

DEVELOPMENT OF SOLIPSISM AFTER RENE DESCARTES-I

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Philosophers in general have shown great antipathy for Solipsism and have refused to accept any philosophical theory that leads to solipsistic consequences.¹ The term 'solipse' was used in the latter half of the 17th century in a pejorative sense to refer mostly to the Jesuits.² It had moral connotation then and referred to a self-centered or selfish person. Although it is not certain as to when the expression came to be used in its present theoretical sense,³ it certainly seems that solipsism as a serious philosophical theory came to be formulated within a few decades immediately after the death of Descartes as an offshoot of his famous *Cogito*, in the 17th century itself. The philosopher-scientist who maintained the doctrine of solipsism was Claude Brunet, a practitioner and thinker in the field of medicine. Not much is known at present amongst the philosophical circles about him and his philosophical doctrines. Both these appear to be shrouded in mystery. It is however necessary to dispel the mystery to the extent possible. The object of this paper is to do this and to bring to light a new strand of thought in the history of Cartesianism. I have very briefly touched upon this matter elsewhere⁴ but only as a part of background on which Father Buffier expressed his ideas to defend a common-sensical view of the external material world. I now propose to focus on Brunet's contribution.

1. Thomas Reid on the Existence of the Sect of Egoists :

In his *Works*, one finds, that Thomas Reid reacted very strongly against Descartes, Berkeley and Hume in the context of the solipsistic consequences that follow from their doctrines. Speaking about Descartes, he said :

Hitherto he was uncertain of everything but of his own existence, and the existence of the operations and ideas of his own mind. Some of his disciples, it is said, remained at this stage of his system, and got the name of Egoists.

And in speaking about Berkeley, he explicitly maintained that

....there is one uncomfortable consequence of his system, which he seems not to have attended to, and from which it will be found difficult, if at all possible, to guard it.

The consequence I mean is this< that although it leaves us sufficient evidence of a supreme intelligent mind, it seems to take away all the evidence we have of other intelligent beings like ourselves.....

I am left alone as the only creature of God in the universe in that forlorn state of *egoism* into which it is said some of the disciples of Des Cartes were brought by his philosophy.⁵

In the third passage Reid spoke more assuredly of the existence of the Sect of Egoists in France that arose soon after Descartes. The passage is a reaction against David Hume.

Accordingly we find that Mr. Hume was not the first that was led into scepticism by the want of first principles. For, soon after Des Cartes, there arose a sect in France called Egoists, who maintained that we have no evidence of the existence of anything but ourselves.

Whether these egoists, like Mr. Hume, believed themselves to be nothing but a train of ideas and impressions, or to have a more permanent existence, I have not learnt, having never seen any of their writings; nor do I know whether any of their sect did write in support of their principles. One would think they who did not believe that there was any person to read, could have little inducement to write, unless they were prompted by that inward monitor which Persius makes to be the source of genius and the teacher of arts. There can be no doubt, however, of the existence of such a sect, as they are mentioned by many authors, and refuted by some, particularly by Buffier, in his treatise of first principles.

Those egoists and Mr. Hume seem to have reasoned more consequentially from Des Cartes' principle than he did himself...⁶

The above passages clearly show that Thomas Reid carried the conviction that the Sect of Egoists (i.e. Solipsists) did exist in France during the 17th Century.

2. Sir William Hamilton's Doubts :

Sir William Hamilton, who edited Thomas Reid's philosophical works, however expressed serious doubts as regards the existence of the Sect of Egoists and commented as follows :

I am doubtful about the existence of this supposed sect of Egoists. The Chavelier Ramsay, above a century ago, incidently speaks of this doctrine as an offshoot of Spinozism and under the name of *Egomisme*. But Father Buffier about the same time, and be it noted, in a work published some ten years before Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, talks of it, on hearsay as the speculation of a Scotch philosopher: 'Un ecrivain Ecossois a public, dit on, un ouvrage pour prouver qu'il n'avoit aucune evidence de l'existence d'aucune etre que de lui; et encore de lui, en tant qu'espirit; n'ayant aucune demonstration veritable de existence d'aucune corps.' "*Elemens de metaphysique*, #61. Now we know that there is no such work. I am aware, however, that there is some discussion on this point in the "*Memoirs de Trouvoux*", anno 1713 p.922 to which however, I must refer the reader, as I have not the journal at hand.⁷

Sir William Hamilton, however, later supplemented the above account as follows :

Wolf (*Psychologia Rationalis*, #38) after dividing idealists into *Egoists* and *Pluralists*, says *inter alia*, of the former: "Fuit paucis abhinc annis assecla quidam Malebranchii, Parisiis, qui Egoismum professus est (quod mirum mihi videtur) asseclas et ipse nectus est." In his *Vernuenftige Gedanken von Gott*, c., c.l.#2, he also mentions this *allerseltsamste* Secte. There is also an oration by Christopher Matthaeus Pfaff, the Chancellor of Tuebingen- "*De Egoismo, nova philosophica haeresi*" in 1722 - which I have not seen. Thus what I formerly hazarded, is still farther confirmed. All is vague and contradictory hearsay in regard to the Egoists. The French place them in Scotland; the Scotch in Holland; the Germans in France; and they are variously stated as the immediate disciples of Des Cartes, Malebranche, Spinoza. There is certainly no reason why an Egoistical Idealism should not have been explicitly promulgated before Fichte, (whose doctrine, however, is not the same); but I have, as yet, seen no satisfactory evidence on which it can be shown that this had actually been done.⁸

Now as to the question whether a Sect of Egoists (Solipsists) did exist during the latter half of the 17th century, I think that while Thomas Reid was right in believing that there did exist such a Sect, the doubts expressed by Sir William Hamilton were not well-founded. It is of some importance to note that it is not only Thomas Reid who spoke of the existence of that Sect in France but Christian Wolff

also mentioned the doctrine of metaphysical egoism as the theory of one Parisian Malebranchian thinker. Wolff did this in 1734, the year in which his *Psychologia rationalis* was published. Reid's *Essays in the Intellectual Powers of Man* appeared in 1785 and it is surprising enough to know that he had not read Wolff's *Psychologia rationalis*. In the chapter XV of his *Essays*, Reid spoke of Carolus Wolfius (Christian Wolff) as the most voluminous writer in philosophy of his age and as the great interpreter and advocate of the Leibnitzian system. Further he mentioned that:

This author proposed two great works upon the mind. The first, which I have seen, he published with the title "*Psychologia Empirica, seu Experimentalis*." The other was to have the title of *Psychologia Rationalis*; and to it he refers for his explication of the theory of Leibnitz with regard to the mind. But whether it was published I have not learned.⁹

It is necessary to note that the testimony of Thomas Reid is independent of the testimony of Christian Wolff and that it is rather surprising how the significance of the independence of these two testimonies escaped the searching acumen of Sir William Hamilton.

However, it also seems that the doubts of Sir William Hamilton were at last laid to rest. Supplementary note on Egoism prepared on the basis of his manuscripts but published posthumously makes reference to Claude Brunet who advocated the doctrine of solipsism after Descartes.

Christopher Pfaff's oration "*De Egoismo, nova philosophica haeresi*" which Hamilton could not see is available. It is a small pamphlet of 27 pages and what it mainly does is to criticise and to denunciate both materialism and idealism. It mentions Egoism as a new philosophical heresy lately sprung in France, England and Ireland. The oration makes reference to Wolff's *Vernunfftige Gedaneken von Gott, der Welt, und der Seele des Menschen*, wherein Wolff mentioned Egoistic Idealism. It further quotes a remark from *Mémoires de Trévoux*, May 1713, p. 922, which forms a part of a brief review of Berkeley's *Principles*. It was in fact to this review of Berkeley's *Principles* in *Mémoires de Trévoux* to which Hamilton had referred but which he himself had not seen at the time he doubted the existence of the Sect of Egoists in France. Since many writers refer to this remark, I shall quote it:

One of us knows in Paris a Malebranchist who went much further than Mr. Berkeley; he had himself maintained very seriously in a long dispute that it is quite probable that he should be the only created being who exists and that not only there isn't body at all but there isn't also any spirit created other than he himself; it is for those who believe that *we see only an intelligible world*, to prove that he carries their principles too far.^{10*}

Now this remark made in 1713 in the Jesuit Journal, Pfaff's oration in 1722, Christian Wolff's mention of Egoism in 1719 and 1734 and Reid's testimony in 1785, all make a strong bid to show that if at all we have to look for the sect of Egoists, we have to look to France of the latter half of the 17th century.¹¹ When one begins to work in that direction, one cannot miss the name of a physician philosopher, Claude Brunet.

3. Claude Brunet : Problem of Identification

It is true many reference works and dictionaries of philosophy, even the French ones, do not mention Claude Brunet at all. Nor does the information given on Solipsism by many writers contain any reference to him. Fortunately enough for us, not all information is lacking. A. A. Lalande in his *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie* gives us an important clue in his critique of solipsism which extends just for a few lines. I quote them in full.

That doctrine is frequently cited (under the name of egoism) by the writers of 18th century, notably by Wolff. But one knows only a sole representative, the physician Claude Brunet; Still it is necessary to make some reservations on the interpretation of the doctrine expounded by him in his *Journal de medicine* (1686), which appears to be the origin of all that has been said later on that theory.^{12*}

Sir William Hamilton had come to know of Claude Brunet, however, on the basis of a different source. The Editor of the posthumously published note on Egoism, to which I have already referred to mentions that in Hamilton's manuscripts there was a reference to Fuellerborn's *Beytrage zur Geschichte der Philosophie*¹³, Part V, p.143, where there is a short notice of a certain Brunet, the author of some philosophical writings, at the beginning of the 18th century, one of which was entitled *Project d'une nouvelle metaphysique*. It is also mentioned that

Brunet's philosophy is characterised by Fuellerborn as "der unverholenste und entschlossenste Egoismus der sich nur denken lasst." A. Lalande does not make reference to this work of Brunet but he refers to a doctrine expounded in his *Journal de medicine*. While that doctrine in *Journal de medicine* was expounded in 1686, the *Project d'une nouvelle metaphysique* was published in 1703. Pierre Larousse's *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e siecle*, (vol.2) mentions Claude Brunet as a French physician born in the second half of the 17th century and says that one knows almost nothing of the life of this scientist. It mentions most of Brunet's works in the field of medicine. The only philosophical work that is mentioned is the *Project d'une nouvelle mentaphysique* (Paris, 1703, 12-mo) and of this work it says:

It is in that later work that Brunet has expounded his philosophical ideas, extremely new and hard at that time. The system which he developed is idealism, which has rendered that name of Berkeley so famous, and which Fichte had to present in our days under a new form. Brunet, whose name has been nearly forgotten, ought to be considered as the father of modern idealism.^{14*}

There is a rather detailed note on Claude Brunet in Michaud's *Biographie Universelle* (1843). The note does throw some light on his career as a scientist< a man of medicine<and also as a philosopher. Mentioning his *Project d'une nouvelle metaphysique* it says that it was first read in the conferences of the Abbe de Cordemoy and then later on published in 1703 or 1704. From the note it becomes quite clear that Claude Brunet was known in wider circles for his idealistic and solipsistic approach.

It is in that work especially that Claude Brunet appears singularly remarkable.....

And who knows if his work was not the point of departure for the Bishop of Cloyne?^{15*}

The author of the note thinks that Brunet ought to be respected among the ranks of Pascal, Gassendi and Bayle.

The most unfortunate part of this high estimation of the contribution of Claude Brunet to 17th and 18th century philosophical developments in France is that it is being done in the absence of his major philosophical work, the *Project*, which it is certain, was published at Paris in 1703.

Not a single copy of that work is available in any of the Universities in France.¹⁶ It is not available anywhere else.

Two questions arise at this stage : 1. Is the Parisian Malebranchist who advocated solipsism mentioned anonymously in the Review of Berkeley's *Principles* in the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, 1713, p.922, the same as Claude Brunet? and 2. Whether from his available works in the field of medicine we can gather evidence and figure out the conceptual framework which Brunet may have used to present his solipsistic system in his *Project* which is lost to us? The answer to both these questions is hopefully in the affirmative and in the remaining part of the paper I shall proceed to develop it.

4. Lewis Robinson's View :

I have already indicated how Sir William Hamilton who had taken interest in this issue had come to discover Claude Brunet as the only exponent of solipsistic doctrine. Since then no one appears to have taken interest in getting to know any details about him or about his philosophy until Lewis Robinson came to publish his two articles : one on Claude Brunet and the other on the Origin of Modern Idealism in 1913 and 1937 respectively.¹⁷ What stands to the credit of L. Robinson is that by citing passages from Brunet's first work, viz; *Journal de médecine* (1686), as also from his *Progrès de la médecine* (1695, 97 & 1709) he brought to light Brunet's solipsistic argument. Lewis Robinson, on the basis of careful study of those passages had almost suggested how Brunet, having developed his thinking for about a decade and half, might have prepared his *Projet d'une nouvelle métaphysique* in 1703. All this should leave us with no doubt whatsoever regarding the existence of at least one Solipsist, if not of a sect of Solipsists in the 17th and 18th century. I do not however agree with Robinson when he says that :

It is easy at first to convince oneself that everything in the said writings, relating to the 'egoists' has its source in a remark which one finds at the end of a short notice on the *Principles* of Berkeley, in the literary and scientific organ of the Jesuits, the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, anne. 1713, page 922.^{18*}

Towards the close of the second section above, I have already quoted that remark and though I also do think that the notice which appeared in the *Mémoires de Trévoux* 1713, p. 922 on Berkeley's *Principles* was

an important anchoring for many writers of the 18th & 19th century to speak of the existence of the Egoists in France, one can't however say that Reid believed in the existence of the egoists on the basis of that notice. From the passages that I have cited from Reid's *Works*, one can see easily that Reid, for his belief in the existence of the egoistic sect, depended on their refutation by some thinkers, especially by Father Buffier in his treatise on first principles.¹⁹ It seems to me that both, Sir William Hamilton and Lewis Robinson have taken no note of this important source of information cited by Thomas Reid. Both Father Buffier and Thomas Reid emphatically state that the Egoists had followed the basic principle of Descartes in developing Solipsism. It may also be noted that Father Buffier cannot be said to have based his refutation of Solipsism on the basis of the notice that appeared in the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, 1713, p.922, since Father Buffier himself was one of the editors of that Jesuit Journal when that notice appeared.²⁰ Father Buffier must have been directly aware of the philosophical scene of those times on the French soil. Father Buffier's testimony which has been cited by Thomas Reid has thus an independent value of its own which goes to confirm the existence of the Egoists.

That Brunet developed solipsistic thesis in his *Projet d'une nouvelle métaphysique* in 1703 is confirmed from the review of that book given by Flachet-St-Sauveur (whose real name is J. Du Perrier) in the Journal published by him, *Pièces fugitives d'histoire et de littérature*, in 1704.²¹ This review of Brunet's work by Flachet-St-Sauveur does not explicitly mention any of the grounds on which Brunet came to develop his solipsistic system. One can however gather how seriously Brunet must have presented it and what furour it must have given rise to in the academic circles. I shall refer to this review later after stating Brunet's solipsistic position proper.

Thus it is easier to side with Lewis Robinson's recommendation that the solipsist referred to by *Mémoires de Trévoux* is no one else but Claude Brunet. This recommendation is however beset with some difficulties which we must reasonably overcome before we accept it. It is not difficult to see what difficulties one will have to face if we read carefully the remarks made in the notice. Firstly, the solipsist is said to be a 'malebranchiste'; secondly, he is said to have gone farther than Bishop Berkeley in the development of his views and thirdly, there was a long dispute in which the 'malebranchist' solipsist

had undertaken to establish his thesis. The notice does not mention between whom the dispute had taken place. The notice is thus doubly anonymous. This anonymity is further worsened by the fact that the notice is not 'signed' by any one. To take up the third difficulty first, I may draw attention to an important passage from Lewis Robinson's another article. The passage is self-explanatory. It runs as follows :

Today, we are in a position to divulge the names of two participants of the long dispute.....

One of them, very probably, the author himself of the notice, is P. Tournemine, the then Director of the *Memoires*. Because in the Preface to the second edition (of the first part only) of *Traite de l'existence de Dieu* of Fenelon, which appeared equally in 1713, having Preface at the hands of P. Tournemine, we find him declaring.... "One of those philosophers had undertaken with me very seriously to show that he was capable of making everything that is there in the world and that he was the only being." While that philosopher is undoubtedly and unquestionably Claude Brunet, Physician by profession, originally belonging to Lyon and residing in Paris, whose medical and philosophical writings date from the later years of the 17th century and the earlier years of the 18th century^{22*}

Robinson's discovery is not at all implausible and in view of the fact that he has been mentioned by a few earlier prominent writers, we may reasonably accept that Claude Brunet is the very same solipsist that is referred to by P. Tournemine in the notice which he wrote of Berkeley's Work for the Journal and the two participants of the dispute referred to therein were Brunet and Tournemine. It however seems that Brunet himself or some follower of Berkeley had a debate with Father Buffier who was also on the Editorial Board of that Jesuit Journal. In his *Elémens de metaphysique*, a work which I have already mentioned, Father Buffier, after mentioning the 'egoist ecossais' (i.e., Bishop Berkeley) having a few followers, put the following in the mouth of Eugene :

It is one of them who had recently given me some embarrassment in responding to him on that point.^{23*}

In fact it is interesting to read the entire 'V' *Entretien* in that work in order to know how the philosophical problem of proving existence of something other than that of one's own, had engaged the philosophers of those times and how seriously the two beliefs viz; the reality of

the external material world and the existence of other souls (minds) were threatened by the idealistic and the solipsistic developments. One can see easily why Jesuits, who were vehemently opposed to the Cartesian philosophy, resisted the new developments. Christopher Pfaff, the Chancellor of Tübingen, whose oration I have already cited, came to declare that development as a *Nova Philosophica Haeresi* in 1722.²⁴

Was Claude Brunet a malebranchist? From Brunet's writings that are available, it may seem to us that he is not a malebranchist and certainly not a '*malebranchiste de bonne foi*' (The notice in the *Memoires de Trevoux*, anno. 1713 p.922, had described Berkeley as a *malebranchiste de bonne foi*.) Lewis Robinson thinks in this connection that Brunet can be regarded as a malebranchist in the sense that if we are to find the origin of Brunet's idealistic and solipsistic thesis, we have to trace it to none but Malebranche. At the same time he warns us to take the expression '*malebranchiste*' when used by the Jesuits *cum grano salis*.²⁵ There is one short article on Claude Brunet by J. Languier des Bancelles²⁶ who mentions Brunet as a Malebranchist less known. But he does not give any reason as to why he considers Brunet to be Malebranchist, though less known. Heikki Kirkenene thinks that in that brief article by Languier, there is an allusion to the strict occasionalism of Brunet which culminated into solipsism.²⁷ I do not see in Languier's article any allusion whatsoever to any theory of occasionalism. On the contrary, it is interesting to note that Brunet himself criticised the doctrine of occasionalism.²⁸ This makes it plain that Brunet cannot be regarded as a malebranchist on that count. But one should not think that one cannot make anything out of that expression, if it was used by P. Tournemine who wrote that notice in the *Mémoires de Trévoux* and if it was used to refer to Claude Brunet. P. Tournemine was such a versatile and critical mind that it's impossible to think that he used the expression '*malebranchiste*' without implying anything.²⁹ I can conceive of three possible reasons as to why Claude Brunet may have been considered by the Jesuits (including P. Tournemine) as a malebranchist. One of them is very simple. It is mentioned in the biographical details about Claude Brunet (though these details are only a few) that Claude Brunet frequently visited the conferences of Abbe de Cordemoy, Not only that, but he also presented his main philosophical work, *Projet d'une nouvelle/métaphysique* in one of those conferences. We know from P. Andre's *Vie de Malebranche* (1886),

that Abbé de Cordemoy held the conferences of the malebranchists which took place every Saturday at the place of Mlle de Vailly, the niece of Malebranche.³⁰ Brunet's attendance at these conferences might have led Jesuits to regard Brunet as a malebranchist. It may also be noted that the Academy of Sciences in those days was a stronghold of Cartesianism where Brunet had presented some of his controversial theses, sometimes even opposing the Cartesian doctrines. Opposition to some parts of Cartesianism was at that time mainly led by Malebranche and it is possible that those who opposed Cartesianism were identified with the followers of Malebranche.

There appear to me, however, to be two other, perhaps more weighty reasons for Claude Brunet to be branded as a malebranchist. The first one has to do with the independent reality of material objects, which Brunet had denied even as early as 1686 in his *Journal de médecine*. The thesis of Idealism which he proposed with its consequential culmination into Solipsism implied rejection of an independent world of material objects. Jesuits were very much concerned about this issue and had opposed every attempt to reject reality to the external material world. The opposition certainly arose out of theological considerations. Though Malebranche himself never denied reality of material objects in any explicit manner, there was a very strong tendency in his thought which led to the development of Idealism and consequentially to the denial of matter as such. Berkeley who came to deny matter on the basis of idealistic thesis 'esse est percipi', was regarded as a 'malebranchiste de bonne foi'. Brunet had proposed his idealistic thesis 'Rein ne exist qu'avec la connaissance' and denied that the material objects had independent reality of their own and, what is more I shall suggest in the part II of this paper, he denied reality of other minds too. It is possible that whosoever rejected reality of external material objects came to be identified with malebranchist.

The second reason which I take to be more important, has to do with what Claude Brunet was doing in the field of medicine. It is here that he went farther than Bishop Berkeley. In an exceptionally brilliant study of La Mettrie's *L'Homme Machine*, Vartanian tells us that although La Mettrie regarded Malebranche's system of occasionalistic metaphysics as made up of "l'erreur, l'illusion, les rêves, le délire", La Mettrie realised also that "no one else had shown more relentless ingenuity in working out the details of a mechanistic psychophysiology".³¹

Malebranche had shown that mental experiences were knowable and describable *qua* matter, that is to say, by reference to mere physiological and physical processes in the human body. La Mettrie came to eulogise Malebranche's effort in developing mechanistic psychophysiology which, according to him, left no room in the end for recognising separate existence of spiritual substance to account for the mental life of human beings. Vartanian also tells us how the author of an anonymous manuscript *L'Ame materielle*, which probably belonged to the second or third decade of the 18th century, regarded Malebranche's *Recherche de la vérité* as the best general treatise on physiological psychology and felt free to say about his own efforts: "On ne trouvera pas mauvais que je joigne ici mes idées à celles de ce grand philosophe, et que je me serve de ses lumières pour traiter une matière si abstraite."³² It then seems that those who were doing physiological psychology considered themselves and were also considered by others as developing ideas implicit in the works of Malebranche. Brunet's medical works from 1686 to 1709 show a relentless application of the principles of mechanics in developing idealism, and mechanistic physiological psychology. It is not then difficult to see why Brunet may have been regarded as a malebranchist. It may be noted that one of the major criticisms of Pere Tournemine against the immaterialists was that human being, for them, was no more than a machine, albeit a spiritual machine. This criticism was directed against the malebranchists. I contend, however, that in following Malebranche in the field of physiological psychology, Brunet, and for that matter any one else who does that, would be taking Cartesianism— the insistence on application of mechanics to the biological world of animals and human beings— to its logical consequence and thus prove himself to be a true Cartesian. I shall deal with this point a little later.

In all that I have said so far, I have tried to hold brief for Lewis Robinson's strong suggestion that the Solipsist referred to by the notice of *Mémoires de Trévoux*, 1713, p.922 be identified with Claude Brunet. It seems however that this suggestion has not been taken note of by Anita Fritz. In the article 'Malebranche and the Immaterialism of Berkeley' (published in *Review of Metaphysics* (3), 1949-50, pp. 59-80, Sec. III) Fritz takes up Paul Schrecker's hint that Malebranche's disciple, Abbé de Lanion, who published at Paris privately in 1678 his *Méditations sur la métaphysique* under the pseudonym 'Guillaume Wander'

as its author, may be considered as the solipsist referred to by *Memoires de Trevoux* in 1713. After quoting two passages from the *Meditations* of Lanion, Fritz hastens to the conclusion that :

Although the Abbé de Lannion digresses from Malebranche's doctrine the influence of Malebranche on his views is evident and Lannion's conclusions are clearly closer to solipsism than those of Malebranche. At least his position is sufficiently close to solipsism to have perhaps merited for him the notice in the *Journal de Trevoux*.³³

This opinion of Anita Fritz has, however, not found favour with those who have studied carefully the work of Abbe de Lanion. For example, M. Chastaing notes in this context that :

Anita Dunlevy Fritz (Rev. of Meta., 1949) thinks without any justification that that Malebrinchist is Lanion. It seems on the contrary justifiable to think that he is not Lanion. The latter wished to prove that he is not the only being created, although his system of proofs appear to prove that which he did not wish to. In contradicting himself, he always declared the logical consequences of the theory of "*monde intelligible*". Not only then it appears normal that any Malebrinchist adopted those consequences in 1713; but it still appears that that Malebrinchist did not exist, that the Jesuits had used their right in inventing him.^{34*}

The views of Abbé de Lanion, if one gleans them from the only philosophical work that stands to his credit, confirm the earlier part of M. Chastaing's judgement. But the view that he expresses towards the end part of his remarks that the malebranchiste solipsist was a straw-man invented by the Jesuits, is not convincing enough in view of the fact that Claude Brunet, long before Berkeley published his *Principles*, had developed his idealistic thesis embracing its logical consequence of Solipsism and that there lay some grounds for Malebranche's influence in that development. I cannot say that M. Chastaing may not have been aware of this. In response to J. Languier des Bancel's³⁵, Chastaing reveals his own reasons against Claude Brunet's candidature.³⁶ He thinks that the texts that we possess of that mysterious physician and his reputation do not support J. Languier des Bancel's reply which he makes following Lewis Robinson. I, however, do not think that the reasons which he adduces are clinching enough to reject the claim of Lewis Robinson, altogether. Firstly, he thinks that Brunet did not conceive himself as a created spirit but as a cosmic producer who

makes for himself all things intelligible and sensible. It is true that as a solipsist Brunet looks upon his own spirit in an altogether different way. He invests his own spirit with autonomy of thinking. His notion of spirit is not that of a passive receiver of ideas. He is not a malebranchiste in this case. But what about the other spirits? In his medical works one can find evidence that Brunet was operating the mechanistic model of physiological psychology which was mainly due to the influence of Malebranche. The most crucial part of any solipsistic thesis is denial of the reality of other minds or spirits—substantialist or psychological. It is possible for one to be an immaterialist without being a solipsist. Bishop Berkeley, most certainly, and Malebranche and Abbe de Lanion most probably, are immaterialists but none of them deny the existence of other spirits or minds. Secondly, M. Chastaing, following the impression of the editors of *Pièces fugitives d'Histoire et de Litterature* (vol.1, 1704, pp.356-58) that Brunet appeared to them as a follower of Spinoza, that they classified Brunet as a Spinozist and not as a Malebranchist or a Cartesian, blames Lewis Robinson for ignoring this aspect. Chevalier Ramsay and, following him, Andre Baxter who quotes Ramsay in his work³⁷, believed that some Spinozists had fallen in a kind of Pyrrhonism called 'l'egomisme'. Sir William Hamilton had already mentioned this view of Chevalier Ramsay.³⁸ It is possible that when Ramsay expressed this view he was depending on Flachât-St-Sauveur's comments on Claude Brunet's *Project d'une nouvelle métaphysique* in his *Recueil de Pièces fugitives d'Histoire et de Litterature*. I do not think that what is said there in any way suggests that Claude Brunet was a Spinozist or that the kind of philosophy which he advocated in his work was an offshoot of Spinozism. Flachant-St-Sauveur's remarks are as follows:

M. Brunet, as one sees, is a man of discoveries, and he is not one of those ordinary philosophers who resort to common principles and to the trodden routes; he has equally abjured the Peripatetism, the Cartesianism, and the philosophy of the Atomists. All the Sects would have liked to have him but presuming enough about the resourcefulness of his own genius, he wished to have a share from all of them; one only doubts if he had any success in that, since I do not think that before him, any other person had advanced such opinions. Spinoza, truly speaking, had recognized only one substance in the nature, but of that he believed himself to be a modification only; instead of that, the Philosopher Brunet believed himself to be the entire nature.^{39*}

Reference to Spinoza, the only one to be found in the whole Review of Brunet's philosophical work by Flach-St-Sauveur, is made, I take it, to indicate the extra-ordinary character of Brunet's solipsistic way of thinking and possibly, a kind of philosophical arrogance which it involves. Spinoza's philosophy, for aught we know, is an attempt to overcome the difficulties posed by Cartesian dualism by developing a monistic doctrine but in the attempt, it results into the reduction of substantial dualism of Descartes to attributive dualism. Nothing of the sort can be even remotely suspected in the solipsistic theory of Brunet. The available texts of Brunet himself do not support any spinozistic interpretation of his doctrine. Thirdly, M. Chastaing says that Brunet not only does not appear to be a disciple of Descartes, nor of Malebranche, but he refuted them publicly through his philosophy as also through his science. Now it is a matter of interpretation. If by the expression 'disciple' you mean a person who follows his master very closely and blindly in all his views, then I admit that Brunet is not a disciple of any one. But are such disciples to be found in the Cartesian or Malebranchian circles of thought? Spirit of inquiry characterised the entire philosophical scene after Descartes so much so that it is not unusual to find Descartes' own doctrines and theories being criticised and refuted by his own admirers and disciples. I would not call Brunet 'a disciple of Descartes or that of Malebranche'. I can only claim to indicate the influence of both these great thinkers on the philosophical reflexions of Brunet. Lastly, Chastaing admits that the doctrine of Brunet may have spread and led to the formation of a Sect of Egoists and the Jesuits may have probably referred to one of the members of that Sect. If that is so, why not concede the possibility of reference in that notice to Claude Brunet himself?

One would like, however, to keep on wondering along with M. Chastaing as to how the Jesuit Journal, *Mémoires de Trévoux*, did not mention Brunet or his major philosophical work that was published in 1703. That was the time when the Journal had launched its crusade against the immaterialism of Cartesians.⁴⁰ In fact, during the 17th century itself, long before they opened their attack by introducing that Journal in the academic world, the Jesuits had fought a very grim battle with the Cartesianism. They had managed to obtain an official censure of Descartes' philosophy from the papal and royal authorities. It would not be then unreasonable to think that though printed 'chez la veuve

Horthemels⁴¹, looking at the 'heretical' nature of philosophy it contained, the Jesuits might have seen to it that all the copies of Brunet's work, *projet d'une nouvelle métaphysique*, were given silent funeral. After all, Flachet-St-Sauveur had reviewed that work as '*pièce fugitive*' and the Jesuits would have been only too glad to see that Brunet's work does not get any attention in the academic circles.

This historical question need not bother us any further. It is important only insofar as it brings out the historical context in which Brunet presented his ideas and the reactions which they invited. We must now turn to the task of exploring Brunet's own ideas by referring to his available works, the problems which he faced, the solipsistic solution which he proposed, and the philosophical reaction it invited. The task is indeed a difficult one and I shall do it with '*la docilité d'un Académicien*', to use Brunet's own words.

5. Skepticism with respect to the Existence of Material Objects :

In order to account for the existence and knowledge of the external material objects, Descartes advocated realism on the one hand and, consistent with his dualism, developed on the other hand Representative theory of knowledge according to which mind comes to know external material world only through representations or ideas which are modifications of mind or soul. Introduction of ideas or representations between mind and the external material objects was no doubt an attractive element of the theory. Descartes thought that with the introduction of ideas or representations between the two utterly disparate substances, all that he was required to do was to construct an 'a priori' proof for the reality of external material world. We know that he did this in the sixth Meditation of his, by invoking (i) his intuitive perception that he is passive in receiving the ideas and sensations, (ii) his natural inclination to believe that they are caused by material objects outside him, and (iii) his firm conviction that God's benevolence bestows upon the natural inclination an incorrigibility or irrevocable validity. Defects of the Representative theory of knowledge are fairly well known and the critics have shown the impossibility of proving existence of the external material world on Descartes' lines. Immediately after Descartes one finds the phenomenon of the rise of skepticism in France. Simone Foucher and a few others like Pierre Bayle and Huet were quicker in working out the logical consequences of Descartes' argument, especially

the philosophical opacity of the concept of 'representation'⁴² which indicated the impossibility of acquiring any knowledge of the external world including the knowledge of its existence. While skeptics were thus engaged in undermining the foundations of Descartes' Rationalism together with its underlying metaphysics, some other significant development was taking place in the direction of promoting the doctrine of modern Idealism. Both Malebranche and Abbe de Lanion, disciples of Descartes himself, criticised Descartes' argument in the sixth Meditation and developed immaterialism. The former did it in an implicit manner while the latter did it explicitly but with abundant caution.⁴³

Although A.A. Luce thinks that Malebranche is a 'patron of matter'⁴⁴ and Mrs. Beatrice Rome thinks that immaterialism is not an ineluctable consequence of Malebranche's philosophy— a counter-claim made against the view of Anita Fritz,⁴⁵ it is acknowledged presently that it was Malebranche who, through his acute and incisive criticism, brought about in philosophical circles transition from Descartes' realism to what Immanuel Kant called later on 'problematic idealism'. It is true that in his *Entretiens sur la métaphysique*, he argued that our knowledge of the existence of material world outside is based on the natural revelations of senses, but one does not know how seriously one can take that argument in view of his own denunciation of senses elsewhere.⁴⁶ He also maintained that it is *faith* alone which can convince us that there are material bodies in the world, but in the end, demarcating the areas of faith and reason, came to see that it is impossible for us to demonstrate or reason out the existence of material bodies. Descartes' demonstration, he claimed, is not rigorous enough. When one thinks rigorously enough, one will find that Descartes' theory of judgment (i.e., logic) which he employs in his demonstration leaves a great deal desirable. Malebranche asks to follow Descartes' own method till it takes us to the truth. Firstly, he rejects the distinction between sensible qualities which are claimed as not belonging to the material objects and the qualities like, extension, figure and movement, the properties without which, we say, we cannot conceive the bodies. All properties are sense-dependent and judgments about them are corrigible alike. The claim that the ideas are caused in us by the material substances outside then becomes weak. But more important than that, one must realise that the being of material world is not a necessary emanation from God. God's being is necessary. So his existence can be proved but not so in the case of material

world. The difference between God and material world is so marked that no demonstration from one to the other is possible. To demonstrate the existence of material world from God is to confuse God's creation with His necessity. Malebranche claimed that Descartes' proof was not decisive at all. How did Descartes know that the ideas which he had did not come from some immaterial cause? Descartes had spoken of three possible causes of the ideas that we have. The Self itself, the material substances outside, and the God. Malebranche agrees with Descartes that the self-itself cannot be the cause. But, according to him, the supposed material substances or objects cannot be their cause either. The only remaining possibility is God. And it's here that Malebranche was struck by his 'Vision of God'. Since by definition God is Supreme Wisdom and Supreme Power, nothing is impossible for Him. He, as the only creative and causal power in the universe, the sensations and ideas which are necessary for the perception and knowledge of external world are created by God in every living creature. The ways in which God acts are very simple. It therefore follows according to Malebranche that God can and that He does produce those sensations and ideas without the intervention of material objects altogether. Malebranche's Vision of God—the Vision to see all things in God—suggested the possibility of rescinding altogether Descartes hypothesis of material substance as a metaphysical luxury.

It must be, however noted that it was l'Abbé de Lanion who was more instrumental and effective in challenging Descartes's realism. He did this in his only work *Méditations sur la métaphysique*.⁴⁷ In these *Méditations* one finds Lanion agreeing with Descartes and following him upto a certain point. Descartes' own *Meditations* provided the model and the framework for Lanion's thinking and one finds him closely following Descartes only upto the fifth meditation. In the sixth *Mediation*, following Malebranche very faithfully, Lanion presented very succinctly his argument for immaterialism. He repeats almost every point that was made by Malebranche against Descartes' argument and is greatly revelled by Malebranche's Vision of God. He maintains that since extended substance is by definition passive, it cannot be the cause of our sensations and ideas, which instead proceed from God alone.⁴⁸ Lanion, not only makes ideas and sensations depend on God, but he also attributes to God the causal power to control our happiness and unhappiness that accompanies them.⁴⁹ Given that I am not the author of my ideas, that there is God who is the rational ground

of the entire universe, that he is not a deceiver and that, being the Wisest, He always acts in the most simple ways, < the premises, none of which, I think, could have been questioned by Descartes, it seemed to both, Malebranche and Lanion, strictly as their logical consequence that God must be the author of all our ideas and sensations. Thus, their metaphysical system did not comprise material objects and in lieu of them ideas and sensations were presented to the various spirits. In fact such a system should not have, one expects, any conflict with Religion or Theology, inasmuch as the system accords highest prominence to God. But then the system would involve not only the rejection of common sense belief that material objects do exist in their own right but also would render the entire Biblical account of Creation given in the *Genesis* a myth and falsehood. One can understand the reaction of the Jesuits to the emergence of this new doctrine of immaterialism.⁵⁰ Especially when Bishop Berkeley, *L'Eveque de Cloyne*, repeated the same pattern of argument in his *Principles of Human Knowledge* their attack seems to have become sharper. In order to appreciate this fully, it is necessary to turn to Claude Brunet's Solipsism.

Brunet developed his Solipsism during the last quarter of the 17th century and the first decade or two of the 18th century. Since his major philosophical work is not available, one has to glean his solipsistic doctrine solely from his medical works. The review of his major philosophical work, viz; *Projet d'une nouvelle métaphysique*, (1703) made by Flachet-St-Sauver in his journal in 1704, simply states his solipsistic thesis and that too, not in its original form. It does not clarify at all the argument, its premisses or the philosophical grounds from which Brunet got to the solipsistic conclusion. Towards the end of his *Journal de médecine* (1686 p. 284-85), Brunet made clear that the explanations of the most beautiful phenomena of the Nature which he had offered in that work, were very extraordinary, and though he himself was persuaded to accept them as just and reasonable, mistakes are possible. He wants us to consider his position as an academic position:

Being then persuaded that in those matters, the most obscure of all, one will pardon me some mistakes without despising that which I shall regard as highly probable, I propose those conjectures with all the docility of an Academician: Some one will examine them and instruct me with the disinterestedness of a philosopher.^{51*}

It is of first rate importance to note that Brunet was a man of Science, a Physician and not a theologian or a professional philosopher. He was one of those scientists and physicians who were greatly influenced by Descartes, especially his procedure of reasoning '*more geometrico*' because of its success in the field of mathematical physics. In the study of medicine, Physicians called for 'clear and distinct' principles *à la Descartes*, from which all demonstrations are to be made but they held, unlike Descartes, that such principles are to be founded only on a study of the purely corporeal aspect of man. No *a priori* conception of man is to be presupposed. It is necessary to determine the nature of a human body by making close and repeated observations of its various parts, organs, systems and sub-systems which will give us clear understanding of the nature of a man. Following the principle of mechanics which Descartes had enunciated in his Physics to account for the nature of Universe in terms of matter and motion and the insight which he had shown in expounding the doctrine of beast-machine, the physicians could not prevent themselves from extending the same principles in understanding the nature of human beings. Though Descartes had maintained mind-body dualism in his philosophical works, it came to be rejected in the circles of physicians and physicists,⁵² following the direction that was given by Descartes himself. Looking at the great contribution which the physicians had made to the study of man, La Mettrie claimed that 'Only physicians have a right to speak on this subject'⁵³, and Jerome Guab rather tersely remarked, 'Desiring it to be peculiar to their disputations, philosophers claim for themselves the investigation of this subject, but... if they want to see anything clearly in the darkness, it would be hardly discernible but for the light borne in front by physicians.'⁵⁴ No one else than Descartes himself had contributed to the mechanistic conception of the universe and to the application of the Principle of Mechanics to the field of biology and physiology that one may take the concept of mechanics as the key-concept of the intellectual framework in which all the scientists and the physicians worked during the 17th and 18th century. Talking about the application of mechanistic principles, Descartes himself had expressed the view that '...for the mind is so dependent upon the humours and the conditions of the organs of the body that if it is possible to find some way to make men in general wiser and more clever than they have been so far, I believe that it is in medicine that it should be sought.'⁵⁵ It is exciting to read Brunet's own declarations

in his medical works to the effect that what one needs in medicine for reasoning is the *Optiques* and *Mechaniques*, whose foundations, he complains, were clarified until his times very obscurely.

And for reasoning in medicine, one needs only the Optics and the Mechanics, the fundamentals of which have been explained upto this time very obscurely.^{56*}

....the Scholastic Physiology had been upto this century, all based on the maxims of morality. The ancient physicians regarded the body of a man as a political state; they believed it to be governed by a particular nature which had under the soul several faculties or powers duly subordinated, which in agreement with the soul, occupy themselves with diverse functions for the well-being of the animal. But the ridicule of that philosophy is revealed enough through the application which one makes of Mathematics to Physique and which shows clearly in the production of principal effects an admirable conformity to the infallible rule of Mechanics. The modern anatomists having also found in the animals so many springs, conduits and humours, no one any more doubts that all the actions which we see them doing proceed uniquely from some dispositions of the organs.^{57*}

Brunet paid a very glowing tribute to Descartes for his contribution in this respect. He writes:

Amidst all the celebrated authors who have produced in the last century in which one can say has commenced the age of adolescence of human reason in the Physique.... no one merits public esteem as much as our famous Descartes for having taught us through his methods so clear and so just, by his hypotheses so ingenious, and by his explanations so subtle; the best use that we can make of the Geometry which he has pushed on so far, and of the Mechanics which he has applied so adroitly in the formation of meteors and in respect of the actions of animals, the experiments which he has made to make us understand and find the veritable system which the nature is, and to take our Physique to a point to assure us.... not doubting at all that in advancing oneself by the routes which he has struck, one would arrive at the most perfect state of happiness (beatitude), to which a philosopher has a rightful claim in this world.^{58*}

With this allegiance to the principle of Mechanism, Brunet comes to formulate his problem as follows; it is the same very Cartesian problem

as to how we come to have ideas about the external material objects.

The philosophers have always found themselves in great difficulties in explaining the manner in which the ideas of the external objects produce themselves in our spirit and what changes take place in our body for forming in us the sentiments which in turn agree with things outside. But because the Anatomy has been until now less known or less applied, one comes across the opinions that are contrary to reason, on that subject, where reason is not sufficient without experience.

Two systems divide all the scientists. Some have advanced that the objects, shaking immediately the organs, make them known through themselves and the real kinds get themselves separated for extending on all parts; our soul looks carefully after its body, apperceives instantly those which would be inwardly united and then turns to reflect on that which they represent. The others, who see a grand embarrassment in the distribution of those wandering images and a great deal of disproportion between what one can conceive of the bodies and the traces they leave on the organ, judging them in addition as too gross for being intelligible as to their essence, have maintained that in general, the things outside us, exciting simply in us the movements different from them, give occasion to the soul to think on the causes through the effects which do not express them at all.

....I address myself uniquely to consider how the body prepares itself for exposing to the spirit the tranquil idea of extension. And without engaging myself into the discussion of the hypotheses of the Gassendists or of the Cartesians, reserving myself to examine them some other time in the context of some metaphysical views, I hope to persuade through the proofs of fact against the latter that the impressions resemble perfectly with their objects; and against the former, that we see veritably only the parts of our body and through their modifications.^{59*}

Having thus formulated the problem in the context of the views held by the Gassendists and by the Cartesians, Brunet, as the above passages show, wanted to give proofs of fact (*par des preuves de fait*) or what we may call as factual evidence, to maintain against the Cartesians that the impressions that we receive resemble perfectly well with their objects and against the Gassendists that we see clearly only parts the of our own body and their modifications. Following upon the passage quoted above one finds the declaration that :

Thus each will include within his soul that which he believes to be different from the soul; and we distinguish the unknown things by consulting inwardly within us, which become similar to that which the soul already knows.^{60*}

This declaration is solipsistic enough. It is with a view to pronouncing it more fully and more effectively that Brunet undertakes in his *Journal de médecine* (1686) study of the structure and functioning of the sense organs. The first article has the title '*Nouvelles conjectures sur les organes des sens, ou l'on propose un nouveau Systeme d'Optique*' (pp. 3-17). Articles II, III, IV, and V deal with the senses of touch, taste, smell and hearing respectively. (pp. 18-57). In the article VI (pp. 58-176) we have a very extensive treatment of the vision. At the outset, he tells us that:

As the vision is the most exterior sense and the most precious of all, I shall go deeper into it more scrupulously than I have done in respect of others.^{61*}

Accordingly we have Digression on Light (pp. 58-71), Reflexion on the First Principle of Mechanics, (pp. 71-92) Composition of Eye, (pp. 92-96), Explication of the *Système d'Optique* (pp. 96-110), *Raison des Experiences* (pp. 110-143), Objections and Replies (pp. 143-164), Latter Proofs (pp. 164-176). In the sixth Section: Objections and Replies, Brunet examines thoroughly Malebranche's reflexions on the different media through which we come to know the distances of the objects, (pp. 145-64), does not approve of any one of them and proposes an explanation which clearly foreshadows at least in part Berkeley's *New Theory of Vision*. The classical example of moon, rising on horizon which appears at a greater distance than the moon appearing high in the sky, is discussed at length. It's in the article VII, (pp. 176-285) after giving a few general considerations that Brunet, under the Section; *Theorie Particulière Du Mouvement*, throws out his philosophical reflexions which evince his solipsistic design very clearly. He states his position as follows:

In considering that no thing can move or go out by itself, one recognizes very well that one imagines nothing of the substances which differ from itself, so they are not inspiritualised. That is why in every epoch of Philosophers, one distinguishes the grand world from the small one which each individual includes and which is like the mirror or the copy of the first. And because anything

singular and determined by all the actual circumstances, could not produce nor change by itself, it is necessary to suppose a Sovereign Being as a commandant and as a motivator of creatures who composes the world of which we ourselves experience only a part and that it is proper to believe him seated external to those outside us who make that world.

But as one only thinks within one's own soul, each one ought to find in one's own self, the reason and the cause of appearances in the imaginary world where one alone presides.

It is that universe based in the nature of man that according to that admirable maxim of the Peripateticians, *intellectus intelligendo fit omnia*, that the thought makes everything, that we can refer all variety and diversity as our modifications proper; and for guarding the conviction and the evidence in one's own reasonings one could not establish the principle that is more simple, more fertile, more intimate and more necessary than one's own self.

Because in any state in which one finds oneself, one comes to notice only two things; consciousness and the expression of that interior sentiment. The first is immovable, and universal; it represents to us the same everywhere. The second rules and determines the first. There is nothing in every knowing being which it does not feel, nor anything which it does not enlighten; and as the action to think is distinct from the light which it throws, the spirit can immediately by itself apperceive that action and through a second reflection think of the sentiment of its thought, not ceasing at all to mark distinctly within itself, which it cannot resist, a profound view of all its sentiments.

We distinguish further in all our thoughts their form or the manner which specifies them of the presence of that manner in the spirit. Thus while red, white, cold, warm, pain, water, house are terms of thought necessarily apperceived by that quality to which is added that of being simply known through something that differs from that which apperceives.^{62*}

The above passage is indeed very difficult for comprehension. But we, who are now accustomed to the idiom of modern idealism for over two and half centuries, may not find ourselves completely alien to the immaterialistic tenor underlying that passage. Surely, it must have sounded very strange and odd during the decades when the biblical truth regarding the materiality of the external world held sway on the minds of the Jesuits. To the supporters of materialism, which was

advancing towards its hey-day, the language of idealism must have sounded odd. In order therefore to leave no room for interpretation, Brunet, perhaps as an afterthought, made an addition, the first sentence of which could be regarded as the first ever expressed maxim of the modern Idealism. The passage which he added runs as follows:

Everything exists only with the consciousness; I wish to say that there is a contradiction in attributing a positive existence to a thing of which one does not think at all. Thus all things are necessarily known. It is highly impossible that a tree, or a table, a pain or a colour and such others, have ever the property of knowing. But because the simple quality to think is in itself a vague notion, which is essentially related to everything that is knowable and since that which can be known has that relation to the one who can know, it demands for subsisting a particular object which is formed and fixed over there and thus reciprocally every object has reality only in the spirit; consciousness finds itself generally in all the thoughts which can be really distinguished only in that, that one sees one thing, the other sees another thing; one senses an admiration, the other senses a pain... things very different from consciousness which becomes exterior to those same objects at the moment it conceives them. For, every term is alienated from the principle of action. If one were to attribute to a thing only that which it represents formally, one could not say with rigour that the objects are modifications of thought; likewise, one would not see at all the thought or consciousness in any of the determinations of the stone, that such and such colour expresses only that colour. But because the pain or the joy are nothing without being apperceived and that perception is an incomplete thing without joy or without pain, etc. which individualise, the thought and those objects constitute really the very same existence.^{63*}

After making thus clear the idealistic refrain of his thinking, Brunet continues his reflections as follows:

Lastly, since one extends oneself in all things, and that one does not distinguish oneself from them at all in regarding them as belonging to a first and simple view; that they are presented only while one thinks of them; that one augments or diminishes them to the infinity according as the spirit applies itself to them or detaches itself from them; and that one discovers nothing for differentiating his thoughts except the different formality of objects, which offering themselves as entirely clear and perceptible, could be represented only through themselves; our soul appears, through its diverse folds,

to give in its knowledge all their determinations, which one names generally as objects, to that alone which they represent; imaginations or ideas, one feels the master of their presence and that the understanding (reason) turns them to its disposition and when, in thinking about all such things, we represent them to ourselves as others, everything made to appear as less indefinite, more exterior, as subsisting in themselves, but which would still pass as ideas or the images of ideas or of the preceding objects to which alone we see them conforming but more subjected to our present action to think, because they are conceived in themselves independent of the sentiment that I excite regarding them in me.

And one calls passion or affection as the objects we determine internally and which change us with pleasures or pains that are the movements of the soul. Pain and pleasure differ in this that in pain, we think principally of the object from which one isolates oneself and which moves us. In pleasure instead, we have attention only on the object which we approach ourselves and which attracts us. Those two general passions appear to take away from us that indifference or that peaceful situation where one feels one's own self; while ignoring where one will engage oneself, one regards oneself as entirely prepared and ready and in full power, but which refuses to be ever put in action, to do at the same time entirely different things. The things pass for general and objects of reason when one does not single them out from all the necessary circumstances so that they exist differently as some or the other. Thus the essence or the reality of a house is an indivisible assemblage of stones, of wood, of plaster etc. And every man believes in the truth when he is firmly persuaded of the sentiment of identification of all the attributes of an object with the object itself; that's how one ensures that the things are what they are; that two and two are two and two.

Considering then the things of the nature as if there is me myself alone, I do not stretch at all beyond the limits of my imagination the judgment that I make of them.

Different qualities assembled represent them as a very simple individual. For, if you take away a little from it or add a little to it, it is no more the same individual. Thus in respect of any indivisible that I conceive to myself, my essence can be modified actually in all sorts of distinct ways, in which case, each being regarded precisely as separated from others, would express still a unity.

Because I think at one stretch and because all my thoughts are

self-excited only through the actual and consistent impressions, it seems that in my respect, there isn't at all any veritable succession and that everything is for an instant; the priority and the posterity of time will not be however the fictions of my spirit, since the objects that I distinguish as in past or in future exist uniquely as the modes of my conception, which are as positive as those which appear to me to be the present-most, since the distant spaces are as real as the space that I occupy. It is possible that knowing myself in the midst of condition determined and fixed by all the things, and imagining myself the same universality of things in some other manner and under some appearance of reality, but incompatible with the earlier state, I regard as actual (real) those objects that I sense and which modify me and I alienate from the present other things that I judge to have been or those that are going to be. A determinate time is then an idea of several appearances of the same object, disposed in such a way that on the one hand, they unite themselves with the sentiments or the views to which I address myself principally, and on the other hand, they always go to represent the object more clearly and in the place where it acts really. But not being able to attribute to a single thing a multitude of impressions without putting them in succession, I give to those which are very nearly identified with me, an existence as veritable as that of mine and comparing them as others, I conceive the latter as past in making me to imagine them as sensed in themselves, or as future, when I imagine about them the sentiment in idea which depends on my actual thought. But all those ways of conceiving, which must connect themselves to many diverse things since they express the same in different circumstances are as many presences or actualities since they appear all at the same time; their distinction is the effect of my imagination which fuses them often together in presenting to me the things past, as if they were present or, to the contrary, as if they were to come. For, I can unite myself, and all the things at all the times. I form myself more easily a grand history (*l'age*) of an object, in applying myself to other objects, each one of a shorter time; likewise, one helps oneself to conceive a grand distance in figuring between them several bodies of some length.

However, I admit of an order in the things when they are in an agreeable arrangement, and as inseparably attached to that which I apperceive as the nature proper and the essential properties of each. And I say that one thing is the cause of another, when in the former which is more ancient, I find the principles and

the first traces of the latter; and from that ground upto the culmination point of the second, I see a chain of ideas which represent that chain more and more towards the moment when it exists in all its grandure. Thus the onion, the earth and the sun are cause of the tulip because I see tulip in small in the germ of the onion, and that the sun appears to me detached essentially from the earth, from the corpuscles of which, the tulip bursts forth into open afterwards. At each moment of those similar causes, I discover a different tulip; such is the case in Spring when tulip has a veritable cause in onion, sun and earth in that they contribute in that season to form it; until they have given effect to it, it subsists without them; that is to say, an effect depends on or is produced by only that which constitutes it in its present state.

When I take up universally and without distinction all the objects of my senses, and I do not think at all as to the individual qualities which make difference in them, I perceive an immense extension, entirely unified, not having any colour nor any warmth, etc. That idea is like the natural property of the sensing substance in which all its faculties are self-produced and made to self-appear. It is in the magnitude (grandure) in general that all the sensations come together in agreement, because they consist equally in the largest and in the smallest of all, and being capable of augmenting or diminishing by degrees to the infinity, they form a continuum which is only grand because of the number of atoms it contains, distinct and exterior to one another.

The particular sensations determine the extension of all the things that I call as bodies, which are coloured or transparent, hot or cold, round or square.

The diverse combinations of odours, of heat, of colours, give us for the bodies all the emotions and all the sentiments of which we are capable. One could very well establish rules for effecting to our advantage, all those compositions. But I strip here all the material objects of those sorts of qualities and I leave in them only those which they have as extension. I believe then that they are thereby really space itself, and the essential difference that they have amidst themselves consists in the situation and the figure.^{64*}

Further on Brunet also speaks of '*l'étendu divisée*' and of '*le mouvement*' which is essential for considering the former. Speaking of the movement, he contended that :

It is in the Space which appears to me as a void that all the bodies changing places, represent to me the movement, which is only a passage of determinations by all the parts, virtual or undivided, of some continuously motionless quantity, along with which the same figures apply themselves exactly.

...It is only a manner of regarding the actual figures which are assuredly co-existent with the bodies.

...The movement is a thing whose all the parts exist at the same time, and of which one forms an idea ~~in~~ connecting to a single body several kinds of figures or of similar bodies, as applied to some near ones as compared with others, from a point fixed in the immobile extension, from which as centre, I myself imagine that a chain of places begins, of which some appear to me since long time as deferred more than others to the proportion they come to unite themselves in a body that I judge to exist alone at the present moment in a place that I conceive void in uniting it at the time when that body appears to me in some place in the preceding moments, which I envisage more only as its images and its shadows which represent it to me as applied to all those places at different moments.^{65*}

Brunet, as I already indicated, had taken up the issue against the Gassendists and the Cartesians as to how we come to possess the ideas concerning External world. Both the Schools had common metaphysical presupposition that there are external material objects which exist in their own right and play the role of causing somehow in the soul of the man ideas concerning them, the most important of them being the idea of extension which constitutes the essence of matter. Brunet, therefore, addresses himself to the unique task of considering how the body prepares itself to expose to the Spirit the 'tranquile' idea of Extension. He carries out his project in the most scientific manner in all its details denying explicitly some unscientific doctrines, such as the doctrine of animal spirits or the doctrine that the objects outside set in motion immediately our sense organs and implicitly some of the metaphysical theories advocated in Brunet's times, such as, that there is a point of interaction between mind and body, doctrine of occasionalism, psycho-physical parallelism and the doctrine of pre-established harmony.⁶⁶ Brunet is not against developing a metaphysical theory as such. Brunet's own philosophical position emerging out of the Science of Medicine is metaphysical enough. Though Brunet is mainly concerned

with the explanation of 'etendue' (extension), he offers us his reflections, though very cryptically, of the cognate concepts like past, present, future, causation, rest and mouvement, only the last one being treated in a rather elaborate fashion. It is necessary to note that Brunet's argument is not based on any *a priori* conception of these and such other ideas supposed to be involved in our knowledge of the external world.

I do not know whether Brunet was aware of the fact that in his *Journal de médecine*, from which I have quoted extensively above, he was in a way working on a suggestion that was made but eventually rejected by Descartes himself in his sixth Meditation where he presented his proof for the existence of external material *objects*. Brunet may have thought that, that suggestion had the merit of falling in line with Descartes' 'cogito' argument and the theory of knowledge based on it. Descartes, as is well-known, had maintained that the power of sensation that exists in us is passive and that this power could not be of any avail to us unless an active power is presupposed either in himself or outside him. He denied that it existed in him. He further maintained that it must exist in external material substance although he depended on God's benevolence for that. For Lanion, as stated earlier, it existed in God rather than material substance. Both Lanion and Descartes denied that active power inheres in us. From this denial, while Descartes developed realism, Lanion developed idealism, albeit, theistic. Brunet denied the positions taken by Descartes and Lanion and asserted their rejected hypothesis that the active power inheres in one's own soul. In fact, the entire argument in the *Journal de médecine* could be said to be an elaboration and justification of the said assertion.

There can be no doubt that Brunet accepted Descartes' theory of knowledge which says that all knowledge is innate. His assertions that 'on ne concoit que soi en soi' and 'nous pourrions rapporter toute la variété a la diversité de nos propres modifications, et que, pour garder de la conviction et de l'evidence dans ses raisonnemens, on n'en peut établir de principe plus simple, plus fecond, plus intime, et plus necessaire que soi. While considering the Cartesian view that all our knowledge, including that of external world, is comprised of ideas, that all those ideas are the proper modifications of our soul, that those of the external objects are representations of the external material objects which cause them, Brunet must have stumbled against

the same difficulty which occurred to Lanion, viz; How can matter, which is by definition inspiritualised give rise to ideas which are the modifications of soul which is a spiritualised substance? Brunet thought that it was not philosophically improper, though theologically an incredulity, to suppose that all our ideas, including those of the external world, are the creations of one's own soul if everything supposed to exist outside is shown to be reducible to figure and extension. Brunet may have thus seen the major difficulty of all those who advocated the Representative theory of knowledge that if it is our own ideas that we know directly and if these ideas are taken to represent the external objects then there is no way of telling as to how the ideas correspond to the external objects. If we, however, cannot reject the fact of correspondence between our ideas and what is represented by them and if we also cannot reject that we know directly our own ideas and nothing else, then the basic assumption of the Representative theory of knowledge that there are independently existing external material objects must be false. Brunet's entire attempt lay in showing that assumption is indeed false and he did it in the very first work viz; *Journal de médecine*.

One does not know if Brunet was influenced by the empirical approach and the historical method of John Locke. It may, however, be noted that although Locke's *Essay* was published in 1690, that is to say, four years after Brunet's *Journal de médecine* was published, drafts A and B of Locke's *Essay* were already complete in 1671 and that during the four years of his stay in France from 1675 to 1679, John Locke had many philosophical transactions within the philosophical circles of France, especially in formulating some of his criticisms of Cartesian ideas.⁶⁷ It is, possible that Brunet, as a man of science—a physician, an anatomist and a physiologist—must have developed interest in the functioning of various sense organs and then that interest may have acquired an epistemological dimension to do the job of Locke's 'scavenger'. It was quite in keeping with his way of thinking that he should entrench his philosophical position as much as possible through a fund of scientific evidence. The supporters of the Representative theory of knowledge were saying that the ideas are modifications of soul or mind, which assertion was quite vague. For Brunet, they were just the modifications of sense organs. It also seems that the then current distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities made

by the scientists and the philosophers was not acceptable to him.

It is the essential function of all the senses to represent the things as they are in themselves and one ought to decide anything concerning the objects which surround us only by reference to that which is impressed concerning them on the organs.

Everything that we know through the senses reduces itself to the dimension and to the figures; Now in order to see that the veritable magnitude and the situation that we can attribute to the bodies are those which characterise our organs actually; it is necessary to consider that the things are large or small, according to the degree of our application alone.^{68*}

....Diverse qualities assembled represent them all as a very simple individual.^{69*}

....the particular sensations determine the existence of all the things that I call as bodies, which are coloured or transparent, hot or cold, round or square.^{70*}

There being thus no basis for the said distinction in what is determined by our senses, Brunet had no reason to conceive Locke's philosophically opaque hypothesis of material substance as the substratum of primary qualities alone, whose nature, however, remains ever unknown. Brunet's scientific and empirical approach nipped that distinction in the bud. Since we come to know the so-called primary properties only through sense organs, they need not be categorically distinguished from the other properties which are also equally known through sense organs.

Closeness of Brunet's thesis that '*rien ne existe ou'avec le connaissance*' with Berkeley's thesis that '*esse est percipi*' is indeed remarkable. But while Berkeley could save his system from the impending ego-centric predicament through an appeal to God's constant vigil of everything in the universe, Brunet embraced wholeheartedly such a predicament and considered things in the nature as if he was alone in this universe.

Considering then the things of the nature, as if there is me myself alone, I do not stretch at all beyond the limits of my imagination, the judgment that I make of them.^{71*}

Brunet was not a man of religion and nowhere in his works that I know of, he ever raised the problem of the existence of God. One finds, however, that Brunet rejected theories which made reference to

God either implicitly or explicitly, like Occasionalism and Pre-established Harmony, which appeared to him to have a bizarre character. The final validity of all our knowledge was not vested by him in God. For him it lay in 'soi', or to be exact, in 'moi'. "...comme on ne conçoit que soi en soi, chacune doit chercher dans son fond la raison et la cause des apparences du monde imaginaire où il préside seul."⁷²

The standpoint which Brunet espoused, needed a drastic change in the nature of mind or soul substance. Both the Rationalists and the Empiricists had conceived mind to be passive in receiving ideas and impressions from the external world through the senses and its activity was confined mainly and merely to the manipulation of ideas into what we call knowledge. For Brunet, Mind is not a recipient of ideas and impressions, not certainly Locke's 'tabula rasa' or 'camera obscurata'. *L'moi*, according to him, is active in itself and creative inasmuch as "tout objet n'a d'actualité que dans l'esprit".⁷³ The passages that I have quoted above (pp. 26-28) show how Brunet conceived the activity of his thought to be vital to making all the distinctions and in giving determinations to its objects. This raises one very vital issue. Did Brunet advocate any view with regard to human soul? Did he believe in the existence of souls other than his own? Or, did he resort to solipsism in considering the nature and state of other minds as well? We shall address ourselves to these questions in the Part II of the Paper, which I intend to publish soon.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For a detailed discussion on this point, refer to Stace, W. T., *Theory of Knowledge and Existence*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1932, pp.65 ff.
2. *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX Siècle*, ed. Pierre Larousse, Paris, 1875, Vol.14 gives on page 846, the following explanation of the expression 'solipse'

'Nom injurieux donné aux Jésuites accusés d'égoïsme.'

3. Hoernle, R. A., 'Solipsism', James Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, New York, 1921, Vol.11, pp. 678-80.
4. Refer to the Section 5 of my Introduction to the English Translation of Father Claude Buffier's *Elémens de métaphysique*. Poona, IPQ Publication, University of Poona, 1980, pp.8-13.
5. Reid, Thomas., *Works*, ed. Sir William Hamilton, 6th Edn. Edinburgh, 1863, p.269 a, and pp. 285 a< 286 b.
6. *Ibid.* pp. 464 b <465 a. Also refer to Page 293 b.
7. Hamilton, Sir William., Editorial Footnote on Page 269 in Reid, *op.cit.*
8. *Ibid.* p. 293.
9. Reid, Thomas., *op.cit.* p. 307 a.
10. *Journal de Trévoux*, Mai, 1713, pp. 921-22. This journal is also known as *Mémoires de Trévoux*. The full title is *Mémoires Pour l'Histoire des Sciences et des Beaux Arts*. The passages marked with asterisk hereafter are originally in French. Their English rendering is mine and it has been done freely with no pretence whatsoever for their absolute correctness.
11. Refer to Christopher M. Pfaff, *Oratio de Egoismo. Nova Philosophica Haeresi*, PELICKIUS, Tubingen, 1722, p.24.

Apart from Pfaff, Wolff and Reid, many other writers have made reference to this development. Vide: Robinson, Lewis., *Un solipsiste au XVIII^e siècle*, *Année Philosophique*, 1913, p.17.

Dr. Lewis White Beck has drawn my attention recently to a reference to the solipsists in a Latin work, *De Charlataneria Eruditorum* written in the year 1715 by a German thinker Johann Burkhard Mencken (1674-1732). Refer to its English Translation: *The Charlatanary of the Learned*. tr. by Francis E. Lits, New York & London, 1937, fn. pp.146-47.

12. Lalande, A., *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie*, Paris, 1926, Vol.II, p.783.
13. Refer to Note 'Y' in Reid, Thomas, *op.cit.* p.988.
14. Larousse, P., *op.cit.* p.1347.
15. *Biographie Universelle*, Michaud Paris, 1843, Vol.6, p.25.
16. About Brunet's biography, not much is known. No one knows where and when he was born. His family hailed from Lyon but it seems that he was resident of Paris during the hey-day of his career as a professional physician. Following works, which are extremely rare, stand in his name;

Journal de médecine. Paris, 1686 (aut., sept. oct.). There is also one avril/mai 1686 issue available. All references below are to the former.

Three separate Volumes of *Le Progrès de la médecine* published in Paris during the years 1695, 1697 and 1709.

There are a few other writings on medical themes in his name. The last belongs to 1737. His major Philosophical work, *Project d'une nouvelle métaphysique* (1703) is not available even in France.

Brunet's period can thus be roughly fixed as 1650 to 1740. It is mentioned in the biographical notes available, that Brunet attended the conferences of the Malebranchists held on every Saturday by Abbe de Cordemoy. He also attended the public conferences of Abbe de la Roque. He had many debates and controversies at the Academy of Sciences.

Brunet is mentioned as a pioneer of French Journalism in the field of medicine by Arturo Castiglioni in his *A History of Medicine*. tr. E. B. Krumbhaar, New York, 1947, pp.650-51.

During my short stay in Paris in March/April 1975, I tried to ascertain the fate of Brunet's major philosophical work, *Project d'une nouvelle métaphysique*, (1703) but without any success.

The French physicist M. Varignon, appears to have influenced M. Brunet a great deal. He considered Varignon's contribution to the field of Mechanics almost parallel to Newton's contribution. (*Le Progrès de la médecine*, Article VI, 1709.) The name of Varignon's work was *Project d'une nouvelle Mécanique* (1687). Can we venture a hypothesis that Brunet's work in metaphysics, *Project d'une nouvelle métaphysique* was only a philosophical and logical extension of the basic principle of mechanics employed by M. Varignon? This paper may be considered as an exploration of evidence from Brunet's other writings to support that hypothesis.

17. Robinson, Lewis, i) 'Un solipsite au XVIII^e siècle' *Année Philosophique*, 1913, pp.15-30. ii) 'Le cogito Cartésien et L'origine de l'idéalisme moderne' *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*, 1937, pp.307-35.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
19. Buffier, Father Claude., *Oeuvres du Père Buffier*, ed. F. Bouillier, Paris, 1861. His *Traité des vérités premières* has been translated into English anonymously. Refer to *First Truths, and the Origin of Our Opinions Explained; with an Enquiry into the Sentiments of Modern Philosophers, relative to Our Primary Ideas of Things*, London, 1780. Father Buffier criticised the egoists in Part I, chap.I to III, pp.9-17, who were Descartes'

followers. In the second chapter, there is also a reference to an English philosopher "who has made no scruple to publish to the world" the uncertainty of matter. This latter reference is no doubt to Berkeley. *Traité* was published in 1724.

In his another work viz., *Eléments de métaphysique a la portée de tout le monde pour accoutumer l'esprit a former des idea justes et precises*, Paris, 1725, (tr. Bokil S.V., *Elements of Metaphysics within the Reach of Everyone*, Indian Philosophical Quarterly Publications, Poona University, Poona-7, India, 1980) which is in the dialogue form, he presented his philosophy of Common Sense and criticised Solipsism.

20. For a brief biographical account of Father Claude Buffier, refer to following sources:
 1. *Nouvelle Biographie Generale*, Paris, 1855, Vol.7, p.. 732-33.
 2. *Oeuvres du Père Buffier*, Introduction by Francois Boullier, Paris, 1861.
 3. *Mémoires de Trévoux*, Aout, 1737, pp. 1503-05.
 4. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. III, New York, 1908 contains a very brief note.
 5. *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* ed. Paul Edwards, Vol.II, makes only a passing reference to Father Buffier in the article on the Philosophy of Common Sense.
21. Flachet-St-Sauveur, *Recueil de pièces fugitives d'histoires et de littérature*, Vol.1, Paris, 1704 pp. 356-58. This work is very rare and the only copy that I know of, is available at the *Bibliothèque nationale*, Paris, and it is reserved only for *l'usage privé*.
22. Robinson, Lewis., *op.cit.* p. 319. I could not check up Fenelon's work but the VII Section of P. Tournemine's *Reflexions* is given as Appendix 'E' by H.M. Bracken in his *The Early Reception of Berkeley's Immaterialism, 1710-1733*. The Hague, 1959.
23. Buffier, Father C., *Elémens de métaphysique*, in *Oeuvres du P. Buffier*, Paris, 1861, p.294.
24. For Jesuit opposition to Cartesin philosophy, see F. Bouillier's introduction to *Oeuvres du P. Buffier*, Paris, 1861, pp.i-vi.
25. Robinson, Lewis, *op.cit.*, p.26.
26. Larguier, J. des Bancel., "Sur un Malebranchiste peu connu", *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Etranger*, 1951, p.566.

27. Kirkinen, Heikki, *Les Origines de la conception de l'homme machine*, Helisinki, 1960. p. 148, fn.1.
 28. Brunet, Claude., *Progrès de la médecine*, Paris, 1709, pp.49-51.
 29. For biographical notes on P. Tournemine, vide., *Biographie Universelle*, Michaud, Paris, 1843, Vol. 42, pp.49-50.
 30. André, P., *Vie de Malebranche*, Paris, 1886, p.337.
 31. Vartanian, Aram., *La Mettrie's L'Homme -machine*, Princeton, 1960, p.60.
 32. *Ibid.* p. 73.
 33. Fritz, Anita D., *op.cit.* p.75.
 34. Chastaing, Maxime., "L'abbé de Lanion et la Problème Cartesien de la connaissance d'autrui", *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Etranger*, 1951, p. 247, fn.3.
- It may also be noted that in 1713, there was no possibility of Lanion being referred to as a Malebranchist. It seems that sometime around 1690s. differences arose between Malebranche and Lanion and they were strained to such an extent that Lanion abandoned his master and posed himself as an adversary of Malebranchism. (cf. Letter published in Blampignon, *Correspondence inédite de Malebranchette*, Paris, 1861, p. 122).
- I remember to have read somewhere that Lanion, probably owing to his connection with Jansenists, Arnauld and P. Nicole, had to leave the Academy of Sciences. I regret I did not note down the reference.
35. Languier J. des Bancel., *Op.cit.*
 36. Chastaing., Maxime., "Berkeley, défenseur du sens commune et theoricien de la connaissance d'autrui", *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l' Etranger*, 1953, pp. 230-31, fn.4.
 37. Baxter, Andre, *An Enquiry into the Nature of Human Soul*, Vol.II, London, 1737, P. 280; In the article, "Dean Berkeley's Scheme against the existence of matter and a material world examined and shown inconclusive", Baxter quotes as a Note 1, a remark from M. Ramsay's *Discours sur la Mythologie*, tome II, Paris, 1727 which runs as follows:

"Quelque Spinozistes sentent que l'evidence leur eachappe a tout moment, dans les pretendues demonstrations de leur Maitre, sont tombes dans une espece de Pyrrhonism insense nomme l'Egomisme ou chacun se croit le seul etre existant."
 38. Refere to Note 7 above.
 39. Flach-St-Sauveur, *op.cit.* p.357.

40. Refer to Allard, E., *Die Angriffe gegen Descartes und Malebranche im Journal de Trevoux*, Niemeyer, 1914.
41. Flachet-St-Sauveur, *op.cit.* p.356.
42. For Simone Foucher's attack vide., Watson, Richard., *The Downfall of Cartesianism*, The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1966.
43. For Malebranche's treatment of Descartes' argument, vide; Malebranche's *Sixième Eclaircissement sur la Recherche de la vérité*.

For his contribution to Idealism, vide; Pillon F. "L'évolution de l'idéalisme au XVIII^e Siècle". *Année Philosophique*, 1893 pp. 109-206 & 1895, pp. 121-193.

Also Robinson, Lewis., *op.cit.* There is a small brochure "*Descartes et le Spiritualisme*", Paris, 1866 by Charles Waddington, which is quite informative.

In respect of Lanion, I say 'with abundant caution', because his *Méditations sur la métaphysique* was published but circulated only privately in 1678. It was included in 1684 by Pierre Bayle in his *Recueil de quelques pièces curieuses concernant la philosophie de M. Descartes*, Amsterdam, 1684, under the pseudoauthorship of Guillaume Wander. That these *Méditations* were written by Lanion was publicly announced by Bayle in 1703; cf. his *Reponse aux questions d'un Provincial*, Reimier Leers, Rotterdam, 1704, p.220. Bayle held these *Méditations* in very high esteem.

Lanion's work had evoked a great admiration in Leibnitz as well. In fact Leibnitz first thought that the author was Malebranche and wrote letter to Malebranche. Malebranche informed him that the real author was Lanion, whereupon Leibnitz expressed his desire to know more about Lanion. It seems that Malebranche did not respond. For this interesting correspondence and also for Leibnitz's comments on Lanion's work, vide., Robinet, A., *Malebranche et Leibnitz*, Paris. J. Vrin, 1955.

44. Luce, A.A., *Berkeley and Malebranche*, Oxford, 1934.
45. Rome, Mrs. Beatrice., *The Philosophy of Malebranche*, Chicago, Regnery, 1963, and Fritz, Anita Dunlevy, *op.cit.*
46. Malebranche, N., *Recherche de la vérité*, Tr. by T. Taylor T., Oxford, 1694, Bk. Vi, pt. I, ch.1.
47. Lanion, l'abbé de, *op.cit.* in P. Bayle's *Recueil (op.cit.)*.
48. *Ibid.* pp. 292-94.
49. *Ibid.* pp. 296-97.

50. Interpretation of Berkeley as a realist and a man of common sense belongs to recent times and is not altogether free from serious doubts. If Berkeley was at all misunderstood as a skeptic, an atheist, a solipsist and an idealist, in our search of the reasons for the contemporary reaction, we must explore the full historical context in which the Jesuit reaction was formed. This context is no doubt provided by skeptical, materialistic and atheistic developments in France itself after Descartes. But it is of greater significance to note that there was idealistic, and more importantly, the solipsistic development which preceded Berkeley's pronouncement of idealism. H.M. Bracken's *Early Reception of Berkeley's Immaterialism, 1710-1733*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1964 does the job of exploring the historical context, no doubt, admirably well but only in a part. It does not take into account the development of Brunet's idealism and solipsism. This latter remark would also be applicable to Richard Watson's *The Downfall of Cartesianism*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1966. Has there been a downfall of Cartesianism ever at all? It's a question which is serious enough.
51. Brunet, Claude., *Journal de médecine*, 1686, p. 285.
52. For a detailed study of this development, vide: i) Rather, L.J., *Mind and Body in the Eighteenth Century Medicine*, London, 1965 & ii) Boas, Marie., "Establishment of Mechanical Philosophy", *Osiris*, X, 1952, pp. 422-60.
53. La Mettrie, L'Homme machine. Paris. 1747, tr. *Man a Machine*, by G. C. Bussey, Chicago, 1927, pp.6-7.
54. Gaub, Jerome, *De Regimine Mentis*, tr. by L.J. Rather in his *Mind and Body in the 18th Century Medicine*, London, 1965, p.41.
55. Descartes, René., *Discourse on the Method*, tr. by Lafleur, L. J. Lib. Arts Edn., 1956, p. 40.
56. Brunet, Claude., *Le Progrès de la médecine*, Paris, 1697, Advertisement, (pages not numbered.)
57. *Ibid.*, 1695, Preface (pages not numbered)
58. *Ibid.*, 1709, pp. 41-42.
59. Brunet, Claude., *Journal de médecine* 1686, pp. 3-4.
60. *Ibid.* p. 4.
61. *Ibid.* p. 58.
62. *Ibid.* pp.210-11.s

63. *Ibid.*, 'Additions et corrections' p.11. (published at the end of the work)
64. *Ibid.* pp. 211-212.
65. *Ibid.* p. 221 ff.
66. For Brunet's reaction to the contemporary Mind-Body relation theories refer to his *Progrès de la médecine*, 1695: Preface; 1709; pp. 48-52 and *Journal de médecine* 1686, p. 209 and pp. 189-90.

For views on Cartesian doctrine of animal-spirits, refer to his *Journal de médecine*, 1686, pp.194-98.

Descartes's theory of animal-spirits was categorically denied first by Nicolaus Stensen in 1667, in his *Myologiae specimen*, in which he came to say that everyone believes that the causes of our movements are the animal-spirits, the most subtle parts of the blood or its vapor, or the essence of the nerves, but all these are words; they are not experienced entities. Refer to Sir Michael Foster, *Lectures on the History of Physiology*, Cambridge, 1901. Aug. George Berthier, in his extremely instructive article, "Le mecanisme Cartesien et la physiologie au XVII^e siecle", (*Isis*, vol. 2, 1914 and vol.3, 1920) noted that the doctrine would have been given up by the thinkers of the 18th century, were it not to appear in Herman Boerhaave, E. Hoffman and the staunch defenders of their school.

Berthier does not mention Claude Brunet, nor does Sir M. Foster.

67. For information on this point, vide., John Lough, *Travels in France-1675-79 by John Locke*, Cambridge, 1953 and Bonno, G. D., *Les Relations intellectuelles de Locke avec la France d'apres des documents inedits*, Berkeley, 1955.
68. Brunet, Claude. *Journal de médecine*, 1686, pp.184-85.
69. *Ibid.* p.214.
70. *Ibid.* p.218.
71. *Ibid.* p.214.
72. *Ibid.* p.214.
73. *Ibid.*, Additions et Corrections p. 11, towards the end of the volume.