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The “venatio sapientiae” in Early Modern Age: Montaigne reader of the *Idiota de sapientia*

Abstract

In some chapters of his Essais Montaigne talks about the difference between true and false knowledge in terms of opposition between sagesse and pédantisme, a point of view very similar to that of Cusanus's Idiota de sapientia (1450). In fact, Montaigne indirectly makes references to this text and expressly says that he has bought Cusanus's philosophical works in Venice. In this paper I inquire into the relationship between Cusanus and Montaigne regarding the critique of the pride of human science, and the acknowledgment of ignorance as the only approach to the eternal wisdom of God, showing both the divergent points and their common conception of human knowledge as “venatio sapientiae”.