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More, Thomas. *The Essential Works of Thomas More*. Ed. Gerard Wegemer and Stephen Smith.

Arazoo Ferozan

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Spaces of Power of the Spanish Nobility (1480–1715)
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but largely invisible to ours. Before a time when creativity could be taken for granted, authors and artists worked out their status and the significance of their activity in religious terms. McClure invites us to draw some surprising conclusions about writers and artists, made in the image of their God—as creators.

GEORGE HOFFMANN

University of Michigan

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More, Thomas.

The Essential Works of Thomas More. Ed. Gerard Wegemer and Stephen Smith.

New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020. Pp. xxviii, 1469 + 54 b/w ill. ISBN 978-0-3002-2337-8 (hardcover) US\$100.

The Essential Works of Thomas More is a tremendous scholarly undertaking published by Yale University Press. Edited by historians Gerard Wegemer and Stephen Smith, it is the outcome of an international collaboration between enthusiastic scholars and translators of More's work. Wegemer and Smith present the first collection of More's Latin and English essential writings in one comprehensive volume. The general preface speaks to the intellectual labour required to put this book together, while the literary endeavour as a whole attests to the immeasurable value of More's work for scholars of the early modern period.

This large volume begins with a chronology of More's life and writings. Before we immerse ourselves in More's universe, however, we are given the tools to explore and understand his writings in the context of historical events that shaped both his personal and professional life as a scholar, an official, and a man of the law. The text includes More's essential dialogues, books, letters, treatises, responses, instructions, collaboration pieces with other scholars, and his polemic writings. Besides More's prose, the volume contains a series of his poetry and rhymes, demonstrating the diversity of his skills. Wegemer and Smith suggest that More's translations of famous works, such as that of Lucian, speak also to his capability and reputation as a translator (17) and to

his keen interest as a humanist in classic works. Those not too familiar with the extent of his scholarly abilities will appreciate More's remarkable talent as a writer and thinker as they flip through the pages of his incredible and extensive compositions.

What makes this volume accessible and transparent to both scholars and the general audience are the brief introductions that accompany each category of More's work. Wegemer and Smith's aim is not to change our opinion about More's ideas. It is to reward us with a glimpse of the events and relationships, both personal and professional, that may have formed his beliefs in politics, religion, and the society where he lived as a man of literature, law, and state.

The brief introductions consider his motivation and purpose in the context of contemporary events such as the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation. His historical narratives are concerned with the questions of fate, freedom, and law influenced by his devout Catholic beliefs and his respect for law and state. More's thought-provoking dialogues in texts like *Utopia* help his readers to become aware of the socio-political issues that the early modern world was facing. More's thoughts are usually not void of sentiments concerning religion; his aim is often to persuade and educate. His instructions similarly offer advice and counsel on topics of faith, vice, pride, and virtue. However, like his contemporaries, he was a critic of some elements of both the secular and ecclesiastical establishments of early modern Europe.

More's work is presented in chronological order—an approach that allows one to use his writings as a biographical road map to his life and to events such as the Protestant Reformation that shaped his scholarly endeavours. The text contains a series of illustrations relevant to the relationships More struck during his lifetime, evident in the extensive number of his letters addressed to powerful people from the political and academic worlds.

The collection of More's last letters, prayers, and psalters, added to this volume, speaks to his suffering but even more so to his devotion to Catholicism in his last days. A curious reader will both enjoy and feel provoked by the diversity of More's work, often wondering if at any point his Catholic beliefs were in contrast to his humanist scholarly nature. And finally, Wegemer and Smith add a reconstructed version of his last trial that shows More's unwavering ideas in politics and religion, which resulted in his execution.

While scholars of the Renaissance, Reformation, and the early modern period in general may have read many of More's writings, this compressive

volume is worthy of any scholar's library. Students of the early modern period will appreciate the diversity of works available in this text to examine, analyze, and use as research material, especially the translated versions of his Latin works. More's writings are examples of the humanist movement and the Protestant Reformation, which changed the political establishment of England and More's own life as a statesman. If the aim of the committee of scholars who put this edition together was to make his work more accessible to the general audience, they have, without doubt, succeeded. This version in modern English and the brief thought-provoking introductions give us a better understanding of both his writings and his complex life as a man of law, politics, religion, and literature.

ARAZOO FEROZAN

McMaster University

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Sachet, Paolo.

Publishing for the Popes. The Roman Curia and the Use of Printing (1527–1555).

Library of the Written Word 80. Leiden : Brill, 2020. xii, 306 p. + 11 ills. ISBN 978-90-04-34864-6 (relié) €166; 978-90-04-34865-3 (e-book) 138 €.

Face à l'utilisation révolutionnaire de la typographie adoptée par le monde réformé, la position de l'Église catholique (et en particulier de la Curie romaine) à l'égard de la nouvelle technologie a été et est souvent dévaluée comme réactionnaire, basculant entre désintérêt et condamnation. La question fondamentale du livre de Paolo Sachet va dans la direction opposée de ce lieu commun historiographique en suggérant plutôt que, dans la première moitié du XVI^e siècle, l'Église romaine aurait développé une politique culturelle cohérente à l'égard du livre et de la presse.

Pour illustrer cette hypothèse, l'auteur imbrique les enjeux culturels, politiques et religieux avec les aspects économiques et technologiques, en retraçant l'histoire complète des politiques romaines visant à développer une stratégie dans ce sens. La période choisie va du sac de Rome (1527) à l'élection à la papauté de Paul IV (1555), qui promulguera le premier *Index des livres*