It is a maxim of which several states in this world today have made a deplorable proof, that there is nothing more seditious and pernicious than a new doctrine: I speak not only in Theology, but even in Philosophy. For if as in St. Paul and in the learned Bellarmine in a little work which he wrote on the mental assent to God, the true knowledge of visible and corporeal things, that is, the true Natural Philosophy, [4] raises us to the knowledge and love of invisible and corporeal things, and above all, to God the creator of all things, the first principle and the last end, where all sciences begin and end, it is quite certain that false philosophy or knowledge of the things of nature cannot lead it to the same end, but can only divert it to errors, heresies, and atheism. [Jean-Baptiste Morin, Réfutation des thèses erronées..., (Paris: chez l’auteur, 1624)]

Francesco Patrizi tried to discredit this philosophy [i.e. that of Aristotle], but he didn’t succeed any more than did Basson, Gorlaeus, Bodin, Charpentier, Hill, and many others, who through their quills, only left monuments to the fame of this philosopher, who were not able to fly high enough to dampen the soaring and glory of the Peripatetician, since he transcends everything sensible and imaginable, and the others crawl on the ground like little worms. Aristotle is an eagle in philosophy, and the others are like chicks, who wish to fly before they have wings. [Mersenne, La vérité des sciences, (Paris: Toussaint du Bray, 1625), 109-110.]

I am disgusted with innovation [nouvelleté], in whatever guise, and with reason, for I have seen very harmful effects of it. The one that has been oppressing us for so many years [i.e. the Reformation] is not the sole author of our troubles, but one may say with good reason that it has incidentally produced and engendered everything, even the troubles and ruins that have been happening since without it, and against it; it has itself to blame. ... [It] takes a lot of self-love and presumption to have such esteem for one's own opinions that to establish them one must overthrow the public peace and introduce so many inevitable evils and such a horrible corruption of morals, as civil wars and political changes bring with them in a matter of such weight--and introduce them into one's own country. [Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays of Montaigne, ed. and trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 86-7; Michel de Montaigne, Essais, ed. Maurice Rat (Paris: Garnier, 1962), vol. I, 126-7.]

I only want to warn you, dearest reader, that I have followed the order of commentaries so that I might refute the atheists, magicians, deists, who now have started to run wild through the whole world, and so that I might refute those things have led to that sort of thing. And that many questions, which otherwise might seem curious, have been taken up so they may show the followers of Campanella, Bruno, Telesio, Kepler, Galileo, Gilbert, and other recent philosophers, that what they say is false, namely that the Catholic doctors and theologians follow Aristotle alone, and swear by his words, even if experience and the phenomena are contrary. [Mersenne, Mersenne, Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim (Paris: Sebastian Cramoisy, 1623), “Praefatio et prolegomena ad lectorem” (unpaginated).]

… I warn everyone that they should beware of the new opinions, which in [these] days, the wickedly idle heads of men give birth to, which lead to the subversion of the true philosophy under the shadow of some sophisms, and which carry in atheism. [Mersenne, Quaestiones ..., col. 714]

SOME LISTS OF NOVATORES

MARIN MERSENNE
Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim (1623)

La vérité des sciences (1625)
François Patrice [i.e. Patrizi], Basson, Gorlaeus, Bodin, Charpentier, Hhil [sic] Olive. [pp. 109-10]

JEAN-CECILE (Ianus Caecilius) FREY
Cribrum philosophorum qui Aristotelem superiore et hac aetate oppugnarunt (1625)
Campanella, Patrizi, Bacon, Telesio, Ramus, Godefridus Chassinus, “the Vile Villon,” Gassendi, Pomponazzi, and Valla; Raimon Llull (incorrectly given as “Ludius”) and Basson are mentioned, though not discussed.

RENÉ DESCARTES
Letter to Beeckman, 17 Oct. 1630
“Telesius, Campanella, Brunus, Basso, Vaninus, Novatores omnes”
Gabriel Nau de

Apoligie pour tous les grand hommes qvi ont esté accusez de magie (1625)

Telesius, Patrice, Campanella, Verulamio, Jordan Brun, et Basson

Advis pour dresser vne biblioteqve (1627)

Telesius, Patrice, Campanella, Verulam, Gilbert, Jordan Brun, Gassand, Basson, Gomesius, Charpentier, Gorlée

Étienne de Clave

Paradoxes ou Traittez Philosophiques des Pierres et Pierreries, contre l’opinion vulgaire (1635)

Patrizi, Basso, Campanella, Gassendi, Dona Catharina Oliva, “personages Crestiens & Philosophes…”

Jean Bachou

Preface to the French edition of Jean d’Espagnet, La Philosophie naturelle restablie en sa pureté (1651)

Telesio, Patrizi, Campanella, Bacon, Fludd, Gorleus, Taurellus, Ramus, Descartes, Sorel, Jean d’Espagnet

Charles Sorel

“Le Sommaire des opinions les plus estranges des Nouateurs en Philosophie” (1655)

Telesio, Patrizi, Cardano, Ramus, Copernicus, Galileio “& autres Astonomes [including Kepler].” Bruno, Gorlaeus, Carpenter, “Enchyridion de la physique restituée [Jean d’Espagnet]”, Basson, Campanella, Descartes, “les nouvaters chymistes, de Paracelse & autres, & particularemment d’Estienne de Claves, Henry de Rochaz [Rochas], and Villon

…the more ancient of the Greeks, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Leucippus, Democritus, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Xenophanes, Philolaus, and the rest (we leave Pythagoras out for his superstition) did not (as far as we know) open schools but got on with their pursuit of truth more quietly, rigorously and simply, i.e. with less affectation and showing off. Thus I judge them to have done the job better, though their works were, with the passage of time, wiped out by those light-minded people whose works were more satisfying and pleasing to the capacity and attitudes of the vulgar herd, time (like a river) carrying down to us matter lighter and full of wind, while letting the heavier and solid stuff sink. [Bacon, Novum organum, I.71]

…the belief that the ancient philosophies fell into disuse after Aristotle’s works came out is false; for long afterwards, down to Cicero’s time and the ages beyond, the works of the old philosophers still endured. But in the times after that, when the barbarian flood burst into the Roman Empire, and human learning suffered shipwreck, the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato were, like timbers of lighter and less solid matter, saved from time’s breakers. [Bacon, Novum organum I.77]

The best temper of minds desireth good name and true honour; the lighter, popularity, and applause; the more depraved, subjection, and tyranny; as is seen in great conquerours, and troublers of the world: and yet more in arch-heretickes; for the introducing of new doctrines, is likewise an affectation of tyranny, over the understandings, and the beliefs of men. [Bacon, Sylva Sylvarum, § 1000]

Neither bare hand nor unaided intellect counts for much; for the business is done with instruments and aids, which are no less necessary to the intellect than to the hand. And just as instruments of the hand stimulate or guide its motion, so the instruments of the mind prompt or look out for the intellect. [Bacon, Novum organum, I.2]

…let us suppose (if you will) that some gigantic obelisk had to be moved to grace a triumph or some such splendid occasion, and men set about the task with their bare hands, would not a disinterested bystander regard that as an act of madness? And madder still if they upped the number of workers, and expected that to do the trick? And Would he not declare that they were yet more insane if they went on to sort the weak from the strong and vigorous, and only use the latter, and expected to achieve their aim in that way? And would he not exclaim that they were only labouring to show that there was method in their madness if, not content with their progress, they appealed last of all to the art of gymnastics and called up men with their hands, arms and sinews well-oiled and medicated as that art prescribed? Yet in intellectual matters men are driven by much the same mad impulse and uselessly concerted efforts when they hope for great things from the massed ranks and concurrence of minds or from their excellence and acuity, or when they strengthen the sinews of the mind with dialectic (which may be seen as a type of mental gymnastics). [Bacon, Novum organum, preface]