

Erasmus
School of
Philosophy

Who was this Erasmus anyway?

EUR International Partners Day – 25 September 2023

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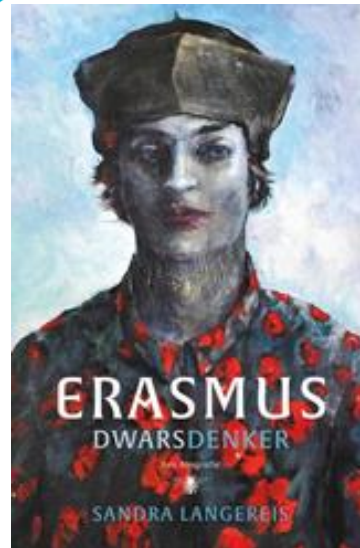
Erasmus University Rotterdam

The Erasmus University logo, featuring the word "Erasmus" in a white, cursive script font.

Erasmus
School of
Philosophy

Erasmus of Rotterdam

1469 – 1536



3 Famous Portraits



Erasmus

Close to the *Laurenskerk*...



Erasmus

Renaissance – or no?

- Gouda 1475
- Deventer 1478
- 's-Hertogenbosch 1484
- Stein 1487



Erasmus

Erasmus to Servaas



“If it were possible, I should have wished you might care for me as I do for you and that you might feel the pangs of love for me as sharply as I am constantly tortured by my desire for you”;

“I suspect (...) you have not yet become persuaded of my supreme love for you”;

“the wakeful hours [are] an annoyance, my sleep [is] restless, all my food tasteless (...) when I am deprived of you”; “each time I seem to see you in my heart, tears suddenly burst from my eyes.” “It was not possible, believe me, to write out even this letter without weeping a lot”;

“it will in any case be sweet to be happy, to cry, to live and to die with you”; “my love for you is and always has been so deep, dearest Servaas, that I value you more than my own eyes, my soul or, in a word, myself (...)”; “For you are ever on my lips and in my heart; you are my only hope, the half of my soul, the consolation of my life”;

“Spare your lover, please (...).”

A stylized signature of Erasmus in black cursive script, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

Educator and Influencer

- Books on language and style
- Books on manners & education
- *Adagia*: proverb collections
- *Colloquia*: short stories
- Translations from ancient Greek
- Editions of ancient authors
- Editions of the Church Fathers
- Bible Commentaries
- A new translation of the NT
- Moral works (*Praise of Folly*)
... &c., &c.



Erasmus

Around 1500



Erasmus

Folly

The Praise of Folly (1511)



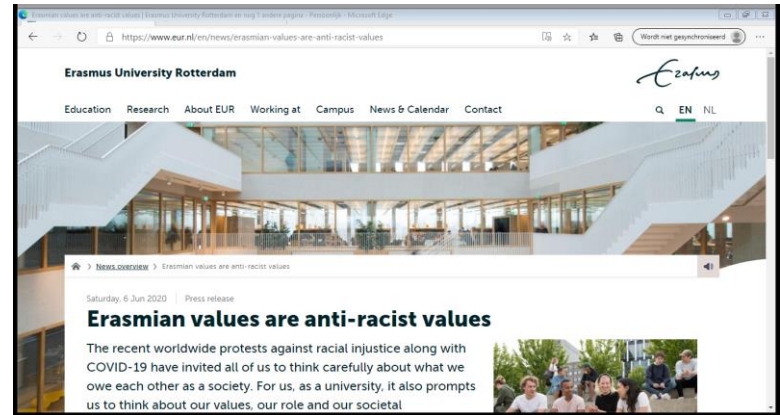
- The folly of failure
- The folly of *furor*
- The folly of faith

Erasmus

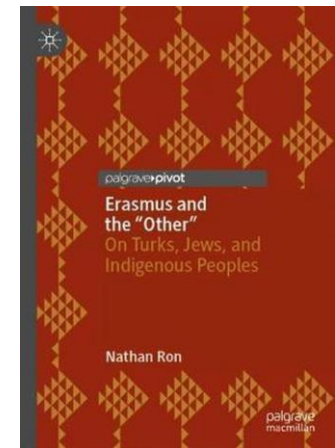
Our world and earlier values...

EUR, 6 June 2020:

Erasmian Values...



...and
Erasmus:
a racist?



The Erasmus University logo, featuring the word "Erasmus" in a stylized, cursive script.

Another thorny example: *EM*, 7 December 2021

~~So a woman will
be a woman, a fool,
whatever disguise
she takes up~~



From 'The Praise of Folly' by Erasmus

Erasmus

Folly

The Praise of Folly (1511)

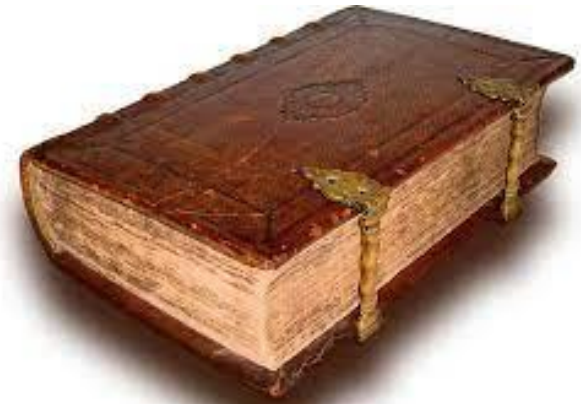
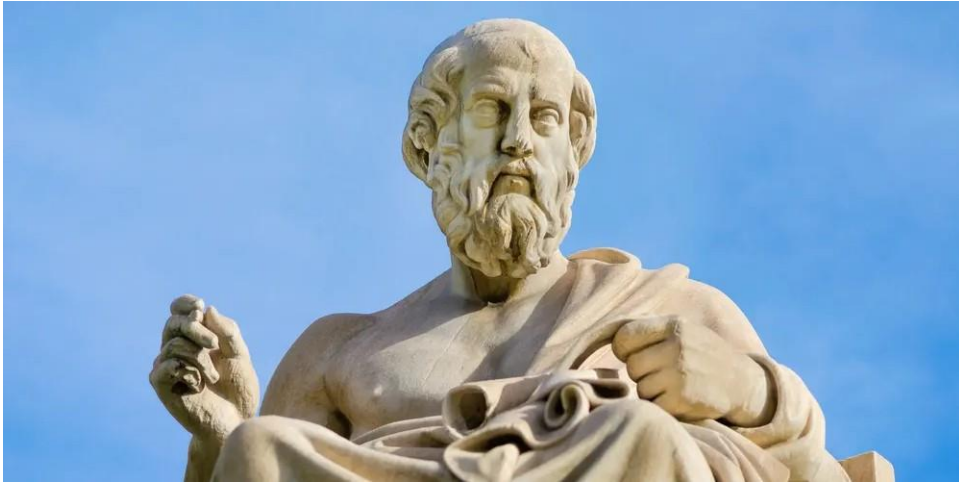


The Fringy Folly of Religion and Philosophy:

- Not a question of 'being yourself'
- Rather: a non-natural form of mental transformation; the 'conversion' to 'Reason'

Erasmus

The Classics, Christianity – and us!



Plato

Jesus Christ

Moral and Political Values

- Justice
- The Rule of Law



Erasmus

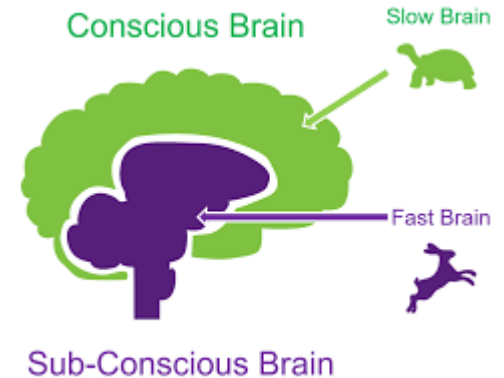
Erasmus Today



Erasmus

Erasmus' "Philosophical Humanism"

The essence of a moral standpoint:
→ to overcome one's biases



The means:

→ the mental software of
education and schooling



The aims:

→ *idealism without dogma*
→ the primacy of practice



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Strategy 2024: “Erasmian Values”

Being an Erasmian is:

- Socially engaged
- World citizen
- Connecting
- Entrepreneurial
- Open-minded



Erasmus

The first European – premodern, but still relevant



Erasmus