On October 17, 1985, we held a symposium at Fordham University on Thomas More’s *Utopia* to commemorate the 450th anniversary of More’s death and the fiftieth anniversary of his canonization. This volume presents the papers developed from that occasion as well as the remarks by Mario M. Cuomo that opened the symposium. A concluding essay on “The Idea of Utopia” is appended. More’s famous book has been called an open-ended dialogue, and we thought that there was no better way to mark these important anniversaries we wished to commemorate than to continue the discussion More began long ago. It is a discussion, we might note, that is seemingly inexhaustible, so many and so provocative are the issues More raised and so varied the interpretations and points of view his classic has inspired. Thus we seized the opportunity to add our contribution to the ever-continuing debate.

Having frequently read in the press that New York’s Governor Cuomo had high regard for Thomas More, whom he often quotes and whose picture hangs on his office wall, we took the initiative of inviting him to speak at our conference. We were delighted and not a little surprised when in mid-summer he informed us that he accepted our invitation. He said he wished to make some introductory remarks at the gathering we planned. Arriving by helicopter on the Rose Hill campus the afternoon of the symposium, Governor Cuomo delivered the memorable comments we publish here. They are a moving testimony of his devotion and his debt to the great English lawyer, statesman, and saint. He makes a reference to *Utopia* to which I should like to call particular attention. Linking More with Teilhard de Chardin, Governor Cuomo stresses that the contribution of both men by virtue of their Christian humanism was to reconcile God and the world. The author of *Utopia*, he tells us, sought “to Christify matter,” to bring earth to perfection. It is a lesson the Governor has taken to heart.

The other three speakers we invited were obvious choices. Each one is a More scholar well acquainted with *Utopia* and its author.
Their essays give ample evidence of the variety of approach and interpretation More's book can produce. I shall briefly introduce them here and say a few words about the theme each develops.

George M. Logan is Head of the Department of English at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. He is the author of *The Meaning of More's UTOPIA* (Princeton University Press, 1983) and of various articles on Renaissance literature and Renaissance humanism. He is co-editor of the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* (5th edition, 1986) and with Robert M. Adams of a new critical edition of *Utopia* which will appear in the Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought series. We asked him to give a broad introduction to *Utopia* at the symposium.

Professor Logan's essay is a penetrating analysis entitled "The Argument of *Utopia*." He interprets the work as a rhetorical exercise examining and testing the relationship of the moral and the expedient in the political realm, and he analyzes both the discussion in Book I of *Utopia* and the "best-commonwealth" narrative in Book II in that light. It is an unusual approach to More's book, though it is derived from classical rhetoric and is certainly in keeping with the Renaissance humanism of More and his contemporaries. That it is a rewarding theme to pursue in deciphering this "deeply enigmatic book," as Professor Logan calls it, is clear.

Thomas I. White is a member of the faculty at Rider College, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, and the author of two notable articles on our subject: "Aristotle and *Utopia,"* *Renaissance Quarterly* (Winter 1976), and "Pride and the Public Good: Thomas More's Use of Plato in *Utopia,"* *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (October 1982). His topic at the symposium was "Pride and *Utopia*: The Arrogance of Wealth and Power," a subject whose contemporary relevance he stressed. His essay here is a revision of his original theme.

Professor White's essay, entitled "The Key to Nowhere: Pride and *Utopia,"" interprets More's book in terms of the sin of Pride, the source of all social evil. It is the central theme in both Books, as he views it, and bridges the gap between opposing interpretations of the work—in particular between George Logan's and Richard Marris'. His discussion here provides an interesting supplement to the previous essay.

Germain Marc'hadour is Professor Emeritus of English literature
at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest in Angers, France, and a founder of the international Amici Thomae Mori and director of its quarterly journal, *Moreana*. He is indeed the dynamic *animateur* of that association and has traveled and lectured widely to promote the study of More as well as a more personal devotion to him. He is the author of many books and articles on the scholar and saint and has been a long-time collaborator in the Yale edition of The Complete Works of St. Thomas More.

Abbé Marc’hadour’s essay, entitled “*Utopia* and Martyrdom,” tackles “a most implausible theme,” as he admits, and is somewhat different from the conventional discourse on *Utopia*. It is a reflection on the notion of martyrdom—that is, Christian witness and heroic sacrifice—in the context of More’s famous book. Essentially, Abbé Marc’hadour contrasts Christian spirituality in this regard with the asceticism of the “religious par excellence” among the Utopians, a group known as the *Buthrescae*.

I have written an essay exploring the general idea of utopia and have added it to the others in this volume. I felt such an inquiry would complement the papers of the symposium and give background and perspective to their more specific themes. My essay is an historic *aperçu* extending from antiquity to our own times. It is interpretive and, I hope, suggestive of the broader dimensions and deeper aspects of the utopian vision.

I want to thank my son John and my son-in-law Tony Santos as well as my good friend George Peck and a visitor from mainland China, Qihong Shi, who was a perceptive witness of the Communist revolution in his native China, for their comments and critique. Their discussions with me on the broad topic of utopia have been of great profit.

*Fordham University*  
June 22, 1989  

JOHN C. OLIN  
Professor Emeritus