

foreign soil—that, interdisciplinary, recognizes the limitations of past scholarship in its prologue and epilogues and advances the conversation on this subject, by way of the rehearsal of archival evidence, in very interesting ways. Oppitz-Trotman does not resolve every issue that he addresses to this reviewer's satisfaction. However, Oppitz-Trotman's recovery of evidence is so thorough and his discussion of the issues is so wide-ranging that *Stages of Loss* establishes itself as both a place of origin for the study of English troupes on the Continent and a guideline in methodology for a wide array of research questions that the next generation of archival scholars can address.

Ross Dealy. *Before Utopia: The Making of Thomas More's Mind*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020, xii + 400 pp. \$120.00. Review by M. G. AUNE, CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The conventional understanding of Thomas More's intellectual development holds that in the early years of the sixteenth century, prior to his meeting Erasmus, he was unsure of his vocation and his own sense of his faith. This unease was, in part, the result of feeling caught in a binary sense of faith: either/or; contemplative/active. But through his exposure to Erasmus' adaptation of Stoic thought, More became more unitary in his approach to Christianity. According to Ross Dealy, this shift can be traced through More's *Lucian* (1506), Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* (1511) and finally *Utopia* (1516). It is at this point in More's intellectual development that Dealy has located his most recent work of intellectual and philosophical history.

Ross Dealy, retired associate professor at St. John's University, has written several works on Christian thought of the early Renaissance. In his previous book, *The Stoic Origins of Erasmus' Philosophy of Christ* (2017), Dealy argued for a reassessment of Erasmus' theological writings, suggesting that he drew on a sophisticated knowledge of Stoic philosophy, in particular that of Cicero, in his interpretation of the life of Christ. For Dealy, Erasmus posited a novel understanding of intention—virtuous acts require a virtuous intention. And further, that Erasmus' sense of Stoicism is two-dimensional rather than a binary, either/or. His current book picks up where this study left off, continu-

ing to use Erasmus' writings as a way to understand the intersections of philosophy and theology at the turn of the fifteenth century. The life of Thomas More provides the focus and Dealy's book devotes substantial energy to biography as well as philosophy.

Dealy begins by setting out the problem and then moving into a review of current scholarship and its shortcomings. He carefully introduces, summarizes, critiques, and dismisses a range of scholarship on More, stoicism, and *Utopia*. He begins with rhetorical interpretations and how they conflict with Stoic understandings of the key terms *honestas/honestum* and *utilitas/utile*. The introduction then moves on to a kind of genealogy of the scholarship on *Utopia*, stoicism, and rhetoric since the 1970s. Dealy clarifies what he sees as the methodological and interpretive flaws in these studies, all while preparing the ground for his own interpretation.

Dealy's argument focuses on the relationship between Hythloday and "More" and its antecedents in More's sources, in particular Seneca's *De otio* and *De tranquillitate animi*. Dealy finds that Seneca's wiseman "cannot tolerate the state" and "there is absolutely no human state which could tolerate a wiseman" (33). At the same time, those who disavow the state are attacked and, finally, neither "More's" nor Hythloday's positions "represents virtue" (33). In a series of sections built on questions and answers, Dealy briefly explores the Stoic's writings upon which More drew in characterizing Hythloday and his narrative self. He then returns to More's biography and the relationship that developed in More's mind between Stoicism and Christianity. He reiterates that "More's mind was always polarized" and he saw Christianity in binary terms until his encounter with Erasmus' work on Christianity in 1504 (40). In fact, "after late 1504 Thomas More was never 'of two minds'" (42).

Before Utopia is then divided into eight sections and a conclusion, which present Dealy's evidence supporting his contention about More's two-dimensional thinking, how it shaped *Utopia*, and how scholars have neglected the importance of this relationship.

Part 1 begins with More's intellectual biography, arguing that More was always of two minds about his engagement with the world, the contemplative life of devotion versus the humanistic interaction with politics, education, and his own physical nature. More's writings of

this time (pre-1504) are examined carefully, in particular his letters to John Colet and his translations of Pico, as is the scholarship devoted to them. The section ends with a summary of the scholarly consensus that More “both chose the world and did not choose the world” (81).

Part 2 takes up “the possibility that [More’s] decision was not either/or but both/and . . .” (82). Dealy builds his argument starting with Erasmus’ *De taedio Iesu* and *Enchiridion*, holding that the works resist a binary understanding and in fact advocate just the sort of convergent point of view that More embodied.

A close reading of More’s Latin translations of Lucian (1506) is the focus of the third part. Dealy traces More’s understanding of the Stoic *honestum/utile* in these texts, along with his borrowings from Cicero. The part ends with a chapter that raises the question of the influence of the work on all aspects of *Utopia*.

Parts 4 and 5 turn to Erasmus and his depictions of More in *The Praise of Folly* (1511). Dealy argues that while Erasmus sees More’s mind as “a unitary whole” (149) he depicts More as “a man for all seasons” but also as a man able sharply to criticize people and their lives. This apparent contradiction prepares the ground for the argument for More’s inclusive character. This argument is bolstered by a reading of *Folly* that argues for a strongly biographic understanding of the work as based in More’s both/and outlook rather than a rhetorical one that focuses too heavily on its contradictions.

The next part engages fully with *Utopia*, and argues that the Utopian conception of pleasure has its beginnings in *Lucian* and again presents what appears to be a binary, this time the Stoic *honestum* and the Epicurian *voluptas*. For Dealy, More presents these ideas in a kind of symbiosis rather than opposition. To prove his point, Dealy works meticulously through the section of *Utopia* devoted to their philosophy. In so doing, he echoes More’s own careful interrogation of Stoic and Epicurian philosophies, which conclude with a nuanced understanding of pleasure. Where health is necessary for pleasure, it is also a kind of pleasure itself.

Warfare and the Utopians’ integrative approach to it are the subject of part 7. Dealy again starts his argument in opposition to conventional interpretations of the matter. While the majority of scholarship sees Utopians’ dislike of war but imperial intentions and preparation for

war as contradictory, Dealy finds their knowledge of war as intrinsic to their basic philosophy of governance. The section concludes with a brief and insightful contrast between Utopians' beliefs on war and those of Machiavelli, concluding that Utopians seek "not to profit from evil but to rectify it" (307).

The final part returns to the debate between "More" and Hythloday and find that while Hythloday is an effective interlocuter and foil, he never fully grasps the complexities of truth as presented in the text. Dealy again argues that More adapts a technique from *Praise of Folly*, having Hythloday present a reductive understanding of truth. Through his critique of this understanding, "More" then presents his own both/and conception of truth, which is ultimately closer to that of the Utopians. Dealy concludes with a summary anchored in More's biography. He clarifies his argument that Hythloday represents More's early, binary philosophical outlook while "More" represents his later, unitary understanding of philosophy and Christianity. The final paragraph provides a thoughtful coda and possibly a preview of Dealy's next project: More's intentions in joining Henry VIII's court and how he hoped to shape it.

Before Utopia complements Dealy's prior book very well. Not only does it extend his argument about the importance of a unitary Stoicism in early sixteenth thought (and the development of humanism), it also provides a persuasive rethinking of More's intellectual development and intentions in writing *Utopia*. It presents what seems in many ways a simple argument and in supporting it, takes the reader through equally careful readings of Erasmus, Seneca, and Cicero and assesses (often vigorously) a wealth of prior work. Though some will certainly challenge some of Dealy's interpretations, his argument is clear and will likely become required reading for intellectual historians of the early sixteenth century and the origins of humanism.