UNIVERSITY OF MURCIA

International Journal of English Studies

IJES

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Thomas More in the *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis benemerentium effigies XLIIII* (1572)[i]

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Received: 03/10/2023. Accepted: 16/07/2024.

ABSTRACT
While in Antwerp to work on his edition of the Polyglot Bible (1573), the Spanish humanist Benito Arias Montano met the Dutch engraver, Philip Galle. They collaborated on the publication of the *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis benemerentium effigies XLIIII* (1572), a collection of over 40 portraits, each accompanied by a Latin epigram by the Spaniard. One of these portraits corresponds to Thomas More; and it was the first time that an engraving of Henry VIII's Chancellor appeared in a portrait book. This study analyzes More's presence in Galle's and Arias Montano's volume. After dealing with the sources of Galle's graphic representation of More and its formal analysis, we clarify why the Spanish Netherlands were a most fitting context for the popularisation of More's image in printed works. The Spaniard's possible role in the creation of the final list of 44 illustrious men is also relevant, though it has primarily been argued by Spanish scholars. Other aspects related to the genesis of the *Virorum doctorum* are also taken into account before concluding with an analysis of the two versions of the Latin epigram that Arias Montano composed for More, a synthesis of what the Spaniard admired in the ill-fated English author.

KEYWORDS: Thomas More; Phillip Galle; Benito Arias Montano; *Virorum doctorum*; Engraving; Portrait Book.

1. INTRODUCTION

Benito Arias Montano (1527-1598) was a Spanish humanist, theologian and philosopher. After being ordained priest, his reputation enabled him to participate in the Council of Trent (1562), as one of the many Spanish legates[ii]. Back in Spain, King Philip II appointed him as his chaplain in 1566. Even when there are significant gaps in his biography[iii], the period of his life

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Print ISSN: 1578-7044; Online ISSN: 1989-6131 doi: 10.6018/ijes.586811

that is relevant to this study is fairly well known. Following Philip II's instructions, Arias Montano traveled to the Netherlands, where he would remain (with a short Italian interlude in 1572) from 1568 to 1575. The Spanish King had commissioned him to supervise and a new edition of the Polyglot Bible[iv], which eventually came to be known also as the *Antwerp Bible* or *Biblia Regia*.

Montano arrived at Antwerp in May 1568. The French book printer and publisher Christophe Plantin was already working on the new Polyglot Bible. As agreed, the Spaniard would supervise the edition of this work that finally came to be printed in Plantin's in five languages –Latin, Greek, Syriac, Aramaic, and Hebrew[v].

One year before Arias Montano's arrival, the Duque de Alba, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, had come to the Low Countries to restore Spanish rule following the turmoil that started in 1566. The Duke's agenda also included the task of supervising the orthodoxy of the books published in the Spanish Netherlands. The presence in Antwerp of his well-learned compatriot was an opportunity Álvarez de Toledo would not miss. Therefore, he asked Arias Montano to compile an updated version of Pius IV's *Tridentine* Index[vi]. As a result, four Indexes were published between 1569 and 1571[vii].

Despite his involvement in the said matters, Arias Montano managed to publish (or collaborate on) several other works. One of them was the *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis benemerentium effigies XLIIII* (Antwerp, 1572). This work belongs to a very popular Renaissance genre, the *viri illustres*, which saw an unprecedented proliferation in the sixteenth century: basically, these works included portraits of relevant personalities, accompanied by their biographies. The initiative to publish this work came from Philip (or Philips) Galle (1537-1612), a well-known Dutch engraver and print publisher in Haarlem and Antwerp, who asked the Spaniard to collaborate with him. This would be their first joint project. Arias Montano would compose the Latin lines below each of the portraits by Galle. The *Virorum doctorum* deserves credit for pioneering the inclusion of Thomas More in a work of this kind, not only in the Netherlands but also in Europe. During the remaining years of the sixteenth century, portraits of the English humanist appeared in six other *viri illustres* volumes, published in different European countries and several languages[viii].

One might wonder why the Spanish Netherlands would be the ideal setting for a Morean revival. After the execution of Thomas More for high treason (July 6, 1535), the memory of Henry VIII's second Chancellor disappeared from public life in England. Accounts of his death traveled through Europe, but for the general public, he remained in the shadow. It was during the settlement of English Catholic exiles in the Spanish Netherlands after Elizabeth I's coronation in 1558 that the reputation of the late Chancellor became "an ever-widening influence" throughout the sixteenth century (Southern, 1950: 17). The cult of the ex-Chancellor among English exiles constituted, in William Sheils' words, "a particular tradition within post-Reformation English Catholicism" (2009: 82). It is interesting to notice how the

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Low Countries saw the printing of several Morean works on dates close to those of Arias Montano's arrival (May 1568). In 1565-1566, the *Opera Latina* was published at Leuven, by Jean Bogard and Pierre Zangre (Tiletanus)[ix]. The so-called Recusant movement, constituted by exiled English Catholics, had clearly defined its aims by 1568: spiritual, cultural and educational (Southern, 1950: 18); certainly, Thomas More had played his part in the three. Another factor must be taken into consideration: Philip II and the Duke of Alba had committed themselves to help the English exiles. The King and the Iron Duke probably thought they were doing enough, but the expatriates saw themselves as helpless and vulnerable.

In the present paper, I intend to analyze in detail Thomas More's presence in Galle's volume. It was the first time that an engraving of Henry VIII's Chancellor appeared in a portrait-book. Galle's engraving of More markedly influenced other portraits of the English humanist published in later works of this type (Morison, 1963: 50). This debut raises several questions, some of which have only been partially resolved.

My starting point is a reassessment of Galle's sources for the depiction of the English humanist's likeness (§ 2.1). This implies exploring the dependence of this engraving with the canonical representation of Thomas More by Thomas Holbein, or with the couple of illustrations printed before the *Virorum doctorum*. This section will rely heavily on the analysis of these images, some of which are included. Additionally, other aspects related to the genesis of the *Virorum doctorum* must also be taken into account. Arias Montano's possible role in elaborating the final list of 44 illustrious men is also worth discussing, as much as it opens the door to an attractive hypothesis: that the Spaniard was responsible for the inclusion of Utopia's creator (§ 2.2). Whether or not this can be proved, Arias Montano authored a Latin epigram for More, of which two slightly different versions exist. This praise constitutes so far the only testimony of his admiration for the English humanist. The same could be said about all the personalities in the *Virorum doctorum*, as the former wrote laudatory lines for each (except himself). He was personally acquainted with some of them, and his admiration for others is well-documented. However, Arias Montano's assessment of Thomas More has never been closely analyzed; this is the purpose of (§ 2.3). To do so, two circumstances must be kept in mind: the Spaniard's increasing awareness of the English humanist's legacy, and his contacts with John Clement –an exiled member of Thomas More's close circle[x]. The *viri illustres* works were expected to contain favorable accounts of the portrayed figures, but a four-line epitaph would necessarily highlight the most outstanding qualities of the individual in the eyes of the author; as Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín rightly argue (2005: 56), these lines were not intended to provide biographical accounts but to capture and convey a feature of the portrayed person's soul and wit.

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2. THE *VIRORUM DOCTORUM* AND THOMAS MORE

In 1546, Paulo Giovio published in Venice his *Elogia veris clarorum virorum*, containing biographical accounts of 150 personalities whose portraits he held at his residence in Comus. The first edition of this work contained no engravings, but its influence in the sixteenth-century revival of the *viri illustres* genre is widely agreed upon. As stated in the preface to the *Virorum doctorum*, Galle also owned a collection of portraits with which he had decorated his private studio (Galle, 1572: A2r/15-26). Undoubtedly Giovio's *Elogia* was in the mind of Galle when planning his own compilation of *viri illustres* (Sellink 1997, vol. 1: 44). Bataillon had also mentioned the second edition of Giorgio Vasari's biographies of Italian artists (*Vite de'piu eccelenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, Florence, 1568), as the most immediate referent for Galle's project (1942: 134). Nevertheless, the remains of a 1567 protoedition of the *Virorum doctorum* –to which I will return– points again at Giovio's *Elogia*. Galle's work (1567?, 1572) would contain fewer names than the *Elogia* (44 vs. 150), but it would be illustrated with copper engraved portraits –as Vasari's work–, each accompanied by two Latin distiches. Galle edited the work and provided the effigies, whereas Arias Montano wrote the Latin lines for all portraits –except his own, which was composed by Hadrianus Junius (Galle, 1572: A2v/18-20). Most of these *auctoritates* had lived in the sixteenth century. Some were contemporaries of Arias Montano and Galle. A few were already dead –three had been executed: John Fisher, Thomas More and Girolamo Savonarola.

In the initial salutation, Galle anticipates that those personalities appearing in the work are not just the artists that he admired and loved, i.e. members of his trade. The selection also included others who had been particularly prominent in their knowledge and practice of other disciplines. Galle had met some and did not miss the opportunity of portraying them (1572: A2r/8-10 - 19-20). However, this retinue of illustrious men would have been incomplete if Galle had not welcomed several other *viri illustres* whom he never met, but whose portraits were –as he put it– so finely executed and reliable ("selectissimas et certissimas"; 1572: A2r/24-5) to deserve their inclusion. Arias Montano's brief assessment of their virtues or main accomplishments was also a faithful reflection of reality. Therefore, the claim of veracity in the *Virorum doctorum* relied on the harmony between what the portraits showed and the two laudatory distiches proclaimed; as Galle stated (1572: A2v/12-14): "As much as the portraits themselves are various, yet all are reliable, so the meaning of the tetrastiches is elegantly distinguished with the utmost observation of truth"[xi].

The list of 44 names included in the *Virorum doctorum* seems to follow no other selection criteria than precisely that which is stated in the title: wise men who deserve praise in the different disciplines. There is still another quality that they all share: despite holding different religious perspectives, these men were all Christian humanists. As Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín announce in the preface to their edition of the *Virorum doctorum*, this work was conceived as a praise of Christian humanism understood with such a wide

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intellectual scope that includes astronomers, physicians, geographers, or printers, side by side with humanists and poets (2005: 11), men from different nationalities. This gives proof of the cosmopolitan nature of the work, and the open-mindedness of its approach. Later *viri illustres* compilations also displayed a similar conciliatory output; a few did not.

As to the order in which the different personalities appear in the work, some of the portraits are grouped with some coherence, while others seem to be randomly placed, one after the other (Hänsel, 1999: 111). According to Sellink, leaving aside the first five engravings (two Popes and three Cardinals), "[t]he portraits themselves are simply grouped according to nationaty" (1997, vol. 1: 52); John Fisher is number five and Thomas More follows, both Englishmen.

2.1. Galle's engraving of Thomas More

Thomas More's most famous image is the portrait painted by Hans Holbein the Younger in 1526 (Frick Collection, New York)[xii]. If one takes for granted that this is the actual likeness of the English humanist, it must then be concluded that Galle's engraving in the *Virorum doctorum* (1572: A8; Figure 1) is far from being a faithful reproduction of More's facial features.

Figure 1.

The face is bony and long, with a pointed chin. The lips are fleshy and slightly sensual, but the expression remains severe and harsh. Overall, More's outfit is less sumptuous than in Holbein's portrait: a one-piece magistrate cap, a less splendid ermine gown, and a simpler

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doublet; the absence of the SS collar further emphasizes a more sober appearance. Inevitably, this leads us to wonder about Galle's model for this image. Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (2005: 72) believe that the Dutch printer followed the pattern of Holbein's portrait. However, they remain somewhat elusive about establishing a direct dependence: More's engraving –as they put it– is after a model ("sobre un modelo de"; 2005: 226) by Hans Holbein, which leaves room for a wide range of possibilities.

As argued, no *viri illustres* volume had included a portrait of More before. Engravings representing the execution of the former Chancellor of England had appeared in several books published in the Continent (Morison, 1963: 41-46). In the 1518 Basel edition of *Utopia*, a woodcut by Ambrosius Holbein depicted the conversation between Hythlodaeus, a young John Clement, More and Peter Guiles, as described at the beginning of the work (More, 1518: 25; Figure 2). None of these illustrations, however, were portraits or were expected to reproduce in detail More's semblance.

Figure 2.

Nevertheless, four years before the *Virorum doctorum*, an exiled English printer, John Fowler, published in Leuven the *Doctissima D. Thomae Mori*, which he dedicated "To Philip, the most powerful Catholic King of the Spains"[xiii]. This work contained More's response to Lutheran advocate Johann Bugenhagen; an engraving of the English humanist was included at the beginning of the text (Fowler, 1568; Figure 3)[xiv]. This is the first portrait of Thomas More to be printed on the Continent; the presence of English Catholic exiles in the Spanish Netherlands, as already argued, was necessarily an adequate scenario. More's depiction –says Morison– "is authentic, if not elegant"; the source of this woodcut image was necessarily Holbein (Morison, 1963: 48).

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Figure 3.

Fowler's engraving presented the defining traits of the (Holbeinian) representation of Thomas More: a magistrate cap; the gown with the fur lining visible on the shoulders and half-sleeves; the doublet worn under the gown, whose sleeves show at the forearms; and the famous gold chain of SS. These details became distinctive of the former Chancellor of England. Artists used them, even if they were not copying a specific model. As to More's engraving in the *Virorum doctorum*, it is fair to say that Galle was not imitating Fowler's woodcut. The Dutch artist could most certainly be familiar with *Doctissima D. Thomae Mori*, but (despite a general resemblance in attire) there are too many differences between both Mores; the absence of the SS collar in Galle's engraving is remarkable. Furthermore, in 1567 –a year before the publication of Fowler's work– an edition of the *Virorum doctorum* was published (Sellink, 1997 vol. 1: 43), but no copies have survived; More's portrait was already in it[xv]. Galle, Morison concluded, created "a version of More's features that is totally independent of the Holbein painting or of Fowler's engraving" (1963: 49).

The Dutch engraver might have gotten his inspiration from an image that was authoritative enough for him: a representation of the former Chancellor with a different face or not carrying the SS chain around his neck. It could also be the case that Galle had simply decided to omit the collar (Morison, 1963: 49)[xvi]. Be it as it may, he was not that naive to believe in the absolute accuracy of all the portraits in his work; as Gaylard convincingly argues (2013: 166): "Portrait-books were a huge commercial success, and the rhetorical emphasis on 'accuracy' by their authors suggests that many viewers, while not expecting a perfect copy of the face, probably accepted portraits in books as approaching the true likeness they were said to be, and for that reason paid good money for these volumes".

Galle's design clearly departs from Holbein in several other details. In the first place, the English humanist is half-length to his right –as in Fowler's. The shape of the face is also different: "the chin is long, the lips slightly protuberant, the nose prominent and slightly

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irregular, but the nostrils are pinched and drawn back, not fleshy as Holbein painted them" (Morison, 1963: 49). More's eyes convey self-confidence and a certain severity. On his head, there is one single cap, with earflaps down and continuous with the brim. The fur-trimmed gown is slightly different –less luxurious, one might say. In the humanist's neck, we may see what Morison describes as "a black semi-clerical vest with a single white frill visible at the neckline" (1963: 49). More's right-hand holds a rolled paper, while he grabs the furred trim of his robe with the other. To complete the picture, the former Chancellor is deprived of his SS collar. As early as 1808, Reverend Thomas F. Dibdin published a new edition of Raph Robinson's English translation of *Utopia* (1551). In an appendix with the title of "Engraved portraits of Sir T. More", Dibdin included a brief comment on this plate: "More is here represented with a scroll in his right hand –ermined robes, without the chain– a cap with an upright front, [...]. The countenance is long, bony, and harsh, and quite unlike what I conceive to be a legitimate portrait of More" (1808: cxix) –which of course refers to Holbein's portrait.

Galle's engraving was particularly influential. Many of its features are echoed in some of the portraits of Thomas More that will appear in later *viri illustres* works. Leaving aside its probable influence on the coin-like woodcut in Roville's 1578 *Promtuarium iconum* (221; Figure 4), Galle's More is undoubtedly the model for both Thevet's (1584: 540r; Figure 5) and Boissard-Bry's (1598: 120; Figure 6) engravings of the English humanist.

Figure 4.

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Figure 5.

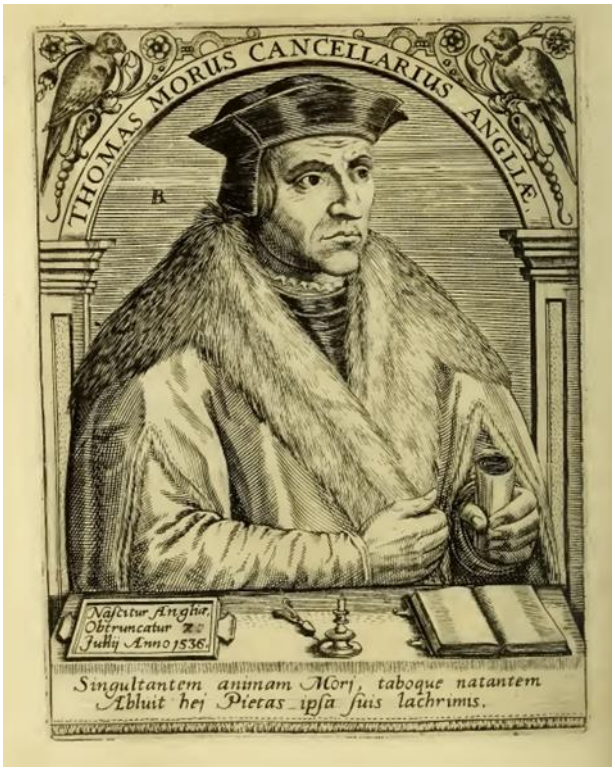

Figure 6.

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The omission of the collar is noticeable in the three cases, but not as conclusive about the filiation of these copperplates as the ear-flapped cap (with no independent piece for the skull), or the clerical undergarment with white frill. Boissard's block is certainly closer to Galle's original, except that More looks to his left; but the shape of the face, the position of the hands and the form of the fur collar offer no doubt (Figure 6). Thevet's 1584 copperplate also points at Galle. However, the French artist left his imprint, for instance, in the less ostentatious fur collar, the quill in More's right hand, and his almost unpleasant facial expression (Figure 5).

2.2. Galle's engraving of Thomas More

It has been recently suggested that Arias Montano was familiar with the English humanist and his works before he travelled to Antwerp[xvii]; furthermore, Thomas More's presence in Erasmus of Rotterdam's written output –with which the Spaniard was well acquainted, both as a reader and a censor– reinforces the said familiarity[xviii]. On top of all, after settling in the Spanish Netherlands Montano was able to witness the growing popularity of Henry VIII's former Chancellor among English recusants. As argued, the printing of More's Latin *Opera* almost coincided with the Spaniard's arrival, not to mention the possibility that Montano met an English exile from More's close circle: John Clement, who appeared in the already mentioned woodcut by Ambrosius Holbein (Figure 2). Shortly before his death, this English physycian contributed to the Spaniard's Polyglot Bible with a manuscript of the Octaeuch (the first eight books of the Old Testament) which had belonged to More[xix]. In light of this, I would like to explore whether or not Arias Montano had any hand in the inclusion of the English humanist in the *Virorum doctorum*.

Galle's words in the prefatory address state that he was the main architect of the project (1572: A2r/22-25): "As I understood that everything possible had to be done on my part to honor the fame of those men and to please their friends, relatives, admirers and fellow citizens, I decided to share with the lovers of the good arts (mine and the others) the most select and reliable portraits that I had managed to acquire, engraved in bronze and reproduced with care"[xx]. Thus, the Spanish humanist's contribution to the work would merely be to praise those already on Galle's list: their merits were as true as the former's distiches were varied and elegant (1572: A2v/8-11)[xxi]. Arias Montano's name was not included either in the title or on the title page, so much so that many references to the *Virorum doctorum* fail to mention him.

However, some scholars (mainly Spanish) have vindicated the Spaniard's relevance in this work, to the point of suggesting that he might have also been involved in the elaboration of the plates[xxii], or even the selection of the names. It is not unreasonable to argue –says Hänsel (1999: 113)– that Stanislav Hosius, Jacobus Latomus, Ruard Tapper and the two popes were all included by Arias Montano, as representatives of the Catholic Hierarchy. As suggestive as Hänsel's claim is, she does not clarify why she mentioned the former and not others.

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Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín are also concerned with vindicating Arias Montano's participation in the elaboration of the final list. For one thing, Galle's appeal to the candidness of his readers at the end of the prologue was a typical Montanian device[xxiii], used this time to ask for the approval of the selection of personalities offered: "this coincidence should serve to prove Montano's intervention in the selection of illustrious men" (Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín, 2005: 40-41). The *Virorum doctorum* was clearly permeated by a spirit of conciliation and tolerance. Both Reformers and Catholics might find the inclusion of some names unacceptable, but this text focused on what the two sides had in common: Christian humanism. Only those with an open mind might be able to appreciate the challenge posed in the *Virorum doctorum*. Similarly, Arias Montano's involvement in the preparation of the final list would thus be consistent with his attitude and position, which remained the same when he praised certain men and censored certain books (2005: 47-48). Bataillon referred to the "esprit d'Arias Montano", which he defined as that compromise between the demands of orthodoxy and his respect for works of science that was his norm in the elaboration of the *Index expurgatorius* of Antwerp (1942: 144)[xxiv].

The arguments in favor of Arias Montano's part in the elaboration of the final list do not seem unreasonable. However, in the particular case of Thomas More's inclusion the evidence seems to point elsewhere. Giovio's 1546 *Elogia* became very popular and influential, particularly in the case of Galle. Even if it did not contain engravings until its re-edition in 1577 (Basel), Thomas More had been included already in the *editio princeps*. Therefore, in straightforward terms, the English humanist was one of Galle's 44 illustrious men, because first Giovio had included him as one of the 150 in his *Elogia*. This work gained wide acceptance as it provided biographic accounts of relevant personalities, of which –in many cases– no *Life* had yet been written. This was the case of Thomas More, whose memory and relevance Giovio's work certainly promoted. And so, when Thomas Stapleton published in 1588 the first biography of the English humanist, among "the judgments that have been passed upon the death of More by famous men of learning outside England" (Stapleton, 1966: 195)[xxv], Stapleton quoted Giovio's praise of More (199)[xxvi].

A more prosaic reason might also be adduced for Thomas More's inclusion: his portrait offered enough guarantees of veracity for Galle. In the prologue, the artist remarks how careful he had been in selecting his sources to portray those men he had not met himself (1572: A2r/20-21, 24-25): "ex optimis et certissimis exemplaribus undique conquisitis depictas […] selectissimas et certissimas".

Most conclusively, it may be stated that Thomas More was in Galle's original plan for this work. Scholars agree that in 1567 (i.e. one year before Montano's arrival), he published (or almost) a previous (and now lost) version of the *Virorum doctorum*, while still living and working in Haarlem. Some of the plates were later used again for the 1572 edition –at least 25 portraits, according to Sellink (1997, vol.1: 50). As early as 1888, the Dutch librarian and bibliographer J. F. van Someren saw a collection of 31 portraits engraved by Galle, with neither

Print ISSN: 1578-7044; Online ISSN: 1989-6131

title nor list of contents. A foreword was placed at the front of the volume, which was dated in 1567. Someren listed the 31 names, among which Thomas More is included. An "*" is added after his name –as is the case with 24 others–, indicating those portraits that were used also in the later editions of 1572 (Someren, 1888: 122).

2.3. Arias Montano's praise of Thomas More

Thanks to Sellink's study on Philip Galle it is possible to know the Latin lines following Thomas More's engraving in the 1567 proto edition of the *Virorum doctorum*. The Dutch poet Adriaen de Jonghe (better known as Hadrianus Junius, 1511-1575) might well be the author of the laudatory verses below the images (Sellink, 1997, vol. 1: 46), and therefore of the three elegiac distiches praising More:

> THOMAS MORVS
> Haec Mori effigies quem nutrix ingeniorum
> Nobilium in lucem terra britanna tulit
> Cui linguam armarat periclaeo musa lepore,
> Et facili excultam carmine condierat.
> Regia dum offensa reprobat divorta mente,
> Demetitur cervix ense resecta seni. (Sellink, 1997, vol. 2: 268)[xxvii]
>
> THOMAS MORE
> This is the portrait of More, whom the nurse of noble minds
> Brought to light in the British land,
> To whom the muse had armed with a tongue of dangerous charm,
> And had seasoned free of the easy song.
> Until the royal discontent with estranged intent condemns,
> and the neck of the old man is cut off with the sword.

Before focusing on Arias Montano's lines –which substituted the former in the 1572 edition– there are two issues in the previous distiches that I would like to point out. In the first place, Hadrianus Junius is playing with the meanings of *divorta*, which of course reminded readers of the ultimate cause of More's execution: the so-called King's Great Matter, i.e. his rejection of Queen Catherine of Aragon[xxviii]. Furthermore, the author is explicit about More's decapitation –by the sword, he writes–, adding that he was a man of age. With these details, Hadrianus Junius could be echoing two Latin epitaphs in honor of the executed ex-Chancellor published in Giovio's *Elogia*. In the first one (by the Dutch poet Jean Second, but published as anonymous), reference is made to how More –an old man– was executed: "Who lies in the mound, whose head was cut off by a sword, / and his gray hair swims in the foul blood?" ("Quis iacet in tumulo, cuius caput ense recisum est, / Et natat in tetro sanguine canities?";

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Giovio, 1546: 57r); in the second, the Spanish Jacobus Exerichus presents the King himself as the executioner: "Henry with an unfair blade cut the throat of More" ("Henricus Morum gladio iugulauit iniquo"; Giovio, 1546: 56v). Still another Latin poem might be taken into account. Its author was the Dutch Nicholas Grudius, Jean Secundus' brother. The poem was published one year before Galle's proto-edition of the *Virorum doctorum*:

> Thomas Morus iam securi feriendus ad filias, et populum
>
> Ne lugete meo confusae funere, natae:
> Ipse ego mutari non mea fata velim.
> Truncum terra teget, si rex non abnuet urnam:
> Et mea iam terris nomina nota volant.
> Libera mens superos repetet; neque serviet unquam:
> In partem hanc quod agat nulla securis habet.
> Tu quoque, spectator tranquillun si cupis aevum
> Exigere, et leto fortior esse tuo,
> Quin tibi membra cadant nullo in discrimine pone:
> Quum sint naturae lege caduca suae. (Grudius, 1566: 125-126)
>
> Thomas More, whom the axe will strike, to his daughters and to people.
>
> Do not cry, daughters, dismayed with my death:
> I myself would not want my fate to change.
> The earth will cover my decapitated body if the king does not refuse me a tomb:
> And already my well-known name flies over the lands.
> Free my mind will ascend up high, and it will never be a slave.
> No axe will have power over this part of me.
> You also, spectator, if you desire to have a quiet life
> And be stronger than your death,
> Consider the loss of your members as nothing:
> the law of their nature is caducity.

Why Arias Montano replaced Hadrianus Junius in the *Virorum doctorum* has not been clarified; as a matter of fact, the latter wrote the tetrastiches below the Spaniard's portrait. The truth is Junius' orthodoxy had been questioned (van Miert, 2011: 303). The Duke of Alba's arrival in the Spanish Netherlands –says Sellink– "must have made Galle very cautious in pursuing the publication of the *Virorum doctorum effiges*" (1997: 48). Arias Montano's participation in this work would surely grant its approval. Furthermore, in the particular case of Junius' words about Thomas More, they were not *politically correct* in their references to the Tudor monarch, an aspect to which I will return before concluding this paper.

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Arias Montano wrote two slightly different versions of the Latin tetrastich dedicated to Thomas More, the variation coming in the fourth line; I will refer to them as a and b.

a.
An memorem doctum magis, an te More fidelem
An fortem, dubito; nam omnia summa tenes.
Quae doctrina fuit, pietas quae pectore in isto
Quem valide ipse subis, exitus edocuit.

I hesitate, More, whether to remember you more as learned, faithful
Or brave; for you are all of these in the highest degree.
How much learning, how much piety there was in your breast
This was shown by the ending that you bravely faced.

b.
An memorem doctum magis, an te More fidelem,
An fortem, dubito; nam omnia summa tenes.
Quae doctrina fuit, pietas quae pectore in isto,
Exitus edocuit, quem subis intrepidus.

I hesitate, More, whether to remember you more as learned, faithful
Or brave; for you are all of these in the highest degree.
How much learning, how much piety there was in your breast
The end, which you faced fearlessly, showed.

The early appearance of More –preceded by his friend, Cardinal John Fisher– in this list of humanists and wise men in the *Virorum doctorum* would certainly be welcomed by all the English Catholics in their continental exile. The Spaniard composed for More (as for the rest of the historical figures portrayed) an accurate and concise laudatory epigram (Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín, 2005: 56). Learning, loyalty and courage are the qualities with which Arias Montano characterized the English humanist. Addressing More directly in the first distich –he rarely uses the first person (Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín, 2005: 58)– the Spaniard wonders for which virtue More should be remembered since he exceeded in the three. This triple view of the humanist as learned (*doctus*; a. and b. l. 1), faithful (*fidelis*; a. and b. l. 1) and brave (*fortis*; a. and b. l. 2) seems to pose a problem, a well-known rhetorical device described by Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín as the poet's inability to sing of the eulogized person's countless excellences and merits (2005: 56). The brevity of the praise might seem to force the author to choose in the second distich just one of the three Mores. However, the skill of the author avoids the apparent dilemma, when he concludes with a statement that integrates all three qualities into one single More: a pious man who was brave enough to die

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rather than renounce his belief. The English humanist is included in a catalog of exceedingly learned men, but in his particular case, there is a dominantly transcendental concretion of his accomplishments. More's wisdom becomes a solid doctrinal formation ("doctrina"; a. and b. l. 3), as fidelity to his faith is elevated to piety ("pietas"; a. and b. l. 3) and his courage echoes that of martyrs who faced their deaths without falling back ("valide"; a. l. 4, and "intrepidus"; b. l. 4).

Arias Montano omitted any explicit reference to Thomas More's execution or any value judgment on the Tudor monarch who had ordered it. Instead, he used a very neutral "exitus"[xxix]. This ambiguous reference to More's end –"departure", "death" (*Oxford Latin Dictionar*y, 1968)– contrasts with the crude references to his beheading and Henry VIII's part in it[xxx]. English exiles were surely disappointed by the absence of a direct condemnation of More's infamous execution[xxxi]. Nevertheless, Arias Montano was not a polemicist or a scourge of the Tudors; other authors were actively playing that role in the Spanish Netherlands, mainly Thomas Stapleton or Nicholas Sanders. Besides, the policy of Spain at the time was –at least officially– neutrality. The Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, the Duke of Alba, had repressed the Dutch Revolt. The English Crown had supported the rebels, but the former did not particularly like the idea of provoking Elizabeth I, conscious of the importance of fluid commercial relations with England for the Netherlands. Arias Montano had political responsibilities and was in close contact with Alba, who had appointed him royal censor with the task of preventing the publication of seditious and heretical books. Contrarily to Junius, Jean Second, Jacobus Exerichus or Nicholas Grudius, he would not run the risk of publishing anything that might annoy the English queen by offending the memory of her father.

This he had already shown when Arias Montano refused to grant Nicholas Sanders his permission to have *De visibili monarchia ecclesiae* printed by the English exile John Fowler at his Leuven shop; the Spaniard had noticed that, at least in Book VII, it slandered Henry VIII. Anti-Elizabethan works printed in the Netherlands quickly found their way into England. Elizabeth I's advisor William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, spared no effort to fight the constant flow of these publications from the Continent (Southern, 1950: 32). The English ambassador to the Netherlands, Thomas Wilson, had a favourable opinion of Arias Montano –a "verie wel learned and godlie of life and a man altogether voyde of malice or spyte"–, as stated in a letter he sent to Burghley (13 March 1575; Lettenhove, 1888: 470) on account of Wilson's efforts to locate the authors and printers of such publications. In the same letter, the ambassador further reported that: "Arias Montanus towlde me farther of hymselfe that Sawnders came to hym for the pryntinge of his *Monarchia*, the seaven booke whereof he woulde not allowe to bee pryntid within Kynge Philippe's dominions, for that it tended to thee breache of peace and touched the bloode of Kynge Philippe's deere syster our Soverayne. And so, Fowler pryntinge al the sayde bookes at Lovayne, savinge the sevente booke onelie, the sayde seavente booke was prynted at Coloyne by Sawnder's lewde practise and so joyned to the rest" (Lettenhove, 1888: 470)[xxxii].

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3. CONCLUSION

The collaboration between Galle and Arias Montano went on for several more years. The Spaniard's role in the *Virorum doctorum* (even if magnified in some Spanish accounts) was limited to the elaboration of the Latin tetrastiches. No evidence invites us to think otherwise. And yet, accidentally (or not) the final arrangement of the *effiges* placed Arias Montano after Thomas More and followed by Juan Luis Vives and Erasmus of Rotterdam (1572: A8, B1, B2 & B3). The famous triad of humanists thus became a quartet –so to speak– by the addition of another Spaniard.

Thomas More's presence in the *Virorum doctorum* is nonetheless problematic; this may also be said of the other Englishman, John Fisher. Both, as argued, were already present in Galle's 1567 edition, a work that laid the focus on religious disputes and the victims of sectarianism (Someren, 1888: 122). No doubt, the two Englishmen were relevant in both aspects. Leaving Fisher aside, if Luther and the other great reformers were dropped from the more conciliatory 1572 version, Thomas More –a ferocious polemicist, a relentless prosecutor of heresy and one of the first victims of the disintegration of Western Christianity– might have also been removed. However, if the only defining characteristic of the *Virorum doctorum* was –as argued– Christian humanism, how could Sir Thomas More be left aside in a work when his close friends Erasmus, Vives or Budaeus remained?

Unfortunately, Marcel Bataillon's 1942 seminal article about Galle and Arias Montano did not make any reference to Thomas More's presence in the *Virorum doctorum*. What he did was to describe this work as "Catholic without any narrowness" ("catholique sans aucune étroitesse"; 1942: 144). Clearly, neither Galle nor Arias Montano –"Catholique sans intransigeance" (1942: 150)– nor Bataillon considered Thomas More a narrow Catholic.

Galle's portrait of the English humanist would appear again in several other 16th-century works. As Morison showed in his 1963 monograph, More's semblance remained fairly well-known during the following centuries through certain iconic (Holbenian) features. A few years after Morison's work, the fallen Chancellor achieved Hollywood stardom when Paul Scofield –"being almost unknown in the movie world" in his own words (O'Connor, 2002: 192)– won the Oscar for Best Actor for his performance of Thomas More in Fred Zinnemann's *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), with both the director and the film receiving the Academy Awards as well[xxxiii]. The success of this combination of image and words back in the 16th century may still be well understood in the present historical moment, where the so-called "memes" are massively used in contemporary social media platforms[xxxiv].

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NOTES

[i] This paper has been written within the Research Project "Thomas More and Spain (16th and 17th centuries): Ideological and Textual Construction" (FFI2017-83639-P), funded by the Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad of Spain.

[ii] See: C. Gutiérrez, S.I. *Españoles en Trento*. Valladolid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Jerónimo Zurita, 1951.

[iii] In recent years (and thanks to the collection *Bibliotheca Montaniana*, published at the University of Huelva, under the direction of Prof. Luis Gómez Canseco), the Spanish humanist and his work have become much more accessible for scholars and students.

[iv] The Complutensian Polyglot Bible (1514-1517) is a multi-lingual edition of the Holy Scripture that was commissioned by Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. It was printed in the University of Alcalá (*Universitas Complutensis*) and contained the Old and New Testaments in four languages: Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin.

[v] *Biblia sacra, hebraice, chaldaice, graece, & latine: Philippi II Reg. Cathol. pietate, et studio ad sacrosanctae Ecclesiae vsum*, 8 vols. Antuerpiae: Christoph. Plantinus excud, 1569-73.

[vi] Paulo IV had promulgated the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in 1559. It was, however, the *Index* published by Pius IV (1564), at the request of the Council of Trent, which became the most authoritative guide, as well as the main reference for future works of this kind.

[vii] *Librorum prohibitorum Index ex Mandato Regiae catholica* …(Christophe Plantin: Antwerp, 1569); *Index Librorum Prohibitorum cum regulis….*(Gualterus Morberius: Liège, 1569). The Duke of Alba, following Arias Monatano's advice, commanded the elaboration of a new catalog of forbidden books: *Index Librorum Prohibitorum…*(Plantin: Antwerp, 1570). Finally, a new list of works that required expurgation –the supression of certain passages– was published in Antwerp (1571): *Index expurgatorius librorum qui hoc seculo prodierunt,…* (Agten 2020, 82-84).

[viii] See: Eugenio M. Olivares Merino. "Becoming visible: Thomas More in 16th Century Portrait Books". *Journal of English Studies* 22 (2024): 251-277.

[ix] *Thomae Mori Angli, viri eruditionis pariter ac virtutis nomine clarissime,…*. Louanii: Apud Ioannem Bogardum sub Biblijs Aureis, 1565, 1566; Rpt. Lovanii: apud Petrum Zangrium Tiletanum..., 1565, 1566. The *Lucubrationes* included More's most popular works to date, i.e. *Utopia*, the Epigrams and the translations from Lucian; see: *Thomae Mori ... Lucubrationes, ab innumeris mendis repurgatae…* Basiliae: apud Episcopium F. 1563.

[x] See: Eugenio M. Olivares Merino. "Benito Arias Montano, a Reader of Thomas More". *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 100.3 (2023): 289-307; and "Arias Montano and *Clemens Anglus*". *Atlantis* 46.2 (2024): 115-133.

[xi] "Namque ut effigies ipsae variae, certae omnes tamen sunt, ita tetrastichorum sententia cum summa veritatis observatione eleganter distincta est" (1572: A2v/12-14). Unless otherwise stated, all translations are mine.

[xii] https://collections.frick.org/objects/100/sir-thomas-more

[xiii] "PHILIPPO, Potentiss[i]mo Hispaniarum, etc. Regi Catholico" (Fowler, 1568: *iii).

[xiv] In 1573 Fowler published an edition of Thomas More's *A dialogue of cumfort against tribulation*, reproducing again the same image (Fowler, 1573: [viiir]).

[xv] For a fully detailed description of the 1567 edition of the *Virorum doctorum*, see Sellink (1997, vol. 1: 43-48) and Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (2005: 90-93).

[xvi] In the so-called Windsow drawings, two sketches by Holbein of More's portrait, there is no collar. https://www.rct.uk/collection/912268/sir-thomas-more-1478-1535; https://www.rct.uk/collection/912225/sir-thomas-more-1478-1535. Rubens' portrait of Thomas More held in *El Prado* (Madrid) is clearly Holbein-like, and yet the artist omitted the SS collar. https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/sir-thomas-more/46d80512-addb-4ecd-8a71-f9333e048ad0

[xvii] See note 10. In 1997 Morocho Gayo had also fancied that the Spaniard must have known More since early in his youth (167).

[xviii] See: Eugenio M. Olivares Merino. "Introducing Arias Montano to Thomas More: The Role of Erasmus of Rotterdam". Miguel Martínez López (Ed.), *Thomas More and Spain*. Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2024. Forthcoming.

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[xix] See note 10.
[xx] "Verum enimvero cum illorum famae colendae, atque eorundem armicis, cognatis, studiosis, et concivibus iuvandis id a me quod praestari posset, deberi intelligerem, selectissimas et certissimas, quas habere potueram, in aere incisas et diligenter expressas" (1572: A2r/22-25).
[xxi] "Porro singulorum quos nunc exhibemus elogia, Benedictus Arias Montano, (qui disciplinarum ómnium & nostrarum etiam artium, picturae & sculpturae peritos plurimum diligit,) binis Distichis artificiose complexus est, quae non minus varietate & elegantia, quam veritate Laudum Lectores iuuabunt" (1572: A2v/8-11).
[xxii] In his discussion of Montano and Galle's collaboration in the 1575 *David hoc est virtutis exercitatissimae* (Antverpiae: Ex officina Christoph. Plantini), Campos Sánchez-Bordona opines that "Montano's skills for art-related issues, his easiness for composition and his mastery of iconography invite us to consider his direct participation in specific engraving plates" (1998: 43). Before that, the Spaniard had already participated in the illustrations for the Polyglot Bible, and in 1571 he published his own book of emblems: *Humanae Salutis Monumenta* (Antverp.: ex prototypographia regia Christoph. Plantinus). Sylvaine Hänsel rows in the same direction: "Assumedly Galle and his workshop took full charge of the images, although he [Arias Montano] did not leave them completely hand in hand" (1999: 109-110). Arias Montano had the participation of several engravers (Abraham de Bruyn, Pieter Huys and the Wierix brothers). Nevertheless, as Antón Martínez states (2009: 27), the Spanish humanist gave so much importance to the engravings that he collaborated with the artists in their preparation –as stated in the title page of this work: "Monumenta, B. Ariae studio constructa et decantata".
[xxiii] "Be well, and approve our study, as befits a pure heart"; "Valete et nostrum studium, ut candidos animos decet, probate" (1572: Aii/20-21).
[xxiv] In its Regula Octava Pius IV's Tridentine *Index* had called for suppressing everything that was unorthodox or inappropriate –not necessarily authors or their entire works. Arias Montano was asked to supervise this project. The *Index expurgatorius librorum* was published in 1571, one year before the *Virorum doctorum* came out. See also note 7.
[xxv] "Non abs re fore iudicaui si quid extra Angliae fines viri docti & celebres de Thomae Mori morte iudicaverint, hunc in locum adferrem" (Stapleton, 1588: 350/18-20)
[xxvi] Stapleton quotes Giovio's full account of Thomas More's life in chapter 24 (1588: 355/28-32 – 356/1-16).
[xxvii] See also: Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (2005: 100, n. 30).
[xxviii] Henry VIII never attempted to get a divorce from the Spanish Queen, as much as he knew that the marital bond was considered indissoluble. Instead, he appealed to Rome for the annulment of their marriage, in other words, that it had never existed.
[xxix] When referring to Savonarola's death (hanged and burnt by the angry mob), Montano uses "exitus" again – an equivocal term, as stated by Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (2005: 260).
[xxx] Apart from the already mentioned Jean Second's and Jaime Exerichus' epitaphs, Giovio's (1546: 56v) *Elogia* included a third Latin composition by Giano Vitale. The Italian poet presented More bowing "his head to the undeserved axe" ("Dum Morus immeritae submittit colla securi"; l.1), the innocent victim of "the monstruous tyrant" ("infandi […] tyranni"; l. 3).
[xxxi] Interestingly, Arias Montano is more explicit about John Fisher's death: "Cùm cecidit, ferro hæc ceruix praecisa cruento, Virtus, ingenium, concidit & pietas" (Galle, 1572: A7; "When the head fell cut off by the cruel iron, / Virtue, intelligence and piety fell with it").
[xxxii] Thomas Wilson remarks that Fowler printed Book VII in Cologne, while Books I-VI & VIII were in Leuven. Eventually, the eight books were published together, first in Leuven (1571) and then in Antwerp (1578). As Southern claimed, "[i]t can, however, be clearly established on bibliographical grounds that Sander's seventh book came from the same press as the other seven" (1950: 33, n. *). About this episode, see also Thomas McNevin Veech, *Dr Nicholas Sanders and the English Reformation 1530-1581* (Leuven, 1935). 90-92.
[xxxiii] In the 39th Academy Awards ceremony (1967), Robert Bolt won the Oscar for Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium; Ted Moore for Best Cinematography, Color; and, finally, Elizabeth Haffenden and Joan Bridge for Best Costume Design. Paul Scofield also won the BAFTA Film Award for Best British Actor (1968). More recently, Jeremy Northam was an

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outstanding (maybe too young) Sir Thomas More in *The Tudors* (Kincaid, 2008: 243-246), whereas Anton Lesser portrayed the Chancellor in the BBC mini-series *Wolf Hall* (2015) and succeeded in transmitting Hilary Mantel's animosity toward the character in her novel (Gregory-Abbott, 2010: 245). Sir Thomas More's presence in both TV shows was preceded by Ned Flanders' impersonation of the Chancellor in the eleventh episode of season 15 of *The Simpsons*, "Margical History Tour" (aired on February 8, 2004). As More stuck to his principles, Henry VIII decided to "canonize" him by shooting him out of a cannon.

[xxxiv] According to the *OED*, a "meme" in its second meaning is: "An image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by internet users, often with slight variations. Also with modifying word, as internet meme, etc.".

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