

Montaigne's Essays

Translated by John Florio
in 1603

Three Volumes

Michel Eyquem de Montaigne February 28, 1533 to September 13, 1592 was one of the most influential writers of the French Renaissance, known for popularising the essay as a literary genre, and commonly thought of as the father of modern scepticism.

The *Essays* of Michel de Montaigne are contained in three books and 107 chapters of variable length. Montaigne's stated design in writing, publishing and revising the Essays over the period from approximately 1570 to 1592 was to record for the 'private benefit of friends and kinsmen ... some traits of my character and of my humours.' The Essays were first published in 1580 and cover a wide range of topics. As *Essai* is French for "trial" or "attempt", so Montaigne attempted to explore his thoughts, his life and learning in written form. His essays are widely regarded as the predecessor of the modern essay: a focused treatment of issues, events and concerns past, present and future.

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