Daniel Kinney, Editor. *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More, Volume 15, In Defense of Humanism: Letter to Martin Dorp, Letter to the University of Oxford, Letter to Edward Lee, Letter to a Monk, with a New Text and Translation of Historia Richardi Tertii*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986. Pp. cliv, 658.

Until quite recently, two Mores strode the stages of popular and academic imagination. One is inseparable from Paul Schofield's masterful portrayal in the theatrical and film versions of Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*. The other is the oh-so-saintly More of such early biographies as son-in-law William Roper's *The Lyfe of Sir Thomas More, Knyghte*. Thanks to books like Alistair Fox's *Thomas More: History and Providence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), we now have something more akin to a picture of "the real Thomas More" (G.R. Elton, "The Real Thomas More?" in Peter Newman Brooks, ed., *Reformation Principle and Practice: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Dickens* [London: Scholar Press, 1980], p. 24). His was a much more complicated personality than the righteous solitary of secular existentialism or of Roman Catholic hagiography.

Daniel Kinney recognizes the value of efforts to see More for what he really was, and wants further to complicate the picture. He stresses the "tactfully vehement More of the humanist defenses" as a necessary ingredient in understanding More's apparent metamorphosis from the genial man of letters of *Utopia* to the vituperative polemicist of the religious diatribes (p. xviii). This view informs Kinney's introduction to More's letters to Dorp, Oxford, Lee, and the monk, John Batmanson. Sections on "Historical Contexts", "Christian Wisdom and Secular Learning", "Positive Theology and Erasmian Reform", "Structure, Style, and More's Readers", "The History of the Texts", "Translations", and "A Note on the Texts", locate the letters in every dimension of their provenance and subsequent transmission. The thoroughness of Kinney's scholarship does not prevent him from bringing alive venerable controversies between the old and new guards of Renaissance Christian learning.

Take the Letter to Dorp, for example. Debates about the merits of proposed Erasmian reforms of the theological curriculum at the University of Louvain lie behind it. Through Kinney, we eavesdrop on an all too familiar world of academic politicking. The voices of Lorenzo Valla, Poggio, Dorp, Meinard Man, John Briart, Peter Giles, Rodolphus Agricola, Jerome Busleyden, Alard of Amsterdam, Gerard Geldenhouwer, Ammonio, Ortwin Gratius, and of course, Erasmus and More ring as true and various — and frequently as sadly pedantic and mean-spirited — as the correspondence pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *New York Review of Books*. At the same time, by carefully collating the work of others, most notably Percy Allen's edition of Erasmus' correspondence and Henry De Vocht's history of the University of Louvain, Kinney straightens out potential misunderstandings over chronology and the purported motives of various parties to the fray. He presents a very thoroughly documented, though laudably readable narrative of the contretemps

between Erasmus and Dorp, and More's role in mediating it by suggesting a personal, rather than public exchange of views as the appropriate path of reconciliation. Circles of charge and countercharge radiate out from personal animosities between the Dutchmen, polarizing conservative scholastics and reforming humanists at Louvain, and soon embroiling the academic community across Europe. It is good to be reminded that if the controversy, though mended in 1517, played some part in sending Dorp, exhausted, to a premature grave in 1525, "a whole chorus of Erasmians mourned his passing" (p. xxvi). The other Morean letters in defense of humanism are equally well contextualized.

The bulk of this volume, however, is given over to Kinney's fortunate discovery, in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris, of a third manuscript of More's Latin history of Richard II. Not available to Richard Sylvester, who edited the Latin history in the second volume of the Yale edition, this manuscript has been dated to "the first half of the sixteenth century" (p. cxxxiv, n. 2). Rehearsing familiar arguments – that the Latin history is Cardinal John Morton's work, for example, not More's at all – Kinney once again brings to bear exhaustive scholarship in a "Textual History". Apart from establishing the new text, his principal objective is to modify significantly Sylvester's account of the relationship between More's Latin and English histories of Richard II, and to offer a new family tree of the formative and diffusion stages of the various texts in a scheme of "textual *contaminatio* or cross-pollination" (p. cxlviii). Kinney shies away from a complete analysis of the rhetoric of the Latin history; but the fact that more than half of the text is made up of direct and reported speeches, he suggests, indicates that whether or not More has in mind "a serious historical purpose", he "is engaged in the stylistic exercise *par excellence*, the declaimer's endeavour to make the best case *pro* and *contra* for theses where one or the other position could normally be taken for granted" (p. ciii). "A Note on the Text" rounds out Kinney's introduction to the new text of the Latin history of Richard II.

Throughout this collection of some of More's less celebrated, though still important, writings, Kinney has more than maintained the very high standards of scholarship we have come to expect from *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More*. Sometimes, massive new editions of collected works seem self-indulgent. The Cornell Wordsworth comes to mind. The Yale edition, however, has been a welcome and long overdue contribution to the shelves. As with other volumes, these translations are not only well-documented and annotated; they are eminently readable. Later volumes of the Yale edition now include "Addenda et Corrigenda". Allow me to close with two: delete the extra "in" from the tenth line of p. xliii; and should not "text of experience" on p. lxx read "test of experience"?

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