

Arias Montano and *Clemens Anglus*¹

EUGENIO MANUEL OLIVARES MERINO

Universidad de Jaén

eolivar@ujaen.es

On Philip II's instructions, the Spanish humanist Benito Arias Montano arrived in the Netherlands on 15 May, 1568. The Spanish king had commissioned his chaplain to supervise and print a new edition of the so-called Polyglot Bible. This paper argues that during Arias Montano's stay in the Spanish Netherlands (until 1575), he was exposed to the importance and popularity of Thomas More, a catalytic icon for all English recusants in terms of their religious vindications. This aspect of the Spaniard's life has never been addressed, but may be supported by the evidence provided in this paper. What is more, the presence of John Clement (Thomas More's pupil and friend) in the Netherlands and his possible meeting with Arias Montano further strengthens this claim.

Keywords: Benito Arias Montano; Thomas Stapleton; Nicholas Harpsfield; John Clement; Polyglot Bible; Octateuch

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Siguiendo instrucciones de Felipe II, el humanista español Benito Arias Montano llegó a los Países Bajos el 15 de mayo de 1568. El rey español había encargado a su capellán supervisar e imprimir una nueva edición de la llamada Biblia Políglota. Este artículo

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sostiene que durante la estancia de Arias Montano en los Países Bajos españoles (hasta 1575), estuvo expuesto a la relevancia y popularidad de Tomás Moro, un icono catalizador para todos los recusantes ingleses en términos de sus reivindicaciones religiosas. Este aspecto de la vida del español nunca ha sido abordado, pero puede estar respaldado por la evidencia proporcionada en este artículo. Es más, la presencia de John Clement (alumno y amigo de Tomás Moro) en los Países Bajos y su posible encuentro con Arias Montano refuerza aun más esta afirmación.

Palabras clave: Benito Arias Montano; Thomas Stapleton; Nicholas Harpsfield; John Clement; Biblia Políglota; Octateuco

Although there are significant *lacunae* in the biography of Benito Arias Montano, the period of his life that is relevant for this study is fairly well-known.² On Philip II's instructions, the Spanish humanist arrived in the Netherlands on 15 May, 1568. He remained there (except for a short Italian interlude in 1572) until 1575. The Spanish King had commissioned his chaplain to supervise and complete a new edition of the so-called Polyglot Bible, which was eventually published by Plantin (Antwerp, 1569-1573) and became widely known as the Antwerp Bible, or Biblia Regia.

In the preface to readers of the first volume, Arias Montano expressed his gratitude to all who had helped him in the task. Among them, he mentioned "CLEMENTE ANGLO Philosophiae et Medicinae Doctore" (1571, ***2v/ 19), who supplied the Bible editors with his personal copy of the Octateuch. While the Spaniard's words will be analyzed in detail in the following pages, it is worth noting that this Clement, the Englishman, Doctor in Medicine and Philosophy, is none other than John Clement (d. 1572), a member of Thomas More's closest circle and one of the characters in the first book of *Utopia* (1516). *Clemens Anglus*—as he appears in other texts—was twice an exile in the Netherlands, first under Edward VI (from 1549 to 1553) and then after Elizabeth I's coronation (from 1560 until his death).

Arias Montano's allusion to *Clemens Anglus* also includes a reference to Thomas More: as stated, the above-mentioned copy of the Octateuch had belonged to the English humanist. This detail prompted me to explore the potential familiarity between Arias Montano and Thomas More, his figure and his work. The relevance of the English humanist in early modern Spain has for long been basically limited to what is known from two works: the 1592 biography of Thomas More written by the Spanish poet Fernando de Herrera (*Tomás Moro*, Alonso de la Barrera Press), and the first (and partial) translation of *Utopia* into Spanish by Gerónimo de Medinilla y Porres, printed in Córdoba (Salvador de Cea Press) as late as 1637. Recent research, however,

² The two standard biographies of the Spanish humanist are Aubrey F. G. Bell's *Benito Arias Montano* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922) and Ben Reker's *Benito Arias Montano (1527-1598)* (Leiden: Brill, 1972). I have not, however, used either, as they provide no significant information about the topic under discussion.

has demonstrated that More's interest to scholars in Spain needs to be backdated to the first half of the sixteenth century.³

It is my contention that during the time Arias Montano spent in the Spanish Netherlands, he was exposed to the importance and heritage of Thomas More in the context of English recusancy. This aspect of the Spaniard's life has never before been addressed. The cult of the ex-Chancellor among English exiles constituted, in William Sheils' words, "a particular tradition within post-Reformation English Catholicism which stressed loyalty to both papacy and crown" (2009, 82). More had died loyal to his King, but his first loyalty lay with God. For English Catholics, this duality was hard to maintain after Elizabeth I's excommunication on 25 February, 1570. However, it did not affect the promotion of More's virtuous life, with many looking towards Rome for the official proclamation of his martyrdom and sanctity. Interestingly, the Spanish ecclesiastical writer Alonso de Villegas included Thomas More—and Bishop John Fisher—in the third part of his *Flos Sanctorum* (1588, 79-83) as one of those who (though not yet canonized) were believed to be among the blessed due to their exemplary life ("fuero[n] sus obras de gra[n]de exemplo" [1588, title page]).

The printing press was of course the vehicle used to spread More's reputation, often with the support of his portrait on one of the initial pages. Among the Catholic works published in English in Leuven and Antwerp for readers both in England and the Netherlands—over one hundred before 1600 (Soetaert 2019, 537)—, several Morean works were printed around the time of Arias Montano's arrival. In 1565-1566, the *Opera Latina* had been published in Leuven by Jean Bogard and Pierre Zangre.⁴ This work "bridge[d] two eras of recusant activity", says James K. McConica (1977, 143). More's image as a loving father and upright politician, treasured by those expatriates who had been close to him, was passed on to the new Elizabethan exiles, for whom he became "the model of individual perseverance and religious fidelity" (Voss 2000, 496; italics in the original). After the iconoclastic riots (*Beeldenstorm*) by Calvinists in Antwerp (August and September, 1566), "the English printing operation moved en masse to Louvain" (O'Connell 1964, 33). It was there that John Fowler (1537-1579), a famous exiled English printer and "ardent admirer of More" (Schrickx 1976, 8), published *Doctissima D. Thomae Mori*, with a dedicatory preface to Philip II (Leuven, 1568). Five years later, back in Antwerp, Fowler published an edition of Thomas More's *A dialogue of comfort against tribulation*. None of these Morean works would pass unnoticed by Arias Montano.⁵

³ Víctor Lillo Castañ has attributed to Vasco de Quiroga (1477/1478-1565), the first Bishop of Michoacán (Mexico), an unpublished complete translation into Spanish of *Utopia* which was composed not long after the date of More's work (1520's or 1530's); see Lillo Castañ (2018; 2021).

⁴ This had been anticipated, so to speak, by the *Lucubrationes* (Basel, 1563), which included More's most popular works to date, i.e., *Utopia*, the Epigrams and the translations from Lucian.

⁵ In 1569 the 3rd Duke of Alba, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo y Pimentel (1507-1582), appointed Arias Montano royal censor, tasked with preventing the publication of seditious and heretical books. The English ambassador, Thomas Wilson, had a fairly good relationship with the Spaniard. In a letter (13 March, 1575) to

One may assume that the Spanish Biblicist already knew about the ex-Chancellor before travelling to Antwerp. Arias Montano—an Erasmian in many of his convictions (Bataillon 1950, II, 357)—might have been introduced to the English humanist through the countless references Erasmus of Rotterdam made to More in his written production. That said, the list of sixteenth-century Spanish authors that referred to the English humanist or his works widens when examined closely: from well-known authors such as *El Brocense*, Pedro de Soto and Alonso de Villegas, to less well-known names like Antonio María Gratiano, Cristóbal de Tamariz and Diego de Yepes. I have elsewhere argued, however, that Arias Montano might have been more than familiar with the literary creation of the English humanist (Olivares Merino 2023, 289-307), one detail seeming to confirm that More was in the mind of the Spaniard on his arrival at Antwerp. Philip II had asked his chaplain to buy books for the library of El Escorial, as Arias Montano was an experienced bibliophile—many of his friends also taking advantage of his help to get printed works and manuscripts. And so, in a list of books that the Spaniard was sending to Spain from the Netherlands shortly after his arrival was a copy of the recently published edition of Thomas More's Latin works (1565-1566): "Thomae Mori opera f[oli]o Lovan[ii]" (Rodríguez Moñino 1928, 585).

However, as much as Arias Montano—like any other European humanist—did know about Thomas More, during his visit to the Netherlands he was exposed to More's reputation among English exiles. This is evidenced by the inclusion of the ex-Chancellor's portrait in the work he produced with Philip Galle, *Virorum Doctorum* (Galle and Arias Montano 1572, A8), which contained the engravings of forty-four men of renown by Galle and was published in Antwerp.⁶ The Spanish humanist wrote four-lines praising each of these famous characters—More, of course, included.

Returning to Clement, the English expatriate could have played an important role in the process by providing a vivid description of Thomas More to Arias Montano. The latter's words in the "Praefatio" to the Polyglot Bible demonstrate that, at the very least, he knew about Clement's connection with More. The possibility of a meeting between Arias Montano and the English physician has never been considered, though it cannot be simply ruled out: the coincidence of dates and locations seems to me intriguing enough. That said, the hypothetical nature of this encounter does not necessarily condition the validity of my proposal, i.e., that the Spanish humanist became aware of the importance and renown of Thomas More. Whether or not Arias Montano met him, the relevance of John Clement in the case I am presenting is unquestionable. Therefore, this paper initially gathers evidence that points to the English physician and his wife (among all the English exiles on the Continent) as the most reliable witnesses

William Cecil, Elizabeth I's chief adviser, Wilson declared: "I doe knowe no books doe passe any prynte here, but soche as he [Arias Montano] speciellie shal allowe" (Lettenhove 1888, 470).

⁶ There is an excellent modern edition of this work published by Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (2005), in the collection *Biblioteca Montaniana*. For an analysis of Thomas More engraving in the *Virorum Doctorum*, see Olivares Merino [Forthcoming, December 2024].

of Thomas More's life and death. This is followed by a discussion of the events that led to the presence of Clement and More in the Antwerp Bible, exploring the meaning and implications of Arias Montano's thank-you note. In the final section, a possible scenario for a meeting between Clement and the Spanish humanist will be outlined.

I. JOHN CLEMENT AND THOMAS MORE

Very little is known about John Clement until he met Thomas More.⁷ In fact, most of what has come to us about the former comes from the sixteenth-century biographies of More—by Nicholas Harpsfield (ca. 1557) and Thomas Stapleton (1588)—, where Clement and his wife, Margaret, received much attention. However, it is important to note that this is just one side of the story, my point being that More's friendship with the Clements also enriched our understanding of the famous English humanist. The Clements' testimonies were crucial in the composition of these first biographies of More (especially Stapleton's). Their recollections, as well as the documents and memorabilia about More that they brought from England to the Netherlands, were instrumental in the piecing together of the early accounts of his life. As A. C. Southern argued in his seminal work *Elizabethan Recusant Prose*, “[Thomas More's] memory was cherished and kept alive among them [English exiles] by members of his own family and household and by his friends—by John Clement and his wife Margaret” (1950, 17).

Although William Roper, More's son-in-law and his first biographer, says very little about the Clements, Harpsfield's biography bears testimony to their prominence in More's intimate circle. After dealing with More's daughter (Margaret Roper) and her husband (William), Harpsfield makes reference to “some other that were of the familie of this woorthy man [Thomas More]”, the Clements being given most prominence (1932, 90/4-6). Stapleton, the last of the sixteenth-century biographers, also used the Clements family's recollections. In the preface to his *Mori vita*, the author explicitly mentioned the importance of the memories of those who had either lived with More or had been on intimate terms with him. Once again, “John Clement, a doctor of medicine” (1588, 6/19-27–7/1-5; 1966, xvi-xvii) and his wife stand out.

John Clement (born in the 1490s) entered the *Barge*—the Mores' home in Bucklersbury (London)—as page and pupil (either in late 1514 or early 1515); “[he] was taken by Sir Thomas More,” writes Harpsfield, “from Paules schoole in London” (1932, 90/10-12). From the outset, he would enjoy “a prominent place in the family circle” (Guy 2008, 59). More took Clement with him on his 1515 embassy to Flanders, and later included him as a character in the first book of *Utopia* (1516). The introductory letter to Peter Gilles provides proof of More's affection for this young man in that he

⁷ The only biography of John Clement is Ernst Wenkebach's *John Clement, ein englischer Humanist und Arzt des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1925).

refers to him as “my pupil-servant” and “my John” (More 1965, 41/17-18, 26),⁸ and compliments him on his promising capacity for both Latin and Greek (More 1965, 41/20-2; 40/16-18). Writing to Erasmus (February 1516), More uses similar terms of praise when reporting Clement’s skills in Hellenistic studies (Mynors and Thomson 1976, 236/185-87; Allen 1910, 198/173-175).

It must have been around this time that Clement became one of the tutors of Thomas More’s children (Guy 2000, 28). He was to remain at Bucklesbury until 1518, when he entered the service of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. In autumn of that same year, Wolsey sent the young man to Oxford as the first Reader in Rhetoric and Humanity. In another letter to Erasmus written at this time, More shared his sincere affection for his protégé, as well as his joy at his quick academic progress (Allen and Allen 1913, 463/1-7; Rogers 1961, 111). Eventually, Clement was appointed Reader in Greek, but also became deeply interested in Medicine. Both Harpsfield (1932, 90/12-13) and Stapleton (1588, 221/19-20; 1966, 91) emphasized these two aspects of his training, i.e., Greek and Medicine, a common feature among humanists.⁹ While Clement never abandoned his philological practices and interests, he left aside his academic career and in 1520 he went to Leuven to study Medicine. Five years later, Clement obtained an MD at Siena. He also had time and occasion to buy “a large number of Greek works and Latin translations” (Woolfson 1998, 81-82). Collecting manuscripts and books would remain his favourite pastime.

Back in England, in 1526 Clement married Margaret Giggs, “whom More had brought up with his own daughters” at the *Barge* (Stapleton 1588, 92/8-10; 1966, 676).¹⁰ Clement and his wife moved into the *Barge* (immediately) following their wedding as the Mores had already moved to Chelsea in 1524. Clement’s medical expertise granted him admission into the College of Physicians in London (1 February 1528). He was appointed physician to Henry VIII (Reed 1926, 330). Reginald Pole, Thomas Wolsey and John Fisher were also among his patients. Needless to say, More himself, as well as his family, also received medical attention from Clement.

The 1530s were undoubtedly troublesome years. Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England since 25 October 1529, saw himself trapped in Henry VIII’s *Great Matter*. In May 1532 he resigned his post with the King’s blessing and retired to Chelsea to write against heresy. In Roper’s biography of his father-in-law, there is only one reference to the Clements and it may be placed precisely at this junction. It comes at the very end of Roper’s work, as a kind of grand finale where he writes that Sir Thomas Elyot, English ambassador to Charles V, visited Chelsea and shared with family and friends—

⁸ “puer meus” and “Ioannes meus” (More 1965, 40/14-15, 21). More also adds that Clement had questioned Hythloday’s estimate of the width of the bridge of Amaurote (More 1965, 41/22-28; 40/18-23).

⁹ For a general description of the association between English humanists and Medicine, see MacNalty (1947). This author has also written about Thomas More’s personal interest in Medicine (1977); see also Bishop and Gelbier (2003).

¹⁰ Harpsfield referred to her as “a woman furnished with much vertue and wisdom, and with the knowledge of the latine and greeke tongue, yea, and phisicke too” (Harpsfield 1532, 90/6-9).

the Clements included—the Emperor Charles’s words of praise for the ex Chancellor (Roper 1935, 104/6-10).¹¹

Thomas More was beheaded for high treason on July 6, 1535. Generally speaking, the Clements stayed clear of trouble, and almost a decade after the execution, John was made President of the Royal College of Physicians in London. This was to change, however, when King Henry died (1547) and was later succeeded by his son Edward VI. Thomas Cranmer (Archbishop of Canterbury at the time) defined a uniform liturgy in English, which was made compulsory in the first Act of Uniformity of 1549 (passed on 21 January 1549). The Clements “voluntarily and willingly relinquished their country, and banished themselves in the late reign of king Edward the sixth” (Harfsfield 1932, 91/23-25). The *Barge* was confiscated, and their library lost forever (Reed 1926, 331-32). In 1549 John, Margaret and their children settled at Leuven, where other English Catholic exiles (Nicholas Harpsfield, among others) had sought refuge. William Rastell, More’s nephew and husband of Winifred, one of the Clements’ daughters, went to Leuven too (late 1549-1550). Both families became depositaries of documents and objects belonging or related to the executed humanist and carried them to the Continent. Margaret Roper, More’s eldest daughter and closest friend of Mrs Clement, had kept her father’s writings and some of his personal objects until she died in 1544. More’s memorabilia came to the Rastells and the Clements from Margaret before her death in London, “or more likely from her own daughter, Mary Bassett” (Guy 2000, 7). During the almost six years of Leuvenian exile, Margaret Clement and William Rastell tried to carry out Margaret Roper’s project, the publication of her father’s complete works. William had inherited from his father, John Rastell, the love for the printing business, publishing several works by Thomas More, his uncle, before his execution.

The crowning of Mary Tudor on 1 October 1553 marked the end of this first exile for the Clements. The following year they sailed back home to England, where they were to meet up again with old friends. Among them was More’s son-in-law, William Roper, who had become Sheriff of Kent after Mary’s accession, and propitiated William Rastell’s return from exile (Winifred had died in 1553). The Clements were able to see More’s English works published in London (*The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, Sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England*, 1557) by their son-in-law and More’s nephew, William Rastell. Other members of More’s family were also in London at the time, one of them being Mary Bassett, Margaret Roper’s daughter. A learned woman with a vast knowledge of Latin and Greek, like both her mother and Margaret Clement, Mary Bassett translated into English Thomas More’s unfinished *De Tristitia*, which was included in Rastell’s 1557 edition of his uncle’s English works.

¹¹ Old Roper’s failing memory—it has been argued—would have mixed up two visits paid by Elyot to More’s household: the first one, “just after More’s resignation,” and the second, “not long after More’s execution” (Chambers 1962, 288).

Mary Tudor died in 1558 and was succeeded by Elizabeth. The Clements left England for the Netherlands two years later. Leuven was again their chosen destiny, but it seems more than probable that they initially stayed in Antwerp. William Rastell joined them in Leuven in 1562/3, and died there (27 August 1565). The family then moved to Bergen op Zoom—a small Brabant town north of Antwerp—where they first met Thomas Stapleton, who, in his 1588 biography of Thomas More, wrote:

More than twenty years ago [1567/8] Margaret, the wife of Dr Clement, showed me the holy man's [Thomas More's] hair-shirt when I was at Bergen near Antwerp on a visit to my father of pious memory, Dr Clement himself, and other Englishmen who had taken up their abode and were bringing up their families in that town (1966, 69-70).¹²

John and his wife remained in Bergen until setting up their final residence in Malines at the end of the decade. Margaret died in 1570; her husband passed two years later, on 1 July.

As argued by Paul J. Voss (2000, 495), the community of English exiles in the Netherlands not only preserved More's inheritance, but was also instrumental in the dissemination of his memory and works. Thus, the reputation of the executed late Chancellor became "an ever-widening influence" throughout the sixteenth century (Southern 1950, 17). Apart from their key role in Stapleton's *Vita Mori*, the Clements most likely helped their son-in-law, William Rastell, with the publication of More's Latin works at Leuven (1565). Unfortunately, his death from a fever in August that same year meant that he never saw the final printed copy; but, perhaps even more tragically, it deprived readers of the biography of his uncle that he was writing (Marc'hadour 2009, 12).

It may thus be concluded that John Clement was a privileged witness to much of Thomas More's life, enjoying a closeness akin to that of More's own children. During John Clement's last years in the Netherlands, he came to the attention of Arias Montano, after his arrival there in May, 1568. The circumstance of this was through a third party, Christophe Plantin, who, as McDonald has pointed out, the Clements mixed with socially: "[a]s soon as they arrived [in Antwerp], Clement was drawn into the circle of the scholarly printer and publisher Christophe Plantin" (2020, 577), the same printer that Arias Montano would work side by side with on the Antwerp Polyglot Bible. *Clemens Anglus* would provide two codices for this monumental project; Arias Montano, however, did not think much of one of them.

¹² "Cilicium beati viri mihi ostendit Margareta D. Clementis vxor ante annos plus quam viginti, quum Bergis prope Antuerpnam patrem meum pia[ε] memoria[ε], ipsum Doctorem Clementem, aliosque nobiles Anglos qui ibi tunc domicilia sua posuerant familiasque alebant, inuiferem" (1588, 95/20-26). Margaret Clement also owned More's shroud (1566, 192; 1588, 347/14-17).

2. CLEMENS ANGLUS, THE GREEK OCTATEUCH AND THE ANGLICAN PSALTER

As already stated, in the initial pages of the Antwerp Bible, Benito Arias Montano acknowledged his gratitude to John Clement for lending him a precious manuscript.¹³ The full paragraph reads as follows: “Est etiam nobis à CLEMENTE ANGLO, Philosophiae, & Medicinae Doctore, qui in hisce regionibus propter Christianam religionem exulat, exhibitum Pentateuchi Graeci, ex Thomae Mori Bibliotheca, elegantissimum exemplar” [There is also a most elegant copy of the Greek Pentateuch, from the Library of Thomas More, presented to us by Clement English, Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine, who is an exile in these countries for the sake of the Christian religion] (Arias Montano 1571, ***2v/19-21). The history of this *Pentateuchus Graecus* has been discussed profusely. In fact, it was not a Pentateuch but an Octateuch.¹⁴ This valuable codex is preserved at Glasgow University Library (ms Gen. 322) and is therefore known as the Glasgow Octateuch.

When Thomas More transferred his lease of the *Barge* to John and Margaret Clement, he probably also donated part of his library to the newcomers; after all, they were family. More had brought up Margaret as his own daughter and his affection for Clement has already been illustrated. By the time they moved, the Clements already owned a good collection of books and manuscripts (some of which had been acquired by Clement in his continental *tournée*).

In 1531, the German scholar Simon Grynaeus travelled to England and visited John Clement at the *Barge*. The Englishman showed his library to his guest, who attested the owner’s care and love for his books, which he considered were “sought out with wonderful diligence, acquired with much labour and at great cost, and kept like a rich treasure” (translated by Carley and Pierre Petitmengin 2004, 220, n.105).¹⁵ Later on, the family’s property was confiscated after their first move into exile. Margaret fortunately had the time to make an inventory of the titles and authors in their library (Reed 1926, 331-32). Following their return from the Netherlands, the Clements’ properties were restored to them, but the over three hundred works in both Latin and Greek were never recovered. The list of books (elaborated from Margaret Clement’s original inventory) was preserved as one of the documents generated in the legal process (Woolfson 1998, 173). Needless to say, the *Pentateuchi Graeci, ex Thoma Mori Bibliotheca elegantissimum exemplar* was not there.

When John Clement went into exile the first time (1549), he carried with him three manuscripts (probably more): “the famous manuscript of the Greek Anthology known as the Palatine Anthology, a Hebrew Psalter that had once belonged to St. Augustine

¹³ The *Praefatio* is dated 23 July, 1571 (X Cal. Sextiles, MDXXI).

¹⁴ The Octateuch refers to the first eight books of the Bible, i.e., *Pentateuch*, plus the *Book of Joshua*, the *Book of Judges* and the *Book of Ruth*.

¹⁵ Simon Grynaeus dedicated his edition of Proclus’ *De Motu* (1531) to Clement, as the latter had provided the manuscript of this work. The quoted words are from the dedication: “mira diligentia peruestigata, mox ingenti cum labore et sumptu conquisita, ac diuitis demum thesauri instar conseruata” (Grynaeus 1531, 3/12-16).

[of Canterbury] [...], now at Leiden; and a *Greek Octateuch* which is now in Glasgow University Library” (Hunt 1982, 369-70; italics added). These three codices must have been precious to Clement—probably because they had once belonged to Thomas More. In his second exile, he was able to take his entire library (including, of course, the three named manuscripts). In the present case, the Greek Octateuch is relevant in as far as it is a link between Arias Montano, John Clement and—through the latter—Thomas More himself, who had once held the manuscript in his library, as stated by Arias Montano in the cited preface.

As early as December 1566, Plantin had offered his services to King Philip II to publish a new Polyglot Bible. Even though the project was not officially sanctioned until March 1568, Plantin had already been tracking manuscripts. A letter in French he sent to Cardinal Granvelle (29 January, 1568)—almost four months before Arias Montano arrived in the Netherlands—shows that Plantin was already in contact with Clement; one of the Greek works in the latter’s possession being of particular interest to him:

Cejourd’huy aussi, Mons le docteur Clemens, anglois, jadis médecin de feu de bonne mémoire la très catholique reine d’Angleterre, m’a rescrit de Berghes, où il se tient en volontaire exil, ainsi que plusieurs autres bons et catoliques personnages Anglois, et envoyé un catalogue de quelques livres rares en grec, entre lesquels il dict avoir une partie de la Bible grecque jusques au livres des Roix, qui est tres ancienne et beaucoup différente de celles qui sont imprimées. Je tascheray de l’avoir, pour la faire conférer à celles que j’ay tant de Complute que de Aldus Manutius Romanus et Basle (Rooses 1883, 227).

[On this day also, Mr Doctor Clemens, English, formerly doctor to the late Catholic Queen of England [Mary I], wrote to me again from Bergen, where he is in voluntary exile, like several other good and Catholic English persons, and sent a catalogue of some rare books in Greek, among which he claimed to have *part of the Greek Bible up to the books of the Kings*, which is very old and much different from those in print. I will try to get it so that I can compare it with those I have from both the Complutense and Aldus Manutius Romanus, and Basle (italics added)].

This codex—as Plantin puts it—, containing the Greek Bible as far as the *books of the Kings*, was of course the Octateuch,¹⁶ and it finally came into his hands. But when? It could be the case that by the time Arias Montano met Plantin (May 1568), the latter already had Clement’s Octateuch in his possession.¹⁷ If this was the case, there would be

¹⁶ In modern editions of the Old Testament, *1 Samuel* and *2 Samuel* are found immediately after *Ruth*, but that was not the case in the sixteenth century. As shown in the Index of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible, it was *Kings* that followed the latter. Hence Plantin’s reference to *au livres des Roix*.

¹⁷ McDonald has claimed that “[i]n 1568, he [Clement] lent Plantin a manuscript of the Greek Octateuch” (2011, 118). However, it is not possible to know whether or not Plantin in fact received the Octateuch before

no occasion for the Spaniard to visit the English doctor in order to receive it; if it was not, Arias Montano would have travelled to obtain the manuscript or to have a look at Clement's library—he was well-known for his book-hunting expeditions. I will return to this issue in the final section.

As brief as it is (*Clemente Anglo, Philosophiae, & Medicinae Doctore, qui in hisce regionibus propter Christianam religionem exulat*), Arias Montano's allusion to the English physician in the Preface to the first volume of the Polyglot Bible requires some clarification. The Spanish Biblicist identifies Clement as a Catholic English exile in the Spanish Low Countries, who was a Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine. The reference to *Philosophiae* might seem misleading since there is not a single account of Clement having studied philosophy. However, the word "philosophy" here does not refer to an academic discipline; the Spaniard is using it in its etymological Greek meaning ("the love of wisdom"), which thus includes a wide range of fields (from history to mathematics), and he is probably focusing on Clement's knowledge of Latin and Greek. This meaning—which is of course retained in the abbreviation PhD—did however exclude law, theology and medicine. Therefore, Arias Montano also makes reference to Clement's expertise in medicine, which is what he was best known for.

In the Preface to the Polyglot Bible, the Spanish Biblicist was updating a previous portrayal of Clement. When the Belgian priest Ioannes Costerius published his annotated edition of Vincent Lérins' *Commonitorium* (c. 434) (Leuven, 1552), he included a report of his meeting with the English doctor during his first exile in Leuven (1549-1553):

Igitur quum Clemens medicinae doctor natione Anglus vir ornatissimus, ac Graecarum literarum peritissimus, mecum subinde pro sua humanitate de literis conferret, atque harum occasione multa de praeclarissimi viri Thomae Mori, quo familiariter dum viueret usus erat, humanitate, pietate, prudentia ac eruditione diceret (Costerius 1552, Kvii-Li).

[Then, an English Doctor of Medicine by the name of Clement, a most distinguished man and a fine expert in Greek literary works, would very kindly discuss with me about literary matters, and he spoke much of Thomas More, a most excellent man, with whom he had lived on terms of intimacy, of his gentleness, his piety, his wisdom and his learning (Stapleton 1966, 104).]¹⁸

Costerius' familiarity with the English exile enabled him to make first-hand judgements about Thomas More's virtues—the same cannot be said about the basis for Arias Montano's words at this point. Furthermore, Costerius' testimony also serves another purpose: it illustrates Clement's eagerness to talk about More. If a meeting between the Spanish Biblicist and the English doctor did ever happen, it seems

Montano's arrival. There is no evidence of this in the letters Plantin sent to Arias before his arrival: 14 February, 18 and 26 March 1568.

¹⁸ Over three decades later, Thomas Stapleton quoted Costerius' words in his *Tres Thomae* (1588, 238/11-17).

legitimate to assume they engaged in a conversation about the unfortunate English humanist.

Clement's presence in the Antwerp Bible is, though, not limited to a single instance. In the eighth and final volume, Arias Montano included *De Psalterii Anglicani Exemplari Animaduersio*—of which two versions were written. Dávila Pérez (2014, 205) has argued that the date of the first (*Animaduersio* A) must be close to that of the *Praefatio ad Lectorem* that precedes it: 13 January 1572 (*Idib. Ianuariis*, 1572). As Arias Montano explained:

nacti etiam sumus illud exemplar Psalterii appellatum Anglicanum, quod tanquam thesaurum magnum diligentissime conseruatum Ioannes Clemens doctissimus et pientissimus uir ex Thomae Mori familia possidet, is enim et optimi exemplaris Pentatheuci Graeci et huius Psalterii nobis copiam fecit (Montano 1572, no page/19-21).

[We have also obtained that manuscript of the so-called English Psalter, which—preserved as a great treasure with so much care—the most learned and pious gentleman John Clement owns from the family of Thomas More, he made available to us both the excellent Greek Pentateuch and his Psalter [Ps. 96 [is here] transcribed from the copy of Clement, the Englishman].¹⁹

The *Animaduersio* was an assessment of this English (Anglican or Hebrew) Psalter, which John Clement had also made available for the production of the Polyglot Bible. He had probably received it from William Roper (Dunkelgrün 2012, 314), but it had once belonged to Thomas More. The Spaniard argued that the Psalter was by no means old; as a matter of fact, it was quite worthless in many aspects. This started a war with the powerful Belgian bishop Wilhelm D. Lindanus (1525-1588), who had praised the singularity of this codex in his *De Optimo Scripturas interpretandi genere* (1558, 19-20). The Psalter was not used for the Antwerp Bible and was eventually returned to Clement's library at Malines.²⁰ When the old English physician died (1 July 1572), the Psalter was returned to Plantin.²¹

In this second reference to John Clement (and Thomas More), Arias Montano refers to him as most learned and pious (*doctissimus et sapientissimus*). He adds that the Psalter

¹⁹ The edition of the Polyglot Bible I have used contains *Animaduersio* A. The second one, or B (Dávila Pérez 2014, 218-25), was written sometime between 10 April and August 1573 (Dávila Pérez 2014, 241).

²⁰ "redditus est a nobis Clementi ad quem pertinebat: isque illum in sua bibliotheca Mechliniae habet: certior a nobis factus quid thesauri in eo contineatur" (Montano 1572, no page/18-20). [We returned [the Psalter] to Clement, to whom it belonged, and he has it in his library at Malines: having been informed by us about the treasure preserved within]. Montano's sarcasm (the English Psalter was by no means a treasure) seems to me completely out of place.

²¹ *Animaduersio* B: "redditusque a nobis Clementi ad quem pertinebat: sed eo uita defuncto, postea ad nos est rursus allatus atque in bibliotheca nostra collocatus" (Dávila Pérez 2014, 224). [And we returned [the Psalter] to Clement, to whom it belonged. However, after his death, it was eventually brought back to us and placed in our library]. Montano was obviously aware of Clement's death: there was no sarcasm in this second version.

came into Clement's hands from the family of More (*ex Thomae Mori familia*). One might conclude that Arias Montano had met the English exile, who had shared with him this detail; and yet, it is equally reasonable to assume that Arias Montano obtained all this information second hand, from Plantin, for instance. However, a key detail supporting the idea that Montano personally visited Clement's library is his explicit admiration for the care Clement took of his manuscripts, described as being preserved "like a great treasure" (*tanquam thesaurum magnum diligentissime conseruatum*). This might remind readers of Grynaeus' words, quoted earlier, after he had visited the library of the English physician at the *Barge*. I do not mean to say that Arias Montano was familiar with the German scholar's 1531 work, but rather highlight that he also visited Clement's library, albeit when the English physician had moved to a different house of course, and no doubt Clement's loving care of his books was equally evident there.

3. A MEETING AT MALINES?

When Benito Arias Montano arrived in the Netherlands, he settled in Antwerp, where Plantin had his premises. At that point, the Clements were living in Bergen-op-Zoom. The fact that John Clement is included as a priest in two lists of English exiles in the Netherlands elaborated by Arias Montano and Sir Francis Englefield in February 1570 rules out any personal acquaintance between the Spaniard and Clement at that point.²² However, the former's allusion to the English Doctor in the Antwerp Bible—in two separate instances, dated 1571 and 1572—clearly points in the direction of some kind of personal acquaintance between the two. Arias Montano's reference to Clement's bibliophilic habits and his reverence for manuscripts further support this notion. Therefore, sometime between February 1570 and late April 1572 (when he was in Rome), Arias Montano came to know that this Englishman was a Catholic exile, a Doctor of both Medicine and Philosophy (i.e., Latin and Greek) and had personally met Thomas More—with whom he was close enough as to inherit two codices from his library. In *Animaduersio A* (ca. January 1572) Arias Montano explicitly declares that he had been in possession of the Anglican Psalter for eight months ("interim dum apud nos per octo menses integros mansit"; 1572, no page/16), which takes us back to April-May 1571 as the probable date for the start of the loan. This might also be the date he met with Clement.

As previously mentioned, in late 1569 or early in 1570, John and Margaret Clement moved to Malines. The distance between Antwerp and this city is about 20 kilometres. From his correspondence we know that the Spanish humanist often travelled to abbeys and monasteries in Brabant to inspect their libraries; he also visited cities that were further away, such as Breda (approx. 50 km) and Hoogstraten (approx. 35 km). Not

²² Both lists were attached to a letter from Arias Montano (13 February 1570) to the Duke of Alba. *Archivo General de Simancas*, Estado 583, 18-2/6 and 18-3/10.

all his expeditions, though, were for book-hunting, as he also traveled to Brussels and Leuven, to work for the Duke of Alba's indexes or simply meet people. A quick look at a map of the Netherlands shows that the road from Antwerp to Leuven and Brussels passes through Malines, where the Clements were living at the time.

In a letter sent to the Flemish physician Carolus Clusius (who lived in Malines from 1567 to 1573), Arias Montano regrets not having paid a visit to him on his way back to Antwerp:

“Vix dici potes[t] quantum dolui quod publici negotii causa festinare coactus vestra consuetudine per horas aliquot rediens frui non potui. Spero autem opportunitatem mihi aliquando fore, ut commodius fruam” (Domínguez Domínguez 2017, 226/5-6).

[I can hardly express the sorrow I have felt for not having been able to enjoy your company for a few hours on my way back, forced to hurry due to public matters. I do hope that on some other day I may have the proper opportunity to enjoy your company comfortably].

Clusius and Arias Montano had first met back in 1564-65, when the former visited the Iberian Peninsula (Egmond 2010, 8). Something else about Clusius and his circle is worth mentioning here. His interest in Latin, Greek and Medicine drove him to Leuven and Montpellier, where he became deeply involved in Botany. While at Malines, Clusius came under the patronage of the nobleman Jean de Brancion, whose house became a meeting point for all those interested in Botany (18). The famous Flemish physician and botanist Rembertus Dodonaeus (Rembert Dodoens) was also a friend of Clusius and a practising doctor at Malines until 1574 (Huskin 2007, 105). It is only reasonable to think that some ties were established between these men and Clement, the old English physician living at Malines who had been formerly doctor of the late Catholic Queen of England [Mary I], in the words of Plantin (see the previously quoted letter to Granvelle). Perhaps the occasion for Clement's first meeting with these physicians in Malines was the illness and death of his wife, Margaret, in that city.

Back to Arias Montano, whose possibilities of having met Clement primarily stand on the loan of the two manuscripts for the Polyglot Bible, this new information about the Malines physicians seems to enhance the chances in two ways. First, the Spaniard's interest in plants is well known,²³ and because of this and other related matters, the names of Clusius, Dodoens and Brancion appear in his correspondence: namely, letters 9, 12, 24, 32 and 40 (Domínguez Domínguez 2017). But there was something else. In his youth, Arias Montano had studied Medicine and he never lost his love for the discipline. In 1574, he arranged with Plantin to publish *De recta curandorum vulnerum ratione et aliis eius artis praeceptis libri II* (Antwerp, 1574),²⁴ a work he completed with the

²³ He had a small orchard (“hortulum tuum”) at his Antwerp house. Letter 62, “Cornelius Gemma to Arias Montano” (Domínguez Domínguez 2017, 424/22).

²⁴ This work was translated into English by John Reed (1588).

surgeon Franciscus Arcaeus. Arias Montano also wrote the “Praefatio” (22 April 1573), in which he recalled his days as a student of Medicine at Alcalá de Henares, under the guidance of Pedro de Mena. Later on, Arcaeus himself went to Llerena (Badajoz), where Arias Montano was temporarily staying and—as he puts it—, he learnt much from Arcaeus (1573, 3-5). All these circumstances bring the Spaniard and Clement a bit closer: a group of people sharing common interests, mainly Medicine, Botany and Classical languages. However, until more evidence is uncovered, the meeting of these two men remains only a possibility, albeit a plausible one.

4. CONCLUSION

In their various research into Benito Arias Montano’s sojourn in the Spanish Netherlands, scholars have mainly paid attention to his editorial and writing activities, or his role as a book censor. The elaboration and printing of the Polyglot Bible is the best-studied episode in the life of the Spanish humanist, both in Spain, the Netherlands and elsewhere. Clement’s participation in this editorial enterprise has been referred to by both scholars writing about the Spaniard and by those concerned with the English doctor. And yet, the present paper departs from previous lines of research, as it places the dealings between Arias Montano and Clement within the context of the former’s increasing awareness of Thomas More.

At this point, I would like to call readers’ attention to the dates of the references to Clement and More in the Polyglot Bible:²⁵ 23 July 1571 (*Praefatio* in the first volume) and early 1572 (*Animaduversio A* in the eighth volume). This is also the time when Galle and Arias Montano were working on the edition of the *Virorum doctorum*, which contained Arias Montano’s praise of More. Indeed, Galle’s prologue is dated 25 February 1572, at Antwerp.²⁶ Certainly, Clement’s Psalter was still in the hands of the Spaniard, and maybe the excellent Octateuch was too, although there are no dates for this loan. The two codices had once belonged to Thomas More, and Arias Montano knew this. Maybe it was Plantin who told the latter all about the English exile and his manuscripts, although another name also comes to mind as a possible informant: Nicholas Sanders, the English Catholic priest who settled in Leuven in 1565, where he published his *De visibili Monarchia Ecclesiae* (1571), a work in which the Clements are mentioned in several places. In 1577, writing from El Escorial, Arias Montano mentioned Sanders as someone with whom he had been acquainted for a long time (Pidal, Miraflores and Salvá 1862, 343).

It might be the case that Clement and Arias Montano never met, but this does not alter the validity of my claim. Starting in February 1570 and over a period of three

²⁵ Willem Canter elaborated the *Variarum in Graecis Bibliis Lectionum Libellus* (A pamphlet of the variants in Greek Bibles), which was included in the seventh volume of the Antwerp Bible. Canter’s contribution is dated, at Leuven, on *XIII. Calend. Decemb.* [19 November] 1571 and it includes a third reference to Clement and the Octateuch—but not to More (A/18-19, 27-8).

²⁶ “Antverpiae, vi. Cal. Mart. MDLXXII” (Galle and Montano 1572, A2r). 1572 was a leap-year, and so February had 29 days.

years, the Spanish humanist was involved in a number of activities that made him aware of the reality of English Catholic recusancy, a movement in which the names of two friends stood out: John Clement and Thomas More. There is written evidence of this in Arias Montano's explicit reference to both men in the Antwerp Bible, and in his eulogy of the English humanist in the *Virorum doctorum*:

*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, to remember you for your learning, your fidelity,
Or your fortitude; since you exceed in them all.
That doctrine, that piety that you cherished within,
All was shown by the end you bravely faced].

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Eugenio Olivares Merino teaches Medieval and Renaissance English Literature at the University of Jaén. His research focuses on *Beowulf*, Chaucer, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and medieval English vampires. Recently, he has explored Thomas More's relationship with 16th-17th century Spain, publishing in journals like the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* and *Moreana*. Olivares is a recognized authority on Margaret Roper, contributing to the acclaimed *A Companion to Margaret More Roper* (2023).