

History of mathematics

[Science](#), [Mathematics](#)



History of Mathematics History of Mathematics Marin Mersenne was a music theorist, mathematician, philosopher and theologian of French origin. He lived between September 8th 1588 and September 1st 1648. He was commonly known as the “ father of acoustics”. During the early 1600s, he was an instrumental figure in the world of science and mathematics. He is best remembered for his contributions to the number theory in mathematics, and his responsibility as a clearing center for communication between reputed scientists and philosophers (Bernstein, 1996).

Rene Descartes and Pierre de Fermat might both correspond with Marin Mersenne for a number of reasons. Fermat, Descartes and Mersenne were all friends who shared mathematical ideologies. Descartes and Mersenne were both educated at the Jesuit College of La Flèche. For this reason, they shared many ideals. Mersenne’s greatest contribution to philosophy was taken to be his passionate defense of Descartes. Mersenne was Descartes’ agent in Paris and even visited him severally while he was in exile in Holland (Bernstein, 1996). Mersenne founded a private academy where a large number of renowned mathematicians in France shared their research. Mersenne used the academy as a forum to spread the ideas of Descartes who was in Netherlands. Mersenne helped in the publication and dissemination of Descartes’ discourse method in 1637. He was also in-charge of soliciting the disputes that arose from Rene Descartes’ Meditations. For this reason, they corresponded very well (Koyre, 1992).

Mersenne also corresponded with Fermat because he promulgated his ideas and mediated disputes arising from his works. For Descartes, Fermat and Mersenne, mathematics was their passion. Fermat was known to be a busy

lawyer who really loved math as a hobby (Bernstein, 1996). Since math was just a hobby to him, he did not want his contributions to be published. The one thing that was published was done so anonymously. His international reputation as a mathematician was as a result of his link with Mersenne. Along with Descartes, Fermat was taken as one of the fathers of analytical geometry (Koyre, 1992). Descartes, Fermat and Mersenne are linked by their contributions to mathematics and their corresponding ideologies.

References

Bernstein, P. L. (1996). *Against the Gods: The remarkable story of risk*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Koyre, A. (1992). *Metaphysics and measurement*. Michigan: Taylor & Francis.