

Human beings and the natural world philosophy essay



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The relationship between human beings and the natural world has been a discussion among philosophers and intellectuals for a very long time.

Philosophers who have worked on these issues are Kant, Montaigne, Descartes, and Pascal etc. But their perspective is very diverse and the conclusion that they all reach upon at times is either somewhat in a way agreeable to each other or plain rejects.

Pascal does not see imagination primarily as a tool by which subversive characters can excite the multitude but rather as a tool of authority that will always be put to the best reason by those who rule, imagination keeps thrall to the order of the world. The admiration given to the persons who rule, and to all who treasure the advantages or worldly " greatness" relies on nothing more considerable than the acquaintance of imagination. (Farrell, 2006)

Montaigne thus makes seemingly conflicting festivities of both the universality of and the dissimilarity among human beings. On one hand he commemorates multiplicity and can truly speak out that everyone has, in himself, a pattern of his own, a ruling pattern. On the other hand, the convinced from the hypothetical, the factual from the forged, the universal and essential from the unintentional and unconcerned. Final conclusions might not be accomplished, for human beings subsist in the realm of estimation, final answer might not be available to human beings (except perhaps for knowing this), but life must still be lived. (Levine, 2001) The primary structural boundary of the human situation that must be established if one is to achieve complicated minimalism requires ditching " metaphysics" as a conduct of human life. Montaigne deems this essential for a human being to live a well and soothing life because he believes metaphysical

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questing often to be a indication of a common kind of human dissatisfaction with the world as it is, which leads people to inflict atrocious cruelties to “remedy” the circumstances. Rather than run away to some imaginary ideal, Montaigne, like Nietzsche, wants people to accept the world. (Levine. Page 1999)

While supporters of Aristotle held the view that exacting natural bodies are parading substances, Descartes holds the view point that there are no substances at all, and therefore it is no shocker that they do not take bliss in the virtue which he posits as a belonging of all true substance. Followers of Aristotle made a critical dissimilarity between natural things and synthetic objects. Restricting substantiality to the natural: a wooden bed is not a substance, but the wood, of which it is made, is; a man is a substance, but the clock is not. Substantial form or, in the case of living natural things, psyche is what activates the potentiality of matter to represent an individual substance. Descartes, unlike the Aristotelians differed, eradicated the disparity between the natural and the artificial, declining all particular bodies, as well as the so-called living bodies, to an understanding of instinctively related particles. Substantiality, in the material world, was retained for “*res extensa*” taken in its general, undifferentiated demonstration, either as for an indefinite period extended or as parts of that extension, as such, it is morally upright. Mind (*res cogitans*), too, as substance, enjoys that innocence which is the characteristic of every true substance. The conclusion may then be drawn that the mind is everlasting “*ex natura sua*”, it being by nature a substance. Descartes reaffirms this additional thought of the morally upright nature of substance in his replies to

the second set of protestation, and arrived at a similar hypothesis: “ We do not have any persuasive verification or example to propose that any substance can perish. And this allows us to conclude that the mind, in so far as it can be known by natural viewpoint, is immortal”. (Fowler, 1998)

If Descartes anticipates the convinced rationalist of the Enlightenment, Pascal portends the anguished extentialist of the mid twentieth century. For Descartes, uncertainty led to the successful certainty of reason; for Pascal; uncertainty led to worse qualms. Pascal wrote: “ I am overwhelmed in the unlimited hugeness of spaces whereof I know zilch and which know zilch of me, I am terrified.” Pascal detested Descartes’ undue rationalism and plagiaristic solace and certainty from his faith in GOD. For Pascal, what is indispensable in humans is not natural reasons, but will and the capacity for faith- that is, heart. Pascal thus bears a resemblance to earlier Christian cynic such as Montaigne. But Pascal is Cartesian in the worth he places on self-consciousness, as shown by his statement I the pensees: “ Man knows that he is pitiful, then, because he is pitiful; but he is great, because he knows it...Man is solely reed they frailest thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed.” Pascal suspected a person’s ability to understand nature or to comprehend self-humanity is wretched. Yet, a human’s exclusive self-consciousness raises her or him above nature and the animals, contributing deliverance through faith in the Christian God. (Leahey, 2004)

The notion of a significant form is somewhat more multifaceted. Most simply, the form is that which, added to primary, results in a complete substance.

But more substantively, substantial form is that from which the attribute behavior of the variety of sorts’ substances originate, and thus that in terms <https://assignbuster.com/human-beings-and-the-natural-world-philosophy-essay/>

of which their manners is to be elaborated, and so, Descartes notes, writing to Regius in January 1642. Helping him to devise his attack on the scholastic Voletius, “ they (i. e. forms) were introduced by philosophers, for no other reason but to explain the proper actions of natural things, of which actions this form is to be the principle and the source”. This conception of notion of the substantial form is also expressed by the Cambrian Fathers in an disagreement for the requirement of form over and above matter: “ Natural Things are not composed of matter alone, since if that were so, a human being, a stone and a lion, being made of the same matter, would have the same essence and definition, therefore, in addition to matter, they have their own forms which differentiate them from one another...There are individual and picky behaviours (functions) suitable to each individual natural thing, as reasoning is to human being, neighing to a horse, heating to a fire and so on. But these behaviours form matter which, as shown above, has no power to being anything about (nullam effectricem vim habet), Thus, they must arise form considerable form.... Consequently, one cannot deny to each and every natural thing its inherent substantial form, from which it is formed, by which the marks (nota) and character of each thing are stamped...and finally, which differentiates and embellish the remarkable theater of this world with its multiplicity and wonderful beauty”. (Garber, 1992)

Descartes turned to natural philosophy for his second argument against substantial forms: “ the second proof is drawn from the purpose or use of substantial forms.” He simply challenged the descriptive value of these scholastic inventions.” In contrast he critically to the illustrative productivity of his own “ formae essentiales”, namely size, figure, position, motion, citing

as proof the clarification he had given salt in the *Meteores*. In his draft he urged Regis to add, as a further example, the clarification of the movement of the heart found in *Discours* and already urbanized by Regius in his thesis of June 1640. Descartes neatly reviewed the far-reaching shift from the hylomorphic clarification to the mechanistic: "(Substantial Forms) were introduced by philosophers solely to account for the proper actions of natural things, of which they were supposed to be the principles and bases...but no natural action at all can be explained by these substantial forms, since their defenders admit that they are occult and that they do not understand themselves.... So these forms are not to be introduced to explain the causes of natural actions. Essential forms explained in our fashion, on the other hand, give manifest and mathematical reasons for natural actions, as can be seen with regard to the form of common salt in my *Meteorology*. And here what you say about the movement of the heart can be added." (Fowler, 1998)

Montaigne discusses science in the context of his discussion of the human and natural sphere, which begins by bearing in mind bodies, heavily and human, and ends by considering breeding, but the bulk of which examines the soul. The assignment of his conversation of the soul under the heading of human and natural things specify that Montaigne does not believe soul to be divine, and by putting science here, Montaigne seems to signify that only bodies are a possible object of science. Montaigne clearly discards all the so-called science of the past, simply treating it, as just another example of doctrinaire philosophizing. His whole discussion of science is enclosed by the thought that "Philosophy is but complicated poetry". Montaigne says, "It gives us the it has succeeded in inventing... for that matter, philosophy

offers us not what is, or what it believes, but the most plausible and pleasant thing it forges". (Levine, Page 75).

The hope is that the disagreement and absurdity that comprise human existence will some how be resolved. The idiosyncratic spiritual longings of human beings are evidence that they exists " alone among all created being". The point of both the accidental or mysterious character of their existence and to the thought that their longings point to the perfection beyond this natural world, Pascal says, " Human existence is, from the perspective of the natural world, unstable or disordered and that fact is reflected in the paradoxical character of human longings. (Lawler, 1993)