The One Thomas More
Travis Curtright

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

TRAVIS CURTRIGHT, is a fellow of the Center for Thomas More Studies at the University of Dallas, associate professor of literature at Ave Maria University, and coeditor of Shakespeare’s Last Plays: Essays in Politics and Literature.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"In this lucid and well-written work, Curtright restores the unity of More's life and thought against 'revisionist' critics who insist on two Mores—the humanist and the increasingly fanatical statesman and martyr. Curtright succeeds in integrating More's writings and public actions, showing that his humanist writings were informed by a Christian humanism that is perfectly consistent with his later deeds and affirmations."—Daniel J. Mahoney, Augustine Chair in Distinguished Scholarship, Assumption College

"A convincing reappraisal of More's life and writings, coming after decades of contradictory critiques. Also of importance are Curtright's insights into aspects of More that have so far remained marginal in scholarship, such as More the moralist or More the philosopher, which here complete a portrait of the sixteenth-century statesman, author, and polemicist, in a particularly comprehensive study"—Marie-Claire Phélippeau, Editor of Moreana

"Thomas More" the humanist, "Sir Thomas More" the statesman, "Saint Thomas More" the martyr. Who was Thomas More? Which characterization of him is most true? Despite these multiple images and the problems of More's true identity, Travis Curtright uncovers a continuity of interests and, through interdisciplinary contexts, presents one Thomas More.

Curtright carefully studies the central humanist and polemical texts written by More to illustrate a coherent development of thought. Focusing on three major works from More's humanist phase, The Life of Pico, The History of Richard III, and Utopia, Curtright demonstrates More's idea of humanitas and his corresponding program of moderate political reform. Curtright then shows how More's later polemical theology and defense of the ecclesiastical courts were a continuation of his commitments rather than a break from them. Finally, More's prison letters are examined. His self-presentation in these letters is compared with other recent and iconic versions, such as those in Robert Bolt’s Man for All Seasons and Hilary Mantel's Wolf Hall. Instead of a divided mind, Curtright ably shows More's integrity and consistency of thought.

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Travis Curtright
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Book News for Immediate Release

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“Travis Curtright has produced one of the most carefully nuanced and balanced portraits of Thomas More yet published. This is not the More of Chambers, Greenbelt, or Elton, nor of Marius, Robert Bolt, or Hilary Mantel—although they and others are important interlocutors in Curtright’s always compelling dialogue—but rather a More in whom humanist and Christian, scholar and statesman, poet and lawyer are all complementary parts of an integrated character.” —Richard Harp, Chair, Department of English, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

“This book presents a lucid, intelligent, and well-written account of Thomas More by exploring a crucial unifying principle that animates his thinking and writings. Curtright’s argument, impressively grounded in literature, philosophy, history, and theology, presents compelling evidence to counter the biographical narrative of “two Thomas Mores.” In this context, More emerges as a consistent and thoughtful writer and not the caricature often put forth by modern-day detractors. The One Thomas More allows for a more balanced, nuanced, and compelling understanding of this fascinating figure.” —Paul J. Voss, Associate Professor of English, Georgia State University