

hand, and that two rosary cases are in the cupboard behind Margaret Giggs and that out of one of these, white beads are hanging.

In the Nostell Priory painting, there is not one cross, but four. In addition to Lady Alice's ornate crucifix⁴⁹ which is in the Basel drawing, Henry Pattenson is wearing a simple one around his neck, and he has the red cross of London on his cap. Elizabeth also has a beautiful cross surrounded by pearls hanging from her neck.

Although Lady Alice is no longer kneeling, she holds a prayer-book with a beautifully bejeweled, deep-green velvet casing. This small gold-edged book matches the small gold-edged books⁵⁰ held by young John and by Margaret Giggs, indicating that the moment captured is indeed the same as in the revised Basel sketch, but without drawing obvious attention to the piety of any one family member. That these books all have blank pages is most easily explained by the fact that the prayer-books depicted with print in Holbein's painting were now outlawed, thus posing a serious danger for their recusant owners. Significantly, the seventeenth-century unprofessional copy now at Chelsea Old Town Hall has lines in at least one of these prayer books, as does the Basel drawing.

These details indicate that the moment captured in the Nostell Priory painting remains the same as the one represented in the revised Basel drawing, but in a fuller and more true-to-life manner. The inclusion of the devotional elements suggests a response to fate and to the question of happiness markedly different than the responses given by Seneca and Boethius. Taken as a whole, this portrait – like the revised Basel drawing – presents a family well “furnished for the whole scope of human life.”

Cicero as the best of Latin writers.

⁴⁹ This cross is now in the British Museum, on loan from Stonyhurst College.

⁵⁰ See footnote 5 above.

Thomas More and the Louvain Humanists

Robert Keane

Writers' Guild of America West
7000 West Third Street
Los Angeles, CA 90048
USA

Louvain dans le titre est la ville où parut l'édition princeps d'*Utopia*, et l'université où étudièrent et enseignèrent plusieurs amis de More : Erasme, Vives, Dorp, et le juriste néerlandais Cranevelt, qu'il découvrit lors de sa mission de 1520 à Bruges. L'auteur base son étude sur plusieurs documents, notamment les treize lettres de More reproduites en facsimilé, avec traduction en anglais et en français, dans *Moreana* 117/3-84. Cranevelt partageait plusieurs traits avec More : avocat, père de famille, employé de la ville puis conseiller d'Etat, poète et traducteur de textes grecs, fidèle à la foi catholique, amoureux de la paix il correspondit avec More même lorsque leurs pays furent en guerre.

Mots-clé: Bruges, Erasme, Vivès, Dorp, Elisabeth Cranevelt.

Louvain in the title refers to the place where More's Utopia was first printed, and where several friends of his studied or taught, including Erasmus and Vives, and the Dutch patrician at the heart of this article : Cranevelt, a humanist like More in many ways : translator of Greek texts into Latin, married with children, a lawyer promoted from municipal service at Bruges to national service at Mechelen; lovers of peace the two men kept corresponding when their countries were at war, and remained staunch members of the Catholic Church. The author draws mainly on More's thirteen letters (1520-1528), reproduced in

facsimile, with translations into English and French, in Moreana 117/3-84, and fleshes them out with other documents.

Keywords: *Bruges, Erasmus, Vives, Dorp, Elizabeth Cranevelt.*

Lovaina en el título hace referencia al lugar en el cual la *Utopía* de Moro fue por primera vez impresa y donde algunos de sus amigos estudiaron o enseñaron, incluyendo a Erasmo y Vives, o al jurista holandés del que hablaremos en este artículo: Cranevelt, a quien conocería en su viaje a Brujas (1520). El autor de este artículo basa su estudio en las trece cartas reproducidas en facsímile, junto a sendas traducciones al inglés y al francés, en *Moreana* 117/3-84. Cranevelt y Moro tuvieron muchos puntos en común. Ambos fueron abogados y padres de familia. Asimismo, tras trabajar para sus municipios, acabaron sirviendo a sus respectivas naciones. Los dos tradujeron textos en griego al latín y fueron poetas. Los dos, también, se mantuvieron firmes en su catolicismo. Por último, ambos amaban la paz y mantuvieron correspondencia, también cuando sus países estaban en guerra.

Palabras Clave: *Brujas, Erasmo, Vives, Dorp, Elisabeth Cranevelt.*

It was the kind of scholarly discovery that comes once in a generation. In 1913 in Belgium two bundles of correspondence were found, containing letters that had been stored away for four centuries. And many of the names that were signed to the handwritten letters were instantly recognizable: they belonged to the great Dutch scholar Erasmus, the Spanish scholar Juan Luis Vives, the English scholar, statesman and martyr Thomas More, and other famous men. Nor were these letters just copies made over the centuries as the original letters fell apart. It is true the edges of many of the papers were eaten away by rats, and the letters discolored by water leaks in loft ceilings, water leaks that also dissolved some of the ink, but the 269 letters were, nevertheless—to the delight of scholars—originals.¹

The letters were addressed to Francis Cranevelt (1485 –1564), a man whose name has not come down through history, but who was known and respected among the residents of the city of Bruges in the sixteenth century. He was a distinguished lawyer, and city administrator, the man chosen to give the speeches of welcome when emperors and kings and chancellors came to visit, as they did in the summer of 1521. He had been a brilliant student at Louvain University, gaining his M.A. in 1505, placing first in his class, then turning immediately to the study of the law, gaining his doctorate in civil and canon law on October 2, 1510. He stayed on for five years in the congenial university town, distinguished for its gothic architecture and its abundance of bookstores. He married and started a family, and did law work, but also found time for the arts. It was the Renaissance, a time when men looked back to Rome and Greece, and Cranevelt polished his Latin and studied to learn Greek.

Then came the offer from Bruges to be pensionary, or legal adviser of that great trading city. It was known as the Queen of the North Sea, but for decades it had been losing its North Sea access as the waterway which gave it a path to the sea had been silting over. Nevertheless, it contained the palace called the Prinsenhof which had often been a residence of the ruling Dukes of Burgundy. Even in the city's diminished state a job in Bruges was a promising start for the young lawyer. He quickly found friends among the scholars of his new city, particularly two priests who had gone to Louvain and then gotten their doctorates in civil and canon law in Italy, Mark Laurijn and Jan van Fevijjn. Both were now attached to the Church of St. Donatian, Laurijn

¹LC vii – xxxii.

as dean, and Fevijn as a canon. Fevijn, who had been a companion of Cranevelt at Louvain, brought a fourth member to the group, Juan Luis Vives, who had come to Bruges in 1512.² Vives, Fevijn, and Cranevelt “spent much of their leisure together,”³ To their deep friendship the bulk of the present correspondence owes its existence.

In 1522, Charles V, ruler of the Netherlands, appointed Cranevelt to the Grand Council of Mechelen, the highest court in the land, and Cranevelt resided in Mechelen for the rest of his long life (he died in his eightieth year). During all these years he kept up his correspondence with his friends in the scholarly community, meticulously preserving and numbering each letter as it arrived. As noted above, there were rodent and water damages to the bundled letters, but thanks to careful editing and tenacious detective work the letters were largely restored.

Worse even than the ravages of time and nature were the dangers posed to the collection by soldiers. Just as scholars were beginning work on the bundles of letters, the German Army swept across Belgium in August, 1914. Their troops reached Louvain on August 19th. Civilian authorities in the university town ordered non-resistance, and Louvain residents were told to turn in weapons. But on the evening of August 25, shooting broke out. Wild firing led to the rounding up and execution of terrified civilians. “At 11:30 pm, troops broke into the Louvain University Library, which contained one of the most important manuscript and book collections in Europe. Using petrol and incendiary pastilles, they set fire to hundreds of thousands of volumes and manuscripts. Within hours, a priceless piece of European—indeed, world—heritage had been reduced to smoking ashes.”⁴

The Germans claimed that civilians had committed atrocities on their troops. “The West, of course, saw it differently. ‘It is treason to civilization,’ wrote the London *Daily Chronicle* on August 29, ‘War on

non-combatants is bad enough, but this is war on posterity to the remotest generations.”⁵

And what of the two precious bundles of letters? When Louvain Professor Henri de Vocht who had been assigned to edit the letters realized that the library was no longer safe, he wrapped the bundles into a parcel, and he kept the parcel with him as he ran down the fire-lit streets amid the shooting and the chaos of that August 25-26 night of terror. He still had the parcel with him when he was led away a prisoner two days later. “I was only separated from it for a few hours at Tervueren, where I was held up by a company of soldiers stationed on the roadside; being at last released from suspense and anxiety, I was sent onward to the regiment, that had continued its way to Brussels. After some trouble and some palavering, I found my parcel in the bucket of the ammunition wagon where I had left it.”⁶

De Vocht went on to tell what an inestimable loss it had been to lose the Louvain library which had significant holdings in the field of humanism and humanists. Nevertheless, he set to work. With the university closed, he was able to spend the war years working on the letters, deciphering, trying to fill in the missing sections and words. It took him fourteen years before he was able to publish his edition of Cranevelt’s letters in 1928.

What do these letters reveal? They open a window on a society of men who almost all received a Louvain education, and maintained contacts with the university as well as with each other in succeeding years. The letters found in 1913 cover the years 1522 to 1528 in Cranevelt’s life. Since there were so many letters from dozens of correspondents they give us a broad picture. At the same time, since there was also a concentration of letters from a few men (for example, Cranevelt’s friend Fevijn has 90 letters in the collection) they also give us a picture of day-to-day life. In addition to this information, the letters tell us about visitors to the Low Countries, such as Thomas More. There are six letters from More in the two bundles.

Then, in 1989, word spread of an amazing discovery. A third bundle of autograph letters to Cranevelt had been found.⁷ But the

² COE for backgrounds: Cranevelt, V. I, 354-355; Laurijn, V. II, 307-308; Fevijn, V. II, 26; Vives, V.III, 409-13; MHL: Vives, 1-60; LC: Cranevelt, xxxiii-lxxxvii; Allen: Cranevelt, V.4, Ep. 1145, 349-350.

³ LC, xlvii.

⁴ *Times Literary Supplement*, 2/1/08: Review by Craig Gibson of Alan Kramer’s *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in The First World War* (Oxford: University Press).

⁵ Matthew Battles, “Knowledge on Fire,” Ch. 6 of *Library: An Unquiet History* (New York, Norton, 2003).

⁶ LC, viii, ix.

⁷ H. Schulte Herbruggen, “A Hundred New Humanists’ Letters: More, Erasmus, Vives, Cranevelt, Geldenhouer and other Dutch Humanists,” *Bibliothèque D’humanisme et Renaissance*, V. 52., 1990, 65-76.

newly found letters were scheduled to be auctioned at Christie's in London on June 21st. There were no guarantees that they wouldn't be bought by a private buyer, and in that event they could possibly be made unavailable to scholars. Fortunately, they were bought by a foundation named after Belgian King Baudouin, and so they were deposited in the library of the University of Louvain, rejoining the two bundles deposited there in the first quarter of the century. These newly-found letters were written in the years 1521 and 1522, so this third bundle actually contained letters that preceded the earlier-found bundles.

It had been noted by Henri de Vocht that even though the earlier two bundles had contained letters from Erasmus, still "those [six letters] from Sir Thomas More seem to have had even more importance in the eyes of his [Cranevelt's] descendents, for the whole collection was called after them [More's letters].⁸ In light of that, one feature of the new discovery caused particular excitement. Among the 117 new letters were seven letters from Thomas More.

At this point we fill in some of the background of More's travels to the Low Countries. More, in his diplomatic duties for the English king, spent time in Bruges in both 1520 and 1521, and was quickly and enthusiastically adopted by the Cranevelt circle. More had previously had some contact with Louvain. He visited the university around 1508. In 1515, on the five-month sojourn in the Low Countries in which he wrote Book II of *Utopia*, More made such a close friend of Peter Gillis, the town secretary of Antwerp, that he wrote him into *Utopia* as a character. Gillis had attended Louvain, as had another official that More befriended on that trip, Jerome Busleyden, a wealthy ecclesiastic who left money in his will to found the *Collegium Trilingue* in Louvain, the three languages being Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Still another connection with Louvain, for More, was that Erasmus made that university his base of operations (with frequent absences) from 1514 to 1521, keeping More apprised of developments there.

In the early summer of 1520 More crossed the English channel as part of the huge entourage that accompanied Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey to the meeting with Francis I at a conference famed for the festivities, jousts, dances and feasting that took place at the Field of Cloth of Gold, near Calais. Henry VIII, on his way back to England, met at Calais from July 24th to 26th with the Emperor Charles V. Henry

and Wolsey then returned to England. Charles V went on to Bruges, with Erasmus probably traveling with him as one of his councillors. More also went on to Bruges for he was to meet there for commercial negotiations with members of the Hanseatic League. In Bruges, Erasmus and Frans Cranevelt, two old friends, got together, and Erasmus took the opportunity to introduce More to Cranevelt. Around this time, too, Vives met More.

In August, 1521, More returned to Bruges, this time in the party of Cardinal Wolsey, who met Charles V there for a conference. After Wolsey left, More stayed on, for commercial negotiations.

The genial More and the hearty, bluff Cranevelt had quickly become friends in their first meeting. Both were lawyers, to start with. But they were certainly not lawyers of the type described by Lord Melbourne in Martin Mayer's book *The Lawyers*:⁹

All the attorneys I have ever seen have the same manner: hard, cold, incredulous, distrustful, sarcastic, sneering. They are said to be conversant with the worst part of human nature, and with the most discreditable transactions. They have so many falsehoods told them, that they place confidence in no one.

Cranevelt would have been quite certain before he even met More that he was not dealing with such a cynical lawyer. It would be hard to imagine that he had not read More's *Utopia*, which had been first printed in Louvain (1516).¹⁰ Himself a Latin poet, Cranevelt would have been interested in More's *Epigrams*, especially since they were printed in 1518 in the same book as Erasmus' *Epigrams* and the third edition of More's *Utopia*.¹¹ But Cranevelt could have gotten the most revealing information about More in the latest collection of Erasmus' correspondence, the *Farrago*, published in 1519, and containing "a brilliant portrait of Erasmus' best friend, Thomas More"¹² in the form of a letter to Ulrich von Hutten. In that work, Erasmus presented More as an exemplar of lay spirituality. After describing More's virtues, Erasmus asks, "What becomes then of those people who think that Christians are not to be found except in monasteries?"¹³

⁹ New York, 1966, pp. 76-77.

¹⁰ Thierry Martens, Louvain.

¹¹ Froben, Basel, March, 1518.

¹² CWE, V.7, Ep. 999 (p. 15), intro. (P. Bietenholz).

¹³ Allen, IV, Ep. 999, p. 21/275-276; CWE, V.7, Ep. 999, p.24/301-302.

⁸LC, lxxxvii.

As for Cranevelt, indications are he was also a deeply spiritual man. He fathered at least eleven children, of whom the oldest son, John, became a priest, and several of his six daughters became nuns. Certainly he was deeply respected by Erasmus, who showed his appreciation of Cranevelt by including him in his will of 1527.¹⁴

Cranevelt couldn't thank Erasmus enough for bringing him together with More. When the excitement of the summer had ended, he wrote to Erasmus that he valued so highly the kindness Erasmus had done him that he "would not exchange it for all the wealth of Croesus:

What kindness is this, you ask? Your introducing me to you—I may now say, our—delightful friend More, of whose society I saw so much after your departure, at his invitation. His more than Sicilian dinners I value highly, but much more his learning, his kindness, his generosity.¹⁵

The *Siciliana* or *Syracusana mensa* (table) meant extravagant and luxurious eating.¹⁶ Cranevelt indicates that the invitations were extended and the dinners provided by More, which raises the question: were these just social meetings of two friends, or were these business dinners? There is a precedent for More dealing in a business relationship with a pensionary (Cranevelt's position) of a Low Country city. Six months after More had in 1509 been made a member of the premier London guild of the Mercers – the usual initiation fee having been waived because of his legal skills – More was called to negotiate with the pensionary of Antwerp, which was an important commercial city for the English. The pensionary's name was Jacob Voogt, or Jacobus Tutor as he was known in Latin. Tutor was in London to settle the question of where the Mercers would have their accommodations in Antwerp on business trips to that city. When the Mercers assembled in their Hall for the negotiation, More gave the initial speech in Latin, the language of choice in diplomacy, and Tutor answered in Latin (with More then translating for his fellows). More and Tutor were by no means strangers to each other. Tutor was a prominent humanist

scholar, a longstanding friend of Erasmus. In fact, he had lived with Erasmus for three months in Orleans in 1501. The negotiations continued for several days—in Latin—until they came to a satisfactory conclusion.¹⁷ One of More's biographers called the colloquies "a vivid and practical example of the way in which learned European humanists were also at the heart of commercial and social affairs in this period."¹⁸

It is possible that, in dealing with Cranevelt, More had more in mind than friendship. Bruges was still an important commercial city for the English. That's why More was there. And Cranevelt was an important man in the city. Nevertheless, Erasmus' testimony would lead us to think differently. "When he finds open-hearted people naturally suited to him," said Erasmus of More, "he enjoys their company and conversation so much that one would think he reckoned such things the chief pleasure in life."¹⁹ Maybe, then, we don't have to look further for More's motives.

We know also, from Erasmus' 1519 biography, that More, given his choice, would eat a diet of beef, salt fish, coarse bread, dairy produce, fruit and eggs, and for drink would choose water. But, presumably, to gain a friend such as Cranevelt he would eat luxuriously. In any event, said Erasmus, "He was by no means averse from all the things that bring harmless pleasure, be it only to the body."²⁰

When he left Bruges, More gave Cranevelt's wife Elizabeth a gold ring, and to Cranevelt himself he gave two ancient coins, one gold and the other silver; one with a head of Tiberius and one with the deified Augustus.²¹ They were expensive gifts, but then the giving of such gifts was with More an old story. He was extravagant in gifts, in tips, in handouts to the poor, in help for friends, in rewards for work done.

¹⁴ Allen VI (app 19).

¹⁵ Allen, IV, Ep. 1145, p.350/4-9; *CWE*, VIII, 1145, p. 56/5-9

¹⁶ Erasmus, *Adagia*, II ii 68: Syracusans, being in the old days very prosperous and rich, were much given to the pleasures of the table.

¹⁷ L. Lyell & F. Watney, *Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company* (1456-1527) Cambridge: University Press, 1936) 320, 329-35.

¹⁸ Peter Ackroyd, *Life of Thomas More* (New York, Doubleday, 1998) 128.

¹⁹ Allen, IV, Ep. 999, p.16/103-5; *CWE*, V.7, Ep. 999, p.18/106-108.

²⁰ Allen, IV, Ep. 999; p.15/ 65-74; *CWE*, V.7, Ep. 999, p. 17/62-75.

²¹ Allen, IV, Ep. 1145, p.350; *CWE*, VIII, 1145, p.56, 17-20.

On one occasion in 1522, when an author, Conrad Goclenius, published a translation of Lucian and dedicated the book to him, More, touched, rewarded the author with a cup of gold coins and a thank-you letter. Whatever coins were in the cup, it was a huge gift. When he showed Abbé Marc'hadour the autograph of More's letter to Goclenius, the one that accompanied the cup of gold coins, Canon De Vocht said:

Do you notice the accent on Morùs? He may have been alluding to the Greek moròs [fool, orig. in Greek] which does bear the accent on the second syllable. And well he might, because this letter accompanied a cup full of gold coins, a real folly about which he cannot have consulted his sensible wife.²²

When Erasmus and Peter Gilles sent More paintings of themselves by the artist Metsys in 1517, More rewarded the man who delivered the Metsys diptych with a gold noble.²³ When Guillaume Budé wrote a letter to accompany More's *Utopia*, More sent him two valuable English dogs.²⁴ Thomas Stapleton said that More "used personally to go into dark courts and visit the families of the poor, helping them not with small gifts but with two, three, or four pieces of gold, as their need required."²⁵

Not for More the explaining away of the gospel injunctions about storing up wealth, and the narrow gate, and the lilies of the field. His generosity was one of his most attractive traits. It is also true that men of More's time were not obsessed with storing funds for old age and retirement (certainly a characteristic of our age). Not many of them saw old age. Neither Francis I, nor Henry VIII, nor Charles I, nor Leo X saw sixty years of age.

²² Germain Marc'hadour, "A Name for All Seasons," *Essential Articles For The Study of Thomas More*, Eds, R.S. Sylvester & G. Marc'hadour (Hamden, CT, Archon Books, 1977) 551.

²³ *CWE*, Vol. V, Ep. 683, p. 148/l. 48.

²⁴ Rogers, Ep. no. 66, sent from Paris, September 9, 1518, thanking More for the dogs.

²⁵ Thomas Stapleton, *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More*, (Pt. III of *Tres Thomae*, printed at Douai, 1588), transl. P. E. Hallett (London, Burns, Oates, 1928) 72.

In *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* (Rogers), there are more than fifty letters listed between More and Erasmus, two dozen between More and Wolsey, some eighteen between More and daughter Margaret. What is different in the thirteen letters of the Cranevelt correspondence? The difference would not consist in discoveries of new facts about More. The difference is in the effect Cranevelt has on More, and what they talked about. Biographers and historians have noted for ages that More was many men. If you were the king, he was a loyal, watchful subordinate; if you were a law client he was a vigilant, painstaking barrister; if you were a humanist scholar, he was a witty, interested listener; if you were his Fool at his dinner table, he was a willing foil for laughter and merriment. One could go on. The thirteen letters sent to Cranevelt portray a man different from all these. The two lawyers had a great deal in common. Cranevelt's father, secretary to the Duke of Gelderland, steered his son toward the law, as did John More with son Thomas. Both Frans and More were gifted in the liberal arts, both learned classical Greek, and Cranevelt also studied Hebrew. Both published translations from the Greek, More from Lucian, Cranevelt from the homilies of St. Basil and the *De Aedificiis* of Procopius. In their law careers, they both started on the city level, Cranevelt as pensionary or legal adviser in Bruges, and More in the somewhat similar position of undersheriff of London. Both then moved to the national level, More to the court of Henry VIII, and Cranevelt to Margaret of Austria's Grand Council in Mechelen. Both were married, with children. Nowhere else in More's connections do we find him interacting with a lawyer so similar to himself, and so compatible, and thus we are able to get an idea what More's conversation was like when he relaxed with the lawyers he dealt with all his life.

In the Von Hutton letter (1519), Erasmus, the priest, talked about More's conversations:

When he speaks with friends about the life after death, you recognize that he is speaking from conviction, and not without good hope. And More is like that even at court.²⁶

²⁶ Allen, IV 999; *CWE*, VII, 999, p. 24/298-300.

No doubt More was. But there was another More too. And this More we meet in the Cranevelt letters. What then did More and Cranevelt talk about? For one thing, they talked about their children. More wrote in Ep. 95 [*Moreana* no. 117, p. 25] after he had returned from Bruges in 1521: "My whole school sends you their regards," so they had talked about More's "school," and probably specifically about More's hiring of tutors for a schoolroom at his houses where his daughters could be schooled equally with his son. Cranevelt would have been especially interested since he himself had received his early schooling from hired tutors.

They talked about wives, along the lines of the age-old male lament that when it came to wives you couldn't live with them and you couldn't live without them. This is reflected in Ep.115 [*Moreana*, no. 117, pp. 35, 36, 37, 39] of August 10th, 1524, sent from London. Cranevelt had written about Vives' wedding the previous May 26th. More replied to something Cranevelt had said about wives. "I agree with your opinion so completely that I think it is not possible to live even with the best of them without any inconvenience at all. *For if you happen to have a wife you will not be free of care.* . . . Nevertheless, Vives has such character and prudence, and has acquired such a wife, that he will not only avoid all the vexation of marriage, in so far as that is possible, but he will even find great pleasure from it." [The sentence in italics here was written in Greek, not Latin. More was taking no chances.]

In the letters, there is a consciousness of growing old. In Ep. 177 [*Moreana*, no. 117, pp. 47, 49], sent from London on February 2, 1526, More wrote about a woodcut picture by Cranach that Cranevelt had apparently sent. The picture is of the 40-year-old Luther and his 25-year-old bride. More wrote, "Comparing the pictures of the spouses with your description, I could clearly see (and I was glad to see, precisely for the sake of the mistress) that you are not yet growing old, since you are still such an outstanding judge of beauty." "Mistress" is a reference to Cranevelt's wife.

They talked lightly about sex. Cranevelt's wife had gone on a trip, when More wrote from London on November 8, 1528 in Ep.48a [*Moreana*, no.17, pp.13, 15]:

...I remember that you once wrote to me that the most pleasant sleep is in a bed without a wife. But these are the words of

husbands in the first nights after their wives have been sent away, for on the remaining nights desire comes creeping back, and, unless the wife has left a proxy, it makes sleep unpleasant. As for your wife, I think she is so prudent that she has taken away all her maidservants with her.

Cranevelt's wife, Elizabeth, was a woman of beauty, wit, and great charm. Even Vives was taken with her, calling her his "sister." And Vives was not a man to easily give up scholarship to spend time with women. He wrote to Cranevelt on October 10, 1520, apologizing for not writing. His excuse was that the study of dialectics at Louvain, like a lovely girl, made him forget everything else.²⁷ More, who obviously much liked Elizabeth, had a running joke that ran through half-a-dozen of the letters. On November 12, 1521, in Ep. 95 [*Moreana*, no.117, p. 25] he wrote: "Give my regards to our mistress and wife." On June 6, 1525, in Ep. 156 [*Moreana*, no.117, p. 43] from London he wrote at the end of the letter: "In the meantime, farewell, together with the wife who is mine by day and yours by night but the mistress of us both." In Ep. 177 [*Moreana*, no. 117, pp. 47, 49] February 22, 1526, he wrote: "Best regards to your mistress and likewise mine."

Abbé: Marc'hadour writes

Si Cranevelt avait publié sa correspondance, il aurait sans doute éliminé ses plaisanteries, dont le contexte n'était connu que des intéressés [*If Cranevelt had published his correspondence he would no doubt have eliminated these pleasantries, of which the context was only known to the parties involved.*]²⁸

We don't have the key to the riddle, but obviously the joke continued because Cranevelt was also enjoying it and responding in his letters.

Another topic they talked about was thrift: More complained in Ep. 41 [*Moreana* no 117, pp. 7, 9] February 13, 1521, that the price he had paid for his lodgings in the previous summer was the "worst." And repeatedly the letters bemoan the constant fighting between France, the Habsburg empire and England. :

²⁷ LCB Ep. 15.

²⁸ *Moreana*, v, 31, no.117, pp. 67, 68.

In two of More's letters, Ep. 242 [*Moreana* no 117, p. 51] of July 14, 1527, and Ep. 262 [*Moreana* no 117, p. 55] of June 10, 1528, he writes even when he doesn't have anything to say, perhaps the most telling sign of affection. And in the Ep. 262, he writes, 'But be sure of this, my dear Cranevelt, if something should happen that would seriously require the services of a friend ...in that matter, you would never find me at fault.'

Abbreviations:

LC *Literae Virorum Eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium*, 1522-1528. Ed. Henry de Vocht (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1928)

MHL *Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia*, Ed. Henry de Vocht, (librairie Universitaire, 1934)

Allen *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, Ed. P.S. Allen (12 vols., Oxford, 1906-58)

CWE *Correspondence of Erasmus*. Vols. 1-12 of The Collected Works of Erasmus (Toronto, Univ. of Toronto Press, 1974-)

Moreana, No 117 Thomas More's Letters to Frans van Cranevelt. No.117 (March 1994) Latin Text, English Transl. & Notes by Clarence H. Miller, French Translation by Roland Galibois, pp. 3-84.

COE *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A biographical register of the Renaissance & Reformation*. Eds. P. Bietenholz & T. Deutscher (3 Vols.; Toronto: U. of Toronto Press, 1985)

Rogers *The Correspondence of Sir. Thomas More*, Ed., E. F. Rogers (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1961).

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La vérole dans un traité de 1533, année charnière entre More et Rabelais

Germain Marc'hadour

126, rue Chèvre
49044 Angers, France
germain.marchadour@wanadoo.fr

La réédition d'un traité sur la syphilis qui parut à Angers en 1533 a provoqué une rétrospective sur cette année cruciale à plus d'un égard. More, sentant venir le schisme anglican, y publia plus d'ouvrages qu'à aucune période de sa vie. Rabelais, premier géant de la littérature française, s'y révéla par le premier tome de sa chronique pantagruélienne, qui alarma la Sorbonne, amusa la populace, et impressionna les lettrés. Médecin qui entend guérir ses malades par le rire, il est également prêtre, et doit beaucoup à ses années de vie franciscaine. Disciple fervent d'Erasme, il doit aussi beaucoup à l'*Utopie* : ses héros sont natifs d'Amaurote. Comme tous les humanistes de l'époque, il est pétri d'écriture sainte, qu'il cite (et parodie) en latin, en grec, et même en hébreu. S'il manie le fouet de la satire avec autant de verve que 'Dame Folie', il se caractérise par la démesure de son réalisme, qui n'empêche pas les éducateurs d'apprécier sa pédagogie. *Le Pourpoint fermant à boutons*, opuscule anonyme, se veut mise en garde autant que cure par gros rire, et c'est à Rabelais que revient la part du lion dans les annotations.

Mots-clé : syphilis, schisme, satire, bible, réalisme.

The reedition of a treatise on syphilis, first printed in 1533, prompted this retrospective on that crucial year : aware that the Anglican schism was impending, and thus his own time running out, More published no fewer than five books. The anonymous author of the slim book on 'the French pocks' writes in a style