

THE BIBLE OF HUMANISM

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Title: *Observations and Contemplations of a Humanist*

Author: Leo Madrigal

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NOTE: This work is also available in paperback and as an audio-book.

Almost any list of the world's greatest wisdom literature would begin with the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao-tzu, the *Analects* of Confucius, *Moral Sayings* of Publilius Syrus, the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, and the *Maxims* of the duc de la Rochefoucauld. Some lists might include *Pensées* by Blaise Pascal; others, such humorous works as *The Sayings of Poor Richard* by Benjamin Franklin or *The Devil's Dictionary* by Ambrose Bierce. Whatever the extent of your own list, you will want to add a new title: *Observations and Contemplations of a Humanist*. Religious fundamentalists, of course, will protest that the only works of wisdom literature worthy of the name are the books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes* in the Old Testament. Those who share that opinion will not likely find much of value in *Observations and Contemplations of a Humanist*. Indeed, if they read it at all, it will be only in order to better know the enemy of their faith. To describe this sure-to-be-controversial book as the *Bible of Humanism* would hardly be an exaggeration. Liberal religion and its secular twin, humanist philosophy, have until now frustrated all attempts to make them approachable and understandable to any but the scholarly elite. In all fairness, it should be pointed out that Corliss Lamont's *Philosophy of Humanism* is both readable and easily comprehensible. However, it has never been widely read, except within the humanist-rationalist fold. The reason for this unfortunate fact is probably that the form the book takes—that of a collection of long essays—tends to intimidate non-intellectuals, even those who by instinct are themselves humanists. *Observations and Contemplations of a Humanist* is more approachable and promises to be vastly more popular. In the first place, the layout and typography are visually pleasing. Then too, the entries are short and easily digested. The longest fits on a single page; most are but one sentence. The Cuban-born, British-educated author, whose full name is *Moisés Rafael Leopoldo Madrigal Delgado*, is an impoverished and virtually unknown figure painter living and working in the Texas Hill Country. Since moving to the United States a few years ago he has kept a journal of his insights, ideas, and attitudes about art, truth, education, enlightenment, sexuality, religion, society, politics, economics, virtue, and interpersonal relationships. The two hundred thirty-eight entries of that original diary—previously published at a hundred dollars in a hand-bound collector's edition of only sixty—constitute the text of the work presently under discussion. Mind you, *Observations and Contemplations of a Humanist* is not a Bible in the sense that it attempts to dictate humanist dogma. The ideas and values expressed by the author are clearly his own, but they are typical of those held by humanists and religious liberals around the world. His use of language is eloquent; his arguments are entirely logical. Furthermore, his overall philosophy is beautifully coherent with none of the inconsistencies that plague so many systems of belief.

ROMA LOCUTA EST.