

tent à nouveau d'ouvrir l'accès à la pensée philosophique par la méthode. Les techniques philosophiques sont abordées sur l'exemple de l'analyse concrète de la notion de justice. L'essai de définition de cette idée est relativement autonome, bien qu'exposé de manière à pouvoir donner lieu à la réflexion méthodologique qui lui fait suite.

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BERVEN, DIKKA, Editor. *Montaigne: A Collection of Essays*. 5 Vol. New York: Garland Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0-8153-1838-3.

In the 400 years since its publication, Montaigne's *Essais* has inspired great interest, vigorous criticism, even censorship, both by Montaigne's ordinary readers, and by readers whose scholarly and intellectual interests eventually led to their own essays on the subject. The articles gathered here provide an introduction to the literary scholarship on Montaigne, with emphasis on scholarly work done in the second half of this century. Only several of the articles are in French, most of all are in English or have been translated from French into English.

Reading habits have changed considerably since the Renaissance. Modern readers often lack the classical and historical background to recognize Montaigne's sources, to identify and date his borrowed material, and to consider the function and role of his sources. Readers will find illumination here of the background to many important layers of meaning which derive from Montaigne's immense literary learning. Until recently, literary scholarship on the *Essais* has been dominated by the evolutionary theory which holds that Montaigne began as a Stoic, passed through a skeptical crisis, and ended as an Epicurean. According to this view, Montaigne's *Essais* is the record of his changing ideas, and the earlier chapters are more or less anecdotal, somehow less interesting and less personal than the self-portrait so apparent in the later chapters of the third book.

Recent trends in scholarship show less interest in Montaigne the man and more interest in the text itself, analyzing rhetorical strategies and formal elements that reveal the artfulness of Montaigne's natural style. Contemporary critical work has identified a literary persona in the text, related to but different from the author. Twentieth-century critics have discovered that Montaigne's views on the nature of language and written discourse are surprisingly modern and valuable in the context of contemporary concerns about the origin of meaning and the role of the reader in the text.