



**Body and society in the  
*Libro de la anathomía  
del hombre* by  
Bernardino Montaña  
de Monserrate: an  
anatomist's  
political dream**

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**Abstract**

The *Libro de la anathomía del hombre* is an exemplary case of a genre of medico-moral works that peaked in the Early Middle Ages and were still seen during the Renaissance. Although it is not, strictly speaking, an original treatise, it presents some relevant characteristics: it was the first anatomy treatise to be written in Spanish; epistemologically, it represents a turning point between Galenist and mechanist concepts of the body; whilst the medical discourse is configured as a true political treatise intended to legitimize the hegemonic order; and, in terms of style, the use of an allegorical dream allows us to treat it as an oneirological work.

**Keywords:** Bernardino Montaña de Monserrate (1480-1558); anatomy; Galenism; mechanism; organicism.

Metaphors for the body, which are longstanding in legal and moral literature from pre-medieval times on, continue to interest political historians and also, although to a lesser extent, historians of science. After a long period of uncertainty, during which only a few sporadic examples can be found both in canonical Christian literature of the Late Middle Ages and in Arabic philosophy, a powerful body metaphor reappeared in the twelfth century in a highly political work, the *Policraticus*, in which John of Salisbury, in one of the most classic expressions of medieval organicist thought, sought to legitimize and reconcile royal and ecclesiastical power. From then on, different formulations of the metaphor were frequently used to assert political legitimacy in scholarly and moral literature, portraits of princes and, of course, in the moral and political genre of ‘social utopias’, which were very common until well into the seventeenth century.

In Spain there are some eminent examples by writers such as Lucas de Tuy, King Alfonso X, Don Juan Manuel [the Prince of Villena], and García de Castrogeriz and later, after the end of the Middle Ages, in authors such as Friar Luis de Granada or [Baltasar] Gracián, who employed the metaphor for moral and practical purposes, or in authors such as Bernardino Montaña, Jerónimo Merola or Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera – among many other medical humanists – in whose works the metaphor adopts a decidedly naturalist form, without losing its original political meaning.

Almost all versions of the metaphor have been analyzed in detail, including the one used by Bernardino Montaña de Monserrate, whose treatise the *Libro de la anathomía del hombre* has not, however, been sufficiently emphasized by historians. In my view, there are many peculiarities in this work – particularly its metaphorical use of the body – which merit in-depth study; this article is intended as a contribution to that analysis. To outline the crux of my argument, I will point to four of those peculiarities: firstly, it was the first anatomy treatise to be written in Spanish; secondly, the metaphor is developed not in a politico-legal or moral work, as was usually the case, but in a medico-scientific work; thirdly, it offers a reverse version of the usual organicist argument; however, its fourth important characteristic is that it preserves its moral and political nature. A fifth noteworthy characteristic lies in the use of visionary oneirology as a resource for legitimizing power.

### **The author, context and historical relevance**

The figure of Bernardino Montaña de Monserrate, court physician to King Charles V of Spain, is not as well-known as other humanist physicians associated with Spanish royalty at that time, such as Luis Lobera – also a physician at the same court – and Andrés Laguna, Alfonso Rodríguez Guevara or Juan Valverde. According to the dates established by Hernández Morejón (1842-1852, p.355-356) and Anastasio Cinchilla Piqueras (1842-1846, p.253-270), [Montaña de Monserrate] was probably born around 1480 in the city of Barcelona; after studying medicine in at least two European universities – most likely Montpellier and Bologna – he became a professor of anatomy at the University of Valladolid. The publication of his last known work in this city in 1551 would thus have occurred when he was seventy years old.

The *Libro de la anathomía del hombre* belongs to the extensive genre of medico-moral works in which physicians and royal attendants developed the ‘second philosophy’ throughout

the Middle Ages. Even though it was written as an anatomy and physiology compendium for practical use, it offers, in addition to the description of the structure and functions of the human body, many reflections on conduct, which in the Hippocratic tradition is always the result of the natural or accidental properties of the organs. Thus, using elements from the broad field of metaphor, which from Antiquity on had been used to draw an analogy between society and the composition and outward appearance of the body, it outlines a political theory – like that of Renaissance utopias – centered on power-sharing between the different authorities and officials who run the city.

The innovative use of professions as a metaphor in a Spanish scientific text is one of the strikingly original features of Montaña's treatise. This does not, of course, mean that it was an original work, given the multiple parallels with earlier medical works that were still in use at the time, such as Henri de Mondeville's *Cirurgia*, which also uses the allegory of professions to describe the body, or Mondino Luzzi's more well-known *Anathomia*, not to mention the fact that some of the illustrations and anatomical designs are virtually exact reproductions of those used by Vesalius in his most famous work, *De humani corporis fabrica*. This had appeared only eight years earlier but was well known in medical circles by that point, thanks to Valencian anatomists Pedro Jimeno and Luis Collado (Sánchez Granjel, 1980, p.156). Likewise, the work's relationship with other contemporary medical texts can be seen in the use of stylistic and didactic devices associated with authors Bernardino de Montaña was very close to, in particular the presence of an allegorical dream, which is similar to the one included in Luis Lobera de Ávila's *Remedio de cuerpos humanos y silva de experiencia* of 1542, whose visionary material also links it to the oneirological genre; a genre long used in gnoseology and particularly in natural philosophy and politics.

Given that this is a work whose scientific content is comparatively second-rate, the historical importance of the compendium lies, as I have mentioned, paraphrasing Saunders and O'Malley (1942, p.88) – whose article is one of the most comprehensive studies of Bernardino Montaña's work – in the fact that it was the first anatomical treatise ever written in Spanish. It is worth noting that the description of the work as second-rate refers to its influence as a compendium of anatomy and physiology and not to its literary value, and certainly not to its documentary value, both for the history of medicine and the history of political ideas. In fact, given that its scientific content was very soon surpassed by the work of medical humanists who have become better known, such as Valverde de Hamusco, Andrés Laguna, etc. and even by medical works appearing immediately before it, such as Luis Lobera's, all of which are more cited and consulted and seem to have been more influential in Medicine, the importance of Montaña's treatise lies, apart from its stylistic features and its aforementioned use of the vernacular, in the epistemological reading it offers at a time when a paradigm shift was occurring, as well as in the political reading it proposes alongside its scientific discourse.

After all, unlike other medical writers and treatises of the period, which have been exhaustively analyzed by the History of Science and the History of Medicine, not many studies have been published either on the author or his only known work. After some mid-nineteenth century references by Chinchilla Piqueras (1842-1846) or Hernández Morejón (1842-1852), and Escribano García (1902) in the early twentieth century – all of which were

in general bibliographical works – there was no further mention [of him or his work] until the middle of the twentieth century. The first was by Alberti López (1942) in a general work for Spanish anatomists, while the second and perhaps most knowledgeable of all was by Saunders and O'Malley (1942) in a monographic article in the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*.

There is an interesting article published at around the same time by [Spanish dramatist and novelist] Valle-Inclán (1949) on the anatomical lexicon used by Bernardino Montaña and Juan Valverde, a topic that was also explored, although very briefly, a few years later by Pedro Laín Entralgo (1988).

Three decades later, José María López Piñero (1976) referred to the work's contents, highlighting the purely physiological aspects, but without touching on their political or sociological meaning. It is also referred to by Sánchez Granjel (1980), who merely limits himself to commenting on the similarity between the dream and the one described by Luis Lobera; he also labels Bernardino de Montaña's medical thought as Galenist without exploring the nuances of this categorization.

Some brief articles during that period that should be mentioned include those of Ivonne David-Peyre (1974-1975, 1976, 1977), who, among the much-studied allegorical uses of the human body in the literature of the period, devotes some substantial commentary to Montaña's work.

More recent, and obviously more interesting, are the articles by Josep Lluís Barona Villar (1991, 1993a, 1993b) in *Cos humà i ordre social en la cultura Reinaxentista, El cuerpo alegórico: claves renacentistas para una interpretación de la naturaleza humana* and, above all, in *Bernardino Montaña de Monserrate: el galenismo y la tradición alquímica, respectivamente*, which coincide with Alberti and Saunders and O'Malley in terms of the degree of relevance they attribute to the *Libro de la anathomía del hombre*. In the first two, although they are not exclusively devoted to Monserrate's treatise, the author suggests some keys for interpreting the political imaginary contained in the anatomical discourse, which matches that of other authors of the period such as Miguel Sabuco, Jerónimo Merola or Luis Lobera himself. The last article, on the other hand, even though it is entirely dedicated to the work examined here, focuses on its content from a medical point of view, however, in terms of the political imaginary it does not touch on the problem that interests us here; in particular, it makes no reference to the [use of] oneirological material as a tool for political legitimation.

### **Structure and significance of the treatise**

In medical terms, the treatise is an amalgam of anatomical and physiological knowledge with a mechanistic vein tainted with typically medieval Arabized Galenism. It is prefaced by a declaration signed by Juan Vázquez, supposedly at the behest of His Imperial Highness Carlos V, which grants the author the appropriate licenses and printing rights as well as posting monetary fines for anyone who countermanded these orders. Apart from the declaration, the table of contents, a dedication letter and a preface in which he basically explains what anatomy is and how it can be learned, the book consists of two parts and a colloquy between the physician and his patient; in addition to all this, it contains twelve illustrations at the

end. The first part is a fifty-eight page comprehensive and detailed anatomical description, divided into twelve chapters.

The second part, which is much shorter and serves as a kind of introduction to the aforementioned colloquy, contains only two chapters and is forty-six pages long: the first chapter is devoted to human reproduction and birth and the second to death and its causes.

The colloquy, which is a total of fifty-four pages long, could be described as a treatise on human physiology in and of itself, since it is interwoven with scattered but abundant material and advice on the proper management of the body which, in this period, was still seen as both connected to and the necessary effect of correct moral governance. This is precisely what allows us to treat the work as belonging to the moral conduct genre.

The colloquy begins with the narration of the dream experienced by Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, the Marquis of Mondéjar – to whom the entire work is dedicated, as seen in the subtitle and the epistolary dedication<sup>1</sup> – as told to his doctor, the author himself, Bernardino Montaña, in order that he may account for the figures and images that, in the character's words, 'appeared' to him in a 'most mysteriously'. And what is so mysteriously shown to the marquis is, in his words, the magnificent architecture of a stately and gracious mansion in whose interior he sees a fortress being built.

First of all I seemed to see a mansion so stately and gracious and beautifully built that it was obviously the house of some royal personage or other nobleman: I am quite sure you would be extremely delighted to see it, because you enjoy looking at fine buildings, but even though that is so I do not wish to stop and tell you about the features of this house, because all of my attention was devoted to contemplating a fortress that I saw being built inside this house, from the first to the last stone (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.83r).

There is really very little mystery in the architectural description of this beautiful house and of the fortress that the marquis sees being built inside it with the materials 'needed for the task'. And if there is scarcely any mystery in the dream itself, it has even less effect on the reader, firstly because of the context and the background the reader has at the time the narrative of the dream starts, and secondly, because the author himself uses footnotes to reveal the links between the architectural images he is describing and the different parts of human anatomy. The stately mansion he describes is none other than the body of a pregnant woman with its respective regions, organs and substances as well as the function of each of these in the reproductive process; the fortress is, evidently, the growing embryo.

As if this were not enough, immediately after the story ends, the possible mystery of the allegory is unveiled within the body of the narrative rather than as a footnote, perhaps to draw the reader's attention to the content being proposed:

Coming to the point, then, I tell you that the royal palace Your Lordship saw was the body of a very beautiful woman, very well-proportioned in limb, and well-built and formed as I judge, not without cause. Your Lordship, it was a royal palace, because considering its skilled and excellent construction, and all the proportion between its parts, and the whole body, one could not think that such a house could have been built except as the residence of some soul who excelled above other souls (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.87r).

The ideological material seems at this point to be well-designed: a house whose beauty and elegant proportions represent order, and a set of organs that, as well as ensuring the harmonious functioning of the whole ensemble, are capable of reproducing themselves.

### **The allegorical dream**

Apart from the socio-historical interest of Bernardino Montaña's work as the first anatomical treatise written in Spanish, one of its most striking qualities from the literary point of view is the way it develops a scientific discourse via a long colloquy and, especially, the presentation of this discourse by means of the aforementioned allegorical dream. In addition to this unusual feature, [the work] possesses a certain literary value that has barely been acknowledged to date, perhaps because of the widespread perception that the dream is merely a copy of the one Luis Lobera included in his *Remedio de cuerpos humanos y silva de experiencia*, published nine years earlier. Indeed, a detailed analysis of both dreams does reveal certain parallels, indicating that Bernardino Montaña had not only read the account of Lobera's dream as a didactic resource, but that he probably had it in mind when he wrote the colloquy between the Marquis of Mondéjar and his doctor. This thesis is supported by the representation of the body as an architectural structure – in the first case a tower and the second a royal household – as well as a certain similarity in the allegorical use of professions, some resemblances in nomenclature, the choice of topics and structure, etc., and even the length of the narrative.

However, the same analysis turns up enough differences in terms of formal content, and above all, in the later work's innovative use of some rhetorical and didactic devices, that its unique nature becomes clear.

Firstly, we need to stress the context in which it appeared. While both works were on medical themes and, more precisely, on anatomy, the earlier one belongs to the genre of remedies and care, with an explanatory pharmacopeia, some parts of which are in Latin and others in Spanish, while the later work, which is written entirely in the vernacular, takes a more academic and scientific approach: it gives a comprehensive and detailed anatomical and physiological description according to Galen's principles.

As to the dream itself, the main difference lies in the object of the discussion: whereas for Lobera de Ávila it involved describing the human body, Bernardino Montaña was interested in describing reproduction and its processes: the fortress being constructed within the royal household with part of its materials. Thus, while Lobera lingers over the description of processes related to the humors over the course of a lifetime, focusing particularly on the decrepitude of old age, Montaña spends most of the narrative explaining reproductive theory, so that the description of old age and death is barely a corollary of the narrative. Thus, to a certain extent it could be said that Monserrate's work continues rather than copies the dream his predecessor related. It takes on topics and issues related to the ones Luis Lobera deals with but, even though it uses some of Lobera's stylistic and figurative devices, it does so from a different perspective and therefore applies new material.

## Beyond allegory

Although, as mentioned earlier, the explicit purpose of the colloquy between the patient and the physician is for the latter to interpret and explain the meaning of the dream as if it were a hermetic revelation; there are no enigmatic images or oracle figures to make the dream anything more than a narrative device; it cannot even be said that there are obscure elements requiring a gift or special powers of deduction and wisdom to decipher the content. On the contrary, all the elements for interpretation seem to have been deliberately placed inside the narrative itself; thus, the colloquy seems more like a medieval dialogue, dialectically one-dimensional, without important discussions or refutations, than a Renaissance dialogue, unlike Saunders and O'Malley's argument (1946, p.95). It is also formally distinct from the Socratic dialogue in which the teacher had to convince his disciple of something he doubted or give rational proof for something he did not know.

In fact, it is noticeable that when the recounting of the dream is over, the physician himself reproaches the marquis – not so much in his tone, which is friendly, but in the words he uses – for perfectly understanding the dream he is seeking advice about because, he says, if the marquis had not understood it perfectly he would not have been able to describe it:

I am well aware that Your Lordship has understood this dream, because otherwise it would have been impossible to recount it in the order Your Lordship has done, I think you mean to test whether I understand it, or perhaps Your Lordship wishes to get to the bottom of some doubts you have about the dream: but whatever the case, I shall do as Your Lordship orders, and say what I understand it to be, and if I err in any way, I beg Your Lordship will pardon me (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.87r).

If the correct interpretation of the truth revealed by the dream happened to demand specific scientific knowledge possessed by physicians, and in particular anatomists, it was out of reach for the majority of people, even if they were, like Don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, a marquis and a learned man.

But the intention is explicitly didactic. In an academic environment, which was still heavily influenced by the late medieval scholastic tradition, the use of Latin as the main language at university as well as the disdain for experimental research constituted one of the main hurdles for those seeking to understand the inextricable marvels of the human body by studying books. In fact, the author's declared purpose at the time of writing the book in Spanish was precisely to bring anatomical knowledge closer to a group of people who were increasingly fluent in Latin, the study of which might be distracting them too much from studying 'doctrine'.

I pleased to write this book in the vernacular, because many surgeons and other discerning men who do not know Latin will wish to take advantage of reading it, and also because I find that these days doctors are so fond of Latin, that they employ all their thought in that tongue: and [as to] what is important, which is doctrine, they do not think of it unless they read about it. And this is one of the most powerful reasons why nowadays there are few doctors who know medicine, and many who write about it. And Your Lordship's dream gives substance and perfection to the work (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.10r).

In this sense there is no doubt that the purpose of the allegorical dream was to stimulate research rather than to preserve knowledge among the initiated. In any case, since the oneiric element remained a classical, learned figurative device, even though on this occasion it appears in one of its most humble forms, one cannot rule out the possibility that the author was looking for some degree of legitimation of the knowledge he was proposing. This is the meaning seemingly implied by the marquis' words describing the content of his own dream as something strange and unimaginable: "It is not as you have said (the said dream) nor is it a thing, sir doctor, that you could imagine unless you heard it, because it seems impossible for any man born to have dreamed such a dream (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.82v).

Of course, this legitimizing effect is necessarily supported by the personality and the illustrious noble lineage of the dreamer, a marquis. This is an aristocratizing device that, as Marta Fattori has pointed out (1985), and according to Macrobio's hierarchies (2006), would have constituted a crucially important element in medieval dream doctrine.

The uncertainty and distrust surrounding dreams, which in terms of interpretation placed them throughout the Middle Ages on the margins of the most conservative learned discourse, do not seem in this case to constitute a rhetorical drawback. The reasons may lie firstly in the ideological horizon of the 16th century, in which a new current of thought about dreams seems to have solidified: namely, that dreams were not only illusions of the devil, but that there was cultural validity to both good and profane dreams; that is, as long as they followed the dominant ideological order, as the dream of reproduction doubtless does, as Jacques Le Goff points out (1983, p.288) when he remarks that 'the dream's role extends to the field of culture and politics'. Secondly, and this is closely related to the last point, because although the narrative constructs it as a dream, and indeed the dream of the Marquis of Mondéjar, it is closer to the visionary images that occurred during vigils, a type of image which, being traditionally less enigmatic, was less likely to arouse clerical suspicion, and which over the course of the Middle Ages acquired the legitimizing functions that the dream-state as such had been losing for a while thanks to the determined effort to eradicate pagan beliefs.

In any case, it is interesting to note, with Acebrón Ruiz (2004, p.41), how the uncertainty in medieval literature about the use of the terms vision and dream (daydream) can be traced back to two ancient oneiric divination genres: firstly, one in which the dreams presented a clear, direct message that could be understood at the very moment of dreaming, and secondly, the kind whose obscure or enigmatic content required outside interpretation through the application of symbolic keys. The Marquis of Mondéjar's dream seems, in this sense, to straddle both genres: while it is a 'daydream' meant to be interpreted, it is not so enigmatic as to warrant divination skills nor so obscure as to need some expert in oneiric language to interpret it using symbolic keys; in accordance with the meaning mostly associated with the vision, the message stands out from the signs to the glory of the knowledge it announces. In this sense, far from replaying the old Virgilian dichotomy between true visions and false visions (Le Goff, 1983, p.286), the correct interpretation requires an expert in the dream's content, which is medical and anatomical, not so much to expunge errors from the vision, since there are none, but to broaden and bolster that true knowledge revealed by dreaming.



## Scientific knowledge and an anatomist's political dream

But the knowledge that is announced and for which legitimacy is sought through oneiric or visionary representation is a type of knowledge that was clearly going through an epistemological crisis. In the year the *Libro de la anatomía del hombre* was published, in 1551, the scholarly world was not yet mature enough to adopt the principles of modern science and openly reject Aristotelian physics and natural philosophy, or, in the case of medicine, the theories of Galen in any shape or form. Vesalius' *La fabrica*, published only nine years earlier, although in learned language, was well-known in the most refined circles, and even though from a scientific point of view it was a modern work, it did not constitute a real alternative to received knowledge: it merely heralded a change that perhaps its own supporters did not perceive. However, Bernardino Montaña was one of those supporters who seems not to have been aware of the transformation that was about to take place and who unequivocally reveals the current reading of his treatise, precisely by vacillating between defending the ancient knowledge and revealing undeniable glimpses of the new knowledge; more concerned with didactic than scientific work, he rushes to cram into the dream and its subsequent interpretation the entire substance of ancient medicine in a conceptual framework – which may be only terminological – that is only superficially modern, but is already essentially different: he is trying to reconcile the notion of the body and of Galenist medicine – the only form of medicine possible in the West until that point – with mechanistic structures of thought.

This is suggested by a certain oscillation in the development of his anatomical imaginary; on the one hand he explicitly embraces mechanism and its terminology, as seen especially in the most generic aspects of the treatise, such as the subtitle: “A book which deals with the conformation and composition of man” (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.I), as well as the architectural allegory of the body in the dream, “For a long while I was lost in wonder gazing at each and every part of this house, for there was great good to behold in it ... And walking within it, on the right hand side, was an architect who, as his works attested, was very diligent, ingenious, and skilled” (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.83r), but in the anatomical details he cannot break free either of the theory of the humors, or of Aristotelian causality and final causes, and certainly not from Aristotle's principles on hylomorphism and generation or the cosmogenic and microcosmic symbolism of Galen's three cavities (natural, sensitive and animal) with their corresponding spirits, although at times he shows doubts – almost always rhetorical ones – about the bases for these:

Therefore I say that in my view, the vital spirit is a corporeal substance composed of matter and form: and not only is it constituted thus, but I say that it is composed of four elements, namely, fire, air, water, and earth, in which composition the elements are so equal that there is harmony among them if the heat, cold, moisture, dryness have the same weight and quantity. The vital spirit is a substance made up of four elements mixed in equal quantities. And in this sense the spirit greatly resembles the celestial bodies, for just as they have no opposite, neither do the spirits have opposites, because being the mean they share all extremes, and thus none of them are opposite, and for this reason, just as each of the celestial bodies has its intelligence, granted to help it and propel it: in the same way the vital spirit has been granted a practical intelligence that helps it, and that intelligence carries out the works of nature by means of the spirit (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.81v).

At a time when, according to García Ballester (1976, p.88), there was an open battle between tradition and innovation in Spanish universities – especially in Valladolid, Alcalá, Valencia and Salamanca – it could be said that Bernardino Montaña's treatise is, overall, the expression of the mechanist dream of a Galenist who does not reject or repudiate Galenism. This is proved by the fact that, besides Aristotle, Galen is one of the few authorities cited in the treatise whom Bernardino Montaña unhesitatingly calls the prince of anatomists: "And nevertheless in this doctrine of anatomy, Galen, who is rightly called the prince of anatomists, and others who have written since, deal very scrupulously with all the parts of the body and their works and benefits and of their harmony and composition" (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.11r).

As is well known, cultural transformations occurring towards the end of the Middle Ages also gave rise to a new view of dreams; especially, research has shown that the secularization of knowledge that took place from the 12th century on led to a growth in discussions of good dreams and profane dreams in literature as well, although only to the extent that such discussions served to maintain the dominant ideological order; in other words, only to the extent that the cultural and political function referred to by Le Goff were predetermined by a system of thought that, while it was starting to recognize and recuperate classical culture regarding dreams, could not yet tolerate a vision of the earthly world that did not replicate the structure of the heavenly world.

The dissertation Bernardino Montaña uses to describe the architecture of the body seems to be inscribed within that very pattern; a pattern in which anatomical material – which is unequivocally the main kernel of the work – serves, just like medieval and possibly ancient 'somatology', to shore up the current cultural and political model. In this sense, it is striking that the argument seems more designed to maintain hierarchical consistency in the chain of gradually decreasing attributes and powers in the architectural works, and to express the separation of the different organs' functions of command and obedience, rather than in the precise quantitative and qualitative description of those organs.

Bernardino Montaña's dream is clearly a deliberately political one; although the anatomical architecture that he lays out throughout the subsequent interpretation is not openly structured as a treatise in which politics is repeatedly inserted via, for example, the organicist metaphor that provided so much material for medieval political and didactic literature; but it is not political only to the extent that a theoretical construction stops being political if there are two competing models for comprehending anatomical reality within the bosom of a literary, scientific and didactic tradition in which the body and its representation always functioned as a metaphor for society. It is enough that the author strategically inserted some short but crucial paragraphs about free will, the purpose of practical intelligence or the instruments used by animal spirits to carry out their work, to make clear the necessary conjunction not only between the macrocosm and the microcosm but also between natural order, created order and the political order.

because considering her build of such skill and excellence, and her parts so well-proportioned, that the whole body led one to think that this house could only have been built as the home of some soul who excelled above all other souls, because, as the prince says, on seeing thus the life and the perfection, and the creator distributes all

goods according to the disposition of the person on whom he bestows them, because he is not partial in his distribution, but gives to each one according to what he deserves, so that in this body built with great care and skill and wisdom it cannot be thought but that it would lodge the form of greatest perfection: and thus in this house that Your Lordship saw, which is as we said the body of a woman, if Your Lordship looked carefully it was the home of the intellective soul that is the most excellent of all forms, because it is the copy and semblance of its creator: this is what I rightly judge it to be. Your Lordship, this house was a royal palace, for in it lived the soul, queen and mistress of all others (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.87r).

This concurrence of orders goes along with the dictates of Christine doctrine and faith, although to do so he has to appeal to what 'holy scholars' have said:

Marquis: According to what you say, there are two principles in the body from which everything flows, namely the practical intelligence that you say accompanies the spirit and the intellective spirit that is the form of the body?

Doctor: It is as Your Lordship says, and some even say that there are three principles, namely nature, the sensitive soul and the intellective [soul].

Marquis: This doctrine seems to me a very good one, because it resolves many doubts that are otherwise difficult or impossible to solve, and also because it is a philosophy that is very close to our faith, because it seems that this intelligence you place in the body, coming from the intellective soul, is the guardian angel that, according to our faith, is assigned to each one of us to guard us.

Doctor: I do not know if this intelligence is the same as the guardian angel we have, in fact I think they are very different, for this practical intelligence that is in our bodies is designed to do two types of things: one of these consists of natural works necessary for the formation of man or the preservation of life: and the other consists of works of voluntary movement which are not necessary for the preservation of life or the species, and the intelligence understands all these works very well and knows how they are to be performed, but it does not have free will to perform them or not perform them, because for the natural works that are necessary for the preservation of life or the species the necessity of the work drives it and binds it, and in the voluntary works it obeys the command of our will, so that for neither thing does it have free will, which can help us and guard us, and can also stop doing so if it wishes, and this is the reason why we pray to it to take care and guard us, and thus I think it is something different that the intelligence you speak of: and besides, as I understand it, each of us has our own guardian angel, and the intelligence of the spirit is the same for all spirits, and for all men, and since this is a matter of theology I defer to what learned holy men may decree (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.1012-101v).

In this sense, medieval Galenist tradition, to whose waning principles Bernardino Montaña necessarily clung, represented a mythological but also holistic understanding of the body. It was clearly the result of a more rational and speculative approach rather than an experimental one, but it was imprecise, and could only see what the parent theory, filtered through Arabic medicine and Christian thought, allowed it to articulate rationally in the imaginable world. In any event, it was an anatomical vision that, while not, as we have said, a straightforward political allegory, did transmit a concept of a unified society, although stratified by rank and structure; a concept well represented in the allegorical dream by the house and the

fortress whose construction is reminiscent of organicist metaphors that have always been so abundantly used by ideologists and legislators to legitimate the established order: from John of Salisbury to Saint Thomas Aquinas, and from Spanish King Alfonso X to Gracián.

While in all of these writers society is imagined as a body, in Montaña, on the other hand, although the effect is the same, it is the anatomical body that is represented as a perfectly articulated and harmonious social whole that is reproducing itself. But the political allegory in question does not seem to be limited to legitimizing the age-old political order but perhaps also plays a role in the so-called 'urban utopias', Eugenio Garin's term for the humanist desire to reform the city using the organicist models that were beginning to emerge in the sixteenth century. As Josep Lluís Barona (1993a) has pointed out, humanist reformers could find in the human body a structural model that was both rational, natural, and built on human nature, with which to reform the medieval city, which was overcrowded and chaotic. Perhaps for this reason and because he was mimicking the society of his time, the social and urban body that Montaña inscribes onto the anatomical body clearly employs a multifunctional representation of trades and ranks, from the architect to the errand boys, passing through pastry-chefs, stewards, cooks, craftsmen, road-sweepers, shop-keepers, knights, governors, the official teacher, etc., a representation that, as it corresponded to a society like Spain's in the sixteenth century, was already widely diversified but still lacked the unified order, coherence and hierarchical solidarity that utopians of all times had imagined. A society, in any case, in which some of the old disputes about who held supreme power still survived: whether it was the pope or the emperor, a religious or secular power, which was popularly represented above all by the imaginary heart-head dichotomy (Le Goff, p.1992, p.14) and was clearly presented in one of the models that Bernardino Montaña uses in his text: the aforementioned *Cirurgia* in which Henri de Mondeville, physician to Philip IV of France, argued in favor of secular power; in other words, the king, well represented at the center by the heart.

Given the importance and also the length of the anatomical and functional description of the heart, Bernardino Montaña seems also to lean towards monarchic power. The heart, as the principal member of the spiritual region, is the seat of the vital spirit from which it is dispersed via the arteries to all the body's limbs: "For this reason we call this region natural, which is to say devoted to works of nature. Likewise we call the chest the spiritual region, because the principal member this region was made to house is the heart, which is the source where we find the vital spirit, from which it is born and spreads to all the body's limbs" (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.88r).

However, not confident about this affirmation – as if hinting that, while power emanates from the king, the last word belongs to the Supreme Pontiff – the vital spirit that is born in the heart must be purified in the brain, the principal organ of the animal region and more temperate than the heart:

the vital spirit in its first generation which takes place in the heart does not remain entirely clean ... sometimes it harbors a very hot superfluity, and if this is the case it is also possible that amongst the true parts of the spirit is housed that fire that makes it very hot. And please understand, Your Lordship, that the animal spirit is the same vital spirit purified of that fiery superfluity: and for this reason it remains as we have said in between the qualities of temperateness and luminosity like the celestial bodies

... and it seems to me that in terms of vital spirits the brain is the most temperate, and for that reason it tempers the vital spirits in such a way that the fiery part, which is very light, is exhaled by the spirit, and what resolves and remains in the brain is the pure, temperate substance of the spirit in all the four qualities (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, f.92r, 92v).

Meanwhile, the mechanist representation that is timidly hinted at represents the new view of science; the view that replaced the classical myth with scientific rationalism, which was supposedly attentive to experiential data but whose first consequence was the dismembering of the human body as well as the corpse-like, static view of the body. Anatomical science was beginning to rebel against Galenism but it was falling victim to its own etymology: not only did it cut into the dead body that it studied but it dissected the concept of the body on which it constructed a new rationale for the somatic; it divided it into parts, breaking it up into pieces as disassociated from one another as the subjects of the sovereign would become in the social structure that was emerging.

It is noticeable, then, that of all the illustrations and figures that Bernardino Montaña copies from Andreas Vesalius, none of them represents an organ, a body part or a limb removed from the rest of the body, as so many of Vesalius' drawings did. As if resistant to the new science that was dissecting and dismembering the unitary body of ancient medicine, Bernardino Montaña's dream of reproduction constituted both the first treatise on anatomy in Spanish and the last great Galenist treaty: a treaty in which we glimpse both the mechanical dream of science, in agreement with the model of thought emerging at the time, and [the author's] expression of dreamy nostalgia for a political and scientific model whose decadence was beginning to seem irreversible.

## NOTE

<sup>1</sup> "To the most illustrious lord, Don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza: Marquis of Mondéjar, Count of Tendilla, lord of the city of Almaguera and its province. On the councils of war, and of state of his Majesty, and his President on the council of the Indies etc. Doctor Bernardino Montaña de Monserrate, Physician to his Majesty, your servant and attendant" (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, Epístola dedicatoria). All citations have been confirmed and checked with facsimile editions (Montaña de Monserrate, 1997, 1998). In this and other citations of texts from non-English languages, a free translation has been provided.

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