

## **Montaigne's Observations of The Human Worldview**

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**Abstract.** *The article deals with the figure of the greatest thinker of the European Renaissance, a prominent public and political figure in France of the era of Henry IV Michel Montaigne (1533-1592), who had a significant impact on the development of linguistic and cultural thought of the era and who is rightfully considered the last humanist of the Renaissance and the first moralist of that Time. His observations about human outlook greatly influenced on the philosophers and scholars of that time and modern world. His work "Experiments" is considered the first of the artistic genre-essay at the time.*

**Key words:** *thinker, Experiments, Renaissance, genre, humanist, cultural studies, peculiarities, worldview, essay, essay genre, development of philosophy, Modern times.*

### **Introduction**

Not someone from the outside, but the thinker himself, by nature, by his inner needs, always philosophizes, since he cannot but reflect on himself in relation to the "other". The fact of a person's awareness of his uniqueness in the world and his mortality in the face of the eternal world makes him come out to comprehend the basic connections of the "I" and the rest of the "world".

Throughout his essays, Montaigne re-tells different stories to convey the idea that our brain can control all of our physical reactions without the need to be touched. At the beginning of the essays, he tells the story of someone who died even before being executed. This person's imagination went beyond and he feared so much what would happen to him next that he provoked his own death. This is the case for many humans since when we allow our mind to wander, depending on our thoughts this can provoke different physical reactions such as dizziness or nauseous when we are afraid. Montaigne tries to demonstrate that our brain is responsible for everything, including its own name and all our thoughts about it.

### **Materials and methods**

It was infinitely important for a person to know the very essential not only in relation to innate or social phenomena with all their diversity, but also, and perhaps above all, in relation to himself, his inner world, the spiritual worlds of other people. And this was not an idle interest, but a deep, constant, vital practical need. Without her permanent satisfaction, at least to a certain extent, it was impossible to assess human existence.

### **Results and discussions**

The Renaissance is an epoch of outstanding time in the development of the culture of Western and Central Europe, covering mainly the XIV-XVI centuries. It is usually associated primarily with spiritual progress in Italy. This time is described as a transitional period from Middle Ages to modern times. Its main feature was a universal impulse to liberate oneself from the centuries-old unlimited

dominance of the church and theology. In essence, it was the greatest progressive revolution in the history of mankind, an era that needed titans and that gave birth to titans in power of thought, passion and character, in versatility and scholarship.

Outstanding scientists, painters, sculptors, poets, politicians, public figures such as Nicolas Copernicus, Pico della Mirandola, Leonardo da Vinci, Niccollo Machiavelli, Albrecht Durer, Martin Luther, Thomas More, Francis Bacon, Shakespeare and a lot of others. The most vividly new tendencies were manifested in the position of humanism, as well as natural, based on science and reason, and not on religion and theology, the perception of the world. It would be naive to believe that in that distant era, immediately after more than a thousand-year domination of the Middle Ages, the great representatives of the Renaissance, and even more so, the broad masses, could abandon religion. The peculiarity of this cultural era was that the titans of the Renaissance first put forward new, humanistic ideals. Very subtly and, at the same time, decisively, they affirmed a new understanding of Christianity, containing at its core the free, full of dignity and creatively active personality of Man. The former unambiguous, imposed by coercion and repression, physical and moral reprisals against dissidents (inquisition) understanding, recognizing only the insignificance and sinfulness of man, was rejected by them.

The creators of the Renaissance drew the strength and energy for such a statement from the inexhaustible power of the ancient philosophy revived by their efforts. Some of them resolutely rejected both the church and theology, however, both they and those who remained within the framework of Christianity gave a fundamentally new status and new content to their contemporary culture. Although they did not create special philosophical concepts, but throughout their lives, intense searches, research in science, painting, sculpture, poetry and other fields, with all their creativity, they created and passionately defended a new philosophy of life. At its center is the power and strength of the human mind, the invincibility of the human spirit, the beauty of his body, lofty thoughts and creative daring.

The most outstanding representatives of the Renaissance are striking in their fierce passion for knowledge, for tireless creative work in the most diverse fields, for their striving for the ideal. All of them ardently and sincerely wished to be equal members of the "Republic of Mind". They were able to pull a person out of the state of humiliation, in which Middle Ages kept him, were able to make him the center of the Universe, the master of life, the creator of all values.

The spiritual core of all creations of the geniuses of the Renaissance is a hymn to Man. In an incredible effort, they created unsurpassed cultural masterpieces. They have reached the ultimate for their era, the height of creativity and depth of thought. They passed on to new generations the strength of their unyielding spirit, the heroism of the fight against all that is dead, obsolete, limiting and humiliating man. The value of the life and work of all the creators of the Renaissance is immeasurably high for that and all subsequent eras. It is difficult to single out one of them without naming the other.

Special attention should be paid to the development of cultural and philosophical thought in the Renaissance, where rationalist philosophy in France was represented by the humanist Michel Montaigne (1533-1592). The great humanist philosopher Michel de Montaigne, who came from a wealthy merchant family, received an excellent education, and put an end to the cultural development of France in the 16th century.

Glory to Montaigne was brought by his "Les Essais" - "Experiments" (1580-1588), written in the solitude of the ancestral castle of Montaigne near Bordeaux, which gave the name to a whole direction of European literature - essayism. It was a philosophical encyclopedia, the main idea of which was the idea of the supremacy of reason. The book-essay, marked by freethinking and a kind of skeptical humanism, is a summary of judgments about everyday morals and principles of human behavior in various circumstances. Sharing the idea of pleasure as the goal of human existence, Montaigne interprets it in the Epicurean spirit - accepting everything that is released to man by nature. In addition to a new attitude towards antiquity and a new attitude towards Christianity - aspects of the Renaissance

culture, each with its own meaning, there is also the problem of interaction and overlapping them of interaction and combination of historically divorced, arguing spiritual heritage. It is very important that the Renaissance - for the first time - realized and set itself this precisely as a problem. Without this duality of cultural material, the Renaissance would not have taken place not only in the genetic, but also in the structural sense [1; 10].

Critical studies of the Essays have, until recently, been mainly of a literary nature. However, to consider Montaigne as a writer rather than as a philosopher can be a way of ignoring a disturbing thinker. Indeed, he shook some fundamental aspects of Western thought, such as the superiority we assign to man over animals,[2] to European civilization over “Barbarians”,[3] or to reason as an alleged universal standard. A tradition rooted in the 19th century tends to relegate his work to the status of literary impressionism or to the expression of a frivolous subjectivity. To do him justice, one needs to bear in mind the inseparable unity of thought and style in his work. Montaigne’s repeated revisions of his text, as modern editions show with the three letters A, B, C, standing for the three main editions, mirror the relationship between the activity of his thought and the Essays as a work in progress. The Essays display both the laboriousness and the delight of thinking.

In Montaigne we have a writer whose work is deeply infused by philosophical thought. One verse out of sixteen in Lucretius’ *De natura rerum* is quoted in the Essays [2]. If it is true, as Edmund Husserl said, that philosophy is a shared endeavor, Montaigne is perhaps the most exemplary of philosophers since his work extensively borrows and quotes from others. Montaigne managed to internalize a huge breadth of reading, so that his erudition does not appear as such. He created a most singular work, yet one that remains deeply rooted in the community of poets, historians, and philosophers. His decision to use only his own judgment in dealing with all sorts of matters, his resolutely distant attitude towards memory and knowledge, his warning that we should not mix God or transcendent principles with the human world, are some of the key elements that characterize Montaigne’s position. As a humanist, he considered that one has to assimilate the classics, but above all to display virtue, “according to the opinion of Plato, who says that steadfastness, faith, and sincerity are real philosophy, and the other sciences which aim at other things are only powder and rouge.

The significance for a person of philosophical knowledge about both the external and internal worlds was equal in size and equal. It was infinitely important for a person to know the very essential not only in relation to innate or social phenomena with all their diversity, but also, and perhaps above all, in relation to himself, his inner world, the spiritual worlds of other people. And this was not an idle interest, but a deep, constant, vital practical need. Without her permanent satisfaction, at least to a certain extent, it was impossible to assess human existence. Not someone from the outside, but the thinker himself, by nature, by his inner needs, always philosophizes, since he cannot but reflect on himself in relation to the “other”.

In addition, sociality was refracted in a new way in the very nature of the Renaissance creative environment and began to speak in the language of cultural values [5;153]. But culture does not simply reflect the historical situation, but, in turn, permeates and recreates it. The humanistic stratum of society of that historical period, which developed new ideas, was simultaneously formed under the influence of these ideas [3; 26]. As many researchers emphasize, in the biographies of humanists, in their academic studies, in their correspondence, in speeches and habits, the same general meaning, the same problems and contradictions are found as in the treatises, poems, paintings of that time: the typological qualities of culture as a whole ... We can say that in this plane, humanism can be understood as an internal definition of the entire Renaissance cultural world. As L.P. Batkin rightly points out, the Renaissance is a humanistic type of culture; humanism, on the other hand, is a Renaissance phenomenon and its unique manifestation is a completely concrete and unique Western European spiritual phenomenon [1;13].

## **Conclusion**

The Renaissance epoch for the most developed European countries was the time of the birth of capitalist relations, the formation of national states and absolute monarchies, deep social and religious conflicts, the rapid development of natural science and great geographical discoveries. Therefore, one of the reasons for the emergence of the Renaissance is the economic reason, since it was a time of rapid development of crafts, the emergence and strengthening of cities (it is not for nothing that the Renaissance begins in Italy, where there were such city-states as Rome, Naples, Venice, Florence, the most developed from economic point of view). Economically free people, in order to justify and substantiate their activities, demanded a new worldview, different from that which was given by the scholastic constructions of the atomists and late nominalists, divorced from life practice, or the ascetic treatises of Catholic clergymen, monks and early Church Fathers. A different philosophy was needed, more active and oriented towards earthly goals, which did not hesitate to appear. Obviously, in addition to purely economic reasons, which undoubtedly really existed, there were other reasons, otherwise it will be difficult to explain why the Renaissance arises precisely in Western, and not in Eastern Europe, precisely among the Western and not the Eastern Christian denomination.

If being a philosopher means being insensitive to human frailties and to the evils or to the pleasures which befall us, then Montaigne is not a philosopher. If it means using a “jargon”, and being able to enter the world of scholars, then Montaigne is not one either. Yet, if being a philosopher is being able to judge properly in any circumstances of life, then the Essays are the exemplary testimony of an author who wanted to be a philosopher for good. Montaigne is putting his judgment to trial on whatever subject, in order not only to get to know its value, but also to form and strengthen it.

He manages thus to offer us a philosophy in accordance with life. As Nietzsche puts it, “that such a man has written, joy on earth has truly increased...If my task were to make this earth a home, I would attach myself to him.” Or, as Stefan Zweig said, in a context which was closer to the historical reality experienced by Montaigne himself: “Montaigne helps us answer this one question: ‘How to stay free? How to preserve our inborn clear-mindedness in front of all the threats and dangers of fanaticism, how to preserve the humanity of our hearts among the upsurge of bestiality?’”

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