

## On the Development of Thomas More Studies

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### I. *Moreana*

I am going to talk briefly about two aspects of More studies from an international perspective. In 1962 Father Germain Marc'hadour, who had written his dissertation on More at the Sorbonne, organized the Amici Thomae Mori, the Friends of Thomas More, and introduced the idea of a bilingual (French and English) journal to be called *Moreana*. The journal made a modest beginning in 1963, and gradually expanded in size and outreach. Through May of 1995 it was housed at the Catholic University of Angers, where there was also a library and research center called Moreanum. This Center in Dallas has a complete run of *Moreana*, which remains an important tool for research.

In many ways, *Moreana* complemented the Yale edition of the Complete Works. Father Marc'hadour thought of *Moreana* as an international forum for research and exchange about the world of Thomas More, and he defined this very broadly. He embraced all aspects of More's life and works, publishing little known documents of the period and major studies of works by More and his friends and foes, serving as a bibliographical clearing house, sponsoring special issues by guest editors, and promoting friendship among the whole world of Moreans, while answering endless queries. As anyone who has ever met Father Marc'hadour can attest, he is a charismatic figure who doesn't take "no" for an answer. And he has worked tirelessly to broadcast More, making himself accessible to More scholars everywhere and reaching out to other More societies in Japan, Germany, England, Australia, Argentina, and the United States. The Amici have also sponsored international conferences on More, held in such varied places as England, Australia, France, Germany, Ireland, Canada, and Argentina.

Father Marc'hadour was himself an editor for the Yale series; he is also a prolific writer as well as an eager correspondent who has recently discovered the delights of email. His early publications include a massive chronological treatment of the world of Thomas More and 5 volumes that index and discuss More's use of the Bible, and he is currently involved in an ambitious program to have More's works translated into French.

Following Father Marc'hadour's retirement or quasi-retirement, *Moreana* has had two other editors while housed in Angers: Clare Murphy and Kevin Eastell. By this

year, both the center and the journal have been in a transitional state. Parts of the library have been disbursed to Poland, where Kevin Eastell is directing a Thomas More Center; to Dusseldorf, where Friedrich Unterweg maintains a center; and to Portugal. There are several guest editors for the 2005 issues, while issues after that will be edited by a new team, based elsewhere in France. This group, which is connected with a reconstituted Amici, can be reached at [info@amici-thomae-mori.com](mailto:info@amici-thomae-mori.com). There is also a website: [www.amici-thomae-mori.com](http://www.amici-thomae-mori.com).

### II. *Translations*

I shall say just a bit about translations, another international activity, since I don't want to impinge on George Logan's discussion. Let me begin by reminding you that More was more or less bilingual, and that many of his works have subsequently been translated and retranslated from Latin to English, while translation into other languages is also ongoing. Translation is important as an interpretive activity—one that necessarily needs to be repeated at different times for different cultures. In fact, as one theorist, Douglas Robinson, has argued, translation can be thought of as a dialogue and as “an unpredictable transaction/interaction between the source-language writer and the target-language reader,” so that translation is not a bridge between two fixed points but a road into a wilderness that needs to be discovered again and again. *Utopia* is the obvious and notable case. When I contacted Moreanum in 1992, there were at least 18 different languages represented, including Arabic, Hebrew, Japanese, Russian, and Breton, besides the obvious ones: Latin, English, French, German, and Italian. Two bilingual editions/translations are particularly important: a Latin-French edition (1978) by André Prévost, a theologian and philosopher, whose introduction is over 200 pages long, and a Latin-Italian edition (1970) with extensive references to classical texts by Luigi Firpo, a distinguished utopist.

### III. *Desiderata*

This is a brief addendum to Clarence Miller's already formidable list. There is room for more on More's rhetoric, understanding the term broadly—and here I am thinking of a recent theoretical book on *the Rhetoric of the Human Sciences*. So we could think about More's rhetoric of theology, of law, of politics, etc. Greenblatt has shown just how crucial the idea of More as a performative artist is, and more could be done with that, with reception studies, and with More's relations with other persons, whether collaborative or antagonistic. There is also the question of integrative and cross-cultural studies: More and the history of ideas (a newly refurbished discipline), cultural approaches more broadly speaking, and any number of current interests, including geography, spatial studies, feminist approaches, colonialism and empire, and so on. Much remains to be done with readings and rereadings of More's polemics and his spiritual works, given the present interest in religion and in church history in the 16<sup>th</sup> century among historians of the Reformation and Catholicism pre and post Reformation. Finally, the relationship of More's *Utopia* to subsequent utopian fictions and to utopianism more generally is a never-ending question.