

Five parts in two volumes, folio (350 by 220mm), general title printed in red and black, separate title-pages for the ‘Sinarum Scientia Politico-Moralis’, Paris, 1672, and Thomas Gage’s ‘Histoire de l’Empire Mexicain’, Paris, Chez Thomas Moette, 1696, 11 folding maps (bound without map of Sierra Leone), 23 plates (the majority folding), 46pp. woodcut pictograms to Gage’s Mexico, engraved head- and tail- pieces, contemporary speckled calf, raised bands, fully gilt in compartments, red morocco label lettered in gilt.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TRAVEL WORKS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Relations de Divers Voyages Curieux qui n’ont point esté publiées, ou qui ont esté traduites d’Hacluyt, de Purchas et d’autres voyages Anglais, Hollandais, Portugais, Allemands, Espagnols, et de quelques Persans, Arabes et auteurs orientaux.

Author
THÉVENOT, Melchisedech

Publication date
1696

Publisher
Thomas Moette,

Publication place
Paris,

Physical description
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l’Empire Mexicain’, Paris, Chez Thomas Moette, 1696, 11 folding maps (bound without map of Sierra Leone), 23 plates (the majority folding), 46pp. woodcut pictograms to Gage’s Mexico, engraved head- and tail- pieces, contemporary speckled calf, raised bands, fully gilt in compartments, red morocco label lettered in gilt.

Dimensions

Notes
The definitive edition of one of the most important and comprehensive travel writings of the seventeenth century.

Melchisedech Thévenot (1620-1692) was a French diplomat, scientist, and travel writer. He was a scholar with interests in mathematics, physics, and medicine, acting as the patron of several early scientific societies and most notably contributing to the formation of the Académie des Sciences. His early career included two missions to Italy in the 1640s and 1650s, and it was there that he first developed an interest in the study of Oriental languages. In 1663, he published the first part of ‘Relations de Divers Voyages’ (An account of diverse and curious voyages), a work that would secure his reputation as one of the most important travel compilers of the seventeenth century. He would go on to publish a second and third part in 1666, a fourth in 1672, and a final fifth part was being assembled in 1692 when Thévenot died. The definitive edition – the present work – would not be published until 1696.

One of the great driving forces behind ‘Divers voyages’ was Thévenot’s desire to help France achieve her aim to increase colonial trade to compete with other European nations. The book aimed to gather together the most up-to-date practical knowledge on navigation and information on foreign countries.
The work includes entries on Africa, the Far East, South East Asia, America, and Australia, together with several important maps. Of particular note is Thévenot’s map of Australia – “the first large-scale map of Australia to chart Tasman’s discoveries” (Dewez) – together with the text regarding his voyage, which appears here for the first time, in Part V.

A full collation is available upon request.

Bibliography
Bibliotheca Lindesiana: Catalogue of the printed books preserved at Haigh Hall (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1910) IV, 8830- 8840; Brunet V, 810-13; Cordier, Japonica, 33; Cordier, Sinica, 1944; Simon Dewez, The Printed World V: Beyond Settlement, ed. Gabrielle Sproat (Woollahra, New South Wales: Gowrie Galleries, 2003), 43; John Lust, Western Books on China Published up to 1850 (Bamboo: London, 1987), 260 [listing the voyages to China]; Antonio Palau y Dulcet, Manual del librero hispanoamericano (Barcelona: Librería Palau, 1948), 331563 and 331564.

Provenance
Nineteenth century book plate of the Marquess of Westerloo.

Price:

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