
The series, "Philosophes de tous les temps," has already given students of the Renaissance a number of useful studies of important figures, each organized around "Présentation, choix de textes, biographie, bibliographie." In 1969 they published one of the last works of the late Pierre Mesnard, "Erasme ou le christianisme critique," and we are fortunate now to have a similar brief study from the well-known author of *L'Univers de Thomas More* and a major contribution to More scholarship, *The Bible in the Works of Thomas More*. The present book is a fine introduction both to the personality of More and to the extensive studies of his life and work, and it is marked by the distinctive and engaging qualities of the abbé Marc'hadour, who is surely the most devoted scholarly disciple of More in this century.

The book is divided into two general sections, the "Présentation," an extended essay on More and the world in which he lived, and the "Choix de textes" (pp. 132-80) designed to illustrate More's life and reputation down to the present day. A brief chronological register of More's life follows, with a "Bibliographie essentielle." This last is devoted to the canon of More's works in order of composition up to the publication of the Leipzig *Opera omnia* in 1689, a very useful guide, since the general bibliography of modern work on More can be abstracted from a number of other bibliographical sources, many of which are listed on page 183. It should be added, however, that the author discusses many of the modern works in the course of his biographical *présentation*. In a few pages devoted to "L'actualité de Thomas More" he indicates some of the most recent developments beginning with the launching of the Yale edition, in a fashion that recalls the character of his journal, *Moreana*.

The biographical essay itself begins with an account of the setting of More's life, and introduces the English humanist with his work on Pico, a link to continental thought and the European setting. The friendship with Erasmus follows, with the 'catholic epistles' to Dorp. Oxford University, a monk, and Germaine de Brie. Each of More's major works is presented cogently and perceptively, with an account of the major contributions of modern scholarship, and the developing personality of More kept in the foreground. The ongoing chronology of contemporary events may at times confuse the general outline of the author's essay, but there are also gains from this rather eclectic approach, since in addition to the familiar milestones of More's life, it allows him to indicate the involvement of the continental community in the general story. It is a fundamental contention of Marc'hadour that, with More, "La valeur propre de son témoignage réside dans l'union profonde de sa pensée avec celle de la société qui l'entoure." The texts of the latter half of this study are chosen to illustrate this theme, and range from his rhetorical compliment to Henry VIII on the occasion of his coronation, to his own epitaph. The general portrait is of the devout and philosophical More rather than that of More the lawyer, politician and statesman, although these aspects of his history are not neglected. If the hagiographic interest is marked, it is also critical and unapologetic. The book is not intended to be more than an introduction for the intelligent but uninformed general reader, and it will be useful not only for the public for which it is primarily intended, but for students of More who wish to refresh their understanding of many of the critical and historical problems surrounding that complex personality.

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