

FRENCH STUDIES B

Montaigne: Essais

Week 7: Montaigne's religion

1. "Il peut avoir paru très bon catholique, sauf à n'avoir guère été chrétien" (Sainte-Beuve)
2. Dr Armaingaud
3. Dieu comme une puissance incompréhensible (II, 178, Apologie...; cf. I, 265; II, 176; II, 183)
4. fideism — "Confessions ingénument que Dieu seul nous l'a dict, et la foy : car leçon n'est ce pas de nature et de nostre raison" (II, 219, Apologie...)
5. autorité & credit (II, 204, 248; III, 248; cf. II, 166)
6. "le meilleur & le plus sain party est sans doute celui qui maintient & la religion & la police ancienne du pays" (II, 331, De la liberté de conscience)
7. "la religion Chrestienne a toutes les marques d'extreme justice & utilité; mais nulle plus apparente, que l'exacte recommandation de l'obeissance du Magistrat & manutention des polices..." (I, 167, De la coustume...)
8. "Après que le ministre avoit fait son presche, sur la fin leur recommandoit la charité; & incontinent après on tuoit leurs chandelles, & là un chacun & chacune l'exerçoit envers sa soeur & son frere chrestien, se la departans l'un à l'autre selon leur volonté & pouvoir : ce que je n'oserois bonnement assurer, encore qu'on m'assurast qu'il estoit vray..."
(Brantôme, Dames galantes, p. 99)
9. "des esprits simples, moins curieux & moins instruits, il s'en faict de bons Chrestiens qui, par reverence & obeissance, croient simplement & se maintiennent sous les loix" (I, 370-371, Des vaines subtilitez).
10. l'ignorance [...] comme piece propre à la creance & à l'obeissance (II, 155; cf. II, 158, 166; III, 250)
11. "Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme titre que nous sommes ou Perigordins ou Alemans" (II, 112, Apologie...)
12. "L'auteur pouvait être un bon croyant; le livre est incroyant" (Lanson)
13. "Du fait qu'un tel homme a écrit, on a plus de plaisir à vivre sur la terre" (Nietzsche)

MONTAIGNE: HIS RELIGION

First, a word of warning:

There are many disagreements about M's religion, so many that one should really demand (as Hemingway on showing wounds from war, or was it bulls? when people start to give opinions) to inspect the credentials of anyone who pronounces on it, so eager is every sect and faction to claim that M was his spiritual ancestor; what is their party line.

My credentials: I have no party line; I try to give an objective assessment of M's religion.

One must differentiate between two things to make for clarity and unambiguity:

- 1 his life and the few facts that we know;
- 2 his book, the religious statements he makes and the implications of them.

Examples of factional bias and disagreement:

Bowman 37: "a devout Catholic" cf Dohen 15: "a mere conforming Catholicism". ; Selafer: "apologist de la religion catholique."

Gide 30: Chaque fois q M parle du christianisme, c'est avec la plus étrange (on dirait parfois: la plus malicieuse) impertinence. Il s'occupe souvent de la religion; jamais du Christ (...). Quant à la révérence qu'il marque à l'égard du catholicisme, il y entre à coup sûr bcp de prudence...

Sainte-Beuve (who had a fine taste for M and a vast (and pernicious, selon Frame) influence on the XIXth century's view of M's religion:

Saint-Beuve probably found this in Bayle (says Busson, 442) who reported it as
Saint-François de Sales' comment on a prince qui ressemblait à Henri X!

2

Il peut avoir paru très bon catholique, sauf à n'avoir (1)
guère été chrétien

(cité par AG 33: Frame DB1047 n 303) (seal)

on montagne

KRAUSHEIMER, A.J.

Studies in Self-Interest (from Descartes to Le Bonheur) Oxford 1962

p. 24: While there need be no hesitation in describing him (in 17th century terms) as a Catholic, it does seem almost impossible to regard him as a Christian, in the sense of one believing in Christ.

> here para from p. 1: on separation of life & work,

LIFE

{ II, 243
III, 43

The facts seem clear enough. Brought up as a Catholic;
mass-hold in his room for hearing from chapel on second floor
mass said in his château (he died during one, at, it is said, the
moment of the consecration); oath of faith 1562 before the
Parlement de Paris, the suggestion of coercion or self-preser-
vation not supported by Frame. Kept in the good books of
the Holy Inquisition of the Dominicans on Rome journey; tells
us in Des prières that he uses Our Father... and crosses him-

self, these being, simple, his favourite signs of piety; ^{the Journal de Voyage} tells of his punctilious atten-
dance to piety in Holyrood ^{in Rome & of his exerts}
Protestants in his family; friend and counsellor to the ^{at Notre Dame de La Roche}
Huguenot king of Navarre who was to become, after his death, HIV.

Facts of his life ~~make~~ make him a Catholic, but without
extremism, no mean achievement in his day of a ^{DLP} ~~Lib~~ or CP member
being a favourite adviser of Mao tse tung.

was censured by them, but
* this he didn't comply with their recommendations

encyclopedia
hesitant to publish it
cause of the area of probability
& superstition found in it.
(at least of religious practice)

THE BOOK

M's scepticism, as I said last week, seems to have been as much a religious phenomenon as it was philosophical or intellectual, the Apologie having been published as a defence of M's religion. What I mean is that he was not concerned merely to deny for the sake of denying all possibility of knowledge, so much as to define the terms for reason, to assign limits to the scope of topics on which the mind might permissibly help men to live — and religion was not one of those topics.

It was on topics, spiritual topics, such as those he catalogues in the Apologie at that part where he is listing and ridiculing one by one the subjects on which the phils have opinions: immortality of the soul, the nature of God, the origin of the universe, on such superhuman problems, that he denied the competence of the intellect. Not only do the senses falsify data on these questions but M ~~xxxxxxxx~~ maintains also that even if they didn't falsify our knowledge of them such knowledge would be of no use whatever to mankind — what a quaint thing to hear from a man only 30 years older than Galileo (b 1564) when he says (I ^{II, 235} 640) that Copernicus's novel solar theory or the ^{problem} one that everybody believed in are six of one etc, not a real problem at all since knowledge of this sort makes not one iota of difference to the lives of human beings, neither easier, happier nor more virtuous, for it was only in 1633 that Galileo would try to persuade the prelates that Eppur si muove and fall

foul of the Dominicans. *(the people who invented the Inquisition & John XXIII college).*

That men should seek to acquire knowledge of such super-human phenomena was to M evidence of man's pernicious inability to accept the place assigned to him in God's plan; if God had meant man to reach the truth of these mysteries he would have infused the knowledge of them into men in the first place, just as he had already breathed into men all the knowledge they require to lead happy virtuous lives, and this knowledge cannot come to man through his mind as God is incompréhensible (I, 246, ^{I. 268} (3)
I, 246, 178, 183
566, 570, 576)

Or n'y peut-il avoir des principes aux hommes, si la divinité ne les leur a revelez; de tout le demeurant, et le commencement, et le milieu et la fin, ce n'est qu songe et fumée

I 604 (= II, 206)

And these principes that man can acquire from God, it is not through his mind but through his faith that he can get them

Confessons ingénument q Dieu seul nous l'a dict, et la foy: car leçon n'est ce pas de nature et de nostre raison (4)

I 620 (= II, 219)

M knows, because he believes. One might expect that someone who doubts everything (as some say M does) would then go on to question what lies at the bottom of his belief, whether it is an intellectually respectable belief and come to realize perhaps that his belief is subjective and irrational, that he believes basically because he wants to and that this, for someone who proceeds logically, ironically and dialectically like a true admirer of Socrates, is a strange foundation on which to

build spiritual certainty. But then M was not the universal doubter that Sainte-Beuve and the rationalist anti-clerical 19th century made him out to be, and there is to him nothing unnatural in his belief; and one is forced to the conclusion: in M the most striking thing in his religious life, as his book reveals it, is the DIVORCE between mind and belief.

The fact is that a cornerstone of M's intellectual world is this unintellectual certainty. Plenty of evidence to suggest that M may have doubted the usefulness, not seen what point there was in certain peripheral aspects of his Catholic religion, but none to suggest that he ever doubted central tenets: existence of God, creation of the universe, purpose of the creation of the universe, Christ the son of God etc. *the negative evidence except, sadly, that he never talks of them.*

And since this belief of M's was what (I think it was) Sartre ~~was~~ called une certitude viscérale ie a subjective, irrational, gut belief, it is not surprising that when he comes to verbalize it, to formulate it on paper and to theorize about religions in general, he should expose certain strange and incongruous things hidden from himself perhaps by his belief. Ie aspects of that Divorce between mind and faith that I mentioned before, M's abstention from using his mind to guide his belief.

From here on I want merely to point out some of these incongruities, these aspects of that divorce.

(4)

1 This divorce goes usually by the name of fideism cf the quotation on p4 these notes from I 620 (II, 249)

Confessons ingénument etc... (4)

M is staunchly fideistic.

~~Fides~~ Fideism:

that truth in religion is ultimately based on faith rather than on reasoning or evidence. And selon M Christianity itself is fideistic

C'est aux Chrestiens une occasion de croire, q de rencontrer une chose incroyable. Elle est d'autant plus selon raison, qu'elle est contre l'humaine raison

I 553, Apologie (= II, 165)

This staunch fideism of M's is bound up obviously with his scepticism: because no truth can be established by man's mind, and because men need truth, truth must be accepted on trust

les choses qui nous viennent du ciel ont seules droit et auctorité de persuasion; seules, marque de vérité; laquelle aussi ne voyons nous pas de nos yeux, ny ne la recevons par nos moyens: cette sainte et grande visage ne pourrait pas en si chétif domicile, si Dieu pour cet usage ne le prépare, si Dieu ne le réforme et fortifie par sa grace et faveur particuliere et supernaturelle

I 229
I 632 Apologie

2 Accepted on trust I said. Religion, like law, is received by men, they accept it and for two reasons, two words that recur again and again every time he speaks about belief: autorité (5)
et crédit I 602, 656, II 484
I, 244, 248; III, 248

ce n'est pas par discours ou par nostre entendement que nous avons receu nostre religion, c'est par autorité et par commandement estranger

I 554 Apologie
II, 166

And if it came to choosing between Catholicism and the Reformed variety of Christianity then there was ~~no~~ no doubt in M's mind which was the better: the older

le meilleur et le plus sain party est sans doute celuy qui maintient et la religion et la police ancienne du pays (6)

II 72 De la liberté de conscience - II, 331

I feel it is just not true to say (as Bowman says p 37) that "M never defends the Church as a valuable social institution". On the contrary, I feel, much of M's Catholicism has to be explained by the fact that an attack on religion was a political act, an attack on the institutions of the state, the king being king by divine right how it could be else? and that for M the two are in practice indistinguishable. That last quotation (6) from II 331 72 almost says as much, you can deduce ~~this~~ from it that for M religion et police ancienne du pays go hand in glove. But we don't need to deduce it — he spells it out for us (and for Bowman) at I 167 127 De la coustume...

la religion Chestienne (sic) a toutes les marques d'extreme justice et utilité; mais nulle plus apparente, que l'exacte recommandation de l'obeissance du Magistrat et manutention des polices... (7)

N.B. his anti-heresy is ^{too much} a political ~~as much~~ ^{than a religious} phenomenon. P.S. for Brantôme on luyens cf II 492 (III. 254)

If it is permissible to imagine M writing, not in the late 16th but late 15th then my feeling is that he was such an areligious man at heart that, in a period where there was less change and ferment in matters of religion, he might never have felt moved to write on the subject. For the things he has to say in the

16th can nearly all be explained as his reaction to the changes and criticisms of the Reformers and by the political climate, the wars brought about partly by the innovators rubbing the wrong way all of M's dearest prejudices and inveterate reluctance to change

quelque apparence qu'il y ayt en la nouvelleté, je ne change pas aisément, de peur que j'ay de perdre au change. Et, puisque je ne suis pas capable de choisir, je prens le choix d'autrui et me tien en l'assiette où Dieu m'a mis. Autrement, je ne me sauroy garder de rouler sans cesse. Ainsi me suis-je, par la grace de Dieu, conservé entier, sans agitation et trouble de conscience, aux anciennes creances de nostre religion, au travers de tant de sectes et de divisions que nostre siecle a produittes

I 639 Apologie = II, 235

Why did he accept beliefs only because they were old? Seems absurd to us, especially in a man of such good sense, of such pragmatic procedures, in other things.

1 because the old things were status quo; and as I said M was, in most things to do with public life an inveterate conservative;

2 because the alternative was worse: ie to make a choice for oneself

Quasi toutes les opinions que nous avons sont prinses par autorité et à crédit. Il n'y a point de mal; nous ne saurions pirement choisir que par nous, en un siecle si faible

II 484 De la phisionomie = III, 248

This alternative — let each judge truth for himself — led to all the things which M found pernicious: innovation, social change, civil war, anarchy; therefore authority was needed:

c'est la seule humilité et submission qui peut effectuer un homme de bien. Il ne faut pas laisser ~~xx~~ au jugement de chacun la cognoissance de son devoir; il le lui faut prescrire, non pas le laisser choisir à son discours; autrement, selon l'imbecillité et variété infinie de nos raisons et opinions, nous nous forgerions enfin des devoirs qui nous mettroient à nous manger les uns les autres

{ I 539-540 Apologie
II, 154

It followed from this that obedience was one of the prime requisites in the believer, and not obedience to only part of the Church's teaching but to all

Ou il faut se submettre du tout à l'autorité de nostre police ecclesiastique, ou du tout s'en dispenser. Ce n'est pas à nous à establir la part que nous luy devons d'obeissance

{ I 197 C'est folie de rapporter le vray et le
I, 230 faux à nostre suffisance

3 another aspect of this divorce between mind and belief is of course M's apology for ignorance and simplicity: the less knowledge one has, the more ignorant one is, the closer one is to God. No atheist would disagree with this of course but the difference is that for the atheist ignorance is probably a reprehensible thing whereas for M it is the most desirable state

des esprits simples, ~~moins~~ curieux et moins instruits, ils'en faict de bons Chrestiens qui, par ~~re~~verence et obeissance, croient simplement et se maintiennent sous les loix

I 346 Des vaines subtilitez
I, 340-1

Notice

a the praise of moins curieux and cf ^{the other week} last week the references

I gave you on M's attacks on curiosity (I 197, 231, 552, 540, II 34, I, 230, I, 251, II, 164, II, 154-5, II, 298, III, 296 etc; see p 5 of these notes on Scepticism).

b notice again the connection in M's mind between
1 bons Chrestiens, 2 croient simplement and 3 se maintiennent sous les loix.

And he repeats this praise of ignorance again and again

Voilà pourquoi l'ignorance nous est tant recommandée par nostre religion comme piece propre à la creance et à l'obeissance

I 540 Apologie *II, 155

cf III 487 *III, 250

J'ay pris plaisir de voir en quelque lieu des hommes, par devotion, faire veu d'ignorance, comme de chasteté, de pauvreté, de poenitence

De la phisionomie

or again I 554 *II, 166

la foiblesse de nostre jugement nous y ayde (à la religion) plus que la force, et nostre aveuglement plus que nostre clairvoyance. C'est par l'entremise de nostre ignorance plus que de nostre science que nous sommes sçavans de ce divin sçavoir

This feeling, that ignorance is ~~xxx~~ bliss and orthodoxy, leads him on at least one occasion to seem heartily sick of Christianity and the evils that religion has led his time into. He extols the Brazilizn cannibals, these noble savages avant la lettre, for the tranquillity and serenity of their souls, for their admirable simplicité et ignorance, sans lettres, sans loy, sans roy, sans religion quelconque I 544 Apologie *II, 158

In such lines M reads less like a Christian than like a student of comparative religion. For he often talks of other religions, and is interested in them either for the light they shed on his own or for themselves. And when he writes of

other religions or of religion in general, it brings out even more to my mind, this divorce between mind and belief that seems to have been inveterate in M; and the things he says make the dichotomy all the more remarkable.

For when discussing religions M usually judges all religions as the objective comparative student would — all except his own! ie he applies his mind and reason to all manifestations of the religious need of men that have ever been seen on earth, except to the one that he himself believes in. Not only does he assess different religions but also judges such things connected with his own religion as prayers, miracles and so on applying his mind and reason to them and finds them wanting because they have not been revealed by God's word.

Eg I 483-4 (=II, 108-9)

He compares the behaviour of Christians to that of pagans, of Moslems and has to conclude that the Christian is always the worst behaved, lacking in virtue, a religion of pretence, self-interest, expediency, vice and inhumanity to man (I, 110-III 485-6); Christians lack real faith and pay only lip service II, 114 (II, 370)

Yet this rational truth, that Christianity is no better than other religions, cannot shake his faith.

He has no illusions about being Christian by divine right, or so one can interpret him: ^{he seems to say} that he is a Christian because he was born in a Christian country, just as he'd have accepted some other religion if born elsewhere (this at least is what he seems

to be saying at I 487 Apologie = II, 112

Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme titre que nous sommes
ou Perigordins ou Alemans

(11)

(However I must point out what Janssen, and then Frame, points out. In Frame's words, RR 1947 p299: ... not an explanation of religion in the soul, but a bitter denunciation of the religion of M's time..."; and I must say that reading all the a) passages from ^{III-113} 486-488 seems to bear this out: M's subject in * these pages being the feebleness of faith in men?)

The fact remains that a reader might take M's idea to be what I have suggested: that people merely accept their religion as willy-nilly as their race or nationality, without there being ^{more} any/divine purpose in the one than in the other. And again this rational truth, that what he believes is an accident of history and climate, that his absolute is really as contingent as the colour of his hair, this does not shake his belief. His faith believes in a religion that his mind knows to be the result in him of chance and geography. cf I 646 where he compares beliefs to cabbages, they have their season, their ripeness, their little span and their death: if they are at the whim of nature and the heavens what sort of absolute quality can be given to them? What he means is that belief is a contingent thing produced in men's minds by contingencies, all beliefs except the belief in God he means, but to anyone who doesn't share his faith in this single belief singled out arbitrarily

by him, this is an absurd piece of double-think: all beliefs

* Lamandé, too, appears to have noticed this (see his 2nd article, pp 706-707), tho' he doesn't state it in so many words: " ... cette phrase si souvent citée & presq toujours à contre-sens ... "

are pointless and conditioned by externals, all except mine!

He denies that there is any fundamental moral law {I, 121,
I, 162
De la coustume...

les loix de la conscience, que nous disons naistre de
nature, naissent de la coustume...

He questions the existence of any natural law, {II, 191
I 585-6 Apologie,
and concludes that even if there is one, men cannot know it {II, 189
583;
and so his belief is not based on either moral or natural law
as an absolute, yet this rational knowledge cannot shake his
belief.

He thinks, as we said, that Christianity is good for keeping
law and order, a phenomenon he also notices in other societies,
yet, though he finds it commendable in Christianity he says that
other religions which are used for the same purpose are false
vanité ceremonieuse, opinion mensongere {II, 293
II 29; une piece de
leur invention, propre à lier leur société I 651. (II, 244)

He believes in Catholicism because it old and because he
was born to it yet he castigates all believers in all other
religions for doing the same thing for the same reasons.
He sees them as vagabondes et arbitraires devotions {II, 244
I 651 al-
though we know that he suspected his own was as arbitrary as
theirs. Yet this rational knowledge cannot shake his belief.

He even says {II, 240
(II 476 Des boyteaux) that he doesn't assess
beliefs by their age, which is true — except for religion, his

own religion. And on the same page, that 100 believers in a thing don't make that thing any the truer than the belief of only one believer makes it, yet at another place ^{II 240} I 644-6 he infers the truth of Christianity because of all the many examples of rudimentary similarities to it among primitive pagan peoples who have never heard of it!

Again, he generalizes on all religions, calling them all grossiere imposture ^{De la coustume} ^{I 115}, ^{I. 157} sous l'autorité et reverence desquels l'imposture se tapit plus aisément ^{III 241} ^{II 477} Des boyteux — yet this rational knowledge cannot shake his belief. Or that men create their own gods, in their own image ^{II 198} ^{I 594}, yet this rational knowledge cannot make him believe that the Christian God comes into the same category as all the others.

The point being, for every one of these points I've raised and which seem to show some contradiction in M's religious convictions, that for M there was no contradiction, since for him the belief came first and existed in a reason-proof compartment.

On the other hand, he does have things to say which must strike us as strange in the mouth of a Christian.

Eg on miracles

In des boyteux, a most readable and interesting essay on the subject of gullibility and old wives' tales etc (such as the one that it is ~~more~~ cripples are more satisfying and ver-

satire sexual partners than normal women), in this brief, coherent essai he rubbishes men's credulity and demolishes various "miracles" that he has witnessed or heard about; he gives a rational, natural explanation to each one and shows it to be a false miracle. [Or cf this and the little essay on the power of the imagination in book I, xxi, where he ascribes miracles to the invention of the imagination. An interesting few lines on p ^{I, 145} 102 of vol I worth a closer look (*all look!!*)

Il est vray semblable que le principal credit des miracles, ~~(74)~~ des visions, des enchantemens et de tels effects extraordinaires, vienne de la puissance de l'imagination agissant principalement contre les ames ~~des~~ du vulgaire, plus molles. On leur a si fort saisi la creance qu'ils pensent voir ce qu'ils ne voyent pas

A most intriguing last sentence, is it not? But what is surely more startling, more revealing is the footnote of M Rat: look at it, ces deux derniers mots (des miracles, my underlining) ont été supprimés dans l'éd. de 1595.

Who deleted them? Why? M didn't. They still appear in the Bordeaux copy that our ed, and all reliable modern eds are taken from. Who did it then? Who tried to prevent M from appearing to be saying something subversive, to prevent us from reading an opinion of M's on an important aspect of his own religion? It can only have been the person who prepared that posthumous ed of 1595, M's fille d'alliance, Marie de Gournay (why doesn't someone write an article to explain their liaison and her motives for forging M?) Whoever it was, it seems plausible to interpret this deletion as the work of a more cautious hand

but: if I, xxi has already been read in class.

quit
 [than Montaigne's and shows that someone may have thought him
 ever so slightly unorthodox and dangerous, a mere three years
 after his death. // ended here 1977]

On miracles, ^{& the supernatural} M usually exempts from his criticisms the ^{supernatural events} miracles he knows about from the Bible (II 242 478-9), but the
 fact remains that everything he says about the false ones, if
 you leave aside his irrational bias in favour of the Biblical
 ones (which he implies should be believed in because they're
 old and beyond the scope of the mind to question) everything
 that he says could be applied to those ones too — and of
 course this was how his reasoning was to be interpreted by
 later generations. One does wonder how M could be so scepti-
 cal of the one sort, the modern, that he has had the chance to
 investigate for himself, how could he see so clearly that if
 his contemporaries' belief can be so entire and sincere and
 unshakeable in something that turns out to have been a forgery
 a joke played by two village lads hiding under the floor of
 the church, but not doubt the authenticity of his own belief
 in similar things which might also be forgeries, only older?

[pto for Brush on M on credulity] quit?

Or in the Apologie ^{§II, 197} (I 593) where he pours cold water on
 the virgin births reputed among Moslems — certainly a strange
 thing to say, one would think, when his own religion contained
 just such a phenomenon ^{& a very fundamental one.} (by the way, Brush p94 also notices this).

I, 254

Or at I 234=I xxxi des cannibales where he says, with perceptible irony, that one's own country is always the one with the best social system, best of everything, best religion — what is he saying, if not that he realises that it is an illusion, a prejudice common to all men and that he himself is no different, that his belief in Christianity's superiority is based on an illusion and a bias?

(* or what he says about the priests of the savages in South pto ^{ant?})

II, 199-200

Or the rubbishing at I 595-6 of the multitudinous gods of the ancients; 36000 they had, he says, a god to each human function, one who is the patron of grape-growing, one to each human trade, town, family; some gods look after a door, some a child's nappy; five or six of these gods are needed to make an ear of corn — quite a hilarious list, but how can one stop oneself comparing these gods to the patron saints of M's own religion and wondering did he not see that similarity himself and therefore mean it to be read into what he has to say and therefore to be taken as a piece of satire? ^{And, if I can see it, could it not be seen by his contemporaries?} Especially since he seems to go to some pains to make the similarity a close one; these gods of antiquity, he says, are

moyens entre la divine et l'humaine nature, mediateurs, entremetteurs de nous à Dieu; adorez par certain second ordre d'adoration et diminutif; infinies en tiltres et offices

} II, 200
(I 596

One might think he had written those words about the saints,*

* d'autant q' in another place he calls Vlours a Saint! (III, 134, VII, 353, De l'incommodité...)

then simply changed one word. (cf Brush also raises this point, p94).

So, on many things, and especially in his generalizations on religion, from all of which he irrationally exempted his own religion, M reads like a comparative religionist; and, whether he knew it or not, most of the things he said about religions in general could be used against his own religion by anyone who didn't share his own arbitrary prejudices. And though M's intention in the Apologie was to defend Catholicism, his essay contains ^(albeit unintentionally) much subversive matter which would one day be used against his own position.

Perhaps this is what Lanson means when he says ("somewhat enigmatically", Brush 95!!!):

L'auteur pouvait être un bon croyant; le livre est incroyant

(12)
(12) (11)

Lanson, 264

For this is a book by a believer (at times no doubt a dissatisfied believer of the sort of Bernanos or Mauriac whose severest criticisms are of their co-believers) which has nourished more doubters of divers sorts than any other, from the English deists of the 17th and 18th, from Bayle and Voltaire to Nietzsche and Gide, Nietzsche who said one of the nicest things about M that one writer can say about another:

Du fait qu'un tel homme a écrit, on a plus de plaisir à vivre sur la terre Biblio avril 1965, p20

(12) (13)

for next week: I, xxiii, III, xiii (beginning, 10 pp), II, xi, IV.