PART II

HUMANIST LETTERS AS A MIRROR OF THE REFORMATION
In early Renaissance England, as elsewhere, translation was very often ideologically motivated. The ideology could be that of the soul, the body politic, or the market place. Translation and translators were in fact often in the service of politics and religion and played a crucial role in advancing agendas in both areas of activity. This is certainly true in the case of the three members of the More family discussed in this article, although the relationship of translation to religion and politics manifests itself in different ways in the three generations. For Thomas More (1478–1535), they were intertwined throughout his public life. For his daughter, Margaret Roper (1515?–1535), the relationship took a different turn with her English translation of Erasmus’ *Precatio dominica in septem portiones distributa*. Lastly, for her daughter, Mary Clarke Basset († 1572), neither her translation of Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History* nor that of her grandfather’s *De tristitia* was entirely free of those co-existing political and religious dimensions that characterized More’s writings on translation or influenced her mother’s rendering of Erasmus. In the case of all three family members, the relationship of translation to politics and religion is reflected, not only in their compositions, but also in epistolary form, in both private correspondence and dedicatory letters.

**Thomas More**

More himself translated only one complete work, Giovanni Francesco’s biography of his uncle, Pico della Mirandola, some epigrams from the Greek Anthology, some of Lucian’s *Dialogues*, in friendly competition...