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“Philosophical Snuff”: The Speculative Story of the Mind¹

Miran Božovič

With speculative realism, a certain argumentative strategy, which became outmoded with Kant’s transcendental turn, seems to have been reinstated in philosophy: namely, the strategy of thought experiment, which transfers the philosopher (and his reader) to another world, i.e., in either the past or future state of this planet or even to a different celestial body altogether. It is there, in the purity of a new, contrived, sometimes entirely fictional setting, that the authentic scene of truth can finally be thoroughly and unconditionally enacted. Along these lines, the opening move of the entire movement of speculative realism consisted in Meillassoux devising a case of an “arche-fossil” *not* being gazed upon by the “ancestral witness” in the times preceding the emergence of the human race.² Brassier, similarly, but inversely, invents the doctrine of “transcendental extinction,” picturing a world devoid of humans as the ultimate test of the scope and purview of what reality is really about.³ But it is perhaps little known that the great philosophers before Kant resorted to similar scenarios of envisaging completely novel locations and environments, in which they hoped the bounds of their terrestrial, everyday existence would be magically circumvented.⁴

In this sense, a thought experiment always seems to express, in the most concise manner possible, what the confines of the mentality of a respective era actually amount to. Accordingly, since in the twenty-first century the fundamental limitation not to be trespassed is that of the human’s “correlation” to the world, it is *a world without man* which is most commonly fantasized about. By contrast, the imagination of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries appears to have been constrained by an entirely different set of limitations that needed to be overcome. At that time, the great “prison of thought” was not guarded by consciousness and language, as in the twentieth century, but predominantly by our own earthly corporeality. It thus became some sort of ultimate philosophical fantasy of the spiritualist, idealist age extending from Descartes to Berkeley to imagine the human mind no longer weighted down by the fleshly impediments of its burdensome body. Suddenly, the mind was envisioned as being able to travel anywhere in the universe, to communicate with other minds directly, fully, and instantaneously, to surpass the limits of human mortality, and to develop and accumulate knowledge *ad infinitum*.

Thus, while today’s realists ruminate on the possibilities of standing face-to-face with non-human reality, the pre-Kantian idealists dreamt about exceeding the bodily

boundaries between souls, thus enabling the mind to gain direct, intimate access to the minds of others. The popular philosophical reverie was not a world without man, i.e., the material substance without the supplement of the mind, but rather *man without body* and, correspondingly, even an entire world liberated from the shackles of corporeal reality.

The intention of this chapter is therefore to present some cases of this “speculative life” of the mind in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century philosophy, the aim of which was to transcend the inhibitions imposed on our thinking by the carnal constraints of human existence.

I Descartes among the Lapp shamans

In the last chapter of his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, John Locke famously says that “the scene of ideas that makes one man’s thoughts cannot be laid open to the immediate view of another;”⁵ and that, therefore, for us to be able to communicate our thoughts to others or preserve them for our own future use, signs of ideas are also necessary. It is not hard to imagine that, for centuries, philosophers were intrigued by the idea of one’s thoughts being directly accessible to another, that is, without one’s wishing in any way to communicate them to the other. It is perhaps because it appears to be so improbable and implausible that this idea is found mostly in the works in the genre of speculative or even fictional history of philosophy. The thinker most often associated with the notion of the ability to read the thoughts of others is Descartes, which is hardly surprising, given the privileged status of thought in his metaphysical theory as the principal attribute of mental substance.

One such work of speculative philosophical historiography is a slim booklet by Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Nouveaux mémoires pour servir à l’histoire du cartésianisme*, originally published in 1692 under the pseudonym M. G. de L’A. It is a highly satirical piece of writing focused on a traveler with a bent for Cartesian philosophy who has heard rumors on his travels that in Lapland there is a stranger teaching Cartesian philosophy with such authority and confidence that Descartes could not have done it better himself. Since Descartes had officially been dead for several years by then, the traveler decides to visit Lapland to investigate the rumors on the spot, and it transpires that the learned stranger is none other than Descartes himself, who did not really die in February 1650, but only feigned his death. In what follows, Descartes recounts for the benefit of the inquisitive visitor—through a dialogue with Pierre Chanut, French ambassador to Sweden, in whose house in Stockholm Descartes staged his own death—the series of events which brought him to Lapland. Disappointed by the lack of understanding of his teachings, by the ridicule and contempt with which his metaphysical theory was received—to give just one example, the medicine Descartes’s valet brings him one day from the pharmacist is wrapped in paper which Descartes recognizes with horror as a page torn out of his *Meditations*⁶—he decides to withdraw to the extreme north, to Lapland, where he expects to find a much more receptive and appreciative audience for his metaphysical theories. He hopes to find peace and solitude there, and to be able to devote himself to contemplation and the study of nature. At the

time, Lapland was obviously considered a mysterious but pure and pristine land, far from the traps of civilization. Descartes says he has always felt a strong inclination for the countries of the far north. As well as the natural phenomena such as "long summer days without night" and "long winter nights without day," the Northern Lights, termed *aurora borealis* by his contemporary Pierre Gassendi, and so forth, Descartes says he is also attracted by various supernatural phenomena, such as the ghosts which frequently appear there, demons in the form of a fly, magic cords containing a number of knots the untying of which produces wind, and so on. What most intrigues him, however, are "the astonishing effects of . . . magic drums" of the Lapp shamans. By studying all these phenomena, he hopes to gain an insight into "where the natural ends and the supernatural begins" (36–7).

Descartes's retreat to the far north does not necessarily entail severing all ties with the people in the rest of the world, in particular his old friends and disciples. In maintaining these ties Descartes relies on "a great secret" (41) passed on to him by the Rosicrucians, who, he says, "know how to render themselves invisible at will," who are able "to prolong their illness-free life up to four or five hundred years," and, more importantly, who "know the thoughts of other people" (47). Although, as a rule, Descartes does not flaunt these exceptional powers—such behavior is forbidden by the strict rules of the Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians, of which he was allegedly a member—nevertheless, from time to time, he does perform a clever trick or two for the benefit of his closest friends: thus, he says, he has more than once surprised Father Mersenne by repeating before him "not only everything he [i.e., Father Mersenne] had said and done in my absence, but also everything he had thought" (50). Descartes is not going to misuse these powers, which enable him to penetrate "without the ring of Gyges and without the helmet of Pluto" into "the deepest secrets of actions of men, and not only of their actions, but also of their thoughts" (51). He is going to use them exclusively to advance and promote his own philosophy. Since the Lapps have the power to transport themselves wherever they wish by means of their magic drums, he will send them to Paris, Leyden or Utrecht to inquire about the state of the Cartesian sect; and if the need arises, he will transport himself there, too, and make himself known to his "wise friends and faithful disciples" and "give them advice and instructions necessary for the propagation of my sect and the extirpation of Peripateticism" (53–4). That is, he will advise his disciples as to the best course of defense to adopt in their verbal duels with Peripatetic adversaries and "provide them with captious distinctions, equivocal terms, and ambiguous expressions capable of holding back the shrewdest dialecticians"; he will "fortify them against all kinds of objections, and when they will find themselves caught in a flagrant contradiction . . . [he] will encourage them . . . to boldly save themselves by resorting to some specious argument" (54). For him to be able "to boast as long a list of commentators as Aristotle had," he "will not have to wait for as many centuries as Aristotle did," Descartes observes, and goes on to add that "one can accomplish quite a bit in five hundred years of life" (54–5).

The satire ends with Descartes's feigned death and burial in Stockholm, in which "a log wrapped in clothes" was buried instead of the metaphysician. Meanwhile, Descartes, who has hidden himself in the attic, is straining his ears in the hopes of catching what the mourners have to say about him but, regrettably, he is too far away to hear anything.

"Although he had not had this pleasure, he nevertheless had another, no less rare one of witnessing his own funeral" (71), adds Huet. Shortly afterwards, an unnamed Peripatetic visits the grave—one wonders if the mysterious visitor was not perhaps Huet himself, who visited Descartes's grave in 1652⁷—who, to his horror, notices that the inscription on the tombstone of the great "restorer of truth" does not correspond to the truth. While the inscription reads "sub hoc lapide," the tombstone itself is made of wood and only "painted to resemble stone."⁸ And to make matters even worse, it was Descartes himself who composed the inscription for the tombstone during his (feigned) terminal illness. Thereupon, the Peripatetic "furtively and maliciously" crosses out the word "lapide" and adds, in charcoal, the word "ligneo" (72)—and thereby restores the truth of things.

One of the more interesting ramifications of this satire, which is definitely not its author's best work, is that the success of Cartesian philosophy and the ensuing decline of the Peripatetic philosophy were in no small degree helped by Descartes's subsequent, that is, "posthumous" interventions in developments on the philosophical stage, made possible by his exceptional powers, first and foremost, by his uncanny ability to read the thoughts of others. It was Descartes's knowing the thoughts of others that gave his disciples an important, perhaps even decisive, advantage over their Peripatetic adversaries and enabled the Cartesians to emerge victorious in verbal combats with the Peripatetics. What people witnessing such an exchange mistakenly took to be a series of well-reasoned arguments on the part of Descartes's disciple and his effective, convincing, refutations of the Peripatetic's objections and counter-arguments was, in reality, nothing other than a charade. In fact, it was Descartes, who—having made himself invisible and transported himself, with the help of magic drums, from Lapland to, say, Paris—was surreptitiously literally putting words in his disciple's mouth. And these words may well have appeared carefully weighed, measured and to the point, since Descartes, owing to his ability to read his interlocutor's thoughts, knew in advance what the latter was going to say. If Descartes had not had these exceptional powers, which he owed to the Rosicrucians, and had he not, at the same time, relied on the help of Lapp shamans, the history of philosophy could well have taken an entirely different course and, in the long run, Peripatetic philosophy could, conceivably, have overshadowed or even superseded Cartesian philosophy.

Although, on the surface, the work openly ridicules Descartes—despite his exceptional powers, all he was able to come up with to help his disciples were "equivocal terms," "ambiguous expressions," "specious arguments," and so on, which could merely confuse their Peripatetic adversaries—it is, on a deeper level, actually much more than just a straightforward satire. Coming from the pen of one of the main opponents and critics of Cartesian philosophy of the period, the work could alternatively be read as a kind of mourning for the former domination of Aristotelian philosophy and a rationalization of the growing influence of Cartesian philosophy: in the context of Huet's work, seventeenth-century Aristotelian philosophers have justly felt tricked and deceived, since their failure in verbal duels with the Cartesians was due, in no small part, to the unfair advantage of the latter. The battle between the two schools for domination of the philosophical stage could be said to have been equal only if the Peripatetic philosophers, too, had been helped, in the midst of their discussions with

Cartesians, by Aristotle himself—just as their Cartesian adversaries were helped by Descartes himself—that is, only if Aristotle, having made himself invisible and being able to read the thoughts of others, had secretly whispered the answers to his disciples and indicated to them a possible line of defense against their Cartesian critics. Only this would make the duel fair and equal, since the two great masters themselves would get to face one another and cross swords through their disciples; only the one victorious in such a duel could really be said to have deservedly won.

II Aristotle the reader of Descartes

On the last page of his last work, *Éléments de physiologie*, Denis Diderot says that "it is a rather common fantasy among the living to imagine themselves dead, standing beside their own corpse, and following their own funeral."⁹ A man standing next to his own corpse, Diderot goes on to add, reminds him of "a swimmer in the water looking back at his clothes, which he has left lying on the shore."¹⁰ In Huet's *Nouveaux mémoires*, the fantasy of witnessing one's own funeral is only half-realized. In Huet, Descartes, having merely staged his own death, observes a mock funeral procession burying a log wrapped in his clothes, while the mourners, on whom he is surreptitiously eavesdropping, are tricked into believing that it is Descartes himself who is being buried. What was merely a charade in Huet, actually does take place in Brigitte Hermann's 1996 novel *Histoire de mon esprit ou le roman de la vie de René Descartes*. This beautifully written novel consists entirely of a first-person narrative, in which Descartes recounts in detail what he himself apparently called "the story of my mind."¹¹ The very last sentence of this voluminous novel reads: "And while they, all in tears, carried me towards the other world . . . , my soul, filled with joy, finally liberated itself from my body and freely set out on the path of discovery of Truth."¹² In this sentence we hear the voice of Descartes, who is clearly observing, and commenting on, the burial of his own dead body. Even this one sentence alone would make reading the nearly 500 preceding pages worthwhile. The moment we read this sentence, everything changes; everything we have read up to that point takes on, in retrospect, an ominous and uncanny quality. In that moment, we come to realize that, all along, we have been listening to the voice of someone who has apparently crossed the divide between life and death, that is, a voice coming from beyond the grave. What Descartes has been narrating all this time from the afterlife, is essentially an account of his earthly life or this-worldly existence, that is, the story of his embodied mind. The death of the body, however, does not mean an end to the story of a mind that is "really distinct" from the body. Obviously, the story of Descartes's mind continues even after its separation from the body. Moreover, as the mind's embodied state is only a minor part of its overall existence, the story of embodied mind is merely a passing episode in its total life history, the greater part of which is formed by the story of its disembodied, "separate" existence.

Precisely such a story, that is, a story of Descartes's disembodied mind, can be found in the novel to which we now turn, namely *Voyage du Monde de Descartes* by the French Jesuit historian Gabriel Daniel, published in Paris in 1690. This delightfully imaginative

novel depicts an encounter, in which the Cartesians, at the end of the seventeenth century, come face to face with Aristotle himself. It is a special merit of this novel that it shows how vertiginously complex, rich and multi-layered stories of disembodied minds can be in comparison with their earthly, embodied lives. Just how famous this novel must have been at the time can perhaps best be seen in the fact that it was translated into English soon after its original appearance and, in the next few years, also into Latin, Italian, and so forth. Before the end of the seventeenth century, Pierre Bayle writes about it with great admiration and quotes extensively from it in remark G of his *Dictionary* article “Rorarius.”¹³ Despite the notoriety it enjoyed at the turn of the seventeenth century, the novel later gradually fell into oblivion. It is an extraordinary piece of writing, whose genre could perhaps best be characterized as phi-fi, that is, as philosophical fiction: the author takes as his premise the Cartesian notion of the “real distinction” between mind and body and works through some of its more colorful and intriguing ramifications, such as space travel and the implicit need for a complete revision and rewriting of the history of philosophy—in the light of the novel’s premise, the history of philosophy as we know it retrospectively turns out to be incomplete, if not plain wrong.

Before exploring these ramifications in more detail, let us first take a brief look at the main plot device of Father Daniel’s novel. In the novel, Descartes is said to have penetrated into “the most curious Secret in the World,” that is, the secret not only of “the Union of the Soul and Body,” but also “that of separating, and re-uniting them when he pleas’d.”¹⁴ That is, he knew how to make his soul leave his body and return to it. As a mind or a “thinking thing,” he was able to separate himself from the body or the “extended thing,” to which he was joined for the duration of his earthly existence and return to it at will. As a mind, he separated himself from the body by taking “Tobacco-Snuff,” which he got from an Amsterdam merchant, who had brought it from an island close to China (21). Since the pure tobacco was too strong for his taste, Descartes added “a certain Herb” to it. As Descartes believed, it was this herb “dried to Powder” that caused his soul to separate itself from the body (22). Descartes passed on some of the magic herb to one of his disciples but was unwilling to disclose its name or reveal the place where it grew (21). Apparently, it was Descartes’s beloved pastime to take a pinch of snuff every now and then and, as a “separate Soul,” fly around the world with great speed—“three or four thousand Leagues” per minute (20)—instructing himself in “the greatest Curiosities in Nature” (22). Immediately upon his return from such a trip, Descartes would reenter his body which, in the meantime, had been lying motionless on his bed awaiting his return. By pure coincidence, some people came to see Descartes just when he was on one of his excursions and found his inert body in bed. Unable to awaken him, that is, to bring his temporarily soulless body back to life, they assumed that Descartes had died and they buried him. Since there was now no body for him to inhabit upon his return, Descartes decided to quit this world for good and travel to the outskirts of the universe, where he still lives forty years after his supposed death. As it transpires, he has settled in “the Third Heaven,” where he is busy constructing a world of his own which will run on principles laid out in his “posthumously” published treatise on cosmology *The World*.

The story of the novel is rather simple. It centers around a young man, an avid reader and student of philosophy, “determin’d to dive to the bottom of Descartes’s

Philosophy" (7), who is going to visit Descartes, where he has been invited by "an old Cartesian" and "the Spirit of Father Mersenne," two of the "very few" to know the truth about his supposed death. The purpose of the visit is to witness the trial run of the world mechanism Descartes is planning to perform "before he puts the Design of his World in Execution" (37–8). The "old Cartesian," apparently as close an associate and confidant of Descartes as Father Mersenne, is also familiar with his master's secret of separating the soul from body. He is said to be in possession of a "great Quantity" of Descartes's mixture of the Chinese tobacco and the mysterious herb, by means of which he has already visited Descartes "six or seven" times in his exile on the outskirts of the universe, bringing him news from our world. Having taken Descartes's snuff, they set out for the third heaven. As it happens, on their journey through the universe, the Cartesian space travelers run into various illustrious thinkers—Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle among others—all of whom obviously also knew the secret of separating the soul from the body. As "separate Souls," these thinkers live on the Moon, where, as the space travelers are pleased to learn, they continue to work on the projects conceived while they were still living in "the lower World," that is, on the Earth. Just as Descartes is constructing his own world in the third heaven, so Plato too is ruling his own "Republic" on the Moon, that is, a state which he has established according to the principles laid out in his dialogue of the same name, the *Republic*, while Aristotle is running a philosophy school on the Moon, the new Lyceum, which he has founded and where, at the end of the seventeenth century, that is, more than 2,000 years after his supposed death, he still teaches philosophy (75), and so forth.

The following two conversations our space travelers have on their way through the heavens—one with Socrates and the other with Aristotle—neatly capture the spirit of the novel. Upon learning that the visitors are from Earth, where he is wrongly believed to be dead, Socrates recounts what actually happened in Athens in that distant year of 399 BCE. "The Soul of a Philosopher, such as I am," explains Socrates, "staid not to be dismissed from the World by the Decree of a Faction of Corrupt Judges, and the Clamours of a Multitude" (71); instead, what really happened was that upon arrest, Socrates immediately quit his body and instructed his "Familiar Spirit," that is, his *daimon*, to move in there in his place and put up a bold front until the very end, which the *daimon* did admirably well (71–2). This means that the one who listened to his death sentence with the utmost composure and self-possession, the one who calmly and courageously faced death, the one who, in short, acted as a true philosopher to the very end, was not really Socrates, but his *daimon*. Consequently, the fame and admiration Socrates has enjoyed for long centuries after his presumed death is, at least in part, undeserved, while his heroic, "philosophical death" which earned him a high place in western culture and in the personal pantheon of many later philosophers is nothing more than a myth.¹⁵ Moreover, his reputation of being an honorable and courageous man is at least somewhat tarnished, as he avoided death through a cowardly deception, that is, by sending someone else, his *daimon*, to die in his place.

What our travelers hear from Socrates would already entail considerable revisions in the history of philosophy. At least some of Plato's dialogues of the early and middle period, such as *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*, which all rank among his undisputed masterpieces, would very probably lose their place in Plato's canon and therefore also

in the history of philosophy, since the dramatic, fateful event they all deal with, actually happened in a radically different way. As a result, these dialogues could no longer be considered as authentic, faithful, depictions of events. Would not the ruse Socrates performed at the (supposed) end of his life, also cast doubt on some of his previous actions—having once mistakenly believed that the sage who willingly drank the cup of hemlock in jail was Socrates himself, while, in fact, it was someone else, the *daimon*, who just came to inhabit Socrates' body, how are we to know that this had not also been the case on some previous occasion? For example, what if the one who had fought bravely as a hoplite in three military campaigns was not really Socrates, but the *daimon* in his body, whom Socrates had sent to fight in his place? This would mean that his reputation as a fearless warrior, too, was a result of deception. Furthermore, how would Plato react were he to realize that in some central dialogues of the early and middle period he had actually fallen victim to Socrates' deception? Moreover, in the eyes of the young Plato, Socrates' death was a turning point that profoundly influenced his decision to pursue a career in philosophy—how would he react if he knew that his own unquestionably brilliant career in philosophy was founded on a lie or deception on the part of his teacher? Not much is said about all this in the novel, although by the end of the seventeenth century, Plato could be reasonably expected to be aware of the true course of events surrounding the supposed end of Socrates' life, especially given that “'tis more than probable” that Socrates has taken up his abode “in his belov'd Disciple Plato's Commonwealth” (75), that is, in Plato's new republic on the Moon.

What the Cartesian space travelers learn in their conversation with Aristotle would entail even more radical and far-reaching revisions of the history of philosophy. As already noted, on the Moon, Aristotle is running his Lyceum where he apparently still teaches philosophy. The really interesting question, which, regrettably, the book does not address, would be: what is Aristotle's own philosophical theory like at the end of the seventeenth century, that is, with 2,000 years of growth and development behind it? While the thinkers on Earth are not even aware of the existence of the vibrant philosophical life on the Moon, the Aristotle that the space travelers encounter, on the other hand, is well acquainted with Cartesian philosophy. He says at one point, “I have seen [Descartes's] Books and pity 'em” (76). He has studied in great detail the *Meditations*, the *Discourse on Method*, and the *Principles of Philosophy, Part One*. Over several pages, he gives an authoritative interpretation of all these works and presents an especially strong critique of *Meditations* (76–85). At times, it even seems as though Aristotle is openly flaunting his knowledge of Descartes's metaphysical theory before the visiting “Gentlemen Cartesians.” Obviously, Aristotle on the Moon closely follows the evolution of philosophical thought on Earth; that is, for 2,000 years he has been reading and studying the works of thinkers who have entered—and left—the philosophical stage on Earth after his supposed death and withdrawal to the Moon.¹⁶ Descartes, on the other hand, when the travelers finally meet him face to face in the third heaven, admits to being largely ignorant of the developments taking place in philosophy on Earth in the forty years following his supposed death. For example, all Descartes knows about the state of Cartesian philosophy in “the lower World” is that it still has many followers, as well as many adversaries (176), but he has never heard of Malebranche, who is considered as one of the greatest Cartesians at the time on Earth

(196). This, explains Descartes, is in part because ever since he quit his body at the moment of his supposed death, he has been experiencing an "Indifference and Disregard . . . for the Sentiments of Men" (176). Aristotle's lectures on the history of philosophy at his new Lyceum on the Moon must surely be utterly unique and precious, since they are given by a speaker who has been a living contemporary of Plotinus, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as of Giordano Bruno, Galileo, and Descartes. Thus, to listen to his lectures on the history of philosophy would no doubt be to learn about the topic from a most knowledgeable source. But even more interesting would be to listen to Aristotle lecturing on his own philosophy: the philosophical theory Aristotle is developing in the seventeenth century on the Moon must be something entirely other than the one taught by him in the fourth century BCE at the Lyceum in Athens, since Aristotle on the Moon is no doubt familiar with all the objections to his philosophy raised over the centuries, and has, by the end of the seventeenth century, most likely resolved them and incorporated his replies to those objections into his new philosophical theory. Incidentally, in the new Lyceum on the Moon, there is a painting, recently completed, showing Aristotle as he receives "a Thunderbolt" from the hand of Minerva, to wipe out "all the Chieftains of the New Sects of Philosophy," among whom the travelers easily recognize Descartes, Gassendi, and so forth (108).¹⁷ Aristotle, speaking about his own philosophy from the perspective of its 2,000 years of development, would undoubtedly make an incomparably more interesting interlocutor—and complex and multi-layered thinker—than Descartes, whom we encounter in the heavens a mere forty years after his presumed death putting his ideas, outlined in *The World*, into practice, and who, by his own admission, no longer bothers to read philosophy.

Another interesting implication of the novel would run as follows: we are told in the novel that the majority of the "separate Souls" wandering through space are those of philosophers, presumably because it is among the philosophers that "the Secret of separating the Soul and Body" was common knowledge (30–1; 46). This means that the founders of several philosophical schools that have flourished and declined on Earth over the centuries are still alive somewhere in space, mostly on the Moon, but their disciples on Earth, who came after them, for the most part do not know this. Thus, on Earth, it is generally believed that all thinkers from Socrates to Descartes are dead. It may, perhaps, be safely assumed that no small number of these "Philosophical Souls" are still keenly interested in philosophy and that, like Aristotle—but unlike Descartes—they, too, closely follow each other's work, all the while revising and amending their original philosophical systems in the light of criticism from each other or in view of new and inspiring ideas found in later, sometimes even centuries younger, thinkers. In light of the latest developments in the heavens, even Descartes's *The World* would seem to be in need of revision, although it can, on the Lunar time scale, still be considered a relatively recent work in the 1690s. In the original, "lower World" version of the book, Descartes famously presents the making of the "new world" as "a fable."¹⁸ Once having completed the construction of his own world in the third heaven, however, he would most probably proceed to modify the text to reflect this fact. Written as a first-hand report describing the process of the new world's coming into being, the book would now perhaps read somewhat like the Book of Genesis. If there were inhabitants in the

newly constructed world, they might well consider Descartes's *The World* as the Bible of their world, and Descartes himself as God. Let us try to picture what the history of philosophical ideas might be like in the universe of Father Daniel's novel: it is not just that, high in the heavens, representatives of various philosophical schools—most of whom could not even have met on Earth, since the schools to which they belonged are divided by centuries—would meet and exchange ideas, as for example, Duns Scotus, in the novel, comes to visit Aristotle and notices several volumes of Descartes's works (126) whereupon, perhaps, as one can easily imagine, a lively discussion ensues, in which the two interlocutors jointly criticize, say, Descartes's account of the Eucharist. It is also that, in the heavens, all these schools are still active and, what is more, they are presumably still being led by their original founders or, more precisely, their souls. On Earth, some of these schools have ceased to exist and been replaced by new ones, while some others continue to exist. In the heavens, on the other hand, all philosophical schools exist concurrently, one beside the other; it is just that some are older—sometimes even centuries older—than others, depending on the time of their first appearance on the philosophical stage. Since, with the exception of rare Cartesians, members of those schools that continue to exist on Earth after the apparent death of their founder do not know that their masters are still alive and continuing their philosophical pursuits in the heavens, most often on the Moon, there is an obvious need for a new genre of philosophical historiography, that is, at least for a history of the Lunar philosophy, as an other-worldly follow-up to its earthly history. Of the history of philosophy on Earth, this much may perhaps safely be said: that it is but a pale and meager shadow of the immensely rich and burgeoning philosophical activity taking place across the Moon. By the end of the seventeenth century, many of the "Philosophical Souls" have spent a far longer time on the Moon than they had previously on Earth. Duns Scotus, for example, when the Cartesians run into him, has been on the Moon, roughly, nine times longer than he had been on Earth. If these thinkers were anywhere near as productive on the Moon as they had been during their earthly lives, the number of their "posthumous" works, as one could surmise, would have vastly surpassed the total of their writings on Earth.

Just how radically other the Lunar philosophical canon must be, can perhaps best be seen if one considers the separate souls' extraordinary cognitive powers. Let us first take a brief look at the way the separate souls of the Cartesian space travelers communicate with one another and with the souls they meet on their way through space. Since they have no bodies to express their thoughts and ideas by speaking or writing, the souls communicate with one another "in Language Spiritual" (29), that is, by a sort of "immediate Communication of . . . Thoughts" (40). However, this does not mean that one soul can in any way know the thoughts of another without the latter's consent or even against its will. The immediacy of communication of thoughts merely means that it takes place without the medium of a body. On the one hand, a body or "extended thing" has the power of speech, and makes spoken communication possible, but, on the other hand, it significantly limits the communication, since a tongue is able to pronounce "but one Syllable at a Time" (67). Speaking of apparently lengthy conversations between the separate souls, the narrator of the novel, addressing the readers, says that however much space the conversations between the separate souls

may seem to have taken up on paper, in reality "they lasted but one single instant" (67). This is because a single "Spiritual Word" in which one soul communicates to another expresses more than "a thousand pronounced or written" words can convey to those who hear or read them (67). One of the space travelers—the one who took Descartes's snuff for the first time—observes that his transient out-of-body experience has taught him many novel things he will be able to put to good use when trying to explain, in the book he is writing, the way angels, as pure spiritual substances free from all matter, communicate between themselves (67). Given the spectacular expressiveness of the "Spiritual Words," the separate souls' intellectual cognitive powers must be truly exceptional to be able to take in and process such a great quantity of information at a time. In conversation with one of his disciples, Descartes likens his snuff-induced state of separation from the body to a "Trance," saying that in both these states "there is no use of the Senses; one can neither See, nor Hear, nor Feel the Impression of External Objects" (17). Yet, unlike the soul in trance, a separate soul has "Perceptions of itself" and is therefore aware of "the Cessation of its Organical Functions" (17). It is in this state of separation from the body that his soul acquired "a World of Immaterial or purely Spiritual Notices"; and the soul acquired this vast amount of spiritual knowledge, Descartes continues, "in an abundantly more perfect and lively manner" than in the embodied state in which its attention is constantly interrupted by the appearances of imagination (17). And by way of conclusion he adds: "More discoveries of Truth could be made thus in one Minute, than in ten years by the ordinary means" (17). The implication here is not that the growing impact of Cartesian philosophy and the gradual decline of Aristotelian influence in the second half of the seventeenth century is a result of Descartes's use of the substance capable of separating his soul from the body and thereby greatly enhancing its cognitive powers. As Descartes himself discovers with surprise, the secret of separating the soul from body—that is, "the Secret, of which he took himself to be the first Inventor" (31)—has been known to most of his rivals and predecessors in philosophy, including Aristotle, all of whom should therefore, in principle, be able to develop equally effective cognitive abilities. Rather, what is implied is how very intense, rich in content, and fruitful must be the life of philosophical ideas on the Moon, and how utterly complex and wildly ramified the interactions among the separate "Philosophical Souls," in comparison to those taking place between their embodied equivalents on Earth.

III "Two Selves in the same brain"

A brilliant spin-off of Father Daniel's notion of separation of soul from body by taking snuff can be found in two of the essays George Berkeley wrote for the *Guardian*. In the wonderfully clever essay No. 35 of April 21, 1713, Berkeley, writing under the assumed name of Ulysses Cosmopolita, claims to have come into possession of Descartes's obviously already notorious mixture of tobacco and the mysterious herb—or "philosophical snuff,"¹⁹ as it is happily termed in the essay—which he says was given him by the nephew of "the author of *The Voyage to the World of Descartes*" (185), which he had apparently read and most likely enjoyed. The effect of the snuff, that is, the

separation of soul from body, is exploited by Berkeley, a philosopher of ideas for whom everything exists in the mind, in a different, more innovative way. After taking the snuff and leaving his body behind, Berkeley does not simply fly around in the sky visiting far-away places. Having separated itself from its body, Berkeley's soul, rather, enters another body, which, however, it does not animate. That is, Berkeley's soul comes to inhabit another body while the latter is still being animated by its own soul—and Berkeley's soul comes to inhabit this body surreptitiously, that is, without its soul taking any notice of it.

In the essay, the Berkeley character is presented as being extremely curious and inquisitive—that is, eager to acquire knowledge in arts and sciences. And it is primarily to satisfy his intellectual curiosity that he travels the world. Eventually, his travels bring him to France, where he meets Father Daniel's nephew, who, upon learning of his thirst for knowledge, presents him with “a small box of snuff,” saying that he knows “no readier way to furnish and adorn a mind with knowledge in the arts and sciences than that same snuff rightly applied” (185). The nephew then goes on to explain to Berkeley the working of the snuff in detail, saying that the soul, having separated itself from its body, is “at liberty to transport herself with a thought wherever she pleases” (186). The separate soul can, among other things, also enter the brain, or more specifically, the pineal gland, i.e., the seat of the soul, according to Descartes, of another person, suggests the nephew. By literally entering another person's mind and observing the thoughts as they occur to that person, Berkeley's separate soul should be able to gain direct, intimate, and as it were, inside, knowledge of the ideas in that person's mind. Moreover, this privileged insight into the mind of another would instruct Berkeley's soul “in a much less time than the usual methods” (186). In the rest of the essay, Berkeley recounts how he spent time in the brains of philosophers, mathematicians, and statesmen, as well as in those of poets, beaux, and even ladies, and outlines the knowledge he acquired while there. Thus, for example, on one occasion, he followed the labyrinthine process of conceiving of a theorem in the mind of a mathematician, while on another occasion, he witnessed the ideas as they were taking shape in the mind of a philosopher. And he was able to do so, he adds, “without any fatigue or wasting of my own spirits” (186).

Shortly afterwards, Berkeley devotes an entire essay, No. 39 of April 25, 1713, to his stay in the pineal gland of one of his main adversaries, the materialist philosopher and radical freethinker Anthony Collins, where he actually observes the process of his thinking out his next book, *A Discourse of Free-Thinking*, which was published that same year and which Berkeley, obviously, strongly disliked. Berkeley ends this essay on a delightful note, remarking maliciously that the utter confusion which reigned among ideas in Collins's mind is reflected in the printed book itself, where the representatives of those ideas are “drawn up in the same confused order upon paper” (190).

Berkeley's account of his soul's stay in Collins's pineal gland (and in those of mathematicians, politicians, poets, and so on) brings to mind the words the Genevan naturalist Charles Bonnet used, later in the century, in presenting a rare case of the fusion of the brains of two fresh-water polyps into a single brain: what we have here, writes Bonnet in his *Considérations sur les corps organisés*, are “two Selves in the same brain.”²⁰ However, there is an important difference between Bonnet's two-selved polyp and Berkeley's temporarily two-souled philosopher (or mathematician, politician,

poet, and so on). Berkeley appears to have some kind of direct conscious access to the thoughts and experiences of the persons whose pineal gland he enters. Describing his awareness of his hosts' current thoughts and experiences, Berkeley at one point says he was "conscious of the sublime ideas and comprehensive views of a philosopher"; at another point he was "present when a battel or a storm raged, or a glittering palace rose in [poet's] imagination," and at yet another, he observed "the tender images in the mind of a young lady" (186), and so forth. Meanwhile, Berkeley's hosts remained unaware of his presence within themselves, as Berkeley is either unable or unwilling to influence their thoughts and experiences. While Berkeley is clearly aware of his hosts' thoughts and experiences, most probably at precisely the time they are having them, none of the two Selves lodged in Bonnet's polyp's brain has any access to the experiences of the other. As Bonnet writes, "it does not seem that the two Selves could have the same sensation in the same indivisible instant of time";²¹ that is, some sensations are had by one Self and some by the other. Bonnet's polyp, with its two Selves taking turns in manifesting themselves and controlling their single body, and presumably unaware of each other, could perhaps be considered a case of the so-called alternating personality, *avant la lettre*. Even though only multi-headed polyps, "hydras," were categorized by Bonnet as "composite persons,"²² there could be little doubt that he would also have classified their single-headed, two-selved variety among them.

IV Philosophy of the "glorified body"

Father Daniel depicts in great detail the mind after its separation from the body at death. In his novel, the mind in the afterlife apparently persists in its disembodied state for centuries. As we have seen, when the Cartesians run into Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle on the Moon, the three sages have been without a body for more than two thousand years already. On the other hand, there are also accounts of the post-mortem fate of the mind, in which the mind immediately after the death of its former, earthly body, unites itself with a new body in the afterlife. A rare story of an embodied mind in the afterlife can be found in Simon Tyssot de Patot's 1720 novel *La Vie, les aventures et le Voyage de Groenland du Révérend Père Cordelier Pierre de Mésange*. In his travels, the titular hero of the novel, Pierre de Mésange, finds himself in Greenland, where he spends some time in two of its cities, constructed underground because of the polar weather conditions. Here he hears a story about a certain Raoul, who claimed that he had come back from the afterlife.²³ Raoul, however, has not actually resurrected from the dead, since it was not after death that he found himself in the afterlife; rather, he got there, by accident, while still alive. One day while hunting in the woods, he lost his way and fell into a precipice where there was a crack in the rock apparently leading to the afterlife. Like the earthly cities, in Greenland, the paradise, too, is located underground. While strolling through the paradise, accompanied by a guide who is "an accomplished philosopher" (1: 171), Raoul notices several odd details. For example, the bodies of the inhabitants of paradise are of human shape, yet much shorter, just about "two feet" (1: 150) tall. But even odder, they all look exactly alike and cannot be distinguished one from another, not even by sex. In their appearance, they remind Raoul of "slightly

deformed children" (1: 152). Even odder still: although in paradise everything is in abundance, its inhabitants do not seem to know how to enjoy all these goods. For example, even though trees bear great quantities of delicious-looking fruit throughout the year, nobody eats them; all they seem to do is observe and contemplate them. The people of paradise, as the guide quickly explains to the visibly bewildered visitor, enjoy things in a different way—not by eating or drinking them, but by “seeing them, considering them, and admiring in them the works of Providence” (1: 163). In paradise, then, pleasures are merely aesthetic and intellectual, whereas sensual ones are apparently unknown. But not only do the people of paradise neither eat nor drink, they never sleep, as the visitor is puzzled to notice. In the afterlife, sleep is considered a punishment for sins committed in the previous life. That is, the sinners serve out their sentence by simply sleeping for a certain time, the duration of which is proportionate to the gravity of the sin committed (1: 178–9). Having served their sentence, they integrate themselves in the paradisiac community and never sleep again. A deep sleep may not seem much of a punishment, except perhaps in a world of purely aesthetic and intellectual pleasures that require wakefulness and constant attention.

In its post-mortem fate, as portrayed by Raoul, the soul immediately after the death of its “sensual,” earthly body comes to inhabit a new, “glorified body.” As the guide describes the experience of his own death to the inquisitive visitor, “there is no interval of time between the mind’s separation from the sensual body and its joining to a glorified body”; he, at least, did not notice that his “soul has been without a body a single moment” (1: 156). The absence of biological needs such as hunger and thirst is reflected in the physiology of their new, “glorified” bodies. As we read in Tyssot’s earlier novel, *Voyages et aventures de Jacques Massé*, bodies in the afterlife are mere empty, hollow shells, devoid of those inner parts which, in their earthly condition, serve the intake and digestion of food and its excretion.²⁴ The bodies of the people of paradise have no fingernails, no teeth, no alimentary canal and no digestive organs, because they are not necessary for their physiological functioning and survival in the afterlife. In both of Tyssot’s novels, the description of the state of the bodies in the afterlife is given by someone who has seen the “glorified” bodies with his own eyes, that is, by someone who has actually witnessed the resurrection of bodies from the dead. Incidentally, in the afterlife, the absence of the sensations of hunger, thirst, and fatigue apparently does not depend exclusively on the “glorified” bodies’ physiology, since Raoul, too, who came to paradise in his “mortal,” “heavy and carnal” body, during the whole time he spent there felt “neither hunger nor thirst nor sleepiness” (1: 169).

Upon entering the afterlife and joining themselves to new bodies, as Raoul learns, the souls are almost entirely without knowledge. The only thing they seem to remember, “although in a rather confused way,” is that in their previous lives they were humans and the place in Greenland where they come from; but beyond that, they know nothing (1: 169). Their originary ignorance is explained by the guide as follows: whatever knowledge they possessed in their previous life has vanished without trace in the afterlife, as “the brain itself and the entire body [*toute la machine*], of which it was but a part, perished” (1: 157). In the afterlife, they have “another body, which is a true blank tablet,” onto which the “images of things” that present themselves to them in paradise will imprint themselves (1: 157). That is, all their knowledge must be acquired anew

after they arrive in the afterlife. The people of paradise must have been very efficacious in acquiring new knowledge. For example, on his stroll through paradise, Raoul is amazed to see, among other things, an intricate water fountain device that is a unique and concrete example of a perpetual motion machine (1: 173). While touring the so-called "Laboratory of the world," he learns to his astonishment that the people of paradise are in possession of "the true philosopher's stone" (1: 178). Further on, he sees a square table upon which sits an imperial crown of a perfectly circular shape; as the guide explains, the area of this table is equal to that of the inner circular opening of the crown, which is to say that the people of paradise have successfully solved the problem of squaring the circle (1: 182), and so forth. Unfortunately, Raoul is not sufficiently interested in mathematics and the sciences to further inquire about the details of the solutions to these problems, which still remain unsolved in our world after his return from the afterlife. Even though Raoul brings back no specific knowledge from the afterlife, the mere news of the existence of the future life causes a great stir among the people of Greenland, who begin taking their own lives in great numbers, in the hope of reaching the paradise in the shortest way possible (1: 185).

The people of paradise had amassed this vast and magnificent knowledge not in spite of, but at least in part because of, their being embodied. For Tyssot, knowledge—both on earth and in the afterlife—apparently requires a material substrate in which to subsist. As already noted, the people of Greenland lost all their knowledge together with their earthly bodies at death. Similarly, after death, a new body and a new brain are needed for the new knowledge, that is, the new "images of things" to imprint themselves onto. Unlike the earthly, "sensual" body, which is "heavy and corruptible" (1: 172), their new, "glorified" body is "small, light, [and] composed of porous and delicate parts" (1: 153). While their "glorified" body puts them in a position "to walk, swim and fly with equal facility" (1: 153) it is apparently still material. In Tyssot, it is their "glorified" body that makes it possible for the souls of the dead Greenlanders to confidentially exchange ideas between themselves and even to read the thoughts of others. The guide demonstrates that it is through their "glorified" bodies that the souls of the dead are able to read the thoughts of others by showing Raoul that he knows his innermost secret thoughts. Having explained that their "glorified" bodies, although small and deformed, are entirely suited for the enjoyment of "pleasures of eternal beatitude" (1: 153), the guide mildly reproaches Raoul for his having previously taken the people of paradise to be of a rather "small size and badly built" (1: 154). When Raoul defends himself by claiming that he never said any such thing, the guide begins his reply by saying that it may well be that the visitor did not say any such thing, and then adds: "but you've had the thought [*mais vous en avez eu la pensée*]; I was holding your hand at the time, and I noticed this through the beating of your pulse" (1: 154). It is here, in what is perhaps the most sublime moment of Tyssot's novel, that it turns out that it is the materiality of the "glorified" body that makes it possible for its soul to read the thoughts of others—the inhabitants of paradise read the thoughts of others by literally feeling them with their fingers. While it may well be true, as Locke believed, that "the scene of ideas that makes one man's thoughts cannot be laid open to the immediate view of another," it can, Tyssot would argue, nevertheless be exposed at least to the latter's sense of touch.

Notes

- 1 The research included in this chapter was funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) under the research project “Language and Science: The Possibility of Realism in Modern Philosophy” (J6-7364).
- 2 See Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, trans. Ray Brassier (London: Continuum, 2008), 10ff.
- 3 See Ray Brassier, *Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), ch. 7, 205–39.
- 4 It is an interesting issue as to why the form of the thought experiment proliferated precisely in the era extending between Descartes and Hume, perhaps the most famous being Locke’s thought experiments of one consciousness being transferred from one body to another (as in the case of the soul of a prince entering the body of a cobbler, whose soul has already departed) or two consciousnesses sharing one body (as in the case of the waking and sleeping Socrates). Hans Jonas, in his somewhat dated “philosophy of life,” defined the transition from pre-modern “animist” monism to modern dualism as a separation of the spheres of spirit and matter, a move that opens an entirely new space of rearranging the two: “From the hard-won observation that there can be matter without spirit, dualism inferred the unobserved reverse that spirit can also be without matter” (Hans Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology* [Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001], 16). Accordingly, with and after Descartes, the mind was suddenly forced to renegotiate its place in the world. Something along these lines was argued by Charles Taylor in his theory of the “disengaged” modern subject (see Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989]), where he convincingly demonstrates that in Plato or Aristotle the order of things still embodied an ontic logos, whereas with Descartes ideas were no longer located in the world but in the subject’s mind, thus exhibiting all kinds of symptoms of their newly developed independence (see *ibid.*, 186–8). In brief, after the pre-modern innocence of ideas being incarnated in reality had been lost, early modern philosophy seems to have been driven by an effort to realign the two orders; one need only consider Spinoza’s parallelism, Leibniz’s monadology or Berkeley’s immaterialism. Thus, a number of, nowadays bizarre, “thought experiments” of the era are but a consequence of ideas being haunted by the threat of having forfeited their once natural conjunction with the material world. And so the mind finds itself in perpetual search of its rightful body, a union which can no longer be taken for granted. With Kant, the peculiar phenomenon of the specific early modern thought experiments vanishes from philosophy once again; famous is his skeptic, non-spiritualist attack on Swedenborg in *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*. Or, as Jure Simoniti contends in *The Untruth of Reality*, “these thought experiments could not pose as a Kantian touchstone of truth” (Jure Simoniti, *The Untruth of Reality: The Unacknowledged Realism of Modern Philosophy* [Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016], 30). Simoniti claims that Kant performs another momentous shift in the relation between the ideal and the real, so that now concepts and ideas are elevated to the level of “conditions of possibility,” and no longer strive to be immediately pinned down to this or that thing. Since, for instance, the Kantian mind only “accompanies” the representations of its senses, it can, on the one hand, never experience the purely spiritual, disembodied Cartesian self-evidence, but on the other, it can be more or less sure of its body.
- 5 John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A. C. Fraser, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1959), 2: 462.

- 6 Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Nouveaux mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du cartésianisme* (n.p. 1692), 26. Subsequent references to this work will be given in brackets in the body of the text.
- 7 See Huet, *Memoirs of the Life of Peter Daniel Huet, Bishop of Avranches*, trans. John Aiken, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1810), 1: 154.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Denis Diderot, *Éléments de physiologie*, in *Œuvres*, ed. Laurent Versini, 5 vols. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1994–7), 1: 1317.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 See Guez de Balzac to Descartes, March 30, 1628, in *Œuvres de Descartes*, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, rev. edn, 12 vols. (Paris: Vrin/CNRS, 1964–76), 1: 570.
- 12 Brigitte Hermann, *Histoire de mon esprit ou le roman de la vie de René Descartes* (Paris: Bartillat, 1996), 460.
- 13 Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 5th edn, 4 vols. (Amsterdam, Leiden, The Hague, Utrecht: P. Brunel et al., 1740), 4: 81b–82a.
- 14 Gabriel Daniel, *A Voyage to the World of Cartesius*, trans. T. Taylor, 2nd edn (London: Thomas Bennet, 1694), 9. Subsequent references to this work will be given in brackets in the body of the text.
- 15 For more on the dramatic impact of Socrates' death on western culture, see Emily Wilson, *The Death of Socrates: Hero, Villain, Chatterbox, Saint* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
- 16 The extraordinary complexity of Daniel's character of Aristotle becomes apparent if we briefly recall the Aristotle portrayed by Jonathan Swift in his *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). When, during his visit to Glubbudbrib, Gulliver calls Aristotle's spirit up from the dead and has two of Aristotle's main opponents and critics, Descartes and Gassendi, both also called up from the dead, present their "Systems" to Aristotle, the latter first openly acknowledges "his own Mistakes in Natural Philosophy" but then goes on to add that, by that time, Descartes's vortex theory and Gassendi's atomist natural philosophy have themselves been disproved, and predicts that the same fate also awaits the then new and widely accepted Newtonian cosmology (see Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Claude Rawson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005], 184–85). While most of what Swift's Aristotle has to say may well be true, it was hardly worth summoning him from the dead merely for that reason.
- 17 In Swift's satire *The Battle of the Books* (1704), where the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns is depicted as an armed conflict, Aristotle does, in fact, although inadvertently, kill Descartes: Aristotle's arrow misses Francis Bacon, for whom it was intended, and strikes "the valiant bowman" Descartes, fatally wounding him (see Swift, "The Battle of the Books," in *Major Works*, ed. Angus Ross and David Woolley [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003], 14).
- 18 Descartes, *The World*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch, and Anthony Kenny, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985–91), 1: 90.
- 19 George Berkeley, *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne*, ed. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop, 9 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1948–57), 7: 187. Subsequent references to this work will be given in brackets in the body of the text.
- 20 Charles Bonnet, *Considérations sur les corps organisés*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Marc-Michel Rey, 1762), 2: 86.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid., 2: 83.

- 23 For the episode, see Simon Tyssot de Patot, *La Vie, les aventures et le Voyage de Groenland du Révérend Père Cordelier Pierre de Mésange*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Etienne Roger, 1720), 1: 142–97. Subsequent references to this work will be given in brackets in the body of the text.
- 24 See Simon Tyssot de Patot, *Voyages et aventures de Jacques Massé* (Bordeaux: Jacques L'Aveugle, 1710), 15.