

A Textual Comparison of The Latin and English Versions of St. Thomas More's History of Richard III

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The two texts (Latin and English) of Thomas More's *History of Richard III* are not simply translations of each other. Each text appears to be directed to a different audience, and draws on resources peculiar to the language it is written in.

I have found six categories of text: 1) common (regular type); 2) English variants of something common (in bold italics in English text, and referred to the variant in the other language in both texts with **cf.**, within brackets, immediately preceding the indicated words); 3) Latin variants of something common (same system of reference); 4) English additions to the Latin (put into bold italics in the English text, with no brackets preceding, referred to by the Latin text with the symbol [^][*English page no./line no.*]; 5) Latin additions to the English (put into bold, non-italic type in the Latin version, with the same kind of reference to it in the English version, using [^][**Latin page no. line.**]; 6) passages that are common to both texts but "re-located" into different positions with respect to the common order: these will be in regular type, but underlined, and will be equipped with an indication of the corresponding position in the other version.

All the Latin additions and variants have been translated in footnotes to the Latin version, with the exception of proper name variants that are self-evident. In the same footnotes there are also indications from time to time of word play or other details with the symbol: <NB: >, and these comments can sometimes apply to the English text as well as the Latin.

This work is meant as raw material for further analysis. Many of my decisions will be subject to revision: how precisely do we draw the line between "common text" that appears in two different languages and "variant" treatments of the same material? or between "amplifications" and "additions"? I want to emphasize that the work is a provisional attempt to sort out the differences between the versions at a basic level. There is no attempt to classify or characterize the variety of variants and additions, or to make premature judgments about their stylistic, rhetorical or thematic functions. But I hope that it will facilitate such analysis!

Explanation of cross reference method

Example 1. Simple variants – e.g. Richard’s Christian name used in the Latin version, but his title in the English: square brackets with “cf.” *immediately precede* the word or words which have a variant in the other version. The English text will alert the reader to the Latin variant just preceding the place where it occurs (in the other version) with a reference to page and line of the other version in **[bold non-italic square brackets]**. The Latin will similarly refer to the English variants with *[bold, italic square brackets]*. These variants have a range from simple paraphrase, to rhetorical abbreviation or amplification of the same idea, to almost totally different kinds of information provided, for some reason, at the same point in the two versions (and are thus a kind of “variant”). Whenever the “[cf.” reference is used, it will appear simultaneously in both versions at the corresponding places in the text, and the words that correspond to the variant in the other version will be in bold (always bold italics in English, bold non-italic in Latin). Unless the Latin variant is very obvious in meaning (such as a proper name), there will be an **English translation of the Latin variant** in a footnote, entered at the end of the variant, always given in **non-italic bold**, set in the context of the English version *[always bracketed in non-bold italics]*.

Latin version, page 16, line 2:

cum *[cf. English 16/1]* **Richardo**

English version, page 16, line 1:

with **[cf. Latin 16/2]** *the Duke of Gloucester*

Example 2. Something additional in one of the texts (and absent from the other version) is indicated by a reference in the other version, at the starting point of occurrence with the symbol **^[English page/lines]** (in the Latin version, for something missing from it, but found in the English version) and **^[Latin page/lines]** (in the English version, for something absent from it, but present in the Latin). As with variants, the text of the additional words (in the other version) will be given in bold face type without any brackets, at the exact page and line number(s) indicated in the reference brackets of the other version. And, also as with the variants, the additional Latin words will be footnoted to a translation that fits the **additional Latin** as well as possible into the context of the English text: juxtaposing or replacing it as necessary. The footnotes as such do not explicitly distinguish variants and additions: the format looks the same. (Only the Latin version has these footnotes, since the English already has its own footnotes, supplied by Mary Gottschalk, glossing More’s archaic English usages).

Latin version, page 9, lines 10-12:

10 ad Potieri domum, *[cf. Eng. 9/10]* **qui Richardo familiaris erat,**¹ curriculo contendisse
pulsatoque violenter ostio multo ante lucem, **quum et violenta et intempestiva pulsatio magni**
ac subitarii negotii fidem faceret,² prope intromissum ... nuntiasse

¹ ... *the self night in which King Edward died, one Mistlebrook came in great haste to the house of one Pottier...* **who was one of Richard’s associates** [...and when ...

² ... *long ere morning ... was with hasty rapping]* **when a violent and unexpected knocking is a sure sign of some important and sudden event** [*quickly let in, he showed unto Pottier that King Edward was departed...*

English version, page 9, lines 9-11:

came in great haste to the house of one Pottier,
10 **[cf. Latin 9/10] dwelling in Red Cross Street, without Cripplegate;** and when he was
with hasty rapping **^[Latin 9/11-12]**, quickly let in, he showed unto Pottier that

Example 3: A third type of cross reference indicates roughly equivalent passages (including all kinds of variants) which have been re-located with respect to the other version. These passages will be marked by simple underlining of the passage in both versions, with explicit indication of the different location, included within the brackets (using the **[cf.]** symbol, since these are a particular kind of variant), and with a comment in the footnote starting with “<NB: ...>”. Bold face type will not be used for these words,

Latin version, page 4, line 28 (last line):

concordiata concordia. **[cf. English 4/28-29]** Regi ipsi omnes non vi, sed ...

page 5, first line:

sua sponte oboediebant, veriusque reverebantur eum quam metuebant³.

English version, page 4, lines 26 – 30:

... no fear
of outward enemies, no war in hand, nor none toward, but
such as no man looked for; **[cf. Latin 4/28-5/1: placed earlier in English]** the people toward
the prince, not in a constrained fear, but in a willing and loving obedience;
30 among themselves, the commons in good peace.

³ **Everyone willingly obeyed the King without any coercion, and revered him more than feared him.** <NB Equivalent thoughts are found in the English, but earlier in the sentence_(English 4/28-29)>