

[VILLENEUVE, Daniel Jost de, pseud. Listonai (fl. 1750-1764)].

Le voyageur philosophe dans un pays inconnu aux habitants de la terre.

Référence : B338267

Amsterdam, Aux dépens de l'éditeur, 1761. Two volumes 12° (165x105 mm). XXIV, 339, [1]; VI, 384 pp. Contemporary boards, spine gilt and with labels. Somewhat rubbed, a few gatherings browned.

Commentaire : First edition of a scarce tale of a voyage to the moon by means of one of the earliest fictional aeronautical devices. On a trip to Canada, the narrator embarks on an interplanetary airship piloted by 'intrépide calculateur de l'infini'. Arriving on the Moon's capital, Selenopolis, he discovers a radiant city where the inhabitants live harmoniously and where physical and metaphysical knowledge is within the reach of the people. He describes education, literature, government, costumes, arts, etc., and multiple inventions. Meeting an old man, the story then develops into a philosophical tale that satirizes society, comparing the natural state and the social state. It is only at the end that we learn that everything described was a dream, with the narrator at the foot of his bed. The work was put on the index in January 1763. 18th century engraved armorial bookplate and of Franz Pollack-Parnau (1903-1981). Negley 1141; Conlon 61:1110; Racault, L'utopie narrative en France et en Angleterre 1675-1761 (1991), 265f.; Fortunati/Trousseau 683f.; C. Imbroscio, Le voyageur philosophe: alterità e specularità nel viaggio lunare di Listonai, in: Minerva, La luna allo specchio (1990), p. 55ff.

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Erasmushaus AG

hdb@erasmushaus.ch

Tél. +41 61 228 99 44

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