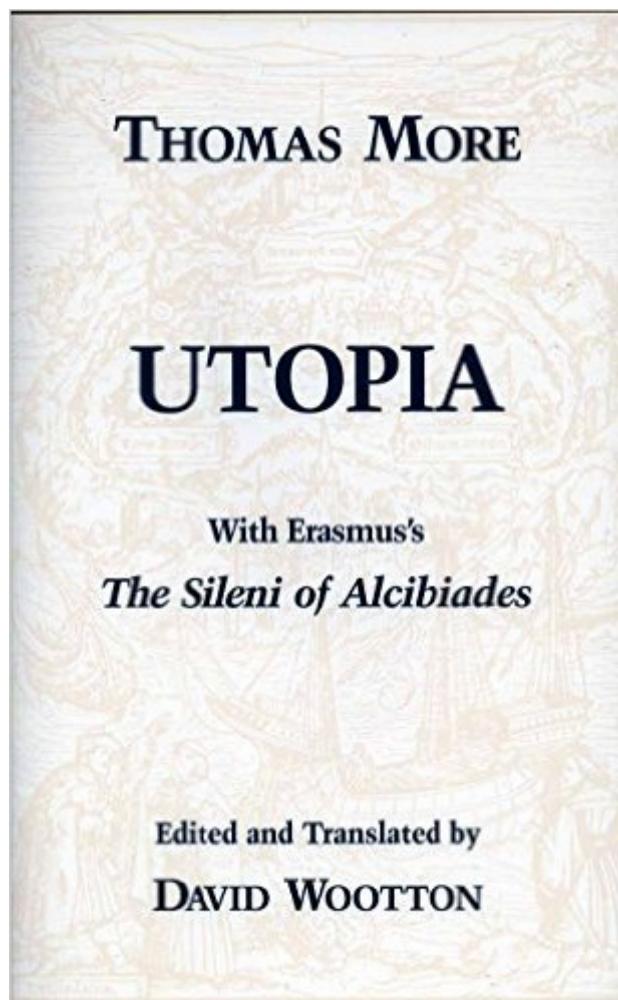


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Utopia With Erasmus's: The Silent Alcibiades (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

Wootton's translation brings out the liveliness of More's work and offers an accurate and reliable version of a masterpiece of social theory. His edition is further distinguished by the inclusion of a translation of Erasmus's 'The Sileni of Alcibiades,' a work very close in sentiment to Utopia, and one immensely influential in the sixteenth century. This attractive combination suits the edition especially well for use in Renaissance and Reformation courses as well as for Western Civilization survey courses. Wootton's Introduction simultaneously provides a remarkably useful guide to anyone's first reading of More's mysterious work and advances an original argument on the origins and purposes of Utopia which no one interested in sixteenth-century social theory will want to miss.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If all you know of Thomas More is the film *A Man for All Seasons* or that he was eventually canonized a saint for sacrificing his life by refusing Henry the Eighth's demand that he recognize his divorce from Catherine of Aragon and his marriage to Anne Boleyn, I strongly recommend you read this excellent Hackett Publishing version of *Utopia*. With a brilliant and incisive introduction coupled with a superbly readable translation, both by David Wootton serving as editor, the reader is given unusually complete context for the world's first Utopian romance/manifesto/travelogue. I first read this work in college and enjoyed it immensely but failed to grasp its subtlety and depth. Reading it

now, especially surrounded by background material that illuminates the work with skillful intelligence, making it especially appropriate reading during these days of political instability and religious turbulence, I found it to be a profound and intellectually stimulating work. Utopia was published exactly 500 years ago yet it seems utterly contemporary in its skillful positing of the thesis that the socialist/communist society of Utopia is a possible paradigm of a political entity. But More is too subtle and brilliant a thinker to simply write a political tract in favor of such a government. His genius resides in his sophisticated recognition of the incessant ambiguities that complicate human interactions. He creates a multi-layered dialogue in which his characters provide all of the counter-arguments and warnings about the shortcomings and possible failures of such a communist state, while never denying its effectiveness in combating human economic inequality.

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