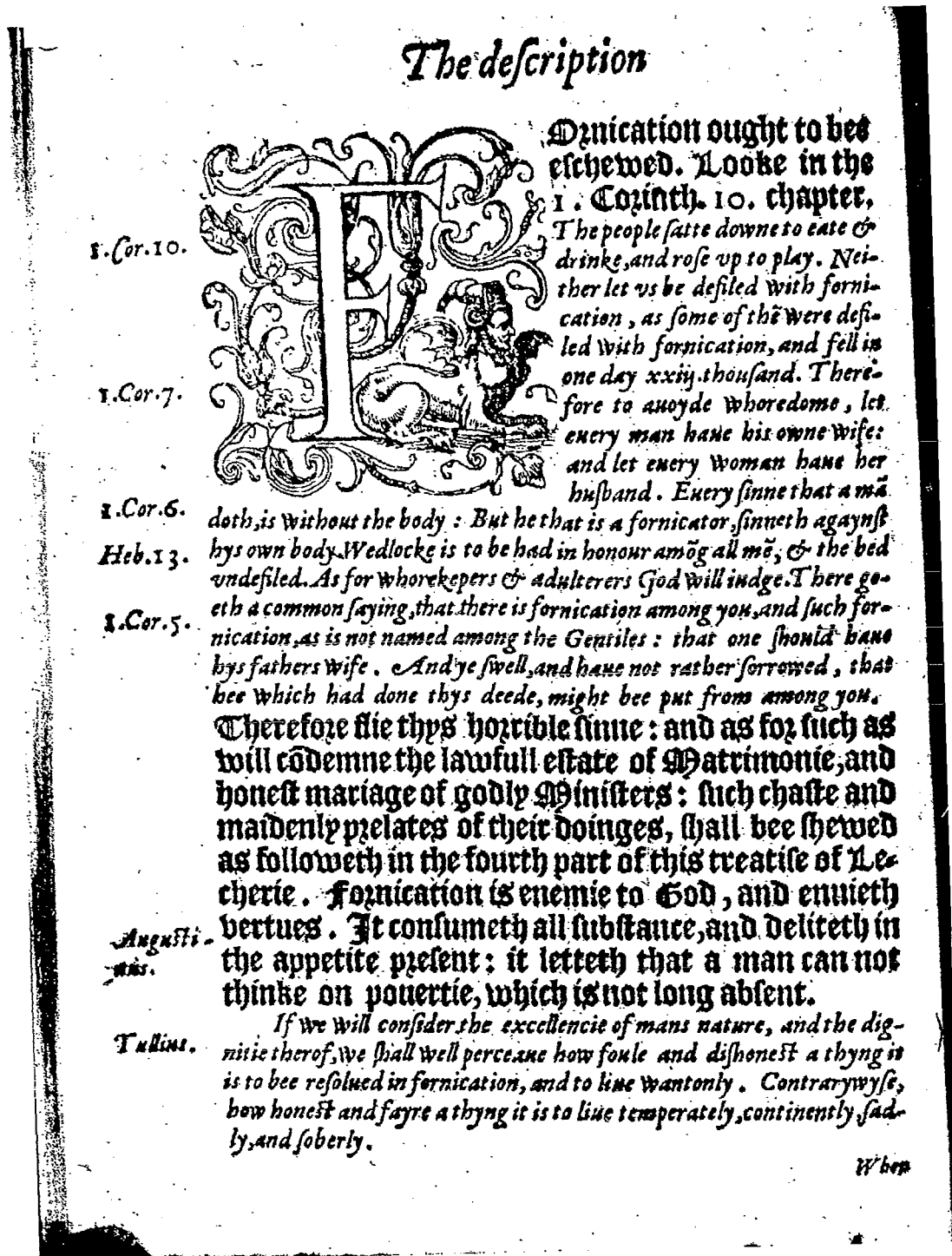
emblems in his essay “Emblemata multiplex: Towards a Typology of Emblematic Forms, Structures and Functions” reminds us that the very form of emblems participates in the construction of meaning. Graham’s charting of the functional classes of various emblem elements offers a flexible framework and a nuanced vocabulary for discussing how emblem books such as Stephen Bateman’s signify. Within the emblem book form, perhaps the richest site of this tension between instability or flexibility of meaning and the yearned after definitive and true meaning of Nature as given by God lies in the relationship between image and text. Certainly it is in this tension-filled relationship that Bateman works to control and redirect his readers’ attention and understanding, and even their very modes of reading.

In speaking of emblem books and their authors, John Manning writes: “They invite us to step through their ornate frontispieces and command our attention: *Aspice* (Look!), *Vide* (See!), *Elige* (Choose!)” (36). Stephen Bateman, while inviting his readers to look and see, is not eager to leave them to choose. The question of authority and texts may be posed in numerous ways. For example, David Graham, in his typology of emblematic forms, speaks of emblem books’ textual authority: “Emblem books confer moral authority on their contents in a variety of ways, but perhaps the most common is through a simple appeal to classical, Biblical or religious authority” (144). This mechanism of, to paraphrase Graham, conferring textual authority on an emblem book certainly applies to Bateman’s text. While Bateman does include a number of classical passages in his book as epigrams, the concern of the expository passages and the book as a whole is most certainly religious (and political). In fact, so heavily dependent upon the bible is Bateman – the margins contain lists of biblical verse and the expositions are built around biblical figures and episodes – that the bible might itself be seen as the primary text and *A christall glasse* its gloss. This relationship between Bateman’s book and the Bible is seen in virtually all his expositions. For example, the second exposition on Lechery reads as follows:

Fornication ought to be eschewed. Looke in the 1. Corinth. 10. chapter. The people satte down to eate & drinke, and rose vp to play. Neither let vs be defiled with fornication, as some of thẽ were defiled with fornication, and fell in one day xxiiij. thousand. Therefore to auoyde whoredome, let euery man haue his owne wife: and let euery woman haue her husband. Euery sinne that a mã doth is without the body: But he that is a fornicator, sinneth agaynst hys own body.  
(D4v)

One can recognise in the lines above a certain missing logic, the lacunae of which are filled by the biblical citations embedded in and framing Bateman’s text (see fig. 14).

While *A christall glasse* is, as an emblem book, descended in form and in its particular utilization of image and text from Andrea Alciato’s *Emblematum Liber*, acknowledged by scholars as the first Renaissance emblem book, the role Alciato and Bateman offer their readers vary greatly. Alciato, notes John Manning, invites all to

Fig. 14. Example of intertextuality, from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse...* (London, 1569). D4v.

participate in his authorial activity and to assume the role of creator: “[V]aleat tacitis scribere quisque notis’ (Let everyone have the ability to write in secret ciphers)” (80). Such an invitation is not extended by Stephen Bateman. It cannot be said that *A christall glasse* encourages the idea that “everyone [should] have the ability to write in secret ciphers;” his text does not even encourage the notion that just anyone should have the right to *read* such ciphers. The tone of “The Epistle to the Reader” suggests that the book’s purpose is educational and spiritually instructive and Bateman encourages his audience to engage with his book, noting how “[t]he holy apostle S. Iames speaketh very louingly vnto all suche as geueth their mindes to godly exercise and study” (A2). Yet the text takes its readers through to a very clearly set out conclusion as to the cardinal points of virtue and how one is to engage with the world, as seen in Bateman’s writing in the final section, “Of the day of doome, And comming of the Lord, wherein is contayned the rewarde of the faithful, the reprobate go into euerlasting fier”. Here, Bateman again suggests the dangers of mutability:

. . . take heede therefore, and be constant in all truth vnto the ende, and God will preserve thee, and on all those that haue no loue vnto his word, among suche doth God let slip false prophets to deceaue them. And therefore God shall sende them strong delusion, that they should beleue lyes, that al they might be damned which beleue not the truth, but haue pleasure in vnrighteousnes, and those which withdraw the faithful from the truth of the gospell”. (X2v)

The cryptic nature of the emblem captures the ambiguous and thus dangerous nature of the world (to which Alciato refers in his call, ‘[V]aleat tacitis scribere quisque notis’) and derives in large part from the polysemousness of an image’s visual elements, a multiplicity of potential meaning then multiplied by its placement in the image’s context. Each element must signify in terms of itself and its relation to the whole. For example, in the first image *Of Lechery* (see fig. 15), wherein a well-dressed woman sits sidesaddle on a goat, which is being led by its beard by an old woman, the details of the woodcut – the young woman, her style of dress, the old woman, the old woman’s walking stick – when taken discretely, might signify in any number of ways. Once these elements are set in relation to create a composition, even greater interpretive confusion arises as the reader attempts to discern – following a pattern Bateman has previously set in his significations – some moral coherence to the image. How and the degree to which this polysemousness is managed by the author speaks to the text’s argument and the author’s intention.

In an analysis of authorial control, Manning describes how “[t]he emblematic epigram exerts an insistent, if gentle, pressure on the reader towards an authorial choice of meaning from a whole lexicon of possible applications, some of which were in the process of being generated” (87). In Bateman’s work, such ‘gentle pressure’ can indeed be seen in each image’s framing epigram, a pressure that continues to be exerted through the subscriptio and into the explication. By the time Bateman arrives at his writing *Of Sloth*, he has abandoned his opening – and

## The description

Great griefe assailes the Lecherous minde : of such as doth the youth alare:  
More worse then beastes I do the finde : such youth to lechery to procure.



## The signification.

**T**He Goate signifieth Lechery : the woman Whoredome : she which leadeth the Goate by the beard is *meretrix*, the baudie : and the deuill *Niticorax*, a blinde guide or deceiver.

**Lechery**

Fig. 15. Of Lecherie, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). D2v.

emblematically very typical – practice of using as an epigram a few pithy lines from a famous classical or biblical source. Whether Bateman turns to crafting his own epigrams or has simply dropped the habit of assigning sources is unclear, but what is remarkable in this shift away from noted sources is that the epigrams begin to exert an even stronger and more direct pressure on the emblems they introduce. The fourth image *Of Sloth* features a friar astride a donkey (see fig. 16). The friar is dressed in his habit and is carrying his rosary. The friar's eyes are closed, and one hand is drawn to his cheek. Without the verbal framing of the epigram, one might well look upon this image and conclude it captures a moment of contemplative devotion. However, the epigram suggests that one read the scene otherwise: "Great grieve it is the learned to see: in slothfull rest to spend their dayes: / Such may be likened to dronebees: that sucke the sweete and go their wayes" (G2).

This 'gentle pressure' is also achieved through what David Graham calls the deictic nature of various emblem elements: "Within the confines of the individual emblem, emblem authors deploy a variety of deictic means to redirect the attention of readers from the textual parts of the emblem to the key visual elements to be found in the *pictura*, and thus to control the sequencing of the reading process" (148). In Bateman's case, it is the subscriptio that is most deictic, for while interpretive space exists between epigram and image, upon arriving at the subscriptio the reader is pointed to understand the image in exact terms. The first woodcut representation *Of Gluttonie*, for example, is rife with confusion and is reminiscent of a bar brawl scene. Five men and the figure of death crowd the frame. All are engaged in chaotic action, save the one who lies bleeding to death in the foreground. In this woodcut full of detail – there is an arrow, a knife, a sword, a carafe, food and drink on the table, acts of aggression, acts of defense, death, and the desire for vengeance – a reader might well feel overwhelmed by the task of reading it rightly. The signification, however, points out what in the image is meaningful and what each of these elements of import signify: "These which are fightyng, signifieth incontinence: he which is slaine hazarde: and death: and the one which goeth out with hys sword in hys hand *audax*, one past grace, or a murtherer" (E3). In this way, Bateman's efforts to control the polysemousness of the emblem image not only influences the meaning derived from the image by the reader; it also affects *how* the reader learns to read images. To read, according to the above, is to discern the details that matter from the many that do not and to recognise in the former their moral significance.

While the emblem is often spoken of in relation to simile and metaphor, those habits of mind dependent on a richness of what signifying elements may connote, Bateman's emblems differ in that they disallow the reader of his text the interpretive range typically allowed by these tropes. To demonstrate this difference, let us consider a clichéd example, 'My love is like a red, red rose.' How love, how the speaker's love particularly, should resemble a rose, and a red one at that, is for the reader or listener to determine. Emblems, while based on constructing meaning through the principle of likeness, of similitudes, continues to work beyond the point of the metaphor's enigma, or uncertainty of meaning, to provide its reader or viewer

## Of Sloth.

Great griefe it is the learned to see : in slothfull rest to spend their dayes.  
Such may be likened to dronebees : that sucke the sweete and go their wayes.



### The signification

**H**E which rydeth on the Ass signifieth sloth, as well among the chiefest as among the lowest : the Fryers weede and Beades signifieth hypocrisie and lothsomnes of the truth.

**W. J. Sloth**

Fig. 16. Of Sloth, woodcut from Stephen Bateman, *A christall glasse*. . . (London, 1569). G2.

with the solution to its mystery, and it is this potential in the semiotic of the emblem that Bateman exploits. John Manning, in *The Emblem*, speaks of “a particular emblematic expository strategy: the process of choosing a specific meaning from the many possible meanings that could attach themselves to an image” (86). This holds true, I believe, for as long as one is looking exclusively at the image. From that point on, however, once a reader’s eyes begin to scan the verbal text, be it the inscription, subscriptio, or explication, the number of possible meanings of the image begins to diminish. Manning, in speaking of Jacob Cats’s *Silenus Alcibiabdis* says that Cats’s play with image and meaning makes clear that: “an emblematic cut is not in itself tied to a single meaning but is at the disposal of the verbal text. The text is what does the work to convey meaning” (86). The interpretive space left for the reader by an author’s verbal framing of the image varies, certainly, but I do not agree with Manning when he asserts the verbal text’s signifying power over the visual image. In this model of how meaning is generated in emblem books, Manning overlooks the varying degrees to which authors will deploy their text to control or dictate the meaning of the associated image. However, it is in looking here, at this variation, that one may gain a sense of how the author is positioning himself relative to his readers, the interpretive frame or world view the author allows his readers, and the role he wishes his readers to play in deciphering his text.

We can see the degree to which Bateman manages to control his readers’ interpretive options in an instance where he actually appears to be offering them an increase in interpretive freedom. In looking at the woodcuts representing Wrath and the accompanying verbal signification following each, one can observe a shift in Bateman’s own interpretive work. As with the first set of images on Covetousness, in looking at the woodcuts on Wrath a reader can at best speculate as to their meaning before turning his or her attention to the authorial denotation of elements in the signification that follows. However, what is noticeably different in these significations on Wrath is the absence of the moralizing conclusions drawn at the end of each signification of the images of Covetousness. In his commentaries on the woodcut images of Covetousness, Bateman begins by identifying the true representative value of each image element and ends by setting the static image into a narrative through a moralizing statement that set all elements into dynamic relation, as is seen in the very first woodcut-signification pairing of the book, in which Bateman identifies each image element of import and ends in moralizing: “The deuill is Envy, the swords in his hand betokeneth mischief, the purse couetousnes, the globe the world, the man in fooles weede signifieth carelesse couetousnes, a man being ouercome with Envy and couetousnes, may be likened to a foole that is not able to rule himselfe, and so the end is death” (B1). In the section on Wrath, Bateman continues to identify the essential elements and their meaning but stops short of offering a moralizing conclusion to the significations. For example, in the first image, he tells his readers that, “The Bore signifieth Wrath, and the mā on his backe mischief: the Pope in the Flag destruction, & the Flag vncertaine religion, turning and chaunging with euey blast of winde: the man killing his selfe

desperation: the woman madness” (C2v) Without a concluding moralizing statement that draws the elements together into a dynamic narrative, the image remains enigmatic and less clear, less revealing of its truth than those representing Covetousness. It is for the readers to understand how the parts relate to generate meaning in the woodcuts on Wrath. Bateman’s refraining from offering his readers a definitive reading of the image in the form of a moralizing statement seems to offer his readers a greater degree of interpretive work to be done in this section, but this work is, perhaps, less than one might think. For what Bateman offers in identifying each element is the foundation for a guided and quite literal form of reading. For example, one might use the given significations of each element of the first visual image of Wrath to build the following reading: mischief (the man) led on by wrath (the bore) and inspired by destruction (the flag bearing the pope’s likeness) and influenced by Roman Catholicism (the wavering flag) will push men toward self-destruction (the boar behind the man might be read in such a way) and will lead women to madness. In comparing this guided, literal reading against the emblem’s explication, one discovers the two are quite similar. The explication speaks of how “Ire accustomed maketh a man to come out of his witte” and that “Ire hath so much done y<sup>t</sup> it hath brought men to desperation, and in the end haue ha<sup>u</sup>ged themselves” (C3). As something of an early modern reading primer, then, this section on Wrath suggests a model of reading that is guided by an authoritative voice and interpretive strategy that is literal rather than metaphoric in nature. Reading, *A christall glasse* suggests, is an act whereby the metaphoric and multiple is rendered literal and singular. While Bateman’s leaving off the signification before offering any moralizing conclusion might appear as offering his reader interpretive room, he gives readers hardly a jot more interpretive space here than in the previous section, for he has guided them over the trickiest, most dangerous moment of the reading act, when the boar, the man astride it, the woman, and the self-mutilating man might mean virtually anything.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Concluding Thoughts

I have focused on the rhetorical aspects of *A christall glasse* to examine the signifying processes at work within both the content and structure of the text, in order to consider how it communicates meaning to its intended readers within its cultural (that includes its political and theological) milieu. What is of particular interest in setting *A christall glasse* within a history of thought and within its contemporary epistemological context is that in so doing, it can be seen to speak to the tremendous transformative tide in the mid-sixteenth century English world view, a time in which discoveries in science, the conscience and desires of monarchs, and growing discontent with the Roman Catholic church converged to create an atmosphere of anxiety which Bateman's text addresses. In a future project, I hope to build on this current effort to more closely consider how transformations in modes of representation and of reading functioned to affect an early modern subject's spiritual self-identity. I would like to more precisely articulate how, within its 16th century context, the nature of reading promulgated in Bateman's *A christall glasse* functions to access and transform those most interior spiritual and mental spaces wherein an English subject conceived of himself or herself as a devotional Christian subject.

What John Manning writes in speaking of emblems books generally, that "[t]he fabric of medieval faith and thought was eroding under a steady tide of religious, political and intellectual upheaval and change" (*The Emblem* 13), most certainly applies to the context in which *A christall glasse* was produced and which it was intended to affect. Despite these upheavals, medieval systems of signification did not, of course, simply disappear. Rather, they continued to be deployed as a means by which to communicate their very dissolution. This paradox can be seen in *A christall glasse*, in Bateman's use of medieval and Catholic modes of thought and representation to denounce what he argued was Catholicism's evil and corruption. This paradox may be understood through Michael Bath's description of the foundations of Renaissance meaning-making processes: "the matrix of signifying practices which made up the contemporary *mundus symbolicus*," writes Bath in *Speaking Pictures*, "remained for the average writer and reader a larger unconscious set of generalised codes" (29), codes that inevitably, though Bath does not articulate this idea, must in part derive from the past of Catholic modes of thought, so pervasive were these modes of thought to premodern England's world view. Reading *A christall glasse* with Bath's notion of unconscious codes in mind, the text gains value and interest in the way in which it promises to reveal vestiges of these habits of mind. Bath argues that the codes of which he speaks are "conventions [that] manifest themselves in the actual practice of reading and writing" (29). These conventions, unconscious though they may be, are capable of being reconstructed through reading these texts anew, and it is in this way that at least one value of books such as *A christall glasse* can be realized.

The destabilizing of the medieval comprehensive world view is central to Rosemary Freeman's, Michael Bath's, and John Manning's understanding of how early modern emblem books functioned within – both represented and defined – the times in which they were written. In introducing the early English emblem book, Freeman describes the nature of allegorical thought in late 16<sup>th</sup> century England. She notes that where the allegorical thought system of the medieval period sought to create a unified, coherent meaning of the universe, by the late 1500s this sense of coherence was no longer. Hers is a fairly dark image of the loss of coherent meaning as England entered the late sixteenth century: "For the medieval man the whole world has been symbolic, and all the details of experience had formed part of one unified allegorical conception of the meaning of life . . . . For Elizabethans, this great framework no longer existed as a single unity: it had not completely vanished but it had broken up, leaving fragments of the old allegorical ways of thinking still present in men's minds, but present only as fragments and not co-ordinated" (20).

Within this loss and this newly fractured, destabilized world, John Manning recognises potential in meaning-making, noting that "the Reformation, the discovery of the New World, new astronomical theories . . . exerted a pressure on the cultures of Europe to look afresh at the things that sustained their imaginative life" (*The Emblem* 13-4). Rather than seeing the progression from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century as one of fracture and great change, Peter M. Daly identifies a cohering principle between "the medieval allegorist and the renaissance emblematiser," that coherence being that both "held that everything that exists point to meanings beyond the things themselves . . . ." (38). It is within this context, in which the very nature of the world and the means of knowing it undergo radical change, that Bateman's readers become vulnerable to his intention of encouraging them toward a particular way of understanding and conducting themselves as English Christian subjects. One source of anxiety upon which Bateman depends was the relationship between *A christall glasse* and the world outside the text. Published at a time when Elizabeth was working to end the religious in-fighting of her country, the book at once seeks to offer readers means of steadying themselves against the uncertainty of the times, yet achieves this through appealing to their own common fears and uncertainties.

In *A christall glasse*, Bateman develops a close association between spiritual and political virtue. He speaks of "wrathfull treason" and says that "as wrath is deadly, so is it trayterous" (D1). This dual political-religious focus is maintained through to the end of *A christall glasse*, where the world is likened to the Pope, an analogy dependent upon the understanding that the Pope and the world are both, by Satan's trickery, capable of deceiving the well-intended: "The vaine glory of thys worlde is a deceatfull sweetenes, and may bee likened to the Popes superbius crueltie, an vnfruitfull labour, a co~tinual feare, a daugerous aduancement, a beginning without prouidence, an end without repentance" (D2). A political concern is seen also in Bateman's indirect allusion to the religious violence known during Queen Mary's rule. Warning his readers that "what measure is mette to others, the same to be measured againe," saying: "If these sentences had bene, and were, of the enemies

of Gods Gospell well co-sidered, truly they would not haue shewed so much crueltie in shedding so much innocent bloud as they haue done, and continually seeke to do”(D2). A third instance in which Bateman connects personal, spiritual sin to crime against the state is in his explication of the third woodcut on Lechery. He writes that “so in adultery and rape, shall be rehearsed y<sup>e</sup> wonderfull calamities and losse of countreyes, with the ouerthrowing of kingdomes, to the cleane secludyng or cutting of, of all such as haue bene maintainers of the same” (E1v). Here, as in the previous examples, Bateman’s two notions of the Christian subject are made clear. He is, on the one hand, concerned for the state of his reader’s soul on the day of judgement, warning, in the signification to the fourth image of Lechery that “hell is the place for such offenders [of virtue], whose continuaunce is endless” (E2). The second understanding of the reader is as a political subject. Bateman does not talk about his readers’ vice ridden or right conduct in the world within the more immediate and intimate contexts of family, village, and town. Rather, he places them against the much broader backdrop of a country working to develop a unified religious identity.

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