

MONTAIGNE (1533-1592) and ZHUANGZI.

<Childhood and life of Montaigne>

1. He was born in a loyal family and had an idealistic education from his father.

EX> -He was raised by farmers to have affection to the normal people.

-He was taught by German who could only speak in Latin. To make Latin his mother tongue. He could use Latin fluently at the age of 6.

-Every morning he woke up listening to music.

2. Montaigne became a lawyer but retired at the age of 35.

3. His close friend, children and father died.

3. From then he spent time in a library of a tower.

He studied all kinds of books and spent time writing.

➔ The work is called ESSAIS

<ESSAIS>

➔ In the tower he wrote **whatever he wanted**.

<Format: ESSAY>

He invented the genre essay. Essay is a short, free, personal paper. He reread revised and added to the writing just like the verb 'essayer'.

<Content: I >

Doing whatever he wants to do means:

-Not being restricted

-Sometimes talkative, sometimes in silence

-Sometimes being friendly but not losing your freedom and will.

➔ He read and wrote about what he read and thought and reflected on everything he had overcome or thought.

EX> by reading ASSAIS you can tell

-He has loud voice and has strong livers and teeth. But he eventually lost teeth after turning 50.

-He loves fishes and likes meat done in rare; He loves to drink wines diluted in water whether it's red or white wine.

-He is never formal and all ways frank. He loves wandering and travelling.

He only talks about "himself" and created a human by description.

<so dear reader, I am myself the subject of my book.>

He only talks about himself; nevertheless he talks about us, humans.

***Scholars say Michel de Montaigne is the first modern man.

Modern humans want to define their selves. He is the first Self observing man. Casting the question:

'*Que sais-je?*) what do I know?'

<Self-directing man>

From only the total scene of constantly evolving I, Montaigne can reach the I, he is observing.

So he wants to describe his self totally.

To show how complex and constant change the observed I is, he has to treat himself like an object to be observed.

This observing of the I is only done from the I itself. And so the observation is always self – directing.

“When I am playing with my cat how do I know that she is not playing with me?”

<This reminds me of Zhuangzi>

莊子, Zhuāngzǐ, B.C. 369?- B.C. 286

昔者莊周爲胡蝶 然胡蝶也 自喻適志與 不知周也

俄然覺 則然周也 不知 周之夢爲胡蝶與 胡蝶之夢爲周與 周與胡蝶 則必有分矣 此之謂物化.

: Once upon a time, I, Chuang Chou, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly, unaware that I was Chou. Soon I awaked, and there I was, veritably myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man. - As translated by Lin Yutang

: Once upon a time, I, Chuang Chou, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, a veritable butterfly, enjoying itself to the full of its bent, and not knowing it was Chuang Chou. Suddenly I awoke, and came to myself, the veritable Chuang Chou. Now I do not know whether it was then I dreamt I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between me and the butterfly there must be a difference. This is an instance of transformation.- As translated by James Legge

: Once Zhuang Zhou dreamed he was a butterfly, a fluttering butterfly. What fun he had, doing as he pleased! He did not know he was Zhou. Suddenly he woke up and found himself to be Zhou. He did not know whether Zhou had dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly had dreamed he was Zhou. Between Zhou and the butterfly there must be some distinction. This is what is meant by the transformation of things.

->He and the butterfly is distinct for sure

But the reason he cannot tell if it is him or the butterfly is because he believes objects changes constantly.

➔ **1. Both authors believe in the constant changing I and the object.**

Ex>Ideas of zhuang zi

-Zhuangzi's philosophy is skeptical, arguing that life is limited and knowledge to be gained is unlimited.

-To use the limited to pursue the unlimited, is foolish.

-Our language and cognition in general presuppose a “dao, 道, 道”.

- Full and empty at the same time.

-“Dao is not something that can be expressed by words.”

But it is paradoxical to say that because Dao is already said by the word.

-“everything changes”

But paradoxical to say that because the phrase itself is not changing to mean everything changes.

➔ **2. Both authors have paradox in their ideas.**

➔ The distinction between the butterfly and I is meaningless and leads to his idea of 無爲自然 = “Nature of doing nothing”

The emptiness, nothingness is DAO. It’s naturally eternal, and should leave everything free.

<Art de vivre> a way to retrieve nature.

(1) To have independence by skepticism.

To free ourselves from passions of objects of outside.

(2) To be used to the thought of death

Death is a trick. Death disturbs us from living but life is something for sure. We need to be resigned from death.

(3) Death is not the enemy. But pain is the bad.

➔ So we let the pains only to the effected parts but for others we should try to make satisfaction.
(l'honnête homme raisonnable)

➔ **3. Both authors are skeptic and has similar attitude towards death.**

***HOWEVER, they (Zhuangzi and Montaigne) differ** in the sense that
<What was the answer to his (Montaigne) question?>

We should find happiness in ones.

He brings up skepticism, but only as a tool.

A tool just enough for happiness and peace.

This general skepticism insures the only one positive. Which is: living a happy life is good and is justifiable. = melancholic

***HOWEVER is also different from Descartes: another modern man**

-wanted to rebuild from 0, cogito ergo sum, to a uniform world changed many things.

-clear and distinct fact: cogito: I think

→ Montaigne literature as in between Asian, ancient ideas and modern ideas.