The Early Modern Travel Narrative: production and consumption
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Collecting travels in late seventeenth-century Paris

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Abstract:
Paris in the late seventeenth century provides a case study in the circulation and use of travel writings within the "culture of curiosity". This paper focusses on one figure at the heart of this milieu, Melchisédech Thévenot (?1622-1692), and on his collection of travel accounts, the *Relations de divers voyages curieux*, published in four folio volumes from 1663 to 1672. Thévenot's collection of voyages is important not only as the first in a long line of French travel collections, but also, and more importantly, because it affords us a glimpse of how travel writing was used — that is, collected, translated, edited, printed, and discussed — within the scholarly/scientific networks of baroque Europe. The Thévenot case reveals the importance of travel writing for the erudite and experimental communities in a period when the modern boundaries between disciplines were far from fully formed, and when the nature of geographical knowledge was undergoing radical change, with the advent of scientific expeditions. Today, Thévenot and his group occupy a hybrid position between the history of science and the history of travel literature: on the one hand, Thévenot hosted an experimental club which was a forerunner of the Académie des Sciences; on the other, his *Relations* became a standard reference in the early Enlightenment, and were especially important in the reception of Dutch and Jesuit writings on China (it was within Thévenot's collection that the Jesuit translations of Confucius were first published in Europe). How a travel collection like Thévenot's functions — for example, how the material form of the book processes information and shapes the readers' experience of the text — has rarely been explored; and yet the travel collection was one of the primary genres through which early modern readers encountered travel narratives, from Ramusio and Hakluyt in the sixteenth century to Churchill or Prévost in the eighteenth.

In 1680, John Locke received a letter from his friend Nicolas Toinard, who regularly sent him scholarly news from Paris. As a postscript to the usual array of reference-swaps and erudite gossip, Toinard allowed one of their mutual friends to add an enquiry of his own. This friend was Melchisédech Thévenot (1622-92), whom Locke had met during his years in France (1672-79). Thévenot explained that, while reading *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, he had found a reference to some papers of Richard Hakluyt's that had not been printed; Purchas seemed to imply that these texts deserved to be made public, and so Thévenot asked Locke to make enquiries as to where these manuscripts might be. By the time of this letter (late 1680), Thévenot was a reasonably well-known collector, who had also published a four-volume travel compilation, the *Relations de divers voyages curieux*.[1] Thévenot hoped that the missing Hakluyt papers might be found and printed, both for the benefit of the 'Public', and as a tribute to Hakluyt, to whom posterity would always be grateful for having brought so many texts to light which would otherwise be

lost. As a final flourish, he notes that since Hakluyt 'saved from oblivion' some writings of the early French explorers, he would like to have the chance to return the favour by doing the same for Hakluyt.[2]

Thévenot's note to Locke can serve as a entry point for exploring the circulation of travel writings within the baroque 'culture of curiosity'.[3] It also, conveniently, introduces us to Thévenot, who provides a focus for this paper. Thévenot, tantalized by a reference to lost Hakluyt papers, hopes to appropriate them within his own series (itself an emulation of Hakluyt); he duly sets about finding them using the method he knows best--by writing to fellow members of the 'Republic of Letters'. In this note to Locke, most of the key terms and images that we will find recurring as we follow Thévenot's case are present: the encyclopedic compilation, seen as a resource for posterity; the fetishization of certain privileged source-texts (usually manuscripts, and often unattainable); and, above all, the desire to bring potentially *useful* and hitherto hidden knowledge (especially from overseas) into public circulation, via translation and print.

A second example from the Toinard-Locke letters (a month later) offers a variation on these themes. Toinard and Locke had been discussing Robert Boyle's latest book, in which Boyle described cooking meat and fish in an evacuated air-pump; this prompted Toinard to wonder whether it might be possible to use an air-pump to transform sea water into healthy drinking water. He then relates that Thévenot had once told him that in Holland, some years earlier, a man claimed to have 'found this important secret' (i.e. making sea water potable), and had tried to sell his discovery to the Dutch East Indies Company, for the sum of '10,000 écus'. The Company refused, and so the secret died with the man. Later, apparently, the Company regretted its decision.[4]

Such stories of ill-fated inventors abound in the correspondence and the periodicals of the time. Thévenot's Dutch anecdote can be connected with a broader project to 'discover' (in the sense of 'uncover' and make public) hidden knowledge, specifically the 'secrets' of the *arts* (that is, artisanal techniques). Discovering the 'arts' also meant devising new techniques, new instruments and machines.[5] As we will find, this program for collecting the 'arts' is connected with travel and navigation on two

levels: firstly, there is an emphasis on techniques that will be useful for the art of navigation (such as the secret of making seawater salubrious, or Thévenot's invention of a bubble level for use aboard ship); second, there is the emphasis on using travel itself as a form of *experience* which, if properly accumulated in print, will allow knowledge of nature and of techniques to be discovered and exchanged.

For historians of early modern science, Thévenot figures in the story of the private scientific assemblies that existed just before the establishment of the Académie Royale des Sciences (in 1666).[6] For historians of travel literature, on the other hand, he is known for the *Relations de divers voyages curieux*, the first major French travel collection, much read by the eighteenth-century *philosophes*. Among those known to have owned copies were Locke, Voltaire, Turgot, d'Holbach, de Brosses, and William Beckford.[7] Usually, these twin aspects of Thévenot's career--scientific associations and the compilation of travel accounts--are kept apart, as if they were unrelated. If, however, we attempt to read the sources without dividing his interests into present-day categories, a relationship between these activities emerges. My aim in this paper is to explore the connections between Thévenot's travel compilation and the social network in which it was produced and used.

Collecting the Arts

Melchisédech Thévenot, born in Paris around 1622, came from a family of royal office-holders,[8] and it seems that his collecting and scholarly projects were funded largely from private wealth.[9] He is still sometimes confused with his nephew, Jean [de] Thévenot (1633-67), who made two voyages, one to the Levant, one to Persia and India (meeting his death on the way back), and wrote an account of his travels that went through several editions.[10] It needs to be made clear, given the confusion between the two, that Melchisédech never set foot in the Orient himself. However, he did spend some time touring Europe in his youth, possibly in the company of his nephew. Especially important were two diplomatic missions he spent in Italy in the 1640s and 1650s, where he formed friendships with members of the scholarly community, and also developed an interest in Oriental studies, partly through his acquaintance with Abraham

Ecchellensis (Ibrahim al-Haqilani), a professor of Arabic at the Maronite College in Rome.

Thévenot was back in Paris by 1655, where he was able to meet the Dutch mathematician Christiaan Huygens (a friendship that was to become important for both of them later).[11] In the mid-1650s, Thévenot had close links with those Parisian scholars who pursued Skeptical and Epicurean philosophy (the so-called *libertins érudits*), especially the circle around Pierre Gassendi and Henri-Louis Habert de Montmor.[12] Thévenot was frequently described as an *honnête homme* (indeed 'un des meilleurs et des plus honnests hommes de Paris'),[13] and had links with the writers who articulated this particular ethic of sociability.[14] The English might have called him 'gentleman virtuoso': with his private wealth, he was able to create a 'cabinet' (that is, a private museum/library with some scientific instruments), in which he could hold meetings of scholarly friends, and play host to foreign scholars when they visited Paris. He also kept up correspondence with other similar figures around Europe (especially Huygens, when he was in the United Provinces, and Vincenzo Viviani and Lorenzo Magalotti in Florence).

In the traditional historiography of French science, Thévenot tends to be remembered for his role as a member of the Gassendi-Montmor group (the so-called 'Montmor Academy'), which Thévenot hosted in the last two years of its existence (1663-1665).[15] Often, this group that met *chez* Thévenot is described a direct ancestor of the Académie Royale des Sciences; in fact, the relationship between the two is more complex.[16] Despite (or perhaps because of) his prominent role as an academy-host, when Louis XIV's minister J.-B. Colbert founded the Académie Royale des Sciences in 1666, Thévenot was not made a member. For the next eighteen years, he withdrew from Paris intellectual life, pursuing studies at his country house at Issy.[17] The literature's traditional focus on the Académie des Sciences has led historians to 'reify' the private academies of the period, to imagine them as 'scientific organizations', with a greater degree of programmatic coherence than the sources can really support. In many ways, the 'assemblies' that met chez Montmor and Thévenot were social settings resembling the other clubs and salons of the mid-century, and to some degree sharing participants and projects with them.[18]

Thévenot's group tends to be remembered for the activities of its most celebrated members, Niels Steno, Jan Swammerdam, and Christiaan Huygens. The Danish naturalist Steno (later known for his work on fossils) first made his name by dissecting a human brain before a large audience at Thévenot's, although he also anatomized insects, along with Jan Swammerdam, the Dutch microscopist, who was staying *chez* Thévenot at the same time.[19] Huygens was a regular visitor to the Paris group from the mid-1650s, and his letters are a major source for its activities, including the attempts in Paris to replicate experiments with the air-pump.[20] The presence of such canonic figures as Huygens, Steno and Swammerdam (and others) has meant that Thévenot's group is usually conceived as being exclusively concerned with experimental natural philosophy. However, like most contemporary scientific groups, the Thévenot circle set itself a wide remit, which included the improvement of navigation and the use of travellers to collect observations. It seems Huygens conceived of this, loosely, as akin to Baconian natural history.[21] We find evidence of Thévenot's continued commitment to collecting 'the arts' in the letters he later exchanged with the Leibniz, who had made Thévenot's acquaintance in Paris in the 1670s. As well as their diplomatic experiences, the two scholars shared an eclectic, polyhistoric curiosity.[22] Thévenot was among Leibniz's more vociferous supporters in Paris, offering to help bring any of his projects to completion, 'sur toute l'Enciclopedie'; Leibniz, for his part, tirelessly commended Thévenot to other correspondents, saying that he was 'un des plus universels que je connoisse; rien n'échappe à sa curiosité' ('one of the most universal [men] that I know; nothing escapes his curiosity').[23]

What Leibniz seems to have admired in Thévenot's work was his desire to compile and then preserve in printed form knowledge that might otherwise be lost. One of the aims of Thévenot's group had been the recovery of forgotten inventions.[24] Leibniz seems to have associated Thévenot with this sort of work, as he explains in a letter of 1678 to Henri Justel, a friend of Thévenot's with similar interests (Justel, too, hosted an 'academy', edited a collection of travel accounts, and kept up correspondence with the learned community abroad). For some time, there had been rumours that Justel was working towards a history of inventions.[25] This prompted from Leibniz a long rhapsody

on how useful it would be to have a modern version of the elder Pliny's *Historia naturalis*:

> ... for one finds in Pliny an infinity of observations on the origins of the arts ... There are a great many things which, without Pliny, would be lost. That is why I wish that a capable person would leave to posterity a faithful portrait of our times, in respect of manners, customs, discoveries, coinage, commerce, arts and manufactures; luxury, spending, vices, corruptions, the diseases which reign, and their remedies. This person would neglect what one could learn from history, and would only attend to that which gets forgotten, and yet deserves not to be -- perhaps more so than what is normally remarked. But all that requires a person with experience, with a vast range of knowledge [consommée en mille belles connoissances]. In a word, more or less the only people I know who are capable of providing this are you [i.e. Justel] and Monsieur Thevenot.
>
> (... car on trouve dans Pline une infinité d'observations sur l'origine des arts ... Il y a quantité de choses qui sans Pline seroient perdues. C'est pourquoy je souhaiterois qu'une personne capable voulut laisser à la posterité un pourtrait fidele de nostre temps; à l'egard des mœurs, coustumes, decouuertes, monnoyes, commerce, arts & manufactures; luxe, depenses, vices, corruptions, maladies qui regnent, et leur remedes. Il negligeroit ce qu'on peut apprendre de l'histoire, et il ne s'attacheroit qu'à ce qui s'oublie, et merite neantmoins de n'estre pas oublié, plus peutestre que ce qui se remarque ordinairement. Mais il faut pour cela une personne d'experience, consommée en mille belles connoissances. En un mot je ne connois presque que vous et Mons. Tevenot capables de le donner.) [26]

He adds that once such a compendious work was complete, posterity would follow their example, and the resulting encyclopedia would constitute 'une veritable histoire du Monde'. What Leibniz refers to here are the passages in Pliny's *Natural history* that give descriptions of the 'arts', like the extraction of purple dyes described in book 9, chapter 133, or the accounts of minerals, mining, painting and sculpture that occupy books 33-37. This interest in a 'history of the arts', or what Bacon called a 'history of trades', was in fact a traditional sister to 'natural history', and was a project shared by many in the savant community of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (and forms the background to projects like Académie des sciences's *Description des arts et métiers*, the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert, and eventually the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers founded in the revolutionary period).[27] What is important is that Leibniz associated this sort of work with Justel and Thévenot.

With Leibniz's comments in mind, we can turn back to consider the activities of the Thévenot group in its heyday of the early 1660s. One document in particular has been identified as a statement of the Thévenot group's ambitions, an unsigned manuscript entitled 'Project de la Compagnie des Sciences et des Arts'. This document highlights the importance of travel and geography among the goals of the Thévenot circle. The opening statement is that:

> 'the design of the Company is to work towards the perfection of the Sciences and the Arts, and to search comprehensively for everything that could be of some utility or convenience to the human race, and particularly to France'
>
> ('Le dessein de la Compagnie est de trauailler à la perfection des Sciences et des Arts, et de rechercher generalement tout ce qui peut apporter de l'utilité ou de la commodité au Genre humain et particulierem[en]t à la France').

The 'Project' then lists various desiderata: experiments will be done, using instruments where possible, to make new discoveries in the heavens and the earth; dissections carried out, to improve medicine; new machines will be invented; the secrets of craftsmen and inventors will be made public, and proposed inventions will be tested.

> 'We will endeavour to disabuse the world of all the Vulgar Errors which have for so long passed for truths, for want of [anyone] having done the experiments necessary to discover their falseness'
> ('on s'estudiera à detromper le Monde de toutes les Erreurs Vulgaires qui passent depuis si long temps pour des veritez, faute d'auoir faict une fois les experiences necessaires pour en decouurir la fausseté').

The aim of disabusing the vulgar of their errors--another familiar theme--is balanced by an emphasis on the mechanical Arts, and the need to acquire and publicize the knowledge of artisans ('les Ouuriers').

A generic feature of such programmatic documents, often written for the benefit of potential patrons, was the rhetoric of utility (for example, in this text, discovering new countries is described as profitable to the state because of the new mines that will be discovered). Even allowing for this, it is striking that the group identifies improving navigation, in order to improve French commerce with the Indies, as an aim:

> 'we will apply ourselves to seeking the means to facilitate navigation and to augment Commerce, and to have occasions to discover the marvels which are found in unknown lands...'

> ('on s'appliquera à rechercher les moyens de faciliter la nauigation pour augmenter le Commerce et pour auoir les occasions de decouurir les merueilles qui se rencontrent dans les pays inconnus').

Moreover, the 'Project' sets out a scheme to make use of travellers for the collection of information, both natural and technical:

> 'in all occasions when curious persons travel to, or live in, foreign countries, they shall be diven *Memoires* [memoranda/questionnaires], and they will be asked to examine ... whatever is judged to be remarkable both in Nature and in the Arts' ('dans toutes les occasions ou des personnes curieuses voyageront ou resideront dans des pays estrangers, on leur donnera des Memoires et on les priera d'examiner ... ce qu'on jugera y estre remarquable tant dans la Nature que dans les arts.')

The Montmor-Thévenot group was able to carry this out, in a fairly limited way, with François Bernier, a student of Gassendi's who had travelled across the Orient and was already living in Mughal India at the time this document was written (and communicating with Paris by letters exchanged with Jean Chapelain).[28] As well as sending questions to 'curious persons' who just happen to be in foreign parts already, the next item in the 'Project' takes the next step, by suggesting that observers should be sent out with any long-distance voyages:

> 'and even in long-distance voyages (*les grandes navigations*) we will attempt to send out intelligent persons specifically to remark all that is curious in the New Lands, as much in metals, animals, plants, as in Inventions and Arts'.
> ('et mesmes dans les grandes navigations l'on taschera d'envoyer esprés des personnes jntelligentes pour remarquer tout ce qu'il y aura de curieux dans les Terres nouuelles, tant dans les metaux, les animaux, et les plantes, que dans les Jnventions des arts').

These expert emissaries should endeavour to exchange technical knowledge with the people they encounter, and in order to improve the terms of artisanal trade, they should take suitable gifts:

> And to that end, when visiting civilized countries (*les pays policés*), travellers will carry models or diagrams of the machines which we use here, so that if the foreigners do not have them, we can teach them how to use some of them, and exchange some of them for those which we do not have, or for the secrets of their arts which we do not know -- something which perhaps would be difficult to get by paying money, or by some other means. Also, we will send out [with travellers] all the curiosities of Optics, Dioptrics, etc., of the Magnet, etc., so that the travellers can introduce ourselves by these means, and make themselves

> esteemed, since we know that it was by such means that entry was gained into some powerful kingdoms.
>
> (Et pour cela l'on portera dans les pays policez les modeles ou les desseins des Machines dont nous nous seruons icy, à fin s'ils ne les ont pas de leur en apprendre l'usage de quelques unes et de troquer les autres, contre celles que Nous n'avons pas, ou contre les secrets de leurs arts que nous ignorons, que l'on auroit peut estre difficilement pour de l'argent, ou par d'autres voyes. L'on envoyera aussi touttes les curiositez de l'optique, Dioptrique etc. de l'aimant etc. pour s'jntroduire par ce moyen et de faire estimer, puis que l'on scait que c'a esté par de semblables voyes que l'on a eu entrée dans de puissans Royaumes).[29]

It seems highly likely that this last idea is a reference to the Jesuit mission to China, which, as the century went on, made increasing use of ornate instrument-gifts to improve their position at the Chinese imperial court.[30] The idea of sending specially-trained scientific observers to distant lands was to be realized by the Académie des sciences, partly at the instigation of Huygens and Adrien Auzout (both members of Thévenot's group who were made members of the Académie).

One reason for accepting that the 'Project' is a document from Thévenot's group is that many of the same sentiments are echoed in a 'Discours sur l'Art de la Navigation' that Thévenot published years later, as part of the supplementary *Recueil des voyages* of 1681. In this text, one of the few extended published pieces of prose by Thévenot, there is much made of the opposition between artisanal knowledge and the worthless 'jeu de l'esprit' of the established sciences. Whereas scholars ('gens de lettres') have filled their libraries with endless commentaries on Aristotle, the art of navigation has advanced by the accumulated experience of pilots on the seas ('ces gens de Mer, ces gens de peu de discours'). The fact that long-distance voyages are now practicable is owed to this accumulation of experiential knowledge:

> We owe this knowledge and these advantages to the useful writings and the exact observations of the navigators of past ages. Geography, and many other Arts, have likewise been improved; and similar progress would have been made in the Sciences, too, if experiments and observations had been employed in the same way.
>
> Nous devons ces connoissances & ces avantages aux écrits utiles, & aux observations exactes des Navigateurs des siecles passez. La Geographie & beaucoup d'autres Arts se sont perfectionnez de même, & on auroit fait un semblable progrés dans les Sciences si on y voit [*sic*: misprint for *avoit*] employé de la mesme sorte les experiences & les observations.[31]

If seamen had followed the example of the learned, they would never have dared cross the Torrid Zone, America would never have been discovered, and half the world would still be in the 'chaos in which the ignorance of past ages had left it' ('cahos où l'ignorance des siecles passez l'avoit laissée'). If, conversely, physicians had imitated the navigators in accumulating experience, medicine might have made more progress, and mankind would be enjoying the benefits of a great store of remedies, rather than the ill-founded dogma and false eloquence of the doctors.

However, it was because of the need for the accumulation of experiential knowledge that Thévenot set himself the task of collecting and translating travel accounts, mainly from English and Dutch long-distance voyages. Because these accounts contain practical navigational matter they could be of use to any future travellers, particularly French merchants. Compiling accounts which were not yet available in French and sometimes not yet even in print into a single collection ('recueil') had the advantage of allowing the seafarer to collate scattered data by leafing through one book. Just like the bubble levels developed in the meetings of Thévenot's group, the collection of travel texts was an instrument designed to be of practical use for navigation.[32]

The 'Project' proposes that the 'compagnie' will enter into communication with 'all other Academies' and with savants of every country, to share news of books, but also to exchange information about local knowledge of both nature and the arts ('s'instruire reciproquement de ce qu'il y a de particulier dans la Nature et dans les arts').[33] A network of correspondence is necessary for the circulation of reports on experiments and observations (including thermometer readings, magnetic variation, tides, eclipses and comets). This will make possible 'une histoire de la Nature la plus universelle qui soit possible'. This 'history of nature' is, clearly, impossible without collective action and transparent communication--even if this ideal might be difficult to realize in practice.[34] What remains of Thévenot's correspondence reveals that he played his part in the transmission of scholarly news, particularly between Paris, Florence and the Netherlands. He was in contact with Henry Oldenburg, the intelligencer for the English

natural philosophers; he also acted as a Parisian contact for the Florentine and Roman communities of savants.[35]

Thévenot's 'cabinet' was not just a meeting place for savants, where experiments were tried, and letters from abroad read out and discussed, but also a private museum, where visitors could examine 'curiosities' and rare books. Like most other cabinets, Thévenot's was a site to be visited by scholars who came through Paris on *voyages littéraires*.[36] His collection included Greek sculpture, and some scientific instruments, but it was best known for its collection of Oriental manuscripts. After his death, the library was put on the market, and a printed catalogue published by Thévenot's friend and sometime assistant, the Arabist, Antoine Galland; after long negotiations, the collection was acquired by the Bibliothèque du roi in 1712. Leibniz, rather late in the day, made an attempt to secure the Oriental manuscripts, but in vain.[37]

Rather than separating his collecting activity from his 'academy', we should conceive of the 'assemblée' as the social use of the cabinet: a collection of *curiosités* and a collective of *curieux*. The savants that met there would discuss the objects, the instruments, the experiments and dissections; and read the correspondence coming in, which often included the travel accounts Thévenot was translating. The 'cabinets' of the *curieux* were the period's sites *par excellence* for contemplating the relationship between nature and art, and for representing materially the Plinian 'history' that Leibniz had dreamt of. It is within such as site of knowledge-production that we can locate the production of the *Relations de divers voyages curieux*.[38]

Divers Curious Voyages

What this section sets out to explore is the ways in which Thévenot's cabinet--conceived as a node within a social network--was the site for the collection, printing and distribution of his *Relations de divers voyages curieux*. In an autobiographical fragment (published by Galland at the head of his catalogue of Thévenot's library), Thévenot describes the project to publish a collection of travel texts as a direct offshoot of the work of his 'assembly':

> Each member of the group proposed for himself a task and occupation: mine was to put together and translate into French those things in which other Nations surpass us in the Arts ... And in order to make Geography more perfect, I put together and gave to the public three [sic] large volumes of a collection of Travels which I had been working on for a long time...
>
> ... chacun d'eux [the members of the group] s'étoit proposé sa tâche & son occupation. La mienne fut de mettre ensemble & de donner en François ce que les autres Nations ont de meilleur pour les Arts ... Et pour rendre la Géographie plus parfaite, je mis ensemble & donnai au public trois grands volumes d'un recueil de Voïages auquel je travaillois depuis long-temps ...[39]

Here, as in numerous other sources, the task associated with Thévenot's name is the 'illustration of geography' for the purpose of facilitating commerce. (Navigation, it should be noted, was traditionally classified among the arts, rather than the sciences). Such knowledge is presented as useful, contributing to the well-being of the French people, indeed of the entire human race.[40] The emphasis on utility crops up elsewhere: Thévenot's friend, Jean Chapelain, noted that the goal of Thévenot's collection was to serve as a beacon for French navigators, and to facilitate commerce,[41] but also, as he told a correspondent, to 'contribute something to exercise the reasoning of the contemplators of nature ' ('apporter de quoy s'exercer au raisonnement des contemplateurs de la nature').[42] The fact that very similar language is used to describe both the travel-publishing project and the 'assembly' is a reflection of the intimate connection between the two. Indeed, at one point it is implied that the voyage narratives, along with one of Swammerdam's insect investigations, are being edited *from the records* of the Thévenot group.[43]

The collection of travel accounts was already a genre with a history. Thévenot was following where Gianbattista Ramusio (whose *Navigazzioni e viaggi* first appeared in 1534) and Hakluyt had led: there had still not been a multi-volume travel collection in French.[44] Thévenot's collection was issued rather like a periodical, as a series of fifty-five folio-sized fascicles, separately printed and paginated, although issued in bundles to the form the 'parts' of the set, each volume being given a title page and para-text. Although new title pages were printed for the reissues, it seems that there was really only one impression of each fascicle.[45]

Thévenot dedicated the collection to Louis XIV.[46] In the dedicatory epistle we find a series of claims being made: how it is now the turn of France to establish a trading empire (after the Portuguese and Dutch); how Louis XIV is the glory of the age, and only France has a large enough population to colonise effectively; how the extremities of the world will be drawn out of obscurity by the king; and how it is reserved to Louis XIV to make 'the whole human race . . . richer, more knowledgeable, better informed of all the advantages that men can draw from the Arts or from Nature'. Explorers would bring back 'new specific remedies' unknown to European medicine, and other technical innovations--just as, Thévenot went on, in centuries past, silk, gunpowder and printing had been transferred from China to Europe. What Thévenot's rhetoric does is to reemploy the discourse of instauration that we have seen in the documents surrounding his 'academy' within the conventions for celebrating the *gloire* of the king.

The appearance of Thévenot's collection coincided with a renewed effort--largely inspired by Colbert--to put French colonial trade on a better footing. The dedication to the king was added in the same year that Colbert launched a new Compagnie des Indes orientales (1664), in deliberate imitation of the Dutch VOIC. Likewise, the contents of Thévenot's series reflects the preoccupation with the need for France to emulate the Dutch. The title page of the first part makes plain that some of the texts are translated from Hakluyt and Purchas, although in the end, only eight of the fifty-five texts in the series were from these English collections: many more were from Dutch travel accounts. Perhaps more importantly, the majority of the texts relate to Asian travels. Of the fifty-five items published, only four related to the New World (all in the fourth part, 1672). Most of the pieces were extracts rather than complete texts, and most were translations from printed European sources, although there were several texts that were previously unpublished.[47] In addition, the octavo volume of 1681 included other pieces alongside its nine voyage texts, like an account of the *Kunstkammer* of Swammerdam's father, and Thévenot's 'Discours on the Art of Navigation'.[48] The texts translated included, for example, a 'Mémoire sur la Géorgie' by the famous Italian traveller Pietro della Valle, which had been sent to Urban VIII in 1627; a portion of Thomas Roe's relation of the Moghul empire first published by Purchas; and extracts from John Greaves' *Pyramidographia*, which had first appeared in English in 1646. The collection did not only

include modern travel narratives, though: the first volume included an extract from the sixth-century Greek travelogue of Cosmas Indicopleustes (because it included descriptions of animals from the East Indies), and brief extracts from the *Geography* of Abulfida, while the fourth part included the Jesuit Prospero Intorcetta's translation of the Confucian classic, the Doctrine of the Mean, under the title *Sinarum scientia politico-moralis*, along with a life of Confucius. This short text represents the first publication of Confucius in Europe (the Intorcetta text had been printed first at Goa); later, in the 1680s, Thévenot was to be involved in the Jesuits' full-scale publication of Confucian texts, the *Confucius, Sinarum Philosophus* (1687).[49]

Since the workings of the Thévenot group were intimately bound up with the reading and writing of letters to other scholarly circles, it comes as no surprise to find that the collection of travel texts was put together from that correspondence. Chapelain told his contacts abroad to look out for travel accounts suitable for translation.[50] Thévenot made use of his contacts in the United Provinces to get texts relating to the Dutch East Indies trade: it was Huygens, for example, who sent Thévenot François Caron's description of Japan, which came out in the second part of the collection.[51] Other scholars in Holland were also brought in: Isaac Vossius obtained for Thévenot the text of Cosmas Indicopleustes that appeared in the first part.[52] Meanwhile, Lorenzo Magalotti in Florence sent travel texts and maps to Thévenot, sometimes by the intermediary of travelling scholars, like the abbé Panciatichi.[53] The short fragment of Abulfeda published in part 1 was transcribed from a manuscript in the Vatican library by Thévenot's old Maronite friend, Abraham Ecchellensis.[54] This dependence on the correspondence network is occasionally acknowledged in Thévenot's prefatory notes, as a claim for the credibility of the documents he was presenting.[55]

Once the texts had been collected, Thévenot would translate his selections and see them through the press. Like the process of collecting, the business of printing the translations was a function of the social network which Thévenot manipulated: the Royal Censor who signed the letters patent granting him the *privilège* to publish was his friend Henri Justel (whom we have already met), and the person named as the beneficiary for the *privilège* was his uncle, one Girard Garnier.[56] This *privilège* was a particularly advantageous one, in that it specified protection for a period of twenty years

(rather than the more usual ten), to be counted from the appearance of each volume (rather than the first). This, presumably, was arranged in recognition of the fact that the book would appear in several sections. But because the complete contents of the series could not be specified on the original *privilège*, this meant that the series was effectively open-ended. Such a flexible arrangement was presumably facilitated by Thévenot's friendship with Justel, the royal censor.[57]

Once printed, the instalments of Thévenot's series went out through the circuit of correspondence again. Thévenot would send the fascicles as gifts to those scholars he was in touch with, including Robert Boyle, and the Oxford-based scholars Edward Bernard and Thomas Hyde.[58] They could then circulate them further: Bernard, for instance, sent one copy to Job Ludolf, Frankfurt's celebrated scholar of Ethiopic.[59] The recipients, if they were in the position to do so, could then send copies of their own books in return: Robert Boyle made sure Thévenot got a copy of his *Observations and experiments about the Saltness of the Sea*.[60]

What these examples underline for us is that the *Relations* were produced by collecting texts sent 'in' to Thévenot by various correspondents, and then (once translated and printed) circulated back 'out' again through the same network. In order to produce the series in Paris, Thévenot and his associates had to make other people, in remote locations, work for them. This is just one example of how the Republic of Letters functioned: by a continual mutual exchange of services, sustaining its sense of communal identity through co-operation.[61]

Thévenot's collection of 'curious voyages' can be counted as one of his successful projects. However, as any encounter with the book makes plain, its success in bringing the series of texts together in print was somewhat qualified by the practical effects of the publication process. Firstly, the fact that the voyages were printed as independent fascicles meant that the collection as a whole was only a series of discrete fragments. Unlike later travel compendia, the accounts are not organized (either by geography or by date), nor is there an index for retrieving the information. As a result, Thévenot's volumes are extremely--almost excruciatingly--difficult for readers to use. Thévenot *did* publish lists of the contents of the series, but these were probably designed to allow the owner of a copy to check that no parts were missing. Each fascicle of the series was

printed separately, as we have seen, and could be distributed as if it were an individual book. A set of the fragments had to be arranged by the owner before being bound; as a result, the make-up of surviving copies is always slightly different, either because some fragments are missing, or because they are differently ordered.[62]

Thévenot was aware of--in fact, continually alluding to--this problem of order within his book. In the list of contents for the first part, he wrote that readers could choose whether to put the extract from John Greaves's *Pyramidographia* at the start or at the end of the volume; in his note prefacing the fourth Part, he admitted that he had to abandon his original organizing scheme as he accumulated texts ('il me sera impossible dans la suite de m'arrester à l'ordre que je m'estois proposé au commencement'). The problem of order was discussed again in an 'avertissement' prefacing the re-issue of the whole collection that appeared in 1696 (after Thévenot's death). The writer of this text, probably the *libraire* Thomas Moëtte, noted that Thévenot was always so busy adding new texts to the series that there was 'some confusion in all his works' ('quelque confusion dans tous ses Ouvrages'), and that the *Relations* were a collection organized neither by chronology or by the matters treated ('... Recueils, qui n'ont point de suite déterminée par les faits ny par les temps'). The same text makes clear that this textual disorder is partly a function of the book's printing history:

> The large number of different Relations, the interruptions in the sequence of one impression, and [the fact that] several different workers sometimes (for reasons that are unclear) worked separately on the same text, produced a kind of disorder, which was very difficult to avoid ... One should not be surprised, then, if within this Collection one finds false signatures and page numbers which are out of sequence; and one can use the Table to find out whether one has the complete set.
>
> Le grand nombre de differentes Relations, les interruptions dans la suite d'une Impression, & plusieurs Ouvriers qui travailloient quelquefois chacun en [par]ticulier sur un mesme Ouvrage pour des raisons qu'on ne peut pas dire, y apportoient une espece de desordre, qu'il étoit bien difficile d'éviter . . . On ne sera donc pas surpris, si parmy ce Recueil on trouve de fausses signatures, & des chifres qui ne suivent pas; & l'on pourra avoir recours à la Table, pour sçavoir si l'on a tout ce qu'on peut avoir de ces ouvrages.[63]

Interestingly, the printer goes on to assert that the disorder within the series is not to be ascribed to any moral failings on Thévenot's part (in particular, the 'jealousy' typical of

the Curious ['cette jalousie qui n'est que trop commune entre les Curieux']). It seems clear that the writer wanted to distance Thévenot from the more negative associations of the curiosity. The fact that he was engaged in *commerce littéraire* with so many other respected members of the Republic of Letters is offered as proof of his seriousness. Nonetheless, the problem of order remains, and is explained by referring to Thévenot's constant deferral of bringing the book to a close.

Thévenot's *Relations* is a text which seems constantly to be in danger of collapsing. The difficulties surrounding the ordering of the information presented are inseparable from the book's material composition. Adrian Johns has recently emphasised the degree to which the familiar bibliographic categories that we take for granted as modern readers (author, text, publisher, date) become unstable when we consider the world of early modern print. Problems of textual 'fixity' (or stability) were particularly acute, Johns shows, in the case of natural-philosophical publishing.[64] The Thévenot case reminds us that this is especially true of travel-editing enterprises.

The limits to Thévenot's project--the textual disorder that the printed pages reveal--were not unique to him; certainly, the bibliographic problems were shared by other scholars engaged in large-scale projects in Paris at that time. (Moreover, he was to experience far greater frustrations with one of his other projects, a plan to edit a translation of the *Geography* of Abulfida, which he pursued doggedly from the late 1660s until his death, and which never saw fruition). By highlighting the movements of texts among the curieux, I have tried to show the importance of travel texts for the scholarly and scientific community of the day, and to emphasise that the site of production for Thévenot's travel series was his 'cabinet'--in both the spatial-physical sense (a place) and the social sense (as a venue for meetings of scholars). Correspondence and travel between such sites was the most important way in which the Republic of Letters was constituted as an 'imagined community'; and by the same token, it was only by harnessing such networks that texts like Thévenot's could be produced at all.

Locke seems not to have replied to Thévenot's enquiry about the missing Hakluyt papers. (Even if he had been able to acquire them for Thévenot, they still may

not have seen the light of day.)[65] As we saw, Leibniz was impressed by Thévenot's range of activities, but was also aware of the danger of spreading one's interests too widely and never finishing anything. He jokingly compared Thévenot to Briareus, the hundred-handed monster.[66] Indeed, after Thévenot's death Leibniz regretted how much had been lost with him.[67] This was the one of the dangers of 'curiosity'--that there were always too many projects and too little time. There was another danger, though, which Thévenot seems not to have articulated, although he must have been aware of it. This was the fact that the nature of geographical knowledge was changing, partly because of the work of Thévenot's friends at the Académie des Sciences. Huygens and Auzout, for example, were involved in the introduction of new methods of telescopy and timekeeping which would bring unprecedented levels of precision to cartographic and geodesic surveying. In the 1670s and 80s, the Académie des Sciences established a global cartographic project, sending specially-trained observers with new instrument-driven techniques to destinations around France and the world. In the year Thévenot died (1692), the Académie des Sciences published its 'corrected' map of France, showing the difference between the old outline of the country and the new, and the accompanying cartouche expressed this difference between old and new as the distinction between a cartography founded on (descriptive) 'Relations' and one founded on (quantitative) 'Observations'.[68] It would take many decades before such a change would be completed--and the philological approach to knowledge-making would remain important for geographers--but nevertheless, Thévenot's monumental collection was built on foundations which were already, quietly, beginning to shift.

NOTES

[1] M. Thévenot, ed., *Relations de divers voyages curieux, qui n'ont point esté publiées; ou qui ont esté traduites d'Hacluyt, de Purchas, & d'autres Voyageurs Anglois, Hollandois, Portugais, Allemands, Espagnols; et de quelques Persans, Arabes, et autres Auteurs Orientaux. Enrichies de Figures de Plantes non décrites, d'Animaux inconnus à l'Europe, & de Cartes Geographiques de Pays dont on n'a point encore donné de Cartes*, 4 parts (Paris, 1663-1672); augmented reissue in 2 vols. (Paris, 1696). There was also a shorter octavo volume, supplementing the folio series: *Recueil de voyages* (Paris, 1681, reprinted 1682), the material from which did not re-appear in the 1696 reissue of the *Relations*. Note that the 1696 reissue can be downloaded in electronic form (two large pdf files) from the Bibliothèque nationale's e-book service, Gallica (http://gallica.bnf.fr/).

[2] Locke, *Correspondence*, ed. E. S. de Beer, 8 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976-89), vol. 2, 229-30 (Toinard to Locke, 14/24 August 1680): Thévenot writes, '... Purchas en parle comme de pieces qui meritent d'estre données au public[.] Il faudroit s'informer en quelles mains peuvent estre tombes ces ecrits, et sauver ces ouvrages en faveur du Public et d'un homme [i.e. Hakluyt] dont on se souviendra tousjours pour l'obligation que nous luy avons de nous avoir sauvé beaucoup de bonnes choses. Il a sauvé des pieces et des ouvrages de quelques uns de nos conquerans François[.] Je vouderois bien estre assez heureux pour luy rendre la pareille et sauver de l'oubly ... quelques-uns de ses ouvrages.' Toinard (or Thoynard, 1628-1706), was an antiquarian and biblical scholar, and one of Locke's most diligent correspondents.

[3] I borrow Krzysztof Pomian's term 'culture of curiosity' in an inclusive sense, as a shorthand for that intellectual culture of the late seventeenth century which embraced scholarship, science, and philosophy, the contours of which can be traced in the letters of (for example) Locke or Leibniz; the term is also useful in that it connotes a mode of sociability (academies, scholarly travel) as well as the material culture of learning (collections, libraries, correspondence). On this theme, see Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux: Paris, Venise: XVIe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987), 61-80; Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: museums, collecting and scientific culture in early modern Italy* (Berkeley, 1994); Neil Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity in early modern France and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming May 2004).

[4] Toinard to Locke, 24 Sept 1680, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, 256: 'Mr Tevenot m'a autrefois dit que l'on estoit tres persuadé en Holande qu'un particulier avoit trouvé il y a du tems ce secret important [i.e. of making seawater potable] avec lequel il est mort, parceque la compagnie des Indes Orientales qui s'en est bien repentie, luy avoit refusé dix mille écus qu'il demandoit pour le dire.' De Beer identifies the Boyle book (240 n.) as *Experimentorum novorum physico-mechanicorum continuatio secunda* (1680).

[5] On the theme of 'secrets' and the 'arts' (i.e. artisans' techniques) in the scientific culture of the period, see William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: books of secrets in medieval and early modern culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Pamela O. Long, *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship: technical arts and the culture of knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

[6] H. Brown, *Scientific Organizations in Seventeenth-Century France (1620-1680)* (Baltimore, 1934; reprint New York, 1967), 135-60; cf. D. J. Sturdy, *Science and Social Status: the members of the Académie des sciences, 1666-1750* (Woodbridge, 1995), 16-21.

[7] For all but Beckford, see M. Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières* (Paris, 1971), 486. Beckford's copy is now in a private collection in Melbourne (Australia): H.-J. Martin and R. Chartier, eds., *Histoire de l'édition française*, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1989-91), vol. 2, 24. The book still commands a high price in the collectors' market, perhaps because of its maps and illustrations. At the time of writing (March 2004) there are two copies of Thévenot's *Relations* on sale at a New York dealer, the first edition at $33,500 and the 1696 edition at $45,000 (this information from www.abebooks.com).

[8] On the family see BN ms fr. 29303, dossier 62724 ('Thévenot à Paris'), esp. items 22-31; Thévenot was 'Conseiller du Roy en ses conseils d'estat'; his maternal grandfather, Melchissédec Garnier (d. 1637) had been 'doyen des avocats au Parlement de Paris'.

[9] Jean Chapelain, *Lettres*, ed. J. P. Tamizey de Larroque, 2 vols. (Paris, 1880-1883), vol. 2, 616: Chapelain to Gronovius, 5 Feb. 1669. Chapelain says of Thévenot: 'Son application a ceste sorte d'estude est d'autant plus noble qu'elle n'a rien de sordide et qu'au lieu d'y chercher autre interest que celuy de l'avantage du genre humain, il y employe avec son temps la richesse qu'il a héritée de ses pères'.

[10] J. Thévenot, *Relation d'un voyage*, 3 vols. (Paris and Rouen, 1664-1684); 'standard' edition, 5 vols. (Paris, 1689), reprinted (Amsterdam, 1727); translations: Dutch (Amsterdam, 1681-8), English (London, 1687), German (Frankfurt, 1693).

[11] J. Mesnard, 'Les premières relations parisiennes de Christiaan Huygens', in R. Taton, ed., *Huygens et la France* (Paris, 1982), 33-40.

[12] Brown, *Scientific Organizations*; R. Pintard, *Le Libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1943; repr. Geneva, 1983).

[13] C. Huygens to L. Huygens, 7 Dec. 1661, in Christiaan Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, eds. D. Bierens de Haan and J. Bosscha, 22 vols. (The Hague, 1888-1950), vol. 3, 395.

[14] On *honnêteté*, see Maurice Magendie, *La Politesse mondaine et les théories de l'honnêteté en France au XVIIe siècle, de 1600 à 1660* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1925; Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1993).

[15] On the 'Montmor academy', see H. Brown, *Scientific Organizations in Seventeenth-Century France (1620-1680)* (Baltimore, 1934; repr. New York, 1967), 64-134; and D. J. Sturdy, *Science and Social Status: the members of the Académie des sciences, 1666-1750* (Woodbridge, 1995), 16-24.

[16] T. McClaughlin, 'Sur les rapports entre la Compagnie de Thévenot et l'Académie royale des sciences', *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 28 (1975), 235-42. See also his 'Une lettre de Melchisédech Thévenot', *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 27 (1974), 123-6; R. M. McKeon, 'Une lettre de M. Thévenot sur les débuts de l'Académie royale des sciences', *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 18 (1965), 1-6; D. S. Lux, *Patronage and Royal Science in Seventeenth-Century France: the Académie de Physique in Caen* (Ithaca, NY, 1989), 29-56.

[17] Erica Harth portrays him as one of Colbert's 'mandarins', which to me seems wrong: *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Ithaca, 1983), 243-250. It was only at the end of 1684 (after Colbert's death, 1683) that Thévenot received royal patronage, when he was appointed *commis à la garde* of the Bibliothèque du roi (and was made a member of the Académie des Sciences a month later). He lost the library post in 1691, and died at Issy on the 29 October 1692.

[18] Harcourt Brown, *Scientific Organizations*, tends to over-reify the groups. Contemporary sources make clear the overlapping 'membership' and activities, e.g. Ole Borch, *Olai Borrichii Itinerarium 1660-1665: the Journal of the Danish polyhistor Ole Borch*, ed. H. D. Schepelern, 4 vols. (Copenhagen / London: C. A. Reitzels / E. J. Brill, 1983), vols. 3 and 4.

[19] See J. Schiller and J. Théodoridès, 'Sténon et les milieux scientifiques parisiens', in G. Scherz, ed., *Steno and Brain Research in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1968), 155-70; Johan Nordström, 'Swammerdamiana: excerpts from the Travel Journal of Olaus Borrichius, and two letters from Jan Swammerdam to Thévenot', *Lychnos*, 15 (1954-5), 21-65; G. A. Lindeboom, ed., *The Letters of Jan Swammerdam to Melchisédech Thévenot* (Amsterdam, 1975).

[20] Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, esp. vols. 3-5; S. Shapin and S. Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the experimental life* (Princeton, 1985), 265-76.

[21] In a note for Colbert attributed to Huygens (c. 1666), Bacon is mentioned as a model for the nascent Académie des Sciences: Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 6, 95-6; also in *Lettres, instructions, et mémoires de Colbert*, ed. P. Clément (Paris, 1861-1870), vol. 5, 523-4.

[22] On Leibniz and 'curiosity', see R. Ariew, 'Leibniz on the unicorn and various other curiosities', *Early Science and Medicine*, 3 (1998), 267-88.

[23] See M. Thévenot to Leibniz, undated (autumn 1681), in Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Akademie Ausgabe, cited hereafter as *A*), 1 / 3 (series 1, vol. 3), 504. Leibniz to Pellison-

Fontanier, 28 March 1692, in Leibniz, *A*, 1 / 7, 293. Thévenot's admiration is often mentioned in letters to Leibniz from other Parisians.

[24] 'Project de la Compagnie des Sciences et des Arts' (?1663), in Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 4, 325-9, here 328.

[25] Some trace of what Justel's 'history of *commodités*' might have looked like can be found in his letter to Locke of 17 Sept. 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol 2., 106. Justel edited a *Recueil de divers voyages faits en Afrique et en l'Amerique, qui n'ont point esté encore publiez* (Paris: Louis Billaine, 1674). For more on Justel see Harcourt Brown, 'Un cosmopolite du grand siècle: Henri Justel', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français*, 82 (1933), 187-201; and Brown, *Scientific Organizations*, 161-84; on his correspondence, see also Lux and Cook, 'Closed circles or open networks?'.

[26] Leibniz to Justel, 14 Feb. 1678, in Leibniz, *A*, 1 / 2, 317. This letter is translated in Brown, *Scientific Organizations*, 178-9 (cf. 161-84 on Justel and his projected history of inventions).

[27] For instance, in 1693, Leibniz was excited to hear a rumour that the abbé Bignon was planning to found a royal academy of arts in Paris, which would be a sister to the Académie des sciences. One of the initial projects for this academy was to compile a history of the arts--the first instalment of which was to have been the history of printing. However, the results were so unsatisfactory that the project was shelved. See Leibniz to Bossuet, 29 March 1693 (*A*, 1 / 9, 88); D. Larroque to Leibniz, 14 Nov. 1693 (*A*, 1 / 9, 614). See also W. E. Houghton, Jr., 'The History of Trades: its relation to seventeenth-century thought, as seen in Bacon, Petty, Evelyn, and Boyle', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 2 (1941), 33-60; C. Salomon-Bayet, 'Un préambule théorique à une Académie des arts', *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 23 (1970), 229-50; A. Stroup, 'The political theory and practice of technology under Louis XIV', in B. T. Moran, ed., *Patronage and Institutions: science, technology and medicine at the European court, 1500-1750* (Woodbridge, 1991), 211-34; R. Briggs, 'The Académie royale des sciences and the pursuit of utility', *Past and Present*, 131 (1991), 38-88.

[28] See N. Dew, *Orientalism in Louis XIV's France* (book manuscript in preparation for Oxford University Press), chapter 3.

[29] All of the above quotations from 'Project de la Compagnie des Sciences et des Arts' (?1663), in Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 4, 325-329.

[30] On the Jesuit astronomers' use of instruments as gifts, see Florence C Hsia, 'French Jesuits and the Mission to China: science, religion, history', University of Chicago Ph.D. diss., 1999.

[31] 'Discours sur l'Art de la Navigation', in Thévenot, *Recueil de voyages* (1681), sep. pag., 5.

[32] On this invention, see A. J. Turner, 'Melchisédech Thévenot, the bubble level, and the artificial horizon', *Nuncius: annali di storia della scienza*, 7 (1992), 131-145.

[33] 'Project de la Compagnie des Sciences et des Arts', 327.

[34] See Lux and Cook, 'Closed circles or open networks?'; A. Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: conduct and community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven, 1995); Lorraine Daston, 'The ideal and the reality of the Republic of Letters in the Enlightenment', *Science in Context*, 4 (1991), 367-86.

[35] Harcourt Brown records that Thévenot was writing to Magalotti from 1658 (*Scientific Organizations*, 135). The fullest account of Thévenot's links with Florence is W. E. Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters: a study of the Accademia del Cimento* (Baltimore, 1971), 296-308.

[36] The Dane, Corfitz Braem, visited Thévenot's 'Cabinet' in April 1666 (quoted in G. Scherz's introduction to Steno, *Epistolae*, 12). Thévenot is listed among notable cabinets in J. Spon,

Recherche des Antiquités et Curiosités de la Ville de Lyon . . . Avec un Mémoire des Principaux Antiquaires & Curieux de l'Europe (Lyon, 1675), 217; C.-C. Baudelot de Dairval, *De l'utilité des voyages. . .* (Paris, 1686), vol. 2, 685. Even after his death, Thévenot's collection could be seen *chez* his heir, Girard Garnier (Martin Lister, *Journey to Paris*, 102-4).

[37] Antoine Galland, ed., *Bibliotheca Thevenotiana, sive Catalogus impressorum et manuscriptorum librorum bibliothecae viri clarissimi D. Melchisedecis Thevenot* (Paris: Florent & Pierre Delaulne, 1694). See also F. Bléchet, *Les Ventes publiques de livres en France, 1630-1750: repertoire des catalogues conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Oxford, 1991), 67; M. Palumbo, *Leibniz e la* res bibliothecaria*: bibliografie,* historiae literariae *e cataloghi nella biblioteca privata leibniziana* (Rome, 1993), 153-156; Galland, *Journal parisien (1708-1715)*, ed. H. A. Omont (Paris, 1919), 129, 131-2.

[38] On Cabinets of Curiosity in general, see Findlen, *Possessing Nature*, and L. Daston and K. Park, *Wonders and the order of nature, 1150-1750* (New York, 1998), 255-301.

[39] Thévenot, autobiographical fragment, at head of *Bibliotheca Thevenotiana*, sigs. 2r-3v.

[40] Galland sings the praises of Thévenot's 'génie pour tout ce qu'il croïoit pouvoir contribuer au bien & à l'avantage des hommes assemblez pour vivre les uns avec les autres': introductory paragraph to Thévenot's autobiographical fragment, in *Bibliotheca Thevenotiana*, sig. 2r.

[41] Chapelain, 'Liste de quelques gens de lettres français vivant en 1662', in *Opuscules critiques de Chapelain*, ed. A. C. Hunter (Paris, 1936), 345: 'Il a surtout une passion violente pour l'illustration de la géographie, dont il donnera bientôt des preuves au monde par la publication d'un Recueil de voyages anciens et modernes non encore vu des Français, ni quelques-uns même de personne; tous traduits par lui, ou par ceux qu'il a employés pour avancer l'ouvrage, qui a pour but de servir de flambeau à nos navigateurs et la facilité au commerce, ce qu'il accompagne de cartes très sûres qu'il a recouvrées, et qu'il fait graver avec soin à ses dépens, et en l'humeur où il est on aura de la peine à lui faire avouer ce travail, tant il est désintéressé en cette entreprise, jusqu'à se défendre de la gloire qu'il en doit raisonnablement recevoir'.

[42] Chapelain, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 349 (Chapelain to Carrel de Sainte-Garde, 6 Feb. 1664).

[43] The title page of one section of the *Recueil de voyages* reads: 'Les Histoires naturelles de l'Ephemere et du Cancellus ou Bernard l'Hermite, décrites & representées par Figures par Mr Swammerdam, pour servir de Suplément à ce qu'Aristote & les autres en ont écrit, Tirées *avec les Voyages precedens* du Recueil des Ouvrages de l'Assemblée, qui s'est tenuë chez Mr Thevenot' (my emphasis).

[44] There was at least one other French travel compilation before Thévenot: see R. O. Lindsay, 'Pierre Bergeron: a forgotten editor of French travel literature', *Terrae Incognitae*, 7 (1976), 31-38.

[45] What became the first part appeared in 1663, the second in 1664, the third in 1666 (together with a reissue of parts 1 and 2), and the fourth in 1672, again with a re-issue. Several fascicles were printed over subsequent years for a projected fifth part--incomplete at Thévenot's death--and were therefore added to a complete re-issue in 1696.

[46] Thévenot, *Relations de divers voyages curieux*, part 2 (Paris, 1664), sig. ä, ij^{r}-iij^{r}, 'Au Roi'.

[47] For a catalogue of the *Relations*, see A.-G. Camus, *Mémoire sur la Collection des grands et petits voyages* [des de Bry] *et sur la collection des voyages de Melchisedech Thévenot* (Paris, 1802), 279-341, esp. 286-92. See also 'Description of the collection of the voyages of Thévenot', *Contributions to a Catalogue of the Lenox Library*, no. 3 (New York, 1879).

[48] *Recueil de voyages* (Paris, 1681).

[49] This is discussed in more detail in N. Dew, *Orientalism in Louis XIV's France* (book manuscript in preparation for Oxford University Press), chapter 5.

[50] For instance, Chapelain told M. Carrel de Sainte-Garde, who was in Madrid, to look out for texts (Chapelain, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 349-50) in Feb. 1664.

[51] Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 3, 395: Huygens to L. Huygens, 7 Dec. 1661. Huygens was related to Caron by marriage; we might speculate that the Huygens-Thévenot link facilitated Caron's move to Paris in 1665, where he was to play an important role in the history of French trade with India: see S. P. Sen, *The French in India: first establishment and struggle* (Calcutta, 1947). Caron's book first appeared as *Beschrijvinghe van het Machtigh Coninckrijcke Japon* (Amsterdam, 1648).

[52] Huygens, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 3, 347: Thévenot to Huygens, 25 Sept. 1661. However, in his 'Avis, Sur le dessein, & sur l'ordre de ce Recueil' (Thévenot, *Relations*, vol. 1 (1663), sig. a ij^{r}-iv^{v}, here iij^{v}) Thévenot states that 'Le Fragment Grec du Cosmas vient de Monsieur [Emeric] Bigot, qui l'a copié dans la Bibliotheque de Florence'. Presumably both Vossius and Bigot were involved.

[53] Conrart, *Lettres à Lorenzo Magalotti*, 110 (29 May 1671), 121 (10 Sept. 1671), 132 (22 Jan. 1672).

[54] See the contents page of the first part and the short 'Avis' to the Abulfeda section (vol. 1, sig. i i^{v}, [sep. pag., 18]), mentioning only 'un fameux traducteur', 'Arabe de Nation'; then in the 'Avis' to part 3 (sig. a v^{r}): '. . . Abulfeda, que le Signor Abraham Echellense avoit commencé à me transcrire d'un Manuscrit du Vatican, & que Messieurs Vossius & Golius m'ont fait copier depuis sur trois Manuscrits Arabes de la Bibliotheque de Leyde'.

[55] For example, in the 'Avis' to the first part, Thévenot claimed that his collection would be 'autant-plus fidele & plus exacte, que ie la feray sur de meilleurs Originaux, & sur la foy de Personnes choisies entre ceux qui les ont couruës & obseruées auec plus de soin'; in the 'Avis' for the fourth part, he added 'j'ay fait chercher dans les plus fameuses Bibliotheques les pieces qui pouvoient l'enrichir, & il y a peu de gens de cette erudition que je n'aye entretenus & consultez sur ce dessein'.

[56] Girard Garnier is named as beneficiary in the *privilèges* for all four parts (though in the first it is misprinted as Garnel). A 'Mr Garnier' is identified as Thévenot's uncle in a note attached to a letter from Thévenot to Colbert (BN ms Mélanges de Colbert 152, f. 271r), and also in Chapelain, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 640. Why Garnier (who was not, it seems, a bookseller) held the *privilège*, and not Thévenot, is unclear.

[57] On the *privilège* system, see L. Febvre and H.-J. Martin, *L'Apparition du livre*, 3rd edn. (Paris, 1999), 338-46. This form of 'package' *privilège* is described in E. Armstrong, *Before Copyright: the French book-privilege system, 1498-1526* (Cambridge, 1990), 131-6.

[58] For Boyle, see Oldenburg, vol. 2, 430 (Oldenburg to Boyle, 4 July 1665: 'Monsr Thevenot hath sent you the 2d Tome of his Curious Voyages in folio, fairely bound, wherein are contained, as far as my cursory perusall could informe me, severall things not unpleasing, and instructive both for Navigation, Policy, and Natural Philosophy, though most of it be but Traduction') and 444 (Boyle's reply: 'I have now Receiv'd Monsr Thevenot's Booke of Voyages, where I find some few things Curious enough, & however should find cause to be sensible of the Givers Civilitys'). For Bernard and Hyde see Bodleian ms Smith 8, pp. 3-5 (Thévenot to Bernard, 1673) at p. 4b; Smith 11, p. 15 (Hyde to Thévenot, 24 June 1673).

[59] Bodleian ms Smith 5, p. 151 (Ludolf to Bernard, thanking him for Thévenot's edition of Intorcetta's text, no date); p. 153 (Ludolf to Bernard, 15 Dec. ? 1677, again thanking him: 'pro libro

La science des Chinois dicto gratias tibi ago . . .'). Ludolf was also in contact with Thévenot (here pp. 155, 157, letters of 20 Mar. 1678 and 31 Dec. 1683).

[60] Oldenburg, vol. 10, 419-24, at 422: J.-B. Du Hamel to Oldenburg, 6 Jan. 1674.

[61] For further examples see Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*; also Lux and Cook, 'Closed circles or open networks?'.

[62] These issues are discussed in Camus, *Mémoire sur la Collection*.

[63] Thévenot, *Relations*, 'nouvelle edition' in 2 vols. (Paris, 1696), vol. 1, sig. * i $^{r-v}$. This avertissement was not signed.

[64] A. Johns, *The Nature of the Book: print and knowledge in the making* (Chicago, 1998).

[65] After all, Jan Swammerdam left his papers to Thévenot, his old friend and supporter, and Thévenot failed to publish all but a couple of fragments from them before his death. Swammerdam's manuscripts were only saved from obscurity by the diligence of his countryman Boerhaave, who tracked them down in 1727, and was able to publish them ten years later as *Biblia Naturæ*.

[66] Leibniz to M. Thévenot, 23 March 1691, in Leibniz, *A*, 1 / 6, 410: 'vous deuvriés estre *centimanus* comme ce Briarée de la fable. C'est à dire vous deuvriés avoir une centaine de gens propres à executer mille belles veues que vous avés'.

[67] Leibniz to E. Spanheim, 16 April 1696, in Leibniz, *A*, 1 / 12, 541: 'M. Thevenot avoit trop de belles choses à donner, il luy est arrivé ce qui arrive à des femmes qui sont en travail de plus d'un enfant, c'est que souvent l'un empeche l'autre sur tout quand il y a faute d'assistance'.

[68] Christian Sandler, *Die Reformation der Kartographie um 1700* (Munich and Berlin, 1905); Josef W. Konvitz, *Cartography in France, 1660-1848: science, engineering, and statecraft* (Chicago, 1987); Jordan Kellman, 'Discovery and enlightenment at sea: maritime exploration and observation in the eighteenth-century French scientific community', Princeton University Ph.D. dissertation, 1997.