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Authority Revisited:
Towards Thomas More
and Erasmus in 1516

edited by
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RENAUD ADAM

THE FIRST EDITION
OF THOMAS MORE'S *UTOPIA*
IN LOUVAIN, ITS PRINTER DIRK MARTENS
AND THE ERASMIAN NETWORK
IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE
EXPLORING THE ROLE OF A HUMANIST
NETWORK IN A PRINTING HOUSE
IN THE LOW COUNTRIES *

Utopiae imprimendae prouinciam Theodoricus noster lubens ac gaudens susceperit
(‘My friend Martens has undertaken the task of printing the *Utopia* with the
greatest pleasure’).¹

With these words, Gerard Geldenhouwer starts a letter addressed to Erasmus, dated November 12, 1516, from Louvain, in which he explains that Dirk Martens, one of the first printers in the Low Countries, agreed to print Thomas More’s *Utopia*. We may find it surprising that the English humanist gave his text to this particular printer and not to a famous humanist printer like Johann Froben in Basel or Josse Bade in Paris. In fact, the answer lies in the name of the addressee of this letter: Erasmus. More did not choose Martens randomly, but had been guided by his friend Erasmus, who was living in Brabant at that time and was working directly with this printer, even in his workshop. With this choice, Erasmus offered to Thomas More the opportunity to have members of their common circle monitor closely the printing of *Utopia*, do the proof-reading and direct the publishing.

This well-documented case is an excellent example to describe the nature of collaborations between a printer and humanists in the early years of the sixteenth century. The correspondence of Erasmus, supplemented by information contained in the first edition of the *Utopia* itself, will help us to study the role and the

* I want to thank Dr Susie Speakman Sutch (University of Ghent) for rereading my text and the editors for their comments.

¹ Allen II (1910), ep. 487, l. 1-2 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 487, l. 1-2).

composition of the network of humanists working closely with Dirk Martens.² It will also give us an opportunity to describe the key role Erasmus played in the humanist book market in the Low Countries and, more specifically, to depict the relationships between him and the printer of *Utopia*. But, before we address the central topics of this article, it is important to present Martens' biography; because his life has attracted less attention from scholars than, for example, that of his colleagues Aldo Manuzio or Johann Froben.³

*Dirk Martens and the Dawn of Humanist Printing
in the Low Countries*

The history of Dirk Martens begins in the middle of the fifteenth century (c. 1446/7) in Flanders, in the little town of Alost, half-way between Brussels and Ghent and located about 60 kilometres from the University of Louvain.⁴ He was the son of Joos Martens and Johanna de Proost.⁵ He married the sister of Bartel Coecke, bell-founder and member of a renowned family in Alost.⁶ They had four children: Petrus, printer in Louvain (d. c. 1524); Barbara (d. c. 1535), married to the printer Servatius Sassenus I (d. 1557), successor to Dirk Martens; Susanna and Bernarda, both deceased before 1527.

Less than 20 years after the printing of the Gutenberg Bible, Dirk Martens founded with his *socius* ('associate') Johannes de



² Biographical information on the persons mentioned in this article can be found in: Bietenholz 1986-1987. I follow the spelling of the name used in this book.

³ Lowry 1979; Sebastiani 2018.

⁴ The biographical sketch of Martens is based on: Heireman 1973; Rouzet 1975, p. 140-142; Adam 2009a; Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009; Adam 2018.

⁵ The Proosts were one of the most powerful families in Alost. Dirk Martens' uncle, Jan Proost (d. 1475), was lord of Eertbrugge and Schellebelle, mayor of Alost at several times and councillor of Charles the Bold. With his wife Alexandrina van Steelant he founded the convent of the Black Sisters in Alost in 1474 (de Potter & Broeckaert 1873-1876, vol. 2, p. 31-32; vol. 3, p. 108-110; Van Rompaey 1967, p. 157-158, 616, 623, 638).

⁶ De Potter & Broeckaert 1873-1876, vol. 2, p. 69, 71; vol. 4, p. 293. These authors do not specify where they found this information. Until now, I have not been able to support or refute it. The well-known painter Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1502-1550) is one of the famous members of this Coecke family.

Westphalia, in his hometown, the first printing house of the Southern Low Countries. Together they published three books in 1473: Denys Rykiel's *Speculum conuersionis peccatorum* (which is the first dated book printed in the Southern Low Countries), treatises attributed to Pseudo-Augustinus and Enea Silvio Piccolomini's *De duobus amantibus*.⁷ The next year they printed four other books: Aristoteles' *Logica uetus* (May 6), Petrus Hispanus' *Textus summularum* (May 26), Battista Mantuanus' *De uita beata* (October 1), and a theological treatise written by the Carmelite from Bruges Peter de Bruyne, *Tabulare Fratrum Ordinis Deiferae Virginis Mariae de Carmelo* (October 28).⁸ After that, Dirk Martens printed only two books, just before closing the workshop. A short time earlier, Johannes de Westphalia had broken their partnership to launch a new venture in Louvain where he published his first book on December 9, 1474: Petrus Crescentiis' *Ruralia commoda*.⁹ He was active there till the end of the century.

Westphalia and Martens certainly met in Venice, the place where people willing to learn the art of printing converged and where the *Tedeschi* ('Germans') formed a community.¹⁰ Italy, and more specifically Venice, deeply influenced the two men and their respective work. In Alost, they used types designed by the Venetian punchcutter Bartholomaeus Cremonensis.¹¹ They were the first to publish in the Low Countries a novel written by an Italian humanist, Piccolomini's *De duobus amantibus*.¹² Martens summarized his program in the colophon of Mantuanus' *De uita beata*, printed on October 1, 1474: *Qui Venetum scita Flandrensibus affero cuncta* ('bring the elegance of the Venetians to his fellows Flemish').¹³ More than book design, Martens aimed to

⁷ ISTC id00248300, ia01283100, ip00671700. The most recent compilation of Martens' publications is available in: Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 201-235.

⁸ ISTC ia01014400, ij00229050, ib00095900, ir00005500.

⁹ ISTC ic00966000.

¹⁰ The citizens from the Low Countries were associated by Italians with Germans. About the German printers in Venice and their community: Zorzi 1986; Kikuchi 2014.

¹¹ Juchhoff 1928.

¹² On the distribution of Piccolomini in the Low Countries, see: Adam 2009b.

¹³ ISTC ib00095900, f. 28v.

disseminate Italian culture in the Low Countries. He fulfilled his dream by the end of his life. The following sections describe the efforts he undertook to achieve this ambition.

Martens left Alost after publishing *Tabulare*, returning there some 12 years later, in 1486. Some scholars think that he was active in Spain.¹⁴ They argue that the *Teodorico Aleman jnpressor de libros* ('Theodorus German, printer of books') who was granted protection by the Spanish kings in 1477 was Dirk Martens. Alexandre Vanautgaerden and I have shown that this theory is based on unsubstantiated arguments.¹⁵ In fact, our point is that Martens went back to Italy to expand his technical knowledge. How else can it be explained that the printer was in possession of Erhard Ratdolt's types after his return to Alost? He bought these types exactly when Ratdolt left Venice to return to his hometown, Augsburg. The first book published in the second printing house of Alost was a speech addressed to the Emperor Frederick III in Bruges on August 13, 1486, written by the Venetian ambassador, Ermolao Barbaro.¹⁶ It is tempting to think that Martens met Barbaro during his voyage to the Low Countries. The publication of this typically humanist text might suggest that Martens will finally bring the elegance of the Venetians to his fellow compatriots. However, he distanced himself from modern Italian literature to print such medieval authors as Henricus Suso or Angelus de Clavasio, and liturgical books such as breviaries.¹⁷

After the death in 1493 of two Antwerp printers Matthias Van der Goes and Gheraert Leeu, Martens established his workshop in that city. His first publication was the letters of Christopher Columbus relating his voyage of discovery to the Indies, a text that appeared first in Spanish after the explorer's return.¹⁸ Martens published around 20 books and indulgences in Antwerp before moving to Louvain in 1497.¹⁹ The following year he pub-



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¹⁴ Petit 1882; Colin & Hellinga 1973, p. 107-108.

¹⁵ Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 28.

¹⁶ ISTC ib00103000.

¹⁷ ISTC is00874000, ia00720000, ib01143970, ib01144450, ib01184300.

¹⁸ ISTC ic00761500.

¹⁹ He matriculated on June 15, 1497 (Schillings 1958, p. 156, no. 75). The statutes of the University of Louvain specify that booksellers, and later printers,

lished a breviary for the use of Liège.²⁰ Martens seems to have specialized in liturgical productions. He printed another breviary for the use of Salisbury and synodal statutes for Liège and Arras.²¹

This venture did not encounter the success that the printer had hoped for. He returned to Antwerp in 1502 after publishing a dozen books. His workshop was located *op die Steenhouwersteveste* (the 'Stone-Cutters Ramparts').²² We do not know if he relocated to his former printing house. However, he chose a place at the heart of the area dedicated to the printed book south of the Collegiate Church of Our Lady, in a triangle formed by the *Kammenstraat* (the 'Breweries Street'), the *Steenhouwersvest* (the 'Stone-Cutters Rampart') and the *Lombaerdeveste* (the 'Lombards Rampart'), with a particular focus on the *Kammerpoort* (the 'Breweries Gate').²³ More than 75 percent of the printers who worked in the city before 1520 could be found in this area.²⁴ The concentration of these printers not far from the collegiate church can be easily explained by the presence of the *Onze-Lieve-Vrouwepand* ('Our Lady Market'), which had been the nucleus of the trade in paintings, sculpture, altarpieces, books and engravings since 1460.²⁵

Antwerp was the place where a meeting and collaboration took place that would leave a strong mark on Martens' future career. What happened was that the *typographus* ('typographer')

were obliged to join the *congregatio uniuersitatis* (university community) after swearing an oath in the rector's hands that they would exercise their business without ruse or fraud (*absque dolo et fraude*). On the legal framework of the book trade in the Southern Low Countries, see: Adam 2017.

²⁰ ISTC ib01163600.

²¹ ISTC ib01178700, is00745000, is00727200.

²² This information is provided in the colophon of one mint ordinance: *De valuatien ende ordinantien vanden gbelde. Dese valuacie es gheprent Thantwerpen op die Steenhouwersteveste by mi Dirsz Martens van Aelst* (USTC 438164, f. 10v). The USTC gives the wrong dating of c. 1500. At that time, Martens was active in Louvain. In fact, this mint ordinance was printed after 1502.

²³ On the printers' settlement in Antwerp, see: Adam 2014, p. 23-25.

²⁴ Printers settled in these streets: Govaert Bac, Adriaen van Berghen, Symon Cock, Jan van Doesborch, Henrick Eckert, Mathias van der Goes, Michiel Hillen, Adriaen van Liesvelt, Dirk Martens, Thomas van der Noot, Henrick Pieterszoon, and Willem Vorsterman (Adam 2014, p. 23).

²⁵ Vroom 1983, p. 78-91; Vermeylen 2003, p. 24-27; Van der Stighelen & Vermeylen 2006.

was contacted by Erasmus on February 15, 1503, and asked to publish his *Lucubratiunculæ aliquot*, a volume of about a hundred sheets containing one of his most important treatises, the *Enchiridion militis christiani* (1503).²⁶ The fame of the Dutch humanist was not yet that of the future author of the *Moriae Encomium*. He was still relatively young, in search of patrons and trying to approach the court of Burgundy. One year later, Martens printed the address Erasmus delivered on January 6, 1504, at the festivities organized by the States of Brabant celebrating the return of Philip the Handsome from his first sojourn in Spain.²⁷ During this period, Erasmus had already published *De praecellentia potestatis imperatoriae* by Jacob Anthoniszoon, with a preface signed by him in which Erasmus let it be known that the author had asked him to help him find a printer.²⁸

Shortly after this, Martens took a break from his career in the printing business. He published nothing until the issue of Francesco Filelfo's *Breviores elegantioresque epistolae* in 1507.²⁹ Is it possible that he was having financial difficulties? Two booksellers from London, Joost Pilgrim and Henry Jacobi, commissioned five of the eight books he printed between 1507 and 1508.³⁰ Martens' financial situation seems to improve in the next years. The proportion of humanist authors constantly increased. Martens reissued Erasmus in 1509 and published Poliziano's and Mirandola's collection of letters and the treatises written by Rudolf Agricola.³¹

When he arrived in Antwerp, Martens was in possession of four Venetian Gothic types and one Greek font, all probably acquired from Erhard Ratdolt in Venice.³² He used his Greek alphabet for the first time in 1491 to reproduce some parts of Alexander de Villa Dei's *Doctrinale* commented by Johann Syn-

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²⁶ USTC 400246.

²⁷ USTC 415544.

²⁸ USTC 436667.

²⁹ USTC 436744.

³⁰ USTC 436749, 436751, 400282, 436764, 441932. On these two booksellers, see: Duff 1905, p. 79-80; Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 45-46, 157, n. 2.

³¹ USTC 436768, 404689, 440880, 403652.

³² Hellinga 1966, vol. 1, p. 79-80.

then.³³ It should be noted that this is the first use of moveable Greek type in the Southern Low Countries.³⁴ Without going so far as to dethrone black letters, which were still favoured by customers, the usage of other kinds of types nevertheless increased from 1500 onwards. Martens was the first to generalize the use of Roman letters. Black letters were first confined to reproducing titles and colophons before disappearing. Martens remained in Antwerp until 1512 when he moved his workshop again to Louvain. The last book printed on *Steenhouwersvest* was the *Plusculae fabulae* by Aesop and Avianus, revised by Adrianus Barlandus (April 22, 1512).³⁵

The new Martens' workshop was located in Louvain *e regione scholae iuris ciuilibis* ('close to the Civil Law Faculty'), on the present-day 'Naamsestraat'. The printing of Lucianus' *Complures dialogi* translated by Erasmus, on August 14, 1512, marks the beginning of the last chapter of Martens' long career which ended with Nicolaus Clenardus' *Tabulae in grammaticen Hebraeam* in 1529.³⁶

The final confirmation of Martens' status as a humanist printer took place in this chapter of his life. He focused on printing classical authors such as Aesop, Lucian or Cicero (writers studied at the Faculty of Arts), and humanists such as Erasmus, Vives or Filelfo. He acquired new trilingual types, which enabled him to print in the three sacred languages, i.e. Latin, Greek and Hebrew.³⁷ In this spirit, he abandoned his old Greek alphabet in 1515, by then worn and incomplete, for a new one directly inspired by the fonts designed for Aldo Manuzio. Three years later, Hebrew appears in the *Alphabetum Hebraicum*, a leaf printed for the students of the *Collegium Trilingue* learning this language.³⁸ Four years later, in June 1522, italics were used for the first time in

³³ ISTC ia00445560.

³⁴ Painter 1960.

³⁵ USTC 400314.

³⁶ USTC 436841, 437460.

³⁷ On the typographic material used by Martens in the sixteenth century, see: Vervliet 1968, p. 63, 70, T 12, R 12, R 15, It 5; Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 50-70.

³⁸ This publication seems not to be recorded in USTC. For bibliographical information, see: NK 2303.

his publication of the Pauline epistles.³⁹ This font was created by the punchcutter Jean Thibault.⁴⁰ Martens was not entirely satisfied with this alphabet. He quickly bought another one of higher quality.

The printer was really proud of his material and made no secret of it. He said in the colophon of Rudolf Agricola's *De inuentione dialectica* that he printed it *characteribus (ut est uidere) faberrimis* ('with types artfully designed, as you can see').⁴¹ Elsewhere, he explained that he is a leader in trilingual printing:

in excudendis Latinis, nulli cedo, in Graecis, perpaucis, in Hebraicis ambimus similem laudem.

regarding Latin edition, I cede to no one; I have few rivals for Greek; I want to deserve the same praises for Hebrew printing.⁴²

Martens ended his career after publishing around 270 books. He had already decided to leave the book business in 1524 and let his son, Petrus, take control of his venture.⁴³ Petrus was associated to his father's enterprise before taking over its control. His work is documented on June 26, 1522, in a letter written by a collaborator of Dirk Martens to Erasmus in which he explained that Petrus had left Louvain for Basel two weeks before.⁴⁴ But, the death of Petrus, after printing four books, forced his father to resume his business for a few years. Dirk Martens finally retired to the convent of the Hermits of St William in Alost where he died five years later, on May 28, 1534.⁴⁵

³⁹ USTC 437196.

⁴⁰ Vervliet 1968, It 5.

⁴¹ USTC 400342.

⁴² This quote comes from Martens' afterword to Erasmus' *Declamations* printed in 1518 (f. 71r) (USTC 400389). The letter signed by Martens is edited in: Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 181, text 14.

⁴³ Petrus Martens published four books under his name, two written by Adrians Barlandus, one by Juan Luis Vives and the last by Lucianus Samosatensis. The list can be found in: Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 235.

⁴⁴ Allen V (1924), ep. 1296, l. 15-17 (translation: CWE 9 [1989], ep. 1296, l. 15-16).

⁴⁵ Martens' grave is actually located in the chapel of St Sebastian in the collegiate church St Martin in Alost (Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 135-136).

Martens is, thus, of great importance for the history of the spread of the art of printing in the Southern Low Countries. He introduced the use of three alphabets (Greek, Hebrew and italic) and generalized the use of Roman types. He also printed the first novel by an Italian humanist in the Low Countries. The Alost printer is also known as the first editor of one of the most important philosophic works written during the Early Modern Period: Thomas More's *Utopia*. The following section will describe the major steps that led to the printing of this text.

Utopia in Press

This section begins on September 3, 1516, when Thomas More wrote these words to Erasmus:

Nusquamam nostram nusquam bene scriptam ad te mitto: praescripsi epistolam ad Petrum [Aegidium] meum. Cetera tu ut recte cures, expertus sum non esse opus ut te adhorter.

I send you my book of Nowhere, and you will find it is nowhere well written; it has a preface addressed to my friend Peter [Giles]. Well, you must do what you can for it. I know from experience that you need no urging.⁴⁶

This letter indicates that More had completed his book – *Nusquamama* (*Nowhere*), More's first choice of a title for *Utopia* – by early September and sent the manuscript to his friend Erasmus, with a prefatory dedicated to his other friend Peter Giles. This triangular friendship – Erasmus, Giles, More – is the key to understanding the composition of *Utopia* and its later printing.⁴⁷ The late Professor L.-E. Halkin of the University of Liège used to say about Peter Giles that he is 'un de ces seconds rôles que l'amitié a fait rentrer dans l'histoire'.⁴⁸ This story can be better understood if we come back to 1515 and to the origin of More's *Utopia*.

⁴⁶ Allen II (1910), ep. 461, l. 1-2 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 461, l. 1-2).

⁴⁷ Wojcichowski 2011.

⁴⁸ Halkin 1988, p. 72.

Thomas More began writing his famous book when he travelled to the Low Countries in early May 1515 in order to conduct trade negotiations on behalf of Henri VIII.⁴⁹ The suspension of the negotiations in July allowed him to go to Antwerp and meet Peter Giles, secretary of the Antwerp city council. Erasmus, a close friend of both, suggested this meeting and is at the origin of the close friendship between the two men. What would become Book II of *Utopia* and the introduction of Book I were conceived in Antwerp. Peter Giles had certainly helped More to compose the book. He even became a character in its narrative. He is the third interlocutor of this story, listening with More to Raphael Hythlodæus' travel history. More portrayed his friend in the beginning of *Utopia* with these words:

Ibi dum uersor, saepe me inter alios sed quo non alius gratior, inuisit Petrus Aegidius Antuerpiae natus, magna fide, & loco apud suos honesto, dignus honestissimo, quippe iuuenis haud scio doctiorne, an moratior. Est enim optimus & literatissimus, ad haec animo in omnes candido, in amicos uero tam propenso pectore, amore, fide, adfectu tam sincero, ut uix unum aut alterum usquam inuenias, quem illi sentias omnibus amicitiae numeris esse conferendum. Rara illi modestia, nemini longius abest fucus, nulli simplicitas inest prudentior, porro sermone tam lepidus, et tam innoxie facetus, ut patriae desyderium, ac laris domestici, uxoris, & liberorum, quorum studio reuisendorum nimis quam anxie tenebar (iam tum enim plus quatuor mensibus abfueram domo) magna ex parte mihi dulcissima consuetudine sua, & mellitissima confabulatione leuauerit.

While I stayed there, among my other visitors, but of all of them the most welcome, was Peter Giles, a native of Antwerp, an honourable man of high position in his home town yet worthy of the very highest position, being a young man distinguished equally by learning and character; for he is most virtuous and most cultured, to all most courteous, but to his friends so open-hearted, affectionate, loyal, and sincere that you can hardly find one or two anywhere to compare with him as the perfect friend on every score. His modesty is uncommon; no one is less given to deceit, and none has a wiser simplicity of nature. Besides, in conversation he is so polished and so witty without offence that his delightful

⁴⁹ Hexter 1965. On More's stay in the Low Countries, see: Sacré 2016.

society and charming discourse largely took away my nostalgia and made me less conscious than before of the separation from my home, wife, and children to whom I was exceedingly anxious to get back, for I had then been more than four months away.⁵⁰

Thomas More praises the kindness and hospitality of Giles who helped him to mitigate his homesickness and his ardent desire to see his wife and children. Finally, More was recalled in October. He composed in London Book I and the conclusion of *Utopia*. In a letter to Ulrich von Hutten written in 1519, Erasmus said about More that, at that time, he was frantically busy, which explains a certain unevenness in the style of Book I.⁵¹ More had already complained about his overburdened work schedule in his prefatory to Giles:

Dum causas forenseis assidue alias ago, alias audio, alias arbiter finio, alias iudex dirimo, dum hic officij causa uisitur, ille negocij, dum foris totum ferme diem alijs impartior, reliquum meis, relinquo mihi, hoc est literis, nihil. Nempe reuerso domum, cum uxore fabulandum est, garriendum cum liberis, colloquendum cum ministris. [...] Inter haec quae dixi elabitur dies, mensis, annus. Quando ergo scribimus?

I am constantly engaged in legal business, either pleading or hearing, either giving an award as arbiter or deciding a case as judge. I pay a visit of courtesy to one man and go on business to another. I devote almost the whole day in public to other men's affairs and reminder to my own. I leave to myself, that is to learning, nothing at all. When I have returned home, I must talk with my wife, chat with my children, and confer with my servant. [...] Amid these occupations that I have named, the day, the month, the year slip away. When, then, can we find the time to write?⁵²

On September 20, 1515, More wrote again to Erasmus, reminding him that he sent his *Nusquam* some time ago and that he longs to see it published soon:

⁵⁰ More 1965, p. 48-49.

⁵¹ Allen IV (1922), ep. 999, l. 260-261 (translation: CWE 7 [1987], ep. 999, l. 283-284).

⁵² More 1965, p. 38-41.

ornatam etiam egregia et magnifica laude, eaque si fieri posset a pluribus non litteratis modo, sed etiam his qui sint ab administranda republica celebrati.

well-furnished too with glowing testimonials, if possible not only from several literary men but also from people well-known for the part they have taken in public affairs.⁵³

As Peter R. Allen showed, Thomas More's ambition with this demand was to carry *Utopia* 'with a group of names which would clearly identify it for the knowledgeable sixteenth-century reader as a document of northern European, not just English, humanism'.⁵⁴

On October 2, Erasmus replied to More in a letter in which he complains of his financial problems, asking him to intervene. After that, he mentions briefly that *De insula deque caeteris curabuntur omnia* ('as for your Island, and all other things, they shall be taken care of').⁵⁵ He also added in the final lines:

P[etrus] Aegidius plane te deamat. Nobiscum assidue uiuis. Mire fauet tuae Nusquamae teque ualde salutat cum tuis omnibus.

Peter Giles is devoted to you. You are constantly present with us. He is delighted with your *Nowhere*, and greets you most warmly, you and all yours.⁵⁶

It might seem surprising that Erasmus does not say a word about what he thinks of More's *Insula* [i.e. the island of *Utopia*] or that he does not ask what he is supposed to do with it. Jack H. Hexter explains that 'there is nothing really odd in this exchange', because Erasmus had presumably read the first version of this book, discussed it with Thomas More, and organized with him how to bring the manuscript to print. This exchange certainly took place during his stay in More's own house as a guest in the first half of August.⁵⁷

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⁵³ Allen II (1910), ep. 467, l. 15-17 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 467, l. 16-18).

⁵⁴ Allen 1963, p. 97.

⁵⁵ Allen II (1910), ep. 474, l. 23-24 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 474, l. 26-27).

⁵⁶ Allen II (1910), ep. 474, l. 29-30 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 474, l. 34-36).

⁵⁷ Hexter 1965, p. xvi.

On October 17, Erasmus launched the process. He wrote to Peter Giles, from Brussels, that:

Nusquamam adorno. Tu fac praefationem mittas, sed ad alium potius quam ad me, ad Buslidium potius.

I am getting the *Nowhere* ready; mind you send me a preface, but addressed to someone other than me, Busleyden for choice.⁵⁸

This passage shows us that Erasmus is very familiar with printing techniques. He is 'dressing' the manuscript before sending it to the printer. This intimacy with the typographic world comes from his close contact with printers. Throughout his career, Erasmus did not hesitate to work directly with printers, even in their workshop.⁵⁹ Then, as the most experienced, Erasmus told Giles how to proceed and asks him to dedicate his preface to Jérôme de Busleyden, archdeacon of Cambrai and councillor of the future Charles V.⁶⁰ *Utopia* opens with this letter, dated November 1, 1516.⁶¹ Some may wonder why Erasmus did not want to be the dedicatee of Giles' preface. Was Erasmus ashamed of the book, as the letter he sent to Ulrich von Hutten in 1519, in which he mentioned the uneven Latin of *Utopia*, might imply. Richard Marius, More's biographer, also suggests that Erasmus was maybe not fully pleased with More's defence of *Moriae Encomium* against Maarten van Dorp.⁶² There is still another possibility: maybe More and Erasmus had already decided together to choose someone other than Erasmus himself.

On October 31, More responded to Erasmus. He is delighted to hear that Peter Giles approved of his book:

⁵⁸ Allen II (1910), ep. 477, l. 5-7 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 477, l. 7-9).

⁵⁹ See: Allen 1913-1915; Crousaz 2005; Vanautgaerden 2012. The working relation between Erasmus and Martens is developed in the next section.

⁶⁰ More met Busleyden, founder of the *Collegium Trilingue*, in Louvain during his diplomatic mission to the Low Countries. He visited Busleyden's house in Mechelen and writes of Busleyden and of the Mechelen mansion in several of his *Epigrammata* (De Vocht 1950, p. 50-65, 80-85; Sacré 2016, p. 198-199).

⁶¹ More 1965, p. 20-25.

⁶² Marius 1974, p. 240.

Nusquamam nostram gaudeo probari meo Petro; si talibus placeat, incipiet placere et mihi.

I am delighted to hear that Peter approves of my *Nusquamama*; if men such as he like it, I shall begin to like it myself.⁶³

He is also wondering if he will receive the same approval from his two friends Cuthbert Tunstall and Jérôme de Busleyden and also from the chancellor Jean Le Sauvage, whom he met during his diplomatic mission.⁶⁴ Busleyden's opinion can be found in the congratulatory letter addressed to More published in *Utopia*: his *Utopia* will make him immortal.⁶⁵ More had to wait until late November or early December to discover Tunstall's positive reaction.⁶⁶ Nothing has been recorded about Jean Le Sauvage's impression. Some proofs were apparently sent to a few selected friends to receive their views on the book.

On November 12, Gerard Geldenhouwer, member of Louvain's humanist circle and Dirk Martens' collaborator, wrote to Erasmus:

Utopiae imprimendae prouiciam Theodoricus noster lubens ac gaudens suscepit. Insulae ipsius figuram a quodam egregio pictore effictam Paludanus noster [Jean Desmarez] tibi ostendet; si quid mutatum uelis, scribes aut figurae annotabis. [...] Adhibebo omnem diligentiam ut Utopia ornate in publicum prodeat; ut prosit lectori, non offendat.

My friend Martens has undertaken the task of printing the *Utopia* with the greatest pleasure. The plan of the island itself has been drawn out by a capital artist, and Paludanus [Jean Desmarez] will show it to you; if you would like any alterations, either let me know, or note them on the draft. [...] I will take great care to see that *Utopia* makes its public appearance in style, so that readers may get the benefit of it, and not be put off.⁶⁷

⁶³ Allen II (1910), ep. 481, l. 62-63 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 481, l. 68-69).

⁶⁴ Allen II (1910), ep. 481, l. 63-64 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 481, l. 69-70).

⁶⁵ More 1965, p. 36-37. Busleyden sent his letter to Erasmus on November 9, 1516 (Allen II [1910], ep. 484; translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 484).

⁶⁶ Allen II (1910), ep. 499, l. 35-39 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 499, l. 38-42).

⁶⁷ Allen II (1910), ep. 487, l. 1-7 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 487, l. 2-7).

As we can see, Geldenhouwer had played an important role in printing *Utopia*. He was in charge of reviewing the proofs and assuming the link between the printing shop and Peter Giles, editor of the text. This letter also shows that the drawing for the cut of *Utopia*'s island woodcut was completed by early November and that Erasmus' advice about its composition was sought.⁶⁸ Besides, Peter Giles drew the Utopian alphabet and wrote a tetrastichon in this fictitious exotic language with a Latin translation, as he explained in his prefatory to Jérôme de Busleyden (dated November 1, 1516):

*Tantum tetrastichum uernacular Utopiensium lingua scriptum,
quod a Mori discessu, forte mihi ostendit Hythlodæus apponen-
dum curavi aliquot annotatiunculis.*

There was only a poem of four lines in the Utopian vernacular which, after More's departure, Hythlodæus happened to show me. This verse, preceded by the Utopian alphabet, I have caused to be added to the book. I have also appended some brief annotations in the margins.⁶⁹

Did More ask at that time to change the name of *Nusquama* by *Utopia*?

On November 18, Erasmus sent a short letter to Peter Giles in which he says *Utopia in manibus est typographi* ('*Utopia* is in the printer's hands').⁷⁰ *Utopia*'s printing started, thus, before all the texts were in Martens' hands. The congratulatory letter addressed by Jean Desmarez (Paludanus), Louvain professor of eloquence and poetics, to Peter Giles is dated December 1.⁷¹ This explains why *Utopia*'s Book I begins on signature b₁r. Martens left a blank sheet to print preliminary texts, but he had incorrectly determined the space these texts would require. Another one, printed without any signature, had been added. It is very difficult to determine the exact date of the printing of *Utopia*, because the book bears

⁶⁸ On this woodcut, see: Schulte Herbrüggen 1997. Unfortunately, the name of the 'capital artist' remains unknown, despite efforts to identify him (debates summarized in: Schulte Herbrüggen 1997, p. 228-229).

⁶⁹ More 1965, p. 22-23.

⁷⁰ Allen II (1910), ep. 491, l. 13 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 491, l. 11).

⁷¹ More 1965, p. 26-29.

no colophon. On December 15, More wrote to Erasmus *nunc expecto haud alio animo quam mater peregre redeuntem filium* ('I now expect [*Utopia*] daily with the feelings of a mother expecting her son's return from foreign parts').⁷² The book was released during the last two weeks of December. William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, sent a letter on January 4, 1517, to thank Erasmus for offering him a copy.⁷³ Nine days later, on January 13, More had received one as the letter he wrote to Erasmus shows in which he thanks him and all the friends who had participated in this adventure (Busleyden, Desmarez and, of course, Giles).⁷⁴ The editor of Erasmus' correspondence, Percy Allen, suggested that *Utopia* might have been intended by More as a *strena* (New Year's gift).⁷⁵

The first edition of *Utopia*, printed by Martens, is an in-quarto reproduced in 54 folios, which means that 13,5 sheets of paper were necessary to print one copy.⁷⁶ The number of copies that had come off the presses is unknown.⁷⁷ The pages are unnumbered.⁷⁸ The title page is followed on its verso by the sketch of the island of *Utopia*. The Utopian alphabet and Giles' *Tetrastichon* are printed on f. [2r]. The *Hexastichon Anemolii* is on the next page. Giles' letter to Busleyden (f. [3r-4r]) and Desmarez's letter and poem (f. [4r]-a₁r) follow these texts. The printer inserted thereafter an epigram on *Utopia* by Gerard Geldenhouwer and one by Cornelius Grapheus. Next comes the congratulatory letter addressed by Busleyden to More (a₁r-a₂v), followed by the *prefatio* ('foreword'), namely, More's letter to Giles (a₂v-a₄v). The text

⁷² Allen II (1910), ep. 502, l. 26-27 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 502, l. 29-31).

⁷³ Allen II (1910), ep. 508, l. 1-3 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 508, l. 1-4).

⁷⁴ Allen II (1910), ep. 513, l. 6-8 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 513, l. 6-8).

⁷⁵ Allen II (1910), ep. 461, intro.

⁷⁶ More 1895 offers a critically edited text, without introductory pieces, except for More's letter to Giles.

⁷⁷ By that time, books were generally printed in editions of from 1000 to 1500 copies (Gaskell 1974, p. 161). In 1507, the Benedictine abbey of Werden (now Essen-Werden) on the Ruhr commissioned Martens to print two liturgical books, both reproduced in 1000 copies (Oosterbosch 1997).

⁷⁸ The signatures are, after four unsigned leaves, a-l⁴ m⁶.

occupies the rest of the book (b_1r-m_6r); Book II begins on e_3v . The last leaf (m_6v) bears Martens' typographical device.

Erasmus promoted More's book in his circle by dispatching it to some friends or advising others to read it. Lord Mountjoy received one around New Year, as we have seen.⁷⁹ Antonius Clava, member of the Council of Flanders, Guillaume Budé and Guillaume Cop, for example, were invited by the Dutch humanist to buy a copy.⁸⁰

Utopia quickly became a great success.⁸¹ Erasmus asked More for a corrected copy in March 1517.⁸² In early October, Gilles de Gourmont, a leading French printer, printed the second edition in Paris.⁸³ Due to hurried composition, proof-reading and printing, this version contains numerous mistakes in spelling. Erasmus complained about it to More:

Vidi tandem Utopiam Parisiis excusam sed mendose.

I have at last seen the Paris print of your *Utopia*, but it is full of mistakes.⁸⁴

Erasmus then charged Johann Froben to print a better version, which was issued in March 1518 with a prefatory signed by Erasmus.⁸⁵ Another one came off the same press six months later, in November.⁸⁶ The following editions are posthumous and mainly derived from the Basel edition of November 1518.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ Allen II (1910), ep. 508, l. 1-3 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 508, l. 1-4).

⁸⁰ Allen II (1910), ep. 524, l. 18-21; ep. 534, l. 56-58; ep. 537, l. 16-17 (translations: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 524, l. 18-20; ep. 534, l. 58-60; ep. 537, l. 21-23).

⁸¹ More was a little bit disappointed in Martens' edition. See: Rogers 1947, ep. 31, l. 35-36; ep. 34, l. 1-6.

⁸² Allen II (1910), ep. 543, l. 11-13 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 543, l. 14-15).

⁸³ USTC 144673. On this edition, see: Hexter 1965, p. clxxxv-clxxxvii.

⁸⁴ Allen III (1915), ep. 785, l. 50-51 (translation: CWE 5 [1979], ep. 785, l. 53-54).

⁸⁵ USTC 630792. On this edition, see: Hexter 1965, p. clxxxvii-clxxxix. This edition is the basis of the critical edition made by the Yale editors of 'The Complete Works of St Thomas More', because 'it appears to be the last edition in which More is likely to have had a direct hand' (Hexter 1965, p. clxxxvii).

⁸⁶ USTC 630793. On this edition, see: Hexter 1965, p. clxxxix-clxc.

⁸⁷ Hexter 1965, p. clxc-cxciv; Cave 2008.

Erasmus & Martens

Thus, Erasmus played a key role in the printing and distribution of More's *Utopia* from Louvain. This would not have been possible without his close relationship with Dirk Martens. The two men met in 1503, as we have seen in the first part of this article. Erasmus worked directly inside the printing office, as he will do regularly thereafter with other printers. He described his work in a letter to Desmarez printed at the end of the *Gratulatorius Panegyricus ad Philippum Archiducem Austriae*, dated in 1504 *Antuerpiae ex officina chalcographia* ('from Antwerp, in the printing house'):

Vix dum prima pagella recens et adhuc ab officina madens coeperat ostentari atque (ut fit in re noua) aliis ab aliis per manus tradi; Erasmus interim, quem scis quantopere semper delectarit Appelles ille post tabulas latitans, nusquam non aures arrectas habebat, undique captans, non quam malis placeret [...], sed qua parte displiceret.

The moment that the first fresh page, still damp from the press, began to be shown about and passed from hand to hand, as novelties usually are, your friend Erasmus cocked up his ears (for you know how much delight he always took in that story about Apelles hiding behind his paintings), catching at every indication, not how many readers approved of it since for me at least one single's man verdict would fully suffice to bolster my self-esteem [...], but where it failed to win approval.⁸⁸

Panegyricus, printed around February, marks the end of the first collaboration between the two men. Erasmus returned to Louvain till December when he went back to Paris after four years in the Low Countries. It would be more than ten years before Martens tried to make contact with Erasmus. Maarten van Dorp, Louvain professor of theology, acted as an intermediary. He wrote these words to Erasmus in September 1514:

Theodoricus Alustensis chalcographus, qui Enchiridion et Panegyricum impressit, orauit me uti se commendarem tuae humanitati. Cupiuit plurimum uidere te, cupiuit hospicio comiter

⁸⁸ Allen I (1906), ep. 180, l. 5-12 (translation: CWE 2 [1975], ep. 180, l. 7-14).

ac liberaliter excipere, et ea de causa Antwerpiam profectus, ut rescuit te non illic sed Louanii esse, ilico recurrit ac totam ambulans noctem uenit postridie Louanium sesquihora ferme postquam abiisses. Si qua in re potest tibi gratificari, omnia pollicetur, et haud scio an omnium hominum uiuat homo tui amantior.

Dirk van Alost the printer, who printed your *Enchiridion* and *Panegyricus*, has asked me to remember him to you. He wanted very much to see you, and indeed to entertain you in a friendly and hospitable fashion, and set off to Antwerp for the purpose; when he heard you were not there, but at Louvain, he came straight back, and by travelling all night reached Louvain the next day about an hour and a half after you had gone. If there is anything he can do for you, he makes every promise, and I doubt if there is a man anywhere who is more devoted to you.⁸⁹

Scholars wishing to illustrate the mutual friendship existing between the printer and the humanist frequently use this episode.⁹⁰ The need for Dorp to remind Erasmus that Martens had published his *Enchiridion* and *Panegyricus* would indicate that the two men no longer had contact since the publication of these two books. The next year, Dorp is still lobbying in favour of Martens. He sent another letter on August 27, 1515, to Erasmus asking him again to let the *chalcographus* ('printer') have something to print.⁹¹ The Dutch humanist was at that time in Basel fully involved with the edition of his St Jerome's *Opera omnia*, printed by Froben in May 1516.⁹²

The collaboration between Erasmus and Martens really began in June 1516, when the Dutch humanist returned to Brabant to assume his function as a councillor of Charles V. They will work together all throughout Erasmus' stay until October 1521. This period can be described as an 'Erasmian fireworks'. During these four years Martens' workshop published a hundred books:

⁸⁹ Allen II (1910), ep. 304, l. 148-156 (translation: CWE 2 [1975], ep. 165-174).

⁹⁰ De Gand 1845, p. 26-27; van Iseghem 1852, p. 114-116; Reedijk 1974.

⁹¹ Allen II (1910), ep. 347, l. 368-372 (translation: CWE 3 [1976], ep. 347, l. 395-398).

⁹² USTC 679364. See on this edition: Vanautgaerden 2012, p. 363-367.

the equivalent of two thirds of his previous production. The writings of Erasmus represent almost half of the catalogue of the typographer with a large number of *principes* and *Paraphrasis*. Dirk Martens printed 51 texts of Erasmus and 17 books translated, edited or annotated by the Dutch humanist, which means the reproduction of an equivalent of 68,000 copies. Martens, printer of 32 *principes*, can be considered as the second printer of Erasmus, far behind the 150 *principes* printed by Johann Froben.⁹³ Martens' printing house was at this moment completely devoted to the cause of the Prince of humanists.

Erasmus did not limit himself to offering in exclusivity his own texts to Martens. He also served as a literary agent, as we have seen with More's *Utopia*. But Martens did not always follow his prestigious guest's advice. He was reluctant to accept the publishing of *Euersiomunitionis aduersus unicam Magdalenam* by John Fisher, bishop of Rochester.⁹⁴ In 1520 he even refused to print an apology against Luther written by Joannes Driedo, professor in Louvain's Faculty of Theology. Erasmus expressed his disappointment to Adrianus Barlandus.⁹⁵ Was Martens embarrassed by publishing polemical texts?

In any event, it was well known that the humanist and his typographer had a privileged relationship. Edward Lee, one of the greatest detractors of Erasmus, wrote to him on February 1, 1520, complaining that he could not find any printer for publishing his text and that Martens would certainly not help him because:

*quum alioqui nulla spes esset ut is tibi tam uiratus satis ex fide
ageret meum negocium.*

there was no hope that he, who was always your sworn vassal, could be properly trusted in any business of mine.⁹⁶

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⁹³ The most recent list of Erasmus' *principes* can be found in Vanautgaerden 2012, p. 501-525.

⁹⁴ Allen IV (1922), ep. 1030, l. 8-9 (translation: CWE 7 [1987], ep. 1030, l. 13-15). Bibliographical reference for this edition: USTC 400407.

⁹⁵ Allen IV (1922), ep. 1163, l. 10-11 (translation: CWE 8 [1988], ep. 1163, l. 12-14).

⁹⁶ Allen IV (1922), ep. 1061, l. 661-662 (translation: CWE 7 [1987], ep. 1061, l. 12-14). On this case, see: Vanautgaerden 1997.

The 'sworn vassal' even welcomed Erasmus in his house for four weeks after his return from Basel, between September and October 1518, even though two doctors had diagnosed his serious illness as the plague.⁹⁷ Erasmus was deeply moved by Martens' attention. He described his recovering in Martens' house with these words:

Ad Theodoricum typographum diuerto, amicum tam syncerum ut uel hoc uno beatus sim futurus, si res animo responderet. [...] Postridie accerso chirurgum. [...] Abiens chirurgus clam dicit Theodorico et famulo peste essem. [...] Post dies aliquot uenit chirurgi pater, incipit, idem iudicat, et in os asseuerat germanam esse pestem. [...] Apud Theodoricum curatus fere quatuor hebdomadis in cubiculum meum remigraui.

So I took refuge with Dirk the printer, such a good friend that I could be happy with him alone if things went as I could wish. [...] Next day I sent for a surgeon [...]. As the surgeon went away he told Dirk and my servant in confidence that it was the plague [...]. Some days later the surgeon's father came and examined me; he was of the same opinion and assured me to my face that it was a genuine case of plague [...]. My recovery in Dirk's house lasted some four weeks, and I went back to my own rooms.⁹⁸

Erasmus did not forget that he was in business with Martens. He even defended Martens' interests against his colleagues, avoiding a commercial conflict with Basel. On December 5, 1517, Erasmus received a letter written by Beatus Rhenanus, on behalf of the Froben firm, in which he complained that Martens printed the *princeps* of Paul's letter to the Romans. Erasmus answered Rhenanus the next day that it would be uncivil to compete with Martens, the *pauperculus* ('little poor') printer.⁹⁹ He added that:

Paraphrasin eram missurus Basileam, libellum ut coniectabam uendibilem. Caeterum cum uiderem nihil omnino adferri, suspicabar eos esse plus satis oneratos; itaque commisi huic nostro.

⁹⁷ On his travel, see: Gibaud 1985.

⁹⁸ Allen III (1915), ep. 867, l. 195-249 (translation: CWE 6 [1982], ep. 867, l. 210-267).

⁹⁹ Allen III (1915), ep. 732, l. 19-21 (translation: CWE 5 [1979], ep. 732, l. 20-24). Bibliographical reference of this edition: USTC 441213.

I had in mind to send my paraphrase to Basel – a book that will sell, I thought. But when I saw that nothing whatever came, I suspected that they had too much work, and so I gave it to this man here.¹⁰⁰

Martens' edition did not satisfy Erasmus. A copy with some revisions by him was sent to Rhenanus, as well as to other friends such as Peter Giles.¹⁰¹ This act is not so innocent as it seems: Froben published the revised version in January 1518.¹⁰² Erasmus also used Martens to take 'revenge' on Froben who had published in 1518 an unauthorized version of his *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae*, conceived in Paris in 1498.¹⁰³ Lambertus Hollo-nius, Froben's proof-reader, obtained this manuscript by fraud (did he steal it from Erasmus in Louvain or purchase a copy?). Froben reissued the text in 1519.¹⁰⁴ Very angry, Erasmus disowned the Basel edition and gave to Martens the first authorized and expanded edition, printed on March 1, 1519, with these words in the title *per Erasmus recognita* ('reviewed by Erasmus').¹⁰⁵ Six months later, Martens was charged with issuing a revised version.¹⁰⁶ The Louvain printer challenged his colleague by copying the typical Froben's title-page frame, substituting his device for Froben's.¹⁰⁷ Erasmus was above all a pragmatist. He managed to create a certain closeness and friendship with Martens, but he will defend Martens' interests only if he defends his own interests first. Some printers complained to him about this, as Josse Bade on September 29, 1516:



¹⁰⁰ Allen III (1915), ep. 732, l. 15-18 (translation: CWE 5 [1979], ep. 732, l. 17-20).

¹⁰¹ Allen III (1915), ep. 732, l. 18-19; ep. 736, l. 19-20 (translation: CWE 5 [1979], ep. 732, l. 20; ep. 736, l. 22-23). None of the five copies still preserved bears Erasmus' manuscript corrections (Brussels, Royal Library, Inc A 1.951; Cologne, Stadtbibliothek, GB IV 3810; Cambridge, University Library, Syn.6.51.18; Oxford, Bodleian, Anitq.e.N.1517.1, Don.e.8/3). We want to thank all the conservators of these libraries for their help. The dispatching of this edition by Erasmus is studied in Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 83-84.

¹⁰² USTC 665618.

¹⁰³ USTC 657249.

¹⁰⁴ USTC 655634.

¹⁰⁵ USTC 403077.

¹⁰⁶ USTC 437048.

¹⁰⁷ On this case, see: Bierlaire 1977, p. 13-20; Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 97-100.

Itaque e re nostra faceres si uni unam operam addiceres, nec prius quam illius exempla distraxerit immutes; quod in Similium opera seruasti ex parte, si priorem impressorem [Mathias Schürer] praemonuisti, et Theodericum [Martens] ad ea impri-menda non es hortatus.

It would thus be greatly to our advantage if you would assign each individual work to a single printer, and not to revise it until he had sold off all the copies; a practice which you have observed in the *Parabola* to some extent, if you have given your previous printer [Mathias Schürer] prior warning, and not encouraged Martens to print it.¹⁰⁸

Erasmus' stay in the Low Countries ended in October 1521. He returned then to Basel to Froben's printing house. The Alost printer will no longer receive any *princeps*. Martens' name will occur sporadically in the correspondence of Erasmus. In November 1527, Conradus Goclenius, professor of Latin at the *Collegium Trilingue* and Erasmus' representative in the Low Countries, mentioned the epitaph written by Erasmus. Martens is portrayed as an old man (he is 80 years old), consumed by the gout and a widower, who has survived all his children.¹⁰⁹ In any event, the collaboration with Erasmus was very beneficial for Martens: his printing house became one of the centres of the Northern humanist community for a few years. As Catherine Kikuchi showed in her study on printing networks in Venice in the fifteenth century, each actor (authors, printers...) acquires a status in the prism of his relations.¹¹⁰ So, thanks to Erasmus, Martens was symbolically perceived by his fellows as a humanist printer.

'Accuratissime recognita', Martens' Collaborators

Dirk Martens did not work only with Erasmus. He co-operated with different scholars. The first documented is a student of the Canon Law Faculty of Louvain (*scholasticus iuris pontificii*), Johannes de Luxembourg (*Johannes Lu(c)enborchensis*). He cor-

¹⁰⁸ Allen II (1910), ep. 472, l. 9-13 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 472, l. 11-16).

¹⁰⁹ Allen VII (1928), ep. 1899, l. 67-84. Erasmus made a mistake. Martens' daughter Barbara was still alive in 1527.

¹¹⁰ Kikuchi 2018, par. 13.

rected the proofs of *Declamatio philosophi, medici et oratoris de excellentia dispuantium* by Filippo Beroaldo and *Praeconia Mariae* by Petrarca both printed in 1501 in a single volume.¹¹¹ His name also appears in the colophon of Bonaccorso da Pistoia's *Declamatio de nobilitate*, published in Louvain on December 1, 1501.¹¹² Nothing more was heard of Johannes de Luxembourg after these publications.¹¹³

The publication of Angelo Poliziano's *Epistolae lepidissimae* in Antwerp on May 4, 1510, marks the beginning of regular cooperation between Martens and renowned scholars for the preparation and supervision of his productions.¹¹⁴ A man whom we have already met edited this book: Peter Giles. Historians traditionally traced the beginnings of the collaboration between Giles and Martens to the years 1503-1504 when Erasmus was reviewing his proofs of the *Gratulatorius Panegyricus ad Philippum Archiducem Austriae*. Still according to these historians, their mutual friendship would have started in Martens' printing house.¹¹⁵ There is no evidence to support this hypothesis, either in the correspondence of Erasmus or in Martens' publications.¹¹⁶

However, printing Poliziano's *Epistolae* reviewed by Giles is a milestone in the career of Martens. This was a crucial step for a typographer wanting to address humanist customers. It is well known that these scholars highly appreciated the aesthetics of books, but their priority was mainly focused on the philological qualities of a text. For example, Ermolao Barbaro did not hesitate to correct himself a large number of copies of his *Castigationes Pliniana*e printed in Rome by Eucharius Silber 1492-1493, despite the presence of an important *erratum*, because he was dissatisfied with the printing.¹¹⁷ Similarly, Martens apologized

¹¹¹ USTC 438256.

¹¹² USTC 400228.

¹¹³ There is no record of Johannes Lu(c)enborchensis' matriculation. There is a *Johannes Balistarius de Lutsenburgho* registered on August 22, 1500, but the length of studies in the Faculty of Arts is of 24 months. Therefore, he cannot be a member of Canon Law Faculty after only one year in Arts (Wils 1946, p. 202, no. 121).

¹¹⁴ USTC 404689.

¹¹⁵ De Le Court 1880-1883; Nauwelaerts 1986.

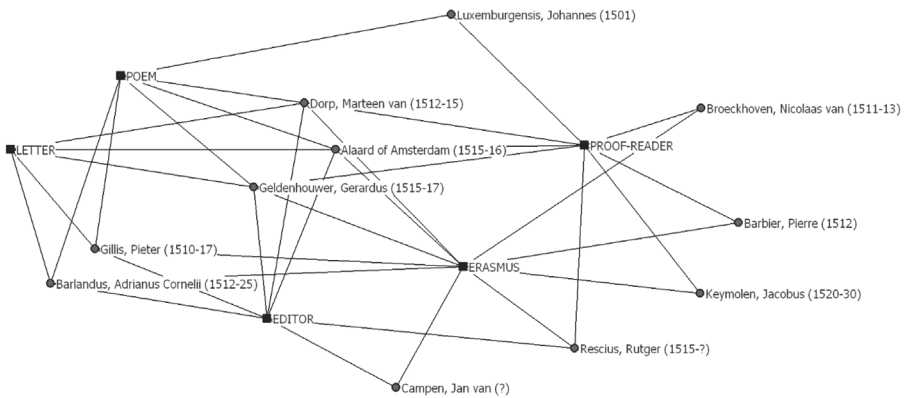
¹¹⁶ Adam & Vantautgaerden, p. 75-76.

¹¹⁷ ISTC ib00100000. See: Charlet & Hirstein 2003.

to his customers in the *erratum* of Erasmus' *Apologia ad Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem*, issued in 1517, for the misprints left by the carelessness of his workers.¹¹⁸

Dirk Martens gathered around him a cénacle of humanists who worked directly with him and some even became close friends. The below map illustrates the Martens' galaxy. There are five nodes: four describing which job was done for Martens (proof-reading, editing, writing letters or poems) and a fifth to illustrate connections with Erasmus. This map was conceived from information contained in the colophons, in the prefatory letters, on the title pages where the different types of interventions (proof-reading, editing...) are specified. Erasmus' correspondence has allowed me to clarify the existence of links between the Dutch humanist and all these men.

Scholars acquainted with the ideas of the Renaissance and also close to Erasmus surrounded Dirk Martens. They are, in the chronological order of their collaboration: Johannes de Luxembourg (1501), Peter Giles (1510-1517), Nicolaas van Broeckhoven (1511-1513), Pierre Barbier (1512-1513), Adrianus Cornelii Barlandus (1512-1525), Maarten van Dorp (1512-1515), Alaard of Amsterdam (1515-1517), Gerard Geldenhouwer (1515-1516),



MAP 1
Erasmus' circle activity in Martens' printing house

¹¹⁸ USTC 400368 (f. 43v). The text is edited in Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 170-171, text 9.

Rutger Rescius (1516-?), Jacobus Keymolen (c. 1520-1530) and Jan van Campen (?).¹¹⁹ Some of these collaborators worked with Martens occasionally, as for example Johannes de Luxembourg, others more frequently. Adrianus Barlandus worked the longest, from 1512 to 1525.

Who were these men? Some of them were promising scholars such as Nicolaas van Broeckhoven, who taught at St Martin's school before leading the Latin School of Antwerp in 1517, or Pierre Barbier, who would serve as chaplain and secretary of Chancellor Jean Le Sauvage from 1516. Others were personalities from the academic world such as Adrianus Barlandus, professor of Philosophy; Rescius, appointed in September 1518 to the chair of Greek at the *Collegium Trilingue*; Maarten van Dorp, at that time professor of Latin in the Faculty of Arts; and Jan van Campen, professor of Hebrew at the *Collegium Trilingue*.¹²⁰ Alaard of Amsterdam taught for a while at Alkmaar before coming to Louvain. Gerard Geldenhouwar was in the service of Charles V, attached to Philip of Burgundy, admiral of Flanders, who afterwards became bishop of Utrecht.

One of Martens' employees has not yet received particular attention: Jacobus Keymolen Alostensis, formerly known as Jacobus Alostensis.¹²¹ His name is documented for the first time in a letter written by Conrad Goclenius to Erasmus on July 14, 1530. Erasmus was looking for a *famulus* ('servant').¹²² Goclenius was thinking that *Jacobus*, who had been in the *durissimum ministerium* ('severe service') of Martens for approximately ten years and whose hands were experts in Latin and Greek, would be an ideal candidate for the job. This is the reason why *Jacobus* was sent to Erasmus. The next year, on November 19, 1531, Jakob Jespersen informed Erasmus that *Jacobus Alostensis* had not returned to Louvain. The man had replaced Jespersen as a Greek teacher to Jacopo Canta, chamberlain to Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio.

¹¹⁹ More information on their work in: Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 75-86.

¹²⁰ There is a question mark beside the name of Jan van Campen because his name cannot be found in any of Martens' works. It is more than likely that the professor of Hebrew helped Martens to print his publication in Hebrew for students of the *Collegium Trilingue* where Campen taught.

¹²¹ Nauwelaerts 1986.

¹²² On Erasmus' servants, see: Bierlaire 1968.

and had been sent to Italy where he was in charge of a printing house.¹²³ Jespersen did not specify the location of this workshop. I discovered it in Bologna where five books were printed by *Jacobus Keymolen Alostensis/Giacopo Keymolen* between November 1532 and March 1535: two editions of *L'ambasciaria di David re dell'Etiopia al santissimo signore nostro Clemente papa VII* and its Latin version, a *Tabula* of Justinian's *Institutes* and the *De coena ac prandii portione* by the physician Luciano Bello.¹²⁴ Keymolen had a career similar to those of many who could not make their fortune in the book industry, wandering from one city to another.

The choice of the typographer focused on people involved in his direct environment. In Antwerp, he enlisted the services of Peter Giles; in Louvain, he chose members of the Faculty. Unfortunately, a number of them did not always sign their work, which prevents us from knowing all the efforts made by some. The best example is Rutger Rescius. His shadow hovers over the Hellenistic orientation of the editorial choices made by Martens at the end of his career, when Martinus published more books in Greek than in Latin.¹²⁵

An important question remains: were Martens' collaborators all linked together? We have seen that they had close connections with Erasmus, but what about among each other? The map on the next page – based on their correspondence, the works they produced together and on biographical information¹²⁶ – will answer this question.

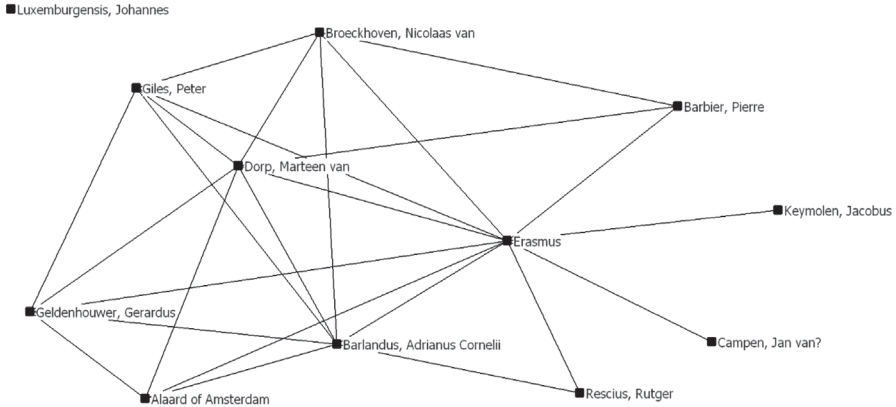
This map shows a real network highly connected. Erasmus had links with all of them (except Luxemburgensis), but a lot of them also had interconnections with each other. Maarten van Dorp and Adrianus Barlandus are the more connected to this group, each connected to seven members. Some of them were even close friends. Peter Giles dedicated his edition of Rudolf Agri-

¹²³ Allen IX (1938), ep. 2570, l. 53-57 (this letter has not yet been translated in CWE).

¹²⁴ EDIT-16 1499-1500, 4974, 36314, 67645. Keymolen's activities in Bologna are briefly described in: Sorbelli 1929, p. 97-98; Serra-Zanetti 1959, p. 43.

¹²⁵ Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 64.

¹²⁶ Tools used: NK, USTC, Daxhelet 1938; De Vocht 1928; 1934; 1950; Bietenholz 1986-1987.



MAP 2
Martens' collaborators' connections

cola's works to his *amicus* ('friend') Maarten van Dorp, printed by Martens on January 31, 1512.¹²⁷ Obviously, the two men did not know each other before they had come into contact through Nicolaas van Broeckhoven, who frequented Dorp in the College of Lily, one of the colleges of the university.¹²⁸ Giles and Dorp introduced Geldenhouwer to Erasmus. The same Geldenhouwer wrote a prefatory letter dedicated to his *amicus* ('friend') Barlandus in the Plinius Minor's *Epistole familiares* commented by the latter and printed by Martens in April 1516.¹²⁹ So, there are strong and plentiful links between these men, except for Johannes de Luxembourg who was not a member of this humanist circle.

Involvement in Martens' workshop is often mentioned in the correspondence of these humanists. Maarten van Dorp wrote to Erasmus in September 1514 explaining to him that he was in charge of the edition of his *Cato*:

Catonem abs te castigatum mihi que creditum castigate impressit [Dirk Martens], me errorum uindice.

The *Cato* you corrected and entrusted to me he has printed very accurately, and I corrected the mistakes.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ USTC 403652. On the dating of this book, see our remarks in: Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 75-76.

¹²⁸ Adam & Vanautgaerden 2009, p. 83.

¹²⁹ USTC 407308. This letter is edited in: Daxhelet 1938, p. 263-264.

¹³⁰ Allen II (1910), ep. 304, l. 156-157 (translation: CWE 3 [1976], ep. 304, l. 174-176). Bibliographical reference of this edition: USTC 442211.

Another example is given by a letter Rutger Rescius wrote to Erasmus on March 8, 1517. Rescius was preparing an edition of Erasmus' collections of letters under the supervision of Peter Giles. He asked Erasmus:

Theodericus igitur hac epistolae parte excudenda relicta in praesentia ad te ipsum exemplar mittit, obnixè orans ut super istius loci lectione sibi quamprimum sententiam tuam aperias. Praeterea cupit, si quid sit quod epistolarum praefationi subiungi queat commode, id ad se dari. Reseruauit enim ei integram pagellam utrinque mundam, quum dimidiam uix partem occupabit.

Dirk has therefore left this part of the letter to be printed later, and sends you the actual copy, begging you to let him know what you want done about the reading in this place as soon as possible. He would also be glad, if there is anything that could conveniently be added to the preface of the letters, if it might be sent to him. He kept for it a whole page blank on both sides, while it will hardly fill half of it.¹³¹

It seems that Erasmus did not answer because Martens had to fill the blank with a prefatory by Peter Giles dedicated to a member of the Antwerp city council, Gaspard van Halmale, and an index table. As we have already seen with the *Utopia*, this example shows that these scholars frequently worked in teams, dividing among them the various tasks of the editing job.

They also provided to Martens material for publication. Alaard of Amsterdam, for example, delivered the autograph manuscript of Rudolf Agricola's *De inuentione dialecta*, which was printed on January 12, 1515.¹³² Alaard of Amsterdam ensured the supervision of the edition with Maarten van Dorp and Gerard Geldenhower. Alaard of Amsterdam was paid 20 ducats for proof-reading this manuscript.¹³³ The same also worked with other printers. He gave the manuscript of the future Adrian VI's *Computus* to Michiel Hillen, who printed the book in February 1520.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Allen II (1910), ep. 546, l. 9-14 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 546, l. 10-15).

¹³² USTC 400342.

¹³³ Alaard of Amsterdam mentioned it in another edition of Agricola's work (Agricola 1539, p. 205).

¹³⁴ USTC 410677. The colophon reads: *Impressum Antuerpiae diligentissime ex exemplari Alardi Amstelredami.* (f. 8v) ('Printed diligently in Antwerp on the basis of Alaard of Amsterdam's exemplar').

The function of these humanists could therefore be similar *mutatis mutandis* to the job of the director of a collection that we see nowadays in publishing houses. Their tasks consist indeed of reviewing the latest proofs, advising the boss in his editorial choices and getting in touch with authors.

The correspondence of Erasmus provides a good deal of evidence on the links that bound Dirk Martens to the humanist community of the Low Countries. One of the most delicious anecdotes is the description by Maarten van Dorp of a Bruegelian meal with the printer on the occasion of the visit of Jacobus Nepos, a *famulus* of Erasmus, in July 1518:

Litteras tuas, ornatissime Erasme, non dici potest quam acceperim cupide; tum autem quam gestienter audierim uel Iacobum tuum aduentasse: porro ut iniunxerim Theodorico nostro, Bacchi mystae, ne quo illum pacto sineret abire quin colloqueremur, quin pranderemus una. [...] Et ecce dum nos fabulamur maxime, Theodoricus potitat maxime partesque agitatur suas haud quaquam instrennue, ne ipse quidem interim otiosus a fabulis. Omnibus paene linguis, loquitur dixerim an obturbat? Germanica, Gallica, Italica, Latina; ut in hoc apostolicum quempiam renatum credas; ut uel Hieronymum quamuis multilinguem, si non elegantia, numero tamen linguarum ausit prouocare.

The receipt of your letter, dear Erasmus and most honoured friend, gave me unspeakable satisfaction, and no less was the pleasure with which I heard of the arrival of your man Jacobus; so much that I promptly instructed our friend Dirk, that devotee of Bacchus, on no account to let him depart until we could have a talk, until we could dine together [...] While we were absorbed in conversation, picture Dirk absorbed in drinking, and by no means slow to play his part, for he too was meanwhile left out of the conversation. He spoke, or should I say interrupted, in almost all languages – German, French, Italian, Latin – so that you might suppose he was some character from the apostolic age reborn, and he bravely challenged Jerome, the great linguist, not perhaps in elegance but in the number of tongues he spoke.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Allen III (1910), ep. 852, l. 1-15 (translation: CWE 6 [1982], ep. 852, l. 2-18).

When he is mentioned in the correspondence between humanists of the former Low Countries, Dirk Martens is not presented as just any printer, but as a full member of their inner circle. He is usually mentioned in familiar terms. As we have seen, Gerard Geldenhower wrote to Erasmus that *Theodoricus noster* ('our Dirk') agreed to publish the *Utopia* of Thomas More. Later, when Peter de Corte gave some details on the activity of Martens' presses to Franciscus Cranevelt, member of the Great Council of Mechelen, he spoke about *prelo Alostensis nostri* ('the press of our man from Alost').¹³⁶ For some humanists, Martens' workshop was more than merely a place they frequented for professional reasons.

This relationship between Martens and Giles was epitomized by a close personal friendship. When travelling in Antwerp, Martens did not hesitate to pay a visit to the town clerk. These meetings provided a place where they could catch up on the latest news as, for example, when in April 1517 Martens told Giles of the warm and friendly reception given by the theologians at Louvain to Erasmus.¹³⁷ Maybe Martens was with Giles on that day when Thomas More – who had been at divine offices in Notre Dame – was returning to his lodging when he happened to see Giles in conversation:

cum hospite quodam, uergentis ad senium aetatis, uultu adusto, promissa barba, penula neglectim ab humero dependente, qui mihi ex uultu atque habitu nauclerus esse uidabitur.

with a stranger, a man of advanced years, with sunburnt countenance and long beard and cloak hanging carelessly from his shoulder, while his appearance and dress seemed to be those of a ship's captain, (named Raphael Hythlodæus).¹³⁸

It would better explain why Martens was chosen to print *Utopia*...

¹³⁶ De Vocht 1928, p. 365-366, ep. 135, l. 11-16. Cranevelt's network was studied by Verweij 2009.

¹³⁷ Allen II (1910), ep. 515, l. 5-7 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 515, l. 7-9).

¹³⁸ More 1965, p. 48, l. 18-23 (translation: More 1965, p. 49, l. 20-23).

*

To conclude, although not strictly speaking a humanist, Martens can be considered as a crucial link in the scientific community of the Low Countries in the early sixteenth century. He introduced the use of three alphabets (Greek, Hebrew and italic) and generalized the use of Roman types. He is also the first to print in the Low Countries a novel written by an Italian humanist. His workshop was a centre of intellectual production of these regions and a meeting place for his network of humanists. The printing of *Utopia* shows that, for a time, Martens was at the centre of the Northern humanist world. Erasmus had certainly a key role, but it would not have happened without the help of the humanists Martens gathered around him. These men, like today's directors of collection, reviewed the latest proofs, advised him in his editorial choices and get in touch with authors. Some even played a crucial role, like Rescius who, at the end of Martens' career, probably became the editorial director of the workshop. This first study on the Leuven printer's networks also allowed us to reveal how close these scientists were to 'their' printer, but also how they were well-connected together.¹³⁹ The conclusion may return to Erasmus himself who said about Martens in a letter to Guillaume Budé, on February 15, 1517:

Unicum hunc habemus τυπογράφον και τοῦτόν γε ἄξιον ἡμῶν.
we have one printer there and the sort of printer we deserve.¹⁴⁰



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Abbreviations

EDIT-16 = *Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del XVI secolo* (<http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/>).

ISTC = *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue* (https://data.cerl.org/istc/_search).

¹³⁹ I have studied the problematic of printers' network in the Early Modern Low Countries in: Adam 2018, vol. 1, p. 180-205. For the fifteenth century Venice, see Kikuchi 2018.

¹⁴⁰ Allen II (1910), ep. 531, l. 524-526 (translation: CWE 4 [1977], ep. 531, l. 583-584).

NK = W. Nijhoff & M. E. Kronenberg, *Nederlandsche bibliographie van 1500 tot 1540*, 3 vols, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1923-1971.
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Abstract

This chapter explores the nature of collaborations between a printer and humanists, through the analysis of the printing process of the first edition of Thomas More’s *Utopia*. More chose the printer Dirk Martens, from Louvain, under the guidance of his friend Erasmus, who was living in Brabant at that time and was working directly with this printer, even in his workshop. With this choice, Erasmus offered to Thomas More the opportunity to have members of their common circle monitor closely the printing of *Utopia*, do the proof-reading and direct the publishing. This well-documented case will help us to study the role and the composition of the network of humanists working closely with Martens. It will also give us an opportunity to describe the key role Erasmus played in the humanist book market in the Low Countries and, more specifically, to depict the relationships between him and the printer of *Utopia*.

