Plague and syphilis at the cradle of modernity

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Foreword by the translator

According to René Guénon, “[t] he Renaissance marks an obvious step back from the Middle Ages, it is a period when we witnessed the 'death of many things', an extremely damaging change in the traditional order. It is also a time of real transformation of a society which, from now on, will work exclusively on the quantitative increase of profits through the liberalization of trade, on the eradication of the sacred link which linked all activities to a transcendent and religious perspective. . We can say that the Renaissance is the source of our current modern world, it was she who gave the broad outlines and provided, alas, the main orientations with its celebration of a so-called "humanism", which was reflected by the reduction of all things to a strictly human order.By refusing any reference to a higher order, the Renaissance actually invited men to “turn away from Heaven under the pretext of conquering Earth”. "(\*)

This description, correct in its entirety, must nevertheless be qualified and refined:

- The "Renaissance" is a historical period that no one is able to limit and define clearly and precisely. This is so quite simply because, in History, all periods are periods of transition and those separating prehistory, (protohistory,) antiquity, the Middle Ages, modern epoch and contemporary epoch are not, contrary to what is generally maintained , crisp, well-defined breaks. This chronological compartmentalization of History in sections responds to an educational need which can moreover be seen as a consequence of public education. This, arbitrary, tends to give a particular uniform coloring to each of these periods, while it is not. Thus, the "Renaissance" is located in the continuity of the "Middle Ages",the same goes for the “Middle Ages” in relation to Antiquity.

Moreover, this temporal division in prehistory, (protohistory,) antiquity, middle ages, modern times and contemporary times stems directly from the linear understanding of time and from the myth of the progress of liberalism and Marxism, which in turn find their roots in Abrahamisms. The last two names (modern and contemporary times) are certainly the most absurd. How will historians, in several centuries - if there are any left - designate future eras? Post-modern period (designation already assigned by some to the period from the end of the Second World War to the present day, and of which the famous holocaust, which has become a real cult, more precisely an ersatz of Judeo-Christianity, would constitute the starting point), post-post-modern,post-post-post-modern? Maybe a virtual era would just be more appropriate. Also, with the virtualization of everything continuing, the future history books will no doubt be written by “artificial intelligences” ...

- The gradual accretion of non and anti-Aryan influences and elements (inventions, creations, ideas, beliefs, religions, sciences, practices, etc.) in Europe, and this since Antiquity, has been a necessary condition to this ripening of the poisonous fruits of the Renaissance. That therefore, the phenomenon described had already started in the "Middle Ages" and during Antiquity, only to come to be fully actualized during the "Renaissance", this period of aphroditism and titanic excess, opposed to the austerity and in the Aryan sense of "measure".

This study sets out to expose one of the causes of this full updating.

Introduction

To truly understand history, one must pay particular attention to what Julius Evola and others called the third dimension of history, that is, to consider that actions and events can have causes and hidden consequences, invisible to the inattentive observer and to the “party historian”, whose historiography is often naively based on secondary and uncertain elements. The questions which will be studied in this essay are as follows. Could pathological factors have played a greater role in the last centuries than is commonly admitted? It has been proven that many European kings and rulers suffered from mental illnesses and physical ailments, which evidently influenced their actions to a greater or lesser extent (1).Could the same thing happen to a large part of the European peoples and modify the course of history on a large scale? More generally, from a traditional point of view, how have the deadliest diseases impacted European history? The two major diseases that will be examined are plague and syphilis. The latter will be studied in more detail because we believe that syphilis has, so to speak, disappeared from the radar screen of all historians; and we believe that syphilis, in a cycle characterized by the importance of sex and woman, has played a major and unsuspected role. The first has already been examined by a few writers; we will resume their analyzes, which we will extend with a few new arguments.

Plague

As we have said, the first disease that will be examined is the Black Death, which spread in Europe in the fourteenth century. It came from Asia and it seems that it was the merchants who brought it to Europe and not the rats, as historians claim today. It was the absence of borders and international trade that allowed it to spread. It is easy to notice the similarity between this situation and the current policy of open borders and “free trade”, since Europe is invaded by the harmful waste of Third World countries; not only by toxic toys, but also by faulty key industrial components, which end up in sensitive industrial facilities.

Back to the Black Death. It made tens of millions of victims in a few years. Many villages were somehow wiped off the map. The dysgenic effects were evident. Hundreds of thousands of old family lines disappeared. And there are reasons to believe that this epidemic is the primary cause of two phenomena which occurred at the time in Europe: the great acceleration of racial “denordification” and the emergence of brachycephalic elements, phenomena that Lapouge (2 ) highlighted, without however being able to explain them. They were all the more catastrophic since much of the best racial stock in Europe had already been decimated during the "crusades", fighting in vain in the sands of the desert.The French historian Fernand Braudel estimated at four or five million the number of Europeans killed during the crusades. Soon after the plague subsided, the survivors, men and women, perhaps encouraged by the Church, felt that they had to repopulate the earth and the unions were more anarchic than in the past; twins and triplets were common (3).

However, these were not the only consequences of the Black Death, since it seems that it sealed the death of medieval civilization and marked the beginning of a new cycle, the nature of which was clearly more capitalist and bourgeois. Here are some points that tend to indicate it.

Due to the great depopulation serfdom gradually fell into disuse and the aristocracy lost its economic power and as a result some form of competition between aristocrats and peasants began. The aristocrats began to seek paid employment in the cities, while some peasants were able to enrich themselves thanks to the fall in the price of land and international trade, which allowed them to sell their surplus food abroad. In addition, a large part of the survivors became rich by inheritance and fell into a hedonistic lifestyle. However, even though many became richer, general living conditions had worsened, which reinforced the reproductive effects. Apart from these socio-economic changes,the general mental health of the population was lastingly affected and superstition increased. For example, because of the plague, more than 800,000 people in Germany and northern France joined the flagellants.

Moreover, the plague had an influence on literature and contributed to its falsification. For example, the concepts of Walhalla and Ragnarök could have Christian origins for the following reasons. It seems that Iceland (as well as Norway) was precisely the country which was hardest hit by the plague, since almost all of its population was decimated (4). The question is whether this "apocalyptic" event could have an influence on Nordic writings such as the Edda., which, however, the official chronology assumes was written in the thirteenth century. If it is really from the thirteenth century, could it have been altered to adapt to the new general state of mind which arose from these catastrophes? On a related subject, the Black Death certainly made it easier for Christian evangelists to convert Scandinavia. Finally, it should be mentioned that several "recentists" have sought to reinterpret the Black Death within the framework of their own particular scenario.

Syphilis

The second disease we wish to examine is syphilis, the uncertain origins of which have generated heated controversy for centuries. A summary can be found on the internet (5). It should be noted that, from what we know, the history of syphilis is more complex and nuanced than the one we will summarize here. However, we will digress if we examine it in detail. We will simply say that the "Colombian theory" seems very plausible to us and that the syphilis epidemic which ravaged Europe could have been caused by the fact that the crew and the soldiers of Columbus had sex with the "native Americans. ". If so, thanks to Columbus, syphilis was the first American import to Europe.

The aim of this study is not to examine the obvious dysgenic effects and negative social consequences of syphilis, but rather to study the more or less hidden mental consequences of the disease and how they contributed to the onset of the disease. “Renaissance”, as this period came to be called the “syphilitic” nineteenth century (6).

The epidemic of 1494

Before approaching this subject, it is necessary to set out the facts and describe the syphilis epidemic of 1494. Historical research indicates that at the beginning, that is to say shortly after 1494, syphilis was frequently fatal and extremely contagious. Historian Sabellicus estimated in 1502 that one-twentieth of Europeans had syphilis; however, Albrecht Dürer wrote: “May God preserve me from French disease. Nothing scares me as much as she does […] Almost all men have it and she devours it so much that they die of it. Erasmus, himself suffering from advanced syphilis and whom doctors were afraid to approach for fear of contracting the disease, wrote that it was "the disease that killed the most people"; and Leo Africanus estimated that nine-tenths of North Africans were infected.As far as Europeans are concerned, given their sexual habits, this is not surprising, as the book by Guy Breton finely attests to “The Love Story of the History of France”. It should be noted that it is obviously very difficult to arrive at a precise estimate of the number of people who were affected.

The disease evolved a lot over time. It caused millions of deaths in the first few years of the epidemic that started in 1494 alone and became less fatal as the decades passed, although that does not mean the contagion has ceased. A contagious and inherited disease, syphilis was hardly ever treated effectively and systematically until the 1940s, when it was discovered that penicillin could treat it. The most used form of treatment during the "Renaissance" was mercury; it was rarely effective and often worsened the patient's condition; and while it was, in some cases, able to cure secondary syphilis, it was ineffective against what modern scientists call neurosyphilis.These are the reasons why it is reasonable to suppose that syphilis frequently persisted in hidden forms: “In most cases, after the disappearance of the chancre and of the rashes characteristic of the early stages, the disease did not manifest itself in these lesions. than during the relapse, which occurred after a few years. Otherwise, it was invisible and therefore secret; and although the victim was often terribly ill much of the time and complained of feeling poisoned, the aches and pains were rarely attributed to syphilis. (7) It was only in the nineteenth century that syphilis was recognized as being capable of causing any disease; as such, she was nicknamed "the Great Imitator".If syphilis was often not detected as the primary cause of severe physical suffering, it is legitimate to think that its consequences on mental health were even less detected. They could be all the more invisible because they did not necessarily lead to acute dementia; syphilis does not affect the clarity of the mind, at least until the later stages of the disease. Now is the time to describe what has been called neurosyphilis, which is at the heart of the second part of this study.at least until the later stages of the disease. Now is the time to describe what has been called neurosyphilis, which is at the heart of the second part of this study.at least until the later stages of the disease. Now is the time to describe what has been called neurosyphilis, which is at the heart of the second part of this study.

Neurosyphilis as a mental illness

Neurosyphilis is the last stage of untreated syphilis. It is likely to occur a few years after the initial infection if the early stages were not fatal to the subject. The symptoms are diverse: “The prodromal or warning signs, often appearing over a decade or more, can be apparent to family and friends, who are often shocked and disturbed by the alternation of long phases of death that they observe. extreme mental clarity and normal behavior and periods in which the subject engages in bizarre, indecent, even criminal acts and loses ethical values.William Osler described "a change of character […] which may astonish friends and relatives" and advised to be alert to "important indications of moral perversions manifested in indecent assault." At the terminal stage, when paresis is approaching, mood changes become more extreme: euphoria, sudden and violent excitement, bursts of creative energy, grandiose reflections alternate with deep depression, often suicidal. Madness of grandeur, paranoia, elation, irritability, rages and irrational, anti-social behavior define the approach of madness. The patient may suddenly start gambling, engage in absurd spending sprees, or imagine owning vast wealth. A calm person becomes emotional, a neat, neglected person,a shy, aggressive one. The pathology here is often misdiagnosed as paranoid psychosis of persecution or schizophrenia. "(8). The same author also writes that “paresis often begins with a dramatic episode characterized by delusions, madness of grandeur, identification with religious, mythical or royal figures; and sometimes fits of rage and violent acts. "A medical encyclopedia mentions the following symptoms:" abnormal gait (gait), blindness, confusion, dementia, depression, headache, incontinence, inability to walk, irritability, numbness in toes, feet or legs, poor concentration, fit, stiff neck , tremors, visual disturbances, weakness."(9) Other studies are more evocative and establish a direct link between neurosyphilis and" creative, intellectual and philosophical activity "(10). The pathological manifestations to which we are going to pay particular attention are, of course, of a mental nature. More precisely, we will study the influence of syphilis on the creative capacities of the brain, but we will not limit ourselves to it, because the “Renaissance” was a time characterized by great efflorescence in many fields.but we will not limit ourselves to it, because the “Renaissance” was an epoch characterized by great efflorescence in a number of fields.but we will not limit ourselves to it, because the “Renaissance” was an epoch characterized by great efflorescence in a number of fields.

The question which concerns us is first to determine to what extent neurosyphilis was widespread in the sixteenth century and then to establish the role that it played in triggering the great upheavals of that time, i.e. the "Renaissance" and Protestantism, and, consequently, in the formation of "our" modern world. The first question cannot be answered with certainty, because neurosyphilis was not detected; therefore we are short of data. However, since millions of Europeans died of syphilis within decades and hundreds of thousands more contracted it, but did not die, it is reasonable to assume that a large number of Europeans developed neurosyphilis. The second question is at the heart of this essay and will be examined in more detail.We would like to tell our readers that we are not asserting that syphilis always determines the works of a person - whatever those works may be. We are not falling into easy, simplistic reductionism. However, we argue that the importance of the influence of syphilis needs to be revised upwards. We will conclude by saying that we hope that our study will not be accused of being "fancy"; serious illnesses have consequences for the mental health and the relationship to the world of those affected. Although the subject of syphilis is little discussed and even little known to the medical community, a few doctors have written interesting texts; for example, the impressionist Edouard Manet, a few years before his death at the age of 51, when he had been plagued by syphilis for thirteen years,suddenly chose to paint still lifes and pretty girls, sometimes nude, which he had never done before, when he was in good health (11). Toulouse-Lautrec, another unhappy painter, suffered a similar fate. Born in 1864, the devastation syphilis had wreaked on his health became very visible in the early 1890s; it had been transmitted to him by his model, who had become his mistress, as well as, probably, by prostitutes, since it is well known that he spent a great deal of time studying brothels for his art. It was around this time that he painted a series of paintings called “Elles”, depicting the various occupants of the red light district in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.something he had never done before, when he was in good health (11). Toulouse-Lautrec, another unhappy painter, suffered a similar fate. Born in 1864, the devastation syphilis had wreaked on his health became very visible in the early 1890s; it had been transmitted to him by his model, who had become his mistress, as well as, probably, by prostitutes, since it is well known that he spent a great deal of time studying brothels for his art. It was around this time that he painted a series of paintings called “Elles”, depicting the various occupants of the red light district in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.something he had never done before, when he was in good health (11). Toulouse-Lautrec, another unhappy painter, suffered a similar fate. Born in 1864, the devastation syphilis had wreaked on his health became very visible in the early 1890s; it had been transmitted to him by his model, who had become his mistress, as well as, probably, by prostitutes, since it is well known that he spent a great deal of time studying brothels for his art. It was around this time that he painted a series of paintings called “Elles”, depicting the various occupants of the red light district in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.the devastation syphilis had wreaked on his health became very visible in the early 1890s; it had been transmitted to him by his model, who had become his mistress, as well as, probably, by prostitutes, since it is well known that he spent a great deal of time studying brothels for his art. It was around this time that he painted a series of paintings called “Elles”, depicting the various occupants of the red light district in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.the devastation that syphilis had wreaked on his health became very visible from the beginning of the 1890s; it had been transmitted to him by his model, who had become his mistress, as well as, probably, by prostitutes, since it is well known that he spent a great deal of time studying brothels for his art. It was around this time that he painted a series of paintings called “Elles”, depicting the various occupants of the red light district in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.portraying the various occupants of the Red Light District in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.portraying the various occupants of the Red Light District in a sympathetic and humane manner, which shocked French society.

The impact of neurosyphilis on the “secular” world during the “Renaissance”

To begin our investigation, we must first briefly examine the characteristics of the “Renaissance” and compare them to the pathological phenomenon induced by neurosyphilis. Regarding the various representative figures of this period, it is often not possible, due to the significant lack of explicit documents, to determine whether they had syphilis. We felt that the best method to achieve certain results was to examine their works, actions and general behavior. It is obviously not possible to do this completely in this study, since it would require careful examination of the biographies of hundreds of "Renaissance" men. This is why it can only be considered as an introductory statement (12). We will quote some additional extracts from the book by J.Hayden, in order to show how a retrospective diagnosis should be made. “Often, having no reason to suspect (syphilis) and seeing no evidence of it in the literary records, they (biographers) simply passed by. It has sometimes been glossed over or discreetly ignored for the sake of surviving family members. Some have found it irrelevant to talk about it. Others have used the word in parentheses, or in a footnote, or at most in a paragraph, as if, instead of being a defining and heartbreaking event for the person affected, syphilis was no more important than a passing head cold. And many thought it would be rude or inappropriate to mention it.The reluctance to attribute a shameful disease such as syphilis to an grown-up, the danger of the work being somehow related to the disease, a tainted and disparaged work - all help to eliminate references to syphilis. […] Syphilologists have left lists of questions to ask patients they suspected of being infected with syphiliti and these questions can be edited by the biographer who retrospectively searches the literary archives. First, was there a pattern of infection during childhood? What should be looked for here are indications of high risk sexual behavior, especially with prostitutes; the confession of having contracted syphilis, perhaps written with caution to a friend or close relative; or a diagnosis from a doctor,although it had only been revealed posthumously. At the possible time of infection, was there a high fever (typhus, typhoid, malaria) accompanied by severe malaise? In any case, were there any indications of treatment with mercury or arsenic or, later, potassium iodide? Did a life of mysterious suffering suddenly succeed relatively good health? Was there an unexpected vow of chastity? Social withdrawal? Sudden misanthropy, a change in values, the adoption (or denial) of a religion? Then, during the following decades,Was the person subject to all kinds of diseases which affected one after the other the different parts of his body and which could lead to suspect that he was developing syphilis? Were there any phases in which his behavior was unusual and bizarre? At later stages, were there personality changes announcing the onset of neurosyphilis: madness of grandeur, euphoria, fits of rage, violent or criminal behavior, extreme depression? Or was there strong mysterious pains, acute gastrointestinal distress, or a wobbly gait heralding aextreme depression? Or were there strong mysterious pains, acute gastrointestinal distress, or a wobbly gait heralding aextreme depression? Or was there strong mysterious pains, acute gastrointestinal distress, or a wobbly gait heralding a tabes dorsalis ? […] The same pattern of revelation is often observed when researching the biography of a person suspected of having been syphilitic: 1. Keep it secret: Although statements are made in private to friends and doctors, syphilis is not publicly admitted during his lifetime. 2. Diagnose it: Early medical biographies, often written by people who had experience of the incurability of syphilis, accepted a diagnosis based on the subject's mental and physical condition and on statements from friends and doctors. . 3. Ignore it: The possibility that the person had syphilis is then ruled out by subsequent biographers, who for decades ignored the question of his general health because they considered it offensive and uninteresting. . 4.Pass by her: The file is reopened and a literary debate begins. Specialists unqualified at identifying syphilis, and who often have misconceptions about the disease, tend to take turns examining and dismissing all clues without placing them in the larger context of a lifetime. The medical consensus does not want to hear about syphilis. "

As we said earlier, the main characteristic of the "Renaissance" is a great creative effervescence in many fields. We will now examine several of these in turn and show the consequences. Although we will start with the world of the arts, we will not be able to avoid hinting at moving to other fields. The "Renaissance" - especially from the beginning of the sixteenth century - was characterized by an admiration for classical antiquity, which suddenly became worthy of attention; for example, ancient mythology became respectable and was seen in some ways as a foreshadowing of Christianity. This period came to be viewed with envy and a number of "Renaissance" men identified with what they believed to be antiquity.That was not all: there was a desire to recreate Antiquity as it was pictured. The result was a confusing mix of themes from Greco-Roman antiquity, biblical themes and others from the 16th century. This sudden exaltation of Greco-Roman antiquity, which on the whole was previously considered abominable due to the supremacy of Christian theology, could be attributed to some extent to neurosyphilis, since it can cause a such exaltation and the “loss of previously affirmed ethical values”. In addition, identification with mythological, extraordinary, legendary figures is typical of neurosyphilis. Finally, this desire, oriented towards the madness of grandeur, to imitate - superficially - Antiquity,and even to recreate it is clearly part of the hubris that neurosyphilis generates to a certain extent.

The "Renaissance" was also characterized by "humanism". Let us dwell on this word, which is recent, since we know that it was introduced into the French language by Pierre de Nolhac in 1886. Firstly, “humanism” is emancipation in several respects. Second, it is the exaltation of "human genius" and the creative power of man. Third, it implies that every man should do all he can to develop his own faculties. The historian Braudel wrote that "humanism" was always against something; against submission to God; against any doctrine which would neglect man; against any system which would reduce the responsibility of man; etc. "Humanism" is a perpetual claim; it is the fruit of pride, of hubris.

Therefore, in the world of "Renaissance" art, aesthetics played a big role and "secular" works became more numerous. The individual "man" became much more present, whether in painting, sculpture or literary works. Painters and sculptors strove to achieve "perfect" realism in their works, which, in other words, amounted to recreating reality. This explains why scientific techniques and mathematical calculations were developed at that time by painters, in order to achieve "perfection". The invention of all these techniques testifies to a great intellectual activity. And, as we will see later, the syphilitic man often has great activity, not to say great voracity, intellectual,since he wants to learn and know everything and be "universal". Incidentally, neurosyphilis, far from weakening mental faculties, is capable of greatly increasing them; a little known, but well documented, case is that of the poet Heinrich Heine, whom neurosyphilis made very prolific (13).

It is interesting to ask whether the Christian cathedrals, the construction of which, for many of them, seems in fact to have started in the "Renaissance", can be the product of the hubris that we have described, of this desire to to recreate what Greco-Roman Antiquity had most visible, namely the great monuments. For example, the clergy of Beauvais in northern France had a cathedral built with a spire 153 meters high - however, the spire collapsed in 1573, four years after the work was completed. The “gargoyles” and other sculptures of half-human, half-animal creatures inside cathedrals could be interpreted similarly, as the desire to create a new, hybrid being, thus imitating “God” who, according to the Christian theology, created men.This general hypothesis is all the more solid since the priests and prelates, far from having been abstinent, suffered from syphilis as much as the rest of the population, if not more; we know well the story of young Caesar Borgia who had been so disfigured by syphilis that he had to wear a mask.

Let us dwell now, to illustrate our point, on Leonardo, Raphael and Michelangelo, three “big hats” of the “Renaissance”, and also “fathers” of modernity in a certain sense. We have chosen these well-known individuals because we have a large number of biographical documents on them; however, through a study of their individuality, we also wish to provide a general view of the times and the reader should consider that our description of these artists may apply in some way or another. other to hundreds of thousands of people. Of course, we encourage our readers to conduct similar surveys on famous and less famous figures of the “Renaissance”.

Regarding Leonardo, it has been alleged that his mother could have been an Arab slave (14) and it is established that he engaged in homosexual debauchery in his youth (15). But historians have never agreed on whether Leonardo was homosexual or whether or not he remained chaste during his adult life. Freud wrote an interesting book on Leonardo, Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci, in which he argues that Leonardo was homosexual. It would be of the utmost importance if, as is possible, Leonardo led a dissolute life in his youth, before practicing chastity, for a sudden vow of chastity is, according to J. Hayden, a fact that biographers Doctors should not hesitate to interpret it as the consequence of a syphilitic infection. A simple glance at his self-portrait lets us think that Leonardo must have been syphilitic, which is not doubted by the scholar who compared the syphilitic Heinrich Heine to Leonardo: “Bloodshot eyes, purple lips, half-open eyelids gave him the inhuman appearance of a mysterious and unrecognizable da Vinci. (16) It should also be noted that Leonardo suffered from progressive paralysis,typical symptom of syphilis during the last years of his life. That's not all. There are other elements of a more subtle nature which indicate that he was syphilitic. First, Leonardo's eclecticism - he was, among others, painter, sculptor, musician, poet, philosopher, writer, scientist, engineer, architect, inventor, botanist and anatomist - is a sign of intense intellectual activity, which could have be caused by neurosyphilis. Second, like many syphilitics, he showed in his work a marked, not to say manic, interest in sex, although in his case this interest was more or less concealed. The "Vitruvian man", who is now very famous and is used by many "counter-initiation" forces, is a good example of this tendency; in this drawing,which is supposed to show the analogy between man and the universe, it is the genitals of the crucified man that are at the center. By the way, could it be that the crucified man is the Christian god? Third, Leonardo had a pronounced taste for ugliness and strangeness, which is visible in many of his drawings of bizarre, monstrous bodies and faces, as well as in at least two of his paintings, Mona Lisa and Saint John, of which they are likely to represent androgynes. This taste can of course be correlated with neurosyphilis, since this disease is likely to cause not only severe depression and a constant state of anxiety, but also an obsession with anything out of balance, "negative" or even evil. . We mentioned the famous portrait of Mona Lisa.We will analyze it, by way of conclusion. The portrait of Mona Lisa is known to be very enigmatic. There are many assumptions about the real identity of the person painted - we write “person” because, as we said, there is reason to believe that he is an androgynous being. One of the most popular theories is that he represents Leonardo himself; the other, that he represents his mother. The proof is that Mona Lisa was the one of his works that was most dear to Leonardo. He refused to give it to the man who had ordered it. And medical experts concluded that the painted person had various illnesses, including syphilis (17). As Leonardo was well acquainted with anatomy, he would have had no difficulty in representing these pathological symptoms. Finally,we will mention that a group of scientists recently sought to exhume the supposed remains of Leonardo in France in order to examine his bones and verify whether any pathological condition could have caused his death (18). It seems they were primarily thinking of syphilis and tuberculosis,

It is generally believed that Raphael died of syphilis at the age of 37, while his father, coincidentally, died in 1494, the year the epidemic began (19). Like most of the artists of his time and perhaps also of those today, he led a dissolute life and had several mistresses: his fiancee died of the same disease, barely three months after him. We can determine the influence that syphilis had on Raphael's work. First, Raphael had a folly for grandeur, in the sense that he was extremely concerned with the formal aspect of his painting and spared no effort to improve it, so much so that one reviewer said he was the first. artist to place beauty before thought, putting an end to medieval art and inaugurating modernism (20).We are well aware that this aspiration may have had other causes; however, as we have shown that syphilis exerts a tremendous influence on those who have this disease, it is worth mentioning. Second, as was the case with Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec, a marked change occurred in his painting, the themes of which had until then been religion and crowned heads: three or four years before his death, while pain Physical and psychological torments probably intensified, he began to paint his mistresses either naked or in a lascivious posture (21).as was the case for Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec, a marked change took place in his painting, whose themes had until then been religion and crowned heads: three or four years before his death, while physical pain and the psychological torments probably intensified, he began to paint his mistresses either naked or in a lascivious posture (21).as was the case for Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec, a marked change took place in his painting, whose themes had until then been religion and crowned heads: three or four years before his death, while physical pain and the psychological torments probably intensified, he began to paint his mistresses either naked or in a lascivious posture (21).

The more we observe the lives of the men of the "Renaissance" who were the object of veneration, the more we discover how disreputable they were in fact. Another of these ambiguous characters is Michelangelo. One only has to look at his physiognomy to guess it (22). We will only mention that he engaged in the falsification of antiques. He was homosexual and one of his "lovers" was identified; these are facts that historians have tried to cover up until recently, claiming that he had no sex life (23). So he may have contracted syphilis. We also have a letter from a close friend of Michelangelo in which he underlines the fact that the artist was "cured of a disease from which few men recover" (24). For us,this disease can only be syphilis and the "cure" the disappearance of certain physical symptoms. Moreover, the fact that Michelangelo died at an advanced age and, it seems, without exhibiting the physical symptoms of syphilis does not contradict our theory, since syphilis can manifest itself either physically or psychologically (25) . And, as we will see, Michelangelo exhibited the typical psychological symptoms of syphilis. First, he identified himself with a god and called himself "Il Divino". Second, as in the case of Leonardo, he was an eclectic mind; he was not only a painter, but also a sculptor, architect and poet. Third, as in the case of Leonardo, he had a strong taste for strangeness; his paintings are full of weird beings,some of whom have a woman's face and a man's muscular body. Fourth, he was antisocial and misanthropic, behavioral traits which J. Hayden said can be caused by neurosyphilis. Finally, he had a marked interest in sexuality; for example, the nude figures in his famous Last Judgment caused a scandal and their genitals had to be painted over. Regarding this specific work, a contemporary of Michelangelo said it was suitable for "public baths and taverns" and not for a church. As for us, what catches our attention in this painting is the fear and the suffering which are everywhere present everywhere; it is the product of a brain eaten away by anguish.This is all the more true as the papal authorities gave Michelangelo carte blanche to paint this fresco.

We will now examine in a similar, synthetic way the world of the literature of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century. We will discuss different genres: poetry, theater, philosophy, novel, etc.

Poetry followed the same course as that described above: sexuality occupied a prominent place in it; feelings in general, especially suffering, became a respectable poetic theme; the poets of antiquity were imitated, sometimes in a grandiloquent way, many new poetic forms, as well as new words, were created; the emphasis was on outward beauty; etc. Once again, we think it is not unwise to assert that the poetry of the "Renaissance" was to a large extent the product of neurosyphilis. To arrive at this conclusion, it suffices to examine minutely the life of some of the poets of this period; in fact, syphilis was what really prompted them to indulge in poetry.

There is no doubt - even if many biographical texts do not mention it - that the French "prince of poets and the poet of princes", Pierre de Ronsard, had syphilis. He suddenly became deaf in his late teens, which prompted him to embrace the poetic "career"; he had various illnesses during his life, which is not surprising, since it seems that he was a libertine; his great work, “Les Amours”, is dedicated to, and mentions, at least ten of his lovers. Ronsard was above all an eclectic mind and showed great intellectual activity. He sought to imitate the Greco-Roman poets and to surpass them. One of his grandiloquent works was La Franciade, an epic poem on the history of France in imitation of Virgil's Aeneid. This work is typical of the hubris of the time, because,in the 16th century, there was simply no reason to write such an epic poem; no Augustus had restored at least to some extent the former greatness of France. It is also interesting to note that Ronsard and his colleagues of the group "La Pléiade" set themselves the gigantic task of creating a new French language, which was to be more refined than the "barbarian" language of the fifteenth century. It remains to be seen how their work in changing the language influenced the formation of the ideas of the masses.It is also interesting to note that Ronsard and his colleagues of the group "La Pléiade" set themselves the gigantic task of creating a new French language, which was to be more refined than the "barbarian" language of the fifteenth century. It remains to be seen how their work in changing the language influenced the formation of the ideas of the masses.It is also interesting to note that Ronsard and his colleagues of the group "La Pléiade" set themselves the gigantic task of creating a new French language, which was to be more refined than the "barbarian" language of the fifteenth century. It remains to be seen how their work in changing the language influenced the formation of the ideas of the masses.

A colleague of Ronsard, Joachim du Bellay, the "French Ovid", also had syphilis, perhaps like his father. He also developed several pathologies during his life, which was short; devoured by syphilis much faster than Ronsard, he died at the age of 37. His work is filled with tales and lamentations about his suffering and bad fortune, as well as love stories. But are these stories really about love? When "Renaissance" writers speak of love using terms such as "burning", "fire", "contagion", "disease" and "infection", they may be speaking from their own experience of the disease. syphilis and not so much unrequited love. Like many men of the “Renaissance”, he fell in love with the image he had of Greco-Roman Antiquity;Following his stay in Rome he wrote in a few poems how deeply he was disappointed that sixteenth-century Rome had nothing to do with what he thought it was.

Although he did not write only poetry, their most famous English counterpart was Shakespeare, the "founder of the English language", who can hardly be doubted to be syphilitic - if at all he really existed and was the author of all the texts attributed to him: indeed, many critics have questioned Shakespeare's very existence, while others have defended various original hypotheses about him (for example, Martin Lings claimed that Shakespeare was a Sufi initiate) (26); as this is not the theme of our study, we will assume that Shakespeare was as described by the official story. Our task is facilitated by the fact that Shakespeare's probable syphilis and its influence on his work were already studied in 2005 in academic work (27).We will simply add that Shakespeare's illness may have had influences of another order, more subtle, on his work; not having a complete knowledge of this work, we will refrain from saying more about it.

We will now cite the summary of the aforementioned study: “Shakespeare's obsessive interest in syphilis, his scientifically accurate knowledge of its manifestations, the last poems of the sonnets, the rumors circulating about his account at the time, everything suggests. that he was infected with "infinite disease". The psychological impact of venereal disease may explain why misogyny and loathing for sex were so common in the writings of Shakespeare's tragic period. This article examines the possibility that Shakespeare's syphilis was successfully treated and puts forward the following new hypotheses: The decrease in the number of Shakespeare's artistic productions at the end of life, his tremors,his social withdrawal and alopecia were due to the mercury poisoning prescribed to him to treat his syphilis. He could also have been affected by ananasarch, since the membranous nephropathy is linked to the absorption of mercury. This medical mishap could have ended prematurely the career of the greatest writer in the English language. Another interesting passage from this study is the following: "Fabricius concludes that" the image of William Shakespeare is clearly that of a bohemian and a libertine, a key figure in an aristocratic jet set whose specialty is courting beautiful women ”and implies that Shakespeare had venereal disease. However, it is from Shakespeare himself that we have the best evidence that he had a sexually transmitted disease:he tells us so in the sonnets and “Shakespeare's colleagues Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe and George Peele all died young, apparently of syphilis contracted in London brothels. Is there any evidence that Shakespeare's own lifestyle exposed him to contracting syphilis? The study author has received criticism for interpreting Shakespeare's life to some extent in terms of syphilis. The criticisms which it is generally made are not to have “insufficient evidence” and to “extrapolate”. However, we are forced to extrapolate to a certain extent, since purely medical data is often insufficient. This review in fact shows that an honest analysis of the very important role of syphilis amounts to revisionism; so,an academic of the "Establishment" is not free to say that the "Renaissance" was to some extent the result of illness.

It is now time to ask the question, criticized, ignored or minimized by most academics, whether François Rabelais had syphilis. The latter, however, praised Rabelais as one of the greatest writers and creators of modern European literature. As far as we know, there is no certainty that Rabelais was syphilitic. However, apart from the fact that he was probably homosexual (28), his existence speaks volumes. He suddenly became very interested in medicine, so much so that he left the monastery to study medicine. Two years later, he became a doctor of medicine and, in 1532, chose to work in a public hospital in Lyon, in order to take care of syphilitics; such a career choice is all the more strange as,given his proven achievements and known connections, he could have had a good monastic career, among other possibilities. That's not all. The very fact that he began to write books seems to have been caused by syphilis (29). Indeed, what most academics forgot to say about Rabelais' books is that syphilis and syphilitics are ubiquitous there (29). This is not the place to do a crude analysis of his work. We will only say that Rabelais dedicates his books to syphilitics, whom he calls "my loves" and speaks of them in many passages, mainly to describe them and their sad fate. In addition, he wrote his books especially for them, so that their reading would relieve them; this practice was in fact not so rare at that time; for example,pregnant women were used to making the Life of Saint Marguerite their own. Apart from this medical aspect of Rabelais' books, two elements are worth highlighting here. First of all, the world that Rabelais built is particularly bizarre and one wonders if it is not the product of his illness. Second, Rabelais, a devout Christian and defrocked monk, fiercely attacks Christianity in his books, which clearly shows that he had changed his values. And, according to Hayden, rejecting a religion can be the result of neurosyphilis. To conclude, Rabelais, this "great writer and creator of modern European literature", would he have written books if he had not contracted syphilis? It is likely not.And those who read Rabelais today do not know that they are reading medical literature.

Rabelais wrote to Erasmus, the "prince of the humanists" - who popularized the term "syphilis" - that he considered himself to be his "spiritual son", which is not surprising, given their many similarities. Erasmus had a large number of mistresses and, as a result, contracted syphilis, as we have already noted. However, we will not examine his life in detail. We will only say that it is highly probable that neurosyphilis had an influence on his existence: a defrocked monk, he showed great intellectual activity - as well as great vanity and great self-satisfaction, caused by the disease - which he brought to the fore. service of its attacks on the Church; he became the leader of a reactionary movement; he thought that reviving the letters meant reviving ancient Greece;he was obsessed with the salvation of souls; was opposed to the scholasticism of its time, which was more concerned with "metaphysical" speculations, etc.

Our examination of the lives of some of the individuals who shaped the world of art and philosophy during the "Renaissance" could be extended to the lives of many other figures of that time. We will not end it without having mentioned Montesquieu and Machiavelli. Montesquieu alludes to his syphilis in writings that resemble ramblings (30). Machiavelli felt the need to leave us the story of one of his many coitus with a prostitute: “His work accomplished, Caesar took to the streets. Machiavelli, his contemporary, a man with a spirit as unshakable as his politics, left a frightening description of the carnal relations he had with a prostitute on whom he vomited, she was so hideous, as soon as he noticed, by candlelight,that she was in fact a bald, toothless old woman. "(31) Machiavelli also wanted to tell us how he spent his evenings and how he wrote" The Prince ":" In the evening, I go home, and I enter my study, I strip myself, on the door, in these peasant clothes, covered with dust and mud, I put on court clothes, or my costume, and, decently dressed, I enter the ancient sanctuary of the great men of antiquity; received by them with kindness and benevolence, I feed on this food which alone is made for me, and for which I was born. I'm not afraid to talk to them, and hold them accountable for their actions. They answer me kindly; and for four hours I escape all boredom, I forget all my sorrows, I no longer fear poverty,and death cannot terrify me; I transport myself entirely to them. And as Dante said: There is no science if we do not remember what we have heard, I have noted everything in their conversations that seemed to me of some importance, I have some. composed a booklet of Principatibus, in which I approach as much as I can all the depths of my subject, researching what is the essence of principalities, of how many kinds there are, how we acquire them, how we maintain them, and why we lose them […] ”Academics and biographers all consider this passage to be metaphorical. However, it might also have a literal meaning, given the pathological mental disorders from which Machiavelli probably suffered. We also know that Machiavelli identified strongly with Polybius,while Erasmus chooses the Latin author Lucien, as did Rabelais and Bonaventure des Périers. Could it be that Machiavelli considered Polybius as his personal demon, in the sense that Socrates gave to this word? In addition, it would be necessary to determine to what extent the humanists altered and falsified the writings of ancient authors, in order to make them compatible with their own views.

We have chosen not to examine the lives of the various European "Renaissance" kings who were pathological cases, even though their actions may have been strongly influenced by syphilis. This choice is explained by the simple fact that the actions of these sovereigns did not have such a lasting influence as that of the “philosophers” and “artists” who greatly contributed to shaping the formation of future generations. Hence our decision to only take into consideration characters from the world of ideas.

The impact of neurosyphilis on the “sacred” world during the “Renaissance”

As suggested above, we believe that neurosyphilis played a role in creating what came to be called Protestantism, which, after all, was just another form of "humanism." It is likely that the founder of Protestantism, Luther, was syphilitic, although, again, there is nothing to prove this with certainty. Several of Luther's biographers, such as Denifle, Grisar, and O'Hare (32), claimed he was syphilitic, while others argued the opposite. Luther's life must be carefully analyzed, given the tendentious nature of the writings, Catholic or Protestant, which deal with him. However, they seem to confirm that he did indeed have syphilis. O'Hare wrote the following: “By his own admission,Luther had no qualms about drinking heavily to ward off temptation and drive away melancholy, and while it is possible that his enemies have gone too far in accusing him of grave immorality, the fact remains that some of his behavior cannot be ignored or excused in this regard. His filthy words, his outbursts of obscenity, his bubbling sensuality were known to all and it is not surprising that his contemporaries thought that these faults could be explained and partially justified only by the attack of a sexual disease which would have been made worse by a life of debauchery. In Theodore Kolde's “Analecta Lutherana” is a medical letter from Wolfgang Rychardus to Johann Magenbuch, Luther's physician, dated June 2, 1523 and kept in the city library of Hamburg,the content of which makes one wonder if Luther did not suffer for a certain period of syphilis, at least of a mild form. "(33)

There is more. Many of Luther's acts and decisions, which historians have failed to explain satisfactorily, could have been the direct consequence of syphilis. We will not dwell on the typical symptoms of neurosyphilis that he showed all his life from adulthood: melancholy, despair, depression, cyclothymia. Overall he was of a violent, despotic and lawless nature. He had titanic pride, but was also a tireless worker, energetic writer, and great orator.

The first element of Luther's life that we will examine is his status as a monk. Absolutely nothing predisposed him to become a monk, because, according to his father's wishes, he should have worked in the field of law. Luther's behavioral dispositions were certainly not what is expected of a monk, like his friends, at the unusual "farewell to the world" supper he gave, as he pointed out, in an attempt to keep him. reconsider his sudden decision to enter the monastery. However, nothing could deter him from becoming a monk at the age of 22 (34). Two reasons are usually given for this decision - the first is that he was gradually drawn to theology by studying philosophy;the second is that he saw a divine call to monastic life in the lightning that once struck near him during a thunderstorm - but they lack historical basis. Luther himself later explained in one of his letters why he had taken his monastic vows: “… besieged by the fear of sudden death, I made a forced and forced vow. We suggest that this fear of death that prompted him to become a monk to seek refuge in the Church and eventually salvation was due to the syphilis he had contracted a few months or years earlier.We suggest that this fear of death that prompted him to become a monk to seek refuge in the Church and eventually salvation was due to the syphilis he had contracted a few months or years earlier.We suggest that this fear of death that prompted him to become a monk to seek refuge in the Church and eventually salvation was due to the syphilis he had contracted a few months or years before.

The second element that we wish to examine is the perception that Luther had of himself and of man in general, which obviously had a lasting influence on Protestantism thereafter. Luther himself admitted that he was drawn into the religious career by despair ("I entered the monastery and renounced the world because I despaired of myself all the time."). He saw in him only sin and in the Christian god anger and revenge. He created his own methods of mortification, which were very harsh, for, being original, stubborn and stubborn, he neglected the common remedies that were promoted in the monasteries. Finally, as the disease progressed mentally,he developed his own religious views - based to a large extent on the question of "salvation" - which necessarily reflected his opinion of himself. He judged that the nature of man was fundamentally corrupted; he wrote the following: “Child conceived in tears and corruption, who, in his mother's womb when he is still only a fetus, is already sin; filthy mud which, before being changed into human mud, commits iniquity, and is acquired to damnation. As he grows up, the element of corruption which he brought from birth grows and develops and bears fruit. He says to sin: "You are my father," and every act he does is a crime; to the verses: "You are my brothers",and it crawls like them in the mire and the rot… It is a bad tree which cannot produce good fruit… manure, which can only give off poisonous odors. Such a point of view can only have resulted from a deeply pathological condition. Therefore, “every action, whatever it is, even if it is directed towards good, being an emanation of our corrupt nature, is, in the sight of God, neither more nor less than a mortal sin: by therefore our actions have no influence on our salvation; we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.which can only exhale poisonous odors. Such a point of view can only have resulted from a deeply pathological condition. Therefore, “all action, whatever it is, even if it is directed towards good, being an emanation of our corrupt nature, is, in the sight of God, neither more nor less than a mortal sin: by therefore our actions have no influence on our salvation; we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.which can only exhale poisonous odors. Such a point of view can only have resulted from a deeply pathological condition. Therefore, “all action, whatever it is, even if it is directed towards good, being an emanation of our corrupt nature, is, in the sight of God, neither more nor less than a mortal sin: by therefore our actions have no influence on our salvation; we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.Therefore, “all action, whatever it is, even if it is directed towards good, being an emanation of our corrupt nature, is, in the sight of God, neither more nor less than a mortal sin: by therefore our actions have no influence on our salvation; we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.Therefore, “every action, whatever it is, even if it is directed towards good, being an emanation of our corrupt nature, is, in the sight of God, neither more nor less than a mortal sin: by therefore our actions have no influence on our salvation; we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.we are saved by faith alone, without good works. Predestination - the prior determination of each person's individual fate - is the next step. To sum up, we suggest that Luther's pessimistic and passive conception of man was the consequence of his syphilitic state.

The last point we will examine is Luther's rebellion against the established order, which was the starting point for what came to be called "Protestantism." It is first necessary to recall that Luther created his own religious conceptions because he considered Christian concepts to be ineffective and incapable of "saving" him. He eventually came to despise much of Christian theology, especially its doctrine of salvation. He decided to make it public in 1517, when he had been a monk for twelve years. In our opinion, it was no accident that Luther first attacked indulgences, which were sold in Germany by a papal commissioner. Indeed, the indulgences were closely related to Luther's obsession - salvation. We also believe that "Protestantism" made progress,not only because a large part of the people had had enough of the abuses of the Church but also because at that time syphilis hit all layers of the people head on. Luther somehow allowed the disease to spread more quickly, emphasizing the importance of faith alone - "without good works" (35). In short, "Protestantism" allowed pleasure to take a greater place, which is probably one of the reasons why sex has historically played a greater role among certain Anglo-Saxon peoples, that is to say the Englishmen and Americans, whether there were suppressed - for example, in Puritanism - or encouraged - for example, in modern American "culture".

Syphilis during the following centuries

The devastation caused by syphilis evidently continued for centuries to come, but will not be examined in this study. We will confine ourselves to saying that neurosyphilis played a role in certain currents and decisive events. The “French Revolution” - as well as other long-standing revolutionary currents - is a striking example (36). The whole of the Romantic movement - as well as other cultural phenomena, such as the development of "classical music" - is another. Finally, we would like to remind you that History is only shaped by a few individuals whose mental health is of capital importance, since it influences their actions and therefore the course of History. And, however, this is precisely the reason why we must remain cautious,when a historical figure is diagnosed as syphilitic; it is not uncommon for such a diagnosis to be used as a pretext to sell books. A notable example is that of Adolf Hitler, whom several historians have claimed without a shadow of proof that he had syphilis: “Morell (Hitler's doctor) regularly tested him for syphilis. of Wassermann and Meinecke and they were negative in 1940. There is not the slightest allusion to syphilis in Morell's diary or in his medical notes on the man who was his patient from 1937 to 1945 ”(37) .which several historians have asserted without a shadow of proof that he had syphilis: "Morell (Hitler's doctor) regularly tested him for Wassermann's and Meinecke's syphilis and they were negative in 1940. There is not the slightest allusion to syphilis in Morell's diary or in his medical notes on the man who was his patient from 1937 to 1945 ”(37).which several historians have asserted without a shadow of proof that he had syphilis: "Morell (Hitler's doctor) regularly tested him for Wassermann and Meinecke's syphilis and they were negative in 1940. There is not the slightest allusion to syphilis in Morell's diary or in his medical notes on the man who was his patient from 1937 to 1945 ”(37).

Plague and Syphilis in the Cradle of Modernity: A Medical Interpretation of History , 2013, translated from English by JB

(\*) Jean-Marc Vivenza, Renaissance. In René Guénon's dictionary, Le Mercure Dauphinois, 2007.

(1) See Marie Louis Victor Galippe, Victor Galippe and Henri Bouchot, L'Hérédité des stigmates de degeneration and the sovereign families, Masson, Paris, 1905 and Auguste Brachet, Louis XI and his ascendants: a human life studied through six centuries d'hérédité, 852-1438, Paris, 1903. The first can be consulted at the address: <http://archive.org/details/lhrditdesstigma00boucgoog> ; the second, at: <http://archive.org/details/pathologiemental00brac> , accessed March 20, 2014. However, they contain some unavoidable errors; for example, the well-known prognathism of the Habsburg family should not be seen as the consequence of disease or "inbreeding", but of racial mixing with non-European elements.

(2) “The Middle Ages were a very bellicose period: however the great increase in wealth and population up to the eve of the Hundred Years War shows that losses were promptly and amply repaired. Certainly the state of things was not perfect, but never, even under the Roman peace, had the country known such prosperity and such rapid progress. Emigration was low, immigration purely individual and almost negligible. The institution of serfdom greatly limited the internal movements of the population. There does not seem to have ever been a time when the population has been more stable. However, it was at this time that the most remarkable transformation that we know began. The brachycephalic element which, for unknown reasons, begins to multiply in such large proportions,is our contemporary Alpinus ”(George Vacher de Lapouge, Race and social environment: Essais D'anthroposociologie, M. Rivière, Paris, 1909).

(3) Adrien Philippe, Histoire de la pleste noire (1346-1350) from unpublished documents, Paris, 1853.

(4) Ibid. (6) It is quite clear to us that other factors, not pathological, are at the origin of the “Renaissance”; we are not claiming that syphilis was the only trigger for the “Renaissance”. (7) Deborah Hayden, Pox: Genius, Madness, and the Mysteries of Syphilis, Basic Books, New York, 2003. (8) Ibid. (10) See, for example, Robert Kaplan, Sex Syphilis Psychiatr, searchable at at:

(5) History of syphilis. In Wikipedia, February 26, 2016. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_syphilis> .

(9) Public Heath, September 15, 2010. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001722> , accessed February 15, 2014. (11) La syphilis d'Edouard Manet (1832-1883), http : //peintresetsante.blogspot.fr/2012/08/la-syphilis-dedouard-manet-1832-1883.html (13) Macdonald Critchley, Four Illustrious Neuroleptics, Proc R Soc Med, 6, 1968, available at the address : <http://europepmc.org/articles/PMC1815551/pdf/procrsmed00307-0057.pdf> , accessed February 15, 2014. (14) “Da Vinci's mother was a slave, Italian study claims”, April 12, 2008.

<http://www.academia.edu/1362620/Sex_Syphilis_Psychiatry_part_1> , consulted on February 15, 2014. (12) Deborah Hayden, in her book, proposes a method to determine if a famous person of the past had syphilis; however, the famous nineteenth-century figures she reviews are mostly personalities of whom we have many detailed biographical documents.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2008/apr/12/art.italy> .

(15) Leonardo Da Vinci, In Wikipedia, February 24, 2016, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo_da_Vinci's_personal_life#Leonardo.27s_sexuality> . (17) "The mystery of the Mona Lisa's smile finally clarified The health of Mona Lisa". <http://www.scientistsofamerica.com/?texte=26> . (18) “The remains of Leonardo da Vinci exhumed ?,” February 17, 2010. <http://www.landrucimetieres.fr/spip/spip.php?article2430> . (22) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Michelangelo-Buonarroti1.jpg> . (26) <http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=10805> .

(16) Macdonald Critchley, ibid. (19) It seems that libertinism was even more widespread in Italy than in France, particularly among the well-to-do and "artists", in the 15th and 16th centuries.

(20) John Ruskin, Complete Works, Pre-Raphaelism, Wiley, 1851.

(21) The sexual gesture is the left hand on the heart or chest. This gesture could also be the sign of a pathology. (23) They were not the only ones; in the 17th century, a descendant of Michelangelo falsified his poetry, which exalted homosexual eroticism. (24) Ross King, Michelangelo and Pope's Ceiling, Penguin Books, 2003, p. 185.

(25) The painter Titian (1488-1576) suffered a similar fate; he had syphilis, but died old. From the testimony of someone who often went to his studio, we know that he was exhausted by sleeping with his models and that it was perhaps to pay for a cure that he painted the portrait of Girolamo Fracastoro, the doctor who coined the name syphilis in his poem from 1530.

(27) JR Ross, “Shakespeare's Chancre: Did the Bard Have Syphilis? ”, Clinical Infectious Disease, 40, 2005, available at: <http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/40/3/399.long> , accessed March 20, 2016.

(28) Carla Freccero,“ Queer Rabelais? ", Available at the address: <http://www.academia.edu/3647301/Queer_Rabelais> , consulted on February 15, 2014 (31)" Syphilis, sex and fear: How the French disease conquered the world ". <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/may/17/syphilis-sex-fear-borgias> . (32) “Martin Luther's Syphilis vs. the Syphilis of Pope Julius ”. <http://beggarsallreformation.blogspot.com/2011/07/martin-luthers-syphilis-vs-syphilis-of.html> .

(29) Lesa B. Randall, Representations of syphilis in sixteenth-century French literature, University of Arizona, 1999 .

(30) Robert D. Cottrell Montaigne Studies (ed.) - An Interdisciplinary Forum, vol. 3, Ohio State University, 1991, p. 11.

(33) Patrick F. O'Hare, The Facts about Luther, Frederick Pustet & co., New York and Cincinnati, 1916.

Historian Grisar states the following: “The new document provided by Theodore Kolde in his 'Analecta Lutherana' is a medical letter from Wolfgang Rychardus to Johann Magenbuch dated June 11, 1523 and taken from the archives of the Hamburg library, of which the content raises the question whether Luther did not suffer from syphilis, at least from a mild form of this disease, for some time. The letter was written under the following circumstances: Luther was recovering from a bout of a disease he thought he had contracted while taking a bath. Melanchthon tells us that this indisposition was accompanied by a high fever. On May 24, however, the patient was able to say that he was getting better, but "was overloaded with distracting work." At the time, a certain Apriolus,Defrocked Franciscan and zealous follower of Luther (his real name was Johann Eberlin), was staying with Luther in Wittenburg. He forwarded detailed information about Luther's disease to a doctor who was close to him, Wolfgang Rychardus, in Ulm. Rychardus was also a great admirer of the Wittenberg professor and also, it seems, a staunch friend of Melanchthon. Following the information Apriolus had given him, he wrote the medical letter in question to Johann Magenbuch, then a medical student at the University of Wittenberg. Johann Magenbuch was part of the circle of reformers in Wittenberg, had helped Melanchthon with the medical terms of his Greek lexicon and then became Luther's physician.It was Magenbuch who had put Rychardus in touch with Luther, and both had already exchanged letters about him. Rychardus long remained Luther's friend.

Rychardus wrote to Luther's attending physician that he had heard of the illness of the new "Elias" (Luther) and was glad to hear that he was recovering. It was obvious that God was preserving him. Out of compassion, Apriolus [in a letter which we do not have] had given him information about Luther's illness and insomnia. He insisted that it was not enough for Luther to sleep every other night, although, of course, his intellectual efforts explained his insomnia. An attentive doctor, he recommended to his friend Magenbuch to give the patient a certain sleeping pill, which he described and which must have been known to Magenbuch ("qui medicum agis". "But if ..., he says, the pains of the French disease disturb his sleep ”, they must be relieved by means of a certain bandage,of which he lists all the mysterious components, such as wine and mercury ("vinum sublimatum ”); it would allow her to get the sleep that was absolutely essential to restore her health. "For God's sake, take good care of Luther," he adjures Apriolus, his informant, before greeting him.

This letter has of course been interpreted differently by the friends and enemies of Luther. It might have been sufficient to detail the circumstances and contents of the letter, if the somewhat violent objections raised against the thesis that, because of the information given to him by Apriolus, Rychardus believed that Luther suffered from the disease French, made additional comments necessary. It has been said that Luther was not at all sick at the time Rychardus wrote his letter, but that he had recovered long ago. It is true that in June 1523 his life was no longer in danger, since Giengerius, returning from the Leipzig fair, had told Rychardus that Elias had recovered (“ convaluisse Helium"); but it was then that his friend Apriolus sent Rychardus the aforementioned disturbing information (" multa de valetudine adscripsit ") which led him to write his letter, which takes up the letter of his informant. Therefore, it really doesn't matter that Luther was much better overall.

It has also been alleged "that it is possible that Rychardus speaks in a general way, without any reference to Luther." According to this opinion, this is what the doctor meant: "Luther must find sleep by means of the remedy which is well known to you [and which he describes], but if, because of it (" cum hoc"), The pains of the French disease disturb sleep, they must be alleviated by a bandage", etc. It is more than obvious that such an explanation is untenable.

It must be conceded, however, that Rychardus' letter is the only document relating to Luther that alludes to syphilis. The “molestice” that some have equated with syphilis actually has a quite different meaning, which is clear from the context.

(34) Luther did not initiate the “Reformation” until 1517, when he had been a monk for over twelve years - this must not be forgotten.

(35) Luther ensured the protection of the upper classes, favoring their concupiscence; for example, he covered the bigamy of Philip I of Hesse, by granting him a dispensation.

(36) New degrees of sheer atrocity were reached during the “French Revolution”, when, for example, “butchers” began to cut up and sell “aristocratic meat”. To what extent were such acts the consequence of pathological conditions?

(37) “Was syphilis the demon that drove Hitler mad? , March 12, 2003. <http://www.fpp.co.uk/Hitler/docs/medical/Syphilis3.html>.