

The basis of the image today is numerical representation and renderable code instead of the analogic, indexical reference to reality. With new software and devices introduced by the day, with the more extensive elaboration of digital technologies, the moving image pushes new frontiers, immersing in the hybrid medial arena that is about to change the way we see and picture our on- and offline, or more accurately, “x-realities” (see Coleman 2011). The shift to code as the underlying basis of the image has consequences to all cultural aspects of our lives, just as much as the previous shifts of paradigms in terms of cultural interfaces (the traditions of the printed page and later of the cinema) influenced and changed the lives and perceptions of previous generations.

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“an overt, incestuous lecher, a plain agent of the devil!”

Thomas More’s *Daemonizing of Luther in A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*¹
in: Költök, kének, detektívek, pirtós és fordítások – Írások Novák György tiszteletére/
Poets, spies, detectives, pieces of toast, and translations: Essay in honor of György Novák,
Szeged, JATEPress, 2012, 68–78. old.

KAROLI GÁSPAR UNIVERSITY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY

Első fejelet

“an overt, incestuous lecher,
a plain agent of the devil”
Thomas More’s *Daemonizing of Luther*
in *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*

“Both sprung from the same aspiring class: their fathers were city dwellers with high ambitions for their brilliant sons, ambitious they hoped to see fulfilled by putting those sons to the study of law. Luther gave up the law and, much against his father’s wishes, entered the monastery. More was powerfully drawn to a clerical career but decided to marry, and acquiesced to his father’s wishes and became a man of the law.... In each of them burned an intensity that was often comic but could become fury at the slightest provocation, and each did battle for principle against an uncompromising and ruthless foe. Neither of them could believe that an opponent was honest or free of malice: each assumed that enemies were inspired by the most depraved wickedness.”¹

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and evaluate the image of the German Reformer Martin Luther (1483–1546) in Book IV of *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529, 1531, 1557), by the greatest English Humanist and Catholic martyr Saint Thomas More (1477–1535). We shall see that More was biased, even hysterical, with regard to the ideas of Luther and the Reformation, writing, as he was, in the aftermath of the bloodshed that had occurred during the German Peasants’ Revolt (1525), for which he blamed entirely and exclusively Luther’s heretical and subversive views.

I. THE BACKGROUND

Henry VIII’s *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (1521) was probably inspired, if not written, by Thomas More. The king’s work was a response to Martin Luther’s

¹ Thomas More, *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, Rendered into Modern English by Mary Gottshalk, Scepter Publisher, 2006, 394. (Henceforth: “G”). See also: Saint Thomas More, “A Dialogue Concerning Heresies”, in: *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, 6. Parts I-II. Lawler, Thomas, McMarc’hadour, German/Marius, Richard C. (eds.), New Haven and London: Yale University Press. (henceforth: CWM 6); CWM 6, 346/13–14

¹ Richard Marius, *Thomas More, A Biography*, Cambridge, Mass, Harvard UP, 1984, 264–5

