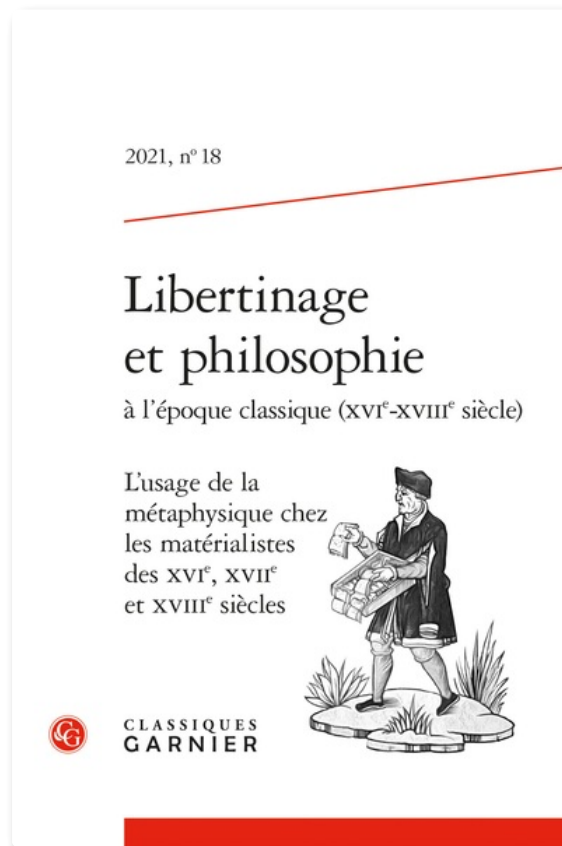


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The Presence of Descartes in Maupertuis's *Vénus Physique*

Reappropriation and Critique

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Author: Storni (Marco)

Abstract: I propose a reassessment of Descartes' influence on eighteenth-century life sciences. To do so, I look into Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis's *Vénus physique* (1745). I begin with Maupertuis's critique of preexistence, the hegemonic theory until mid-century. I go on to discuss Descartes's and Maupertuis's theories of generation. I insist on Maupertuis's reappropriation of Cartesian embryology, as well as on Maupertuis's update of Descartes's mechanistic view.

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