

# Travel Books, Slavery and Colonial Ambitions in the Correspondence between John Locke and Nicolas Toinard (1678-1704)\*

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*Abstract:* Scholars studying Locke's contribution to the *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina* generally report that he had discussed the content of this document with one of his French acquaintances, Nicolas Toinard (or Thoynard). However, no attempt has been made to investigate the reason why Locke regarded Toinard, the author of an *Harmonia Evangeliorum* that he deeply appreciated, as competent in colonial matters. This paper tries to clarify this issue. My aim is to show that, if Locke was credited with being one of the most knowledgeable of Englishmen about the colonial world in his own day, he had found his match abroad in Toinard. Evidence of this is to be found in Toinard's papers and correspondence, including the letters he addressed to Locke. The travelogues, voyages and explorations that he brought to Locke's attention highlight first of all his interest in the French colonization of West Africa, especially in the slave trade. Like Locke, he seems to have invested some money in this human trafficking. Secondly, they show his involvement in French plans for colonial expansion in North America, which is confirmed by his papers and correspondence with eminent political figures and explorers of his time. References to La Salle's 1679 and 1684 expeditions, the Anglo-French conflicts on the Hudson Bay and d'Iberville's enterprises in Carolina are abundant in Toinard's letters to Locke.

*Keywords:* slave trade, *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina*, Massiac, La Salle, Canada, d'Iberville.

## 1. Introduction

In 1679, Locke sent Henri Justel a copy of the *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina*, which he had worked on in 1669 in his capacity as secretary of the Lords proprietors of the colony<sup>1</sup>. Justel had been promised a copy of the

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<sup>1</sup> See J. Locke, *Political Essays*, ed. by M. Goldie, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997,

*Constitutions* by Locke while they were together in France in 1677-79<sup>2</sup>, yet his knowledge of this document predated his encounter with Locke. The bibliophile Justel, who corresponded with Henry Oldenburg and Robert Boyle, was one of the most important intermediaries between French and English ideas during the seventeenth century. In 1674, he edited the *Recueil de divers voyages*<sup>3</sup>, a collection of travel narratives most of which concerned English colonial settlements in mainland North America and the Antilles. The text included a description of Carolina by Richard Blome that attributed the merit of ideating an excellent model of the laws of the colony to one of the Lords proprietors, Shaftesbury<sup>4</sup>. When Justel met Locke in Paris in 1677, he had not yet seen the *Constitutions*, so he was probably eager to receive a copy of the laws from a man closely associated with Shaftesbury.

Another French acquaintance of Locke, the learned Orléans born Nicolas Toinard, might have been shown a copy of the *Constitutions* while they were together in France, because his letters to Locke abound with references to Carolina during the years 1678-81<sup>5</sup>. Both Toinard and Justel raised some objections about the way the *Constitutions* treated Roman Catholics, though for contrasting reasons. The author of the *Harmonia Evangeliorum*, the Latin-Greek *concordantia* between the Gospels that Locke held in great esteem, was concerned

pp. 160-81. Justel thanked Locke for the text: see H. Justel to Locke, 11/21 June 1679, in J. Locke, *Correspondence*, ed. by E.S. de Beer, vol. 2, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1976, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Locke informed Toinard that he had sent Justel a copy “ad liberandum fidem”. See Locke to N. Toinard, 25 May 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> [H. Justel (ed.)], *Recueil de divers voyages faits en Afrique et en l'Amérique qui n'ont point esté encore publiéz, contenant l'origine, les mœurs, les coûtumes et le commerce des habitants de ces deux parties du monde*, Louis Billaine, Paris 1674. The book was published anonymously; the printing privilege reveals that “H. J.” had transferred his rights for the book to the publisher, Louis Billaine. Dally confirms Justel's authorship: see Ph. Dally, “Les Justel (suite) II. Henry Justel (1620-1693)”, in *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français (1903-2015)* 79 (1930), 1, p. 32. Locke possessed this book: see LL, no. 3115.

<sup>4</sup> See R. Blome, “Description de l'isle de la Jamaïque, et de toutes celles que possèdent les Anglois dans l'Amérique. Avec des observations faites par le sieur Thomas, Gouverneur de la Jamaïque, & autres personnes du païs”, in [Justel (ed.)], *Recueil*, cit., p. 60. The English original had appeared in 1672.

<sup>5</sup> The first mention of the *Constitutions* is to be found in a letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 12 July 1678. See J. Locke, *Correspondence*, ed. by E.S. de Beer, vol. 1, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1976, p. 590. Thomas Stringer delivered some copies of the text to Locke in 1677: T. Stringer to Locke, 7 September 1677 and 11 October 1677, *ibid.*, p. 516 and p. 518. However, Toinard might not be the recipient of one of the copies. Writing to him in 1679, Locke made it clear that the one he had sent to Justel was also for him: “I know that, being in his house, it will be in your power just as if it were in your house, even though it is written in English.” See Locke to Toinard, 25 May 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 27. Toinard might have read the French translation of the text that Justel intended to have done: see Justel to Locke, 17/27 September 1679, *ibid.*, p. 105; [January 1680?], *ibid.*, p. 147.

about the Roman Catholics being persecuted in Carolina, whereas the Huguenot Justel believed they should not be accepted in the colony. Thus, we may suppose that Toinard's interest in this document had to do with religion.

I believe that there were other reasons why Toinard read the *Constitutions*. First of all, he boasted a vast knowledge of colonial settlements drawn from travel books and his rich entourage, which included eminent politicians, cartographers, travellers and sea captains. He was acquainted with the abbé Melchisédech Thévenot, an eminent collector of ancient manuscripts containing travel reports, and with François Bernier, whose writings on the Mogol empire Locke admired greatly. Barthélémy d'Espinchal de Massiac, the author of two memoirs on Africa and Brazil, was a friend of Toinard, who introduced him to Locke. Toinard was likewise familiar with the Bishop of Heliopolis François Pallu, who had written an account on his voyages to Siam and the Philippines, and with the nephew of Frederick Coyett, the Governor of Formosa who had been involved in the dramatic events narrated in Cornelis Speelman's *Notitie*. Another of Toinard's correspondents, François Froger, was the author of an important *Relation* on a French expedition to Africa and South America that captured Locke's attention in 1698.

More numerous were the acquaintances that linked Toinard to the exploration of North America, *in primis* the influent abbé Eusèbe Renaudot, a supporter of the explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle. Renaudot corresponded with Toinard for many years and contributed to keeping him abreast of the discovery of the Mississippi<sup>6</sup>. News of the discovery was also sent to Toinard by the abbé and cartographer René Bréhant de Galinée, who took part in La Salle's first expedition to the Canadian lakes, and later by Pierre Le Moynes d'Iberville, who continued La Salle's work in the 1690s. Last but not least, the Orléanais was related to the Beauharnois family<sup>7</sup>, who played a leading role in the French navy and the colonial administration of North America between the late seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Locke entered Toinard's entourage while he was in France and had the opportunity to appreciate his vast knowledge of travel literature, in which he took

<sup>6</sup> See BNF, Collection Margry, relative à l'histoire des Colonies et de la Marine françaises, Nouvelle Acquisition Française 9294, "Correspondance et vie de Nicolas Thoynard, d'Orléans; ses relations avec les découvreurs du Mississipi. Extraits du Journal de Cavelier de La Salle (1682). Expédition de Lemoine d'Iberville contre la Caroline (1705)". Henceforth, I shall refer to this source as NAF 9294.

<sup>7</sup> Toinard was married by contract to Anne Beauharnois at his birth in 1628, and lived with her until 1650. See F.A.A. de la Chesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse contenant les généalogies, l'histoire & la chronologie des familles nobles de France*, suppl. 3, vol. 15, M. Badier, Paris 1786, p. 44.

a keen interest<sup>8</sup>. Soon after the beginning of their correspondence he wrote to Toinard that, if they were to begin an exchange of gifts, he would rather receive some French travel books<sup>9</sup>. Toinard made every effort to satisfy his request, moreover he interspersed his letters with news on voyages and explorations in South America, Africa, the Indian Ocean and North America. This great amount of information sheds some light on the nature of Toinard's interest in colonial settlements, which was not exclusively "scientific", so to speak. In his capacity as secretary of the King<sup>10</sup> and a member of Renaudot's circle, Toinard was fully aware of the overseas expansion plans of his country and of the benefits that might be reaped from them.

Scholars studying Locke's contribution to the *Constitutions* have never investigated the reason why he discussed the content of this document with Toinard. My aim is to show that Toinard was highly competent in colonial affairs. Here I shall mainly focus on his correspondence with Locke and on the travel accounts that he mentioned to him in order to prove this. I shall argue first that the travelogues Toinard brought to Locke's attention highlighted his interest in French attempts to control the populations of West Africa and especially in slave trade, in which he seems to have invested some money in the 1690s. The fact that he informed Locke of this suggests that he might have been aware of his links to slavery, uncovered by recent historiography. Secondly, I shall argue that Toinard's letters to Locke reveal that he was well acquainted with the secret plans behind La Salle's 1684 expedition and, more in general, with French strategies for expansion in North America. He seems to have been one of the brains behind the d'Iberville expedition to Carolina in 1706, and might have attempted to glean information from Locke on English plans in the new world in their correspondence.

### 1. *Travel books on Cayenne, Barbados and Tenerife*

On 2 May 1679, after spending four years in France Locke set off on his journey back to England. His correspondence with Toinard had already started

<sup>8</sup> See A. Talbot, "The Great Ocean of Knowledge". *The Influence of Travel Literature on the Work of John Locke*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Locke to Toinard, 15 July 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> De la Chesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse*, cit., p. 44. This detail is also confirmed by a letter that La Salle sent to Toinard in 1684, where he addressed him as secretary of the King; see NAF 9294, p. 42. Toinard also chaired the Presidential bench at Orléans.

in 1678, when Locke left him in Paris to make a tour of France, and it resumed soon after his departure for England. The exchange of letters is very lively in the years 1679-82, and references to travel accounts are abundant. The first mention of a work of this genre is to be found in a letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 11 June 1679, when he informed him that he was going to send him a "relation" on the Amazon river in a very short time<sup>11</sup>. The account, as Toinard explained in another letter<sup>12</sup>, was the long *Dissertation* written by Esprit Cabart de Villermont, which would appear prefixed to the French edition of Christóbal de Acuña's *Nuevo descubrimiento del gran rio de las Amazonas* in 1682<sup>13</sup>. Locke would therefore have to wait three years before receiving a copy<sup>14</sup>. Villermont was a voyager and an influential politician at the French court in the last decades of the seventeenth century. Having been appointed lieutenant general of Cayenne and governor of the islands of Hyères by the King, he played a strategic role in the French Royal East India Company created by Colbert, where he was in charge of gathering commercial intelligence on Asian trade<sup>15</sup>. He was involved in La Salle's expedition in 1684, when he corresponded with the ship captain Le Gallois de Beaujeu and Renaudot. Given his political skills, it is of no surprise that the *Dissertation* was a piece of anti-Spanish propaganda aimed at encouraging the expansion of French settlements in Cayenne. Villermont emphasized the avidity and cruelty of the conquistadores against the Indios and invoked Bartolomé de las Casas to corroborate his criticism of the mistreatment of the "poor savages" inhabiting the area between the river Orinoco and the river Amazon, taken as slaves by the Spanish and the Portuguese<sup>16</sup>. He magnified the riches of Cayenne (such as jade, greatly appreciated in European and Eastern markets) and the economic advantages that France could gain from trading with the Indios, whom he described as sociable and friendly despite the hostility generally attributed to them. The *Dissertation* included a

<sup>11</sup> Toinard to Locke, 11/21 June 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Toinard to Locke, 9/19 July 1679, *ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>13</sup> See C. de Acuña, *Relation de la Rivière des Amazones*, 4 vols., transl. by M. le Roy de Gomberville, Barbin, Paris 1682. Villermont's *Dissertation* was included in the first volume.

<sup>14</sup> In the meantime, Toinard continued to keep Locke updated on the progress of the French translation, which the latter was eager to read. See Toinard to Locke, 17/27 September 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 108; Locke to Toinard [9 February 1681], *ibid.*, p. 371; Toinard to Locke, 23 February/5 March 1681, *ibid.*, p. 386. However, when the *Relation* was published in 1682, Locke would ask William Charleton, not Toinard, to procure it for him. See W. Charleton to Locke, 16/26 August 1682, *ibid.*, p. 541. Toinard intended to send Locke the first volume, not the entire work.

<sup>15</sup> See I. Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism, and the Ancien Régime*, Berg, Oxford and New York 2008, pp. 108-9.

<sup>16</sup> Acuña, *Relation*, cit., vol. 1, p. 112.

list of works on Cayenne, one of which Villermont harshly criticised<sup>17</sup>. He despised the declamatory tone of the *Relation* written by Blaise François Pagan, which Locke might have read because he reported having found many references to Acuña in it in a letter to Toinard<sup>18</sup>. The *Relation* overtly advocated French expansion in all the Amazon regions, whereas Villermont was more evasive about the true ambitions of his country in that area. Interestingly, in narrating the story of French settlements in Cayenne he omitted some relevant information. He did not say that the French had taken over the land from the Dutch as part of their new mercantilist strategy, known today as Colbertism. Recent historiography has pointed out that, during the 1660s, France had paid off the proprietors of the lucrative sugar plantations in Cayenne, the most important source of profit in that area, transferring the territorial control of the region to the newly established French West India Company<sup>19</sup>.

At the time Toinard was writing to Locke about the *Dissertation*, the Company had dissolved and another French company named “de Sénégal” – the first of the many that took this name later – was in charge of shipping African slaves to French settlements in the Caribbean and in Cayenne<sup>20</sup>. The company, formed in 1673, had been enlarged in 1679, after France had seized the strategically well-placed island of Gorée from the Dutch and captured the old Portuguese fort of Arguin. Interestingly, the populations living on the West coast of Africa would become the focus of the correspondence between Locke and Toinard in August-October 1679, as we shall see in a moment.

In July 1679, another letter from Toinard mentioned two English travel accounts, the first on Barbados and the second on Tenerife<sup>21</sup>. Toinard did not name their authors, but the first, as de Beer suggests, was probably Richard Ligon’s *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*<sup>22</sup>, because Toinard referred to a French translation that had appeared in 1674 and he joked about

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>18</sup> B.F. Pagan, *Relation historique et géographique, de la grande rivière des Amazones dans l’Amérique*, Chardin Besongne, Paris 1655; Locke to Toinard, 9 February 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 371. Locke owned Pagan’s book: see LL, no. 2167.

<sup>19</sup> M.M. van den Bel, “Against Right and Reason’: The Bold but Smooth French Take-Over of Dutch Cayenne (1655-1664)”, *Itinerario* 45 (2021), 1, pp. 70-98. The former owners of the sugar plantations in Cayenne were members of the prosperous Sephardic community located there.

<sup>20</sup> H. Thomas, *The Slave Trade. The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870*, Simon & Shuster, London-New York 1994, p. 185.

<sup>21</sup> Toinard to Locke, 9/19 July 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 53-55.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.53, n. 1; R. Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*, H. Mosely, London 1657.

an episode, the selling of servants at the market, narrated in Ligon's book. The translation had been published by Justel in his *Recueil*, where it occupied more than half of the entire volume. In the Introduction, the anonymous author of the collection – so presumably Justel himself – commented that the *History* really deserved its own volume and praised Ligon's meticulously detailed descriptions of sugar production in Barbados<sup>23</sup>, where the latter had sojourned for three years from 1647 to 1650 working as a plantation manager. Justel seemed therefore utterly favourable to slavery because of the industry of the colonisers. This attitude was largely shared by the authors of the accounts collected in the volume, though one of them, Richard Blome, lamented the cruel treatment of African slaves in Barbados<sup>24</sup>.

The second account, according to de Beer, might be the *Relation of the Pico Teneriffe* that appeared in Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society*, because Toinard wrote that it was to be found in "a book of your society" and related few details on an indigenous people, the Guanches, accurately described in the *Relation*<sup>25</sup>. They were the ancient inhabitants of the Canary islands that the *Relation* depicted as warriors of great physical agility, able to jump from great heights and cultivating the habit of mummifying their dead. The author of the text lamented that they had been almost exterminated by the Spanish, as has been confirmed by recent historiography. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, only very few settlements survived in the interior of Tenerife. Toinard might have been aware of this, because he wrote that the mighty "*Ganches*" living on the other Canary islands were the descendants of this ancient tribe. The Guanches, however, were not the only inhabitants of the Canaries, because a great number of black slaves were collected on the archipelago. This concentration had begun at the time the crowns of Castile and Portugal had joined, facilitating the importation of Africans from Portuguese slave markets (espe-

<sup>23</sup> [H. Justel], "Au Lecteur", in *Id.*, *Recueil*, cit., p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> See Blome, "Description de l'isle de la Jamaïque", cit., p. 40. This kind of attitude was also typical of Ligon. See S. Scott Parrish, "Richard Ligon and the Atlantic Science of Commonwealths", in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 67 (2010), 2, pp. 209-48, on p. 218.

<sup>25</sup> See Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 55, n. 2; Anon, "*A Relation of the Pico Teneriffe. Receiv'd from some considerable Merchants and Men worthy of Credit, who went to the top of it*", in Th. Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge*, J. Martyn, London 1667, pp. 200-13. The *Relation*, probably written by some merchants from Bristol, incorporates many pieces of information on the climate of the island, the nature of the soil and the economy of the place, and emphasises the presence of rich gold and silver mines and the florid production of sugar canes, cotton and wine.



cially from the nearby Cape Verde Islands)<sup>26</sup>. By the middle of the century, the Canary islands had become an obligatory stopover point en route to the New World for buying a variety of goods, including slaves, who were particularly numerous in Tenerife<sup>27</sup>.

In summary, all the travel books that Toinard mentioned in his letters to Locke soon after the latter's departure showed a more or less explicit link to slavery, being related to areas of a certain importance in the transatlantic slave trade. This was also the case with two handwritten accounts that Toinard began to bring to Locke's attention in August 1679, which were with the utmost probability written by Massiac.

## 2. Massiac's memoirs on Angola, Brazil and Chile

Writing to Locke on 30 August 1679, Toinard reported that the *Histórica relación del Reyno de Chile* by the Spaniard Jesuit Alonso de Ovalle<sup>28</sup> contained a mistake that he had been able to detect thanks to an unpublished handwritten account he had found among his papers. Ovalle had mixed two animals up, the "*Querechinchio*" that Locke would mention in the *Essay* to exemplify the difficulty of determining species<sup>29</sup>, and the viscacha, a kind of hare living on the plains of Tucuman. Toinard included a description of the two animals in his letter that he said he had copied from the account. He also mentioned another handwritten account in Portuguese providing information on a black bellicose tribe of cannibals living in Angola, the Jagas.

This was not the first time that Toinard had spoken to Locke about Angola. In 1678, in another letter to Locke he had mentioned the "empacaes", a type of buffalo that lived in that region<sup>30</sup>, and the following year he had given his English friend a present of a piece of wood from Angola before his departure from

<sup>26</sup> R. Noland, "Black Presence in the Canary Islands", in *Journal of Black Studies* 12 (1981), 1, pp. 83-90.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>28</sup> Toinard to Locke, 30 August/9 September 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 85. Toinard refers to the Italian edition of Ovalle's report, which had appeared in 1646. See A. de Ovalle, *Histórica relación del Reyno de Chile y de las misiones y ministerios que exercita en él la Campaña de Jesus*, F. Cavallo, Roma 1646. Locke possessed this edition by 1679, as is confirmed by his journal: see LL, no. 2152; Brit. Lib., Add. MS 15, 642, p. 106.

<sup>29</sup> J. Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. by P. Nidditch, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1975, III.vi. 9, p. 445; de Ovalle, *Histórica relación*, cit., pp. 55 and 78.

<sup>30</sup> Toinard to Locke, 17/27 August 1678, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, cit., p. 606.



Paris, as is faithfully recorded in Locke's journal<sup>31</sup>. Locke had also noted down the beneficial effects of a paste made from that wood, which Angolan grandees used to spread on their bodies to cure migraines and other ills.

Toinard's letter of 30 August 1679 bore out that he had a vast knowledge of Angola. He did not reveal the name of the author of the two accounts, yet it is highly likely that it was the French naval engineer Barthélémy de Massiac, as Locke himself seems to suggest in another letter<sup>32</sup>. Massiac had travelled at length in Africa, sojourning for some years in Guinea (ca. 1648-1651) and Angola (ca. 1652-1660). He had set off from Lisbon as an employee of a Portuguese company and sailed to Saint Paul de Assuncion de Loanda, where he had been in charge of completing two Portuguese forts designed to ward off Dutch incursions. His memoir on these travels has unfortunately been lost, but an abridged version written in French was discovered by Pierre Salmon a few decades ago<sup>33</sup>, containing many details that are to be found in Toinard's letters to Locke. The memoir describes the bellicose black tribes inhabiting the country and their governors, especially Queen Ginga (or Nzinga), the leader of a fierce cannibal tribe who had fought against the Portuguese and had been converted to Christianity. The Jagas (or Yagas) are not mentioned, yet it is likely that the original account, the one Toinard had in his hands, incorporated a description of this cannibal tribe originally inhabiting the border area between Congo and Angola, who used to carry out raids on its neighbours. These raids were largely to be explained by the demand for slaves, which increased the rivalry among the kingdoms of West Africa in the seventeenth century. Various tribes competed with each other and sometimes even with their trade partners for the large profits deriving from selling slaves to European merchants. Massiac's memoir gave evidence of this. He reported that the Portuguese had not been able to expand their dominion in Angola due to the resistance opposed by its inhabitants, especially the powerful Queen Ginga, who interfered in their slave trading<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> See the journal entry for 14 April 1679 in J. Laugh (ed.), *Locke's Travels in France 1675-9, as related in his Journals, Correspondence and other Papers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1953, p. 269.

<sup>32</sup> See Locke to Toinard, 30 August 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 435-6. In the letter, Locke added his greetings to Massiac to his comments on what Toinard had reported on the fishing of "zimbo", a shell used as currency in Congo and Angola.

<sup>33</sup> See P. Salmon (ed.), "Mémoires de la relation de voyage de M. de Massiac à Angola et à Buenos-Aires", in *Bulletin de séances de l'Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer* 6 (1960), 4, pp. 586-604. It would be tempting to identify the French man who wrote the abridged version with Toinard, but the latter arrived in Lisbon in 1666 whereas, according to Salmon, the abstract was written in 1664.

<sup>34</sup> Salmon (ed.), "Mémoires", cit., pp. 593 and 601.

The account also reveals that Massiac owned slaves or was somehow involved in trading them<sup>35</sup>, a detail that is confirmed by his memoir on Brazil. After spending some years in Angola, in 1660 Massiac moved to Guinea from where he sailed to Buenos Aires, penning another memoir on his sojourn in that region. Also this memoir has been lost, but a copy was found by Salmon in the library of Amiens<sup>36</sup>. This copy seems to correspond exactly to the other handwritten account mentioned by Toinard, because it contains a description of the quirquincho and the viscacha identical to the one he included in his letter<sup>37</sup>. Notably, a large part of this second memoir has to do with the slave trade, which Massiac described as being one of the greatest sources of wealth in Angola. He reported that around 20,000 slaves were deported from Angola to Portugal, Brazil and other ports in America each year, a detail that has been confirmed by recent studies<sup>38</sup>. Being willing to invest in this trafficking, and being aware of the greater revenues that might be obtained from selling slaves on the river Plate rather than in Europe, Massiac had resolved to move from Angola to Brazil and had embarked on a Dutch slave ship with some Portuguese traders. The ship arrived in Buenos Aires with eight hundred slaves, whom Massiac and his partners expected to sell thus making “the greatest gain ever obtained from a trade”<sup>39</sup>. However, after being attacked by another ship at the entrance of the port of Buenos Aires, they were stripped of more than half the number of their slaves, and the remaining ones were confiscated by the governor of the town. Thus, Massiac had resolved to spend some time in Buenos Aires, trying to recover his precious merchandise. In the meantime, he collected many pieces of information on the region, on its history, inhabitants, economy and the natural features of the coasts from Cape Frio to the Strait of Magellan<sup>40</sup>.

Toinard might have been given a copy of the original memoirs by Massiac while they were together at Lisbon in 1666-67. In 1678, he introduced Locke to Massiac, who accompanied him on a visit to Rochefort. A note in Locke’s journal reveals that, on that occasion, Massiac had spoken to him about his

<sup>35</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 601, where Massiac related how some of his slaves had been able to escape.

<sup>36</sup> P. Salmon (ed.), “Le voyage de M. de Massiac en Amérique du Sud au XVIIe siècle”, in *Mémoires de la Classe des Sciences morales et politiques de l’Académie Royale des Sciences d’Outre-Mer*, Nouvelle Série 42 (1984), 3, pp. 21-61.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

travels in Angola and Buenos Aires<sup>41</sup>. On his return to Paris, Locke had had other opportunities to converse with Massiac about his travels, as his journal reveals<sup>42</sup>; however, in October 1679 Locke seemed to be eager to know more about the black tribes living in Angola. He advised Toinard that another account written by an English man who had lived among the Jagas for a very long time confirmed what was written in his Portuguese account, and asked him whether it also mentioned the “Geloofs”, a black tribe living on the river Gambia<sup>43</sup>. As de Beer suggests, it is highly likely that the English man was Andrew Battel, whose account on his long stay in captivity in Angola had appeared in Purchas’ *Pilgrimes*<sup>44</sup>. Battel’s narration abounds with horrifying details on the customs and superstitions of the Jagas, particularly their human sacrifices, their cannibal feasts and their cruel habit of killing their children. As for the “Geloofs” – the Wolofs, who had been prey to the Portuguese’s raids since the second half of the fifteenth century – it is likely that Locke had been informed about them by Robert Boyle, because they are mentioned in a journal entry for 11 October 1679 that cites Boyle as its source:

Geloofs are a people 4 or 500 miles or more up the river Gambia they are a very large people much bigger than the English and have the best horses in the world, A stout and war like people but know not the use of guns but are admirable horse men. Salt is the commodity they purchase almost at any rate. The English that went up the river in a pinnace about 400 miles could not go any higher being offended by the muskie small and soft they found in the river there about ariseing from the great number of Crocodiles inhabiting it Mr Boyle<sup>45</sup>.

The story of the pinnace and the bellicose people inhabiting the banks of the river Gambia is to be found in the extract of another travel account included in Purchas’ *Pilgrimes*, written by the Englishman Richard Jobson. He had taken part in an expedition on the Gambia in 1620 and had published his account three years later, soon after his return to England<sup>46</sup>; however, Jobson

<sup>41</sup> Lough (ed.), *Locke’s Travels*, cit., p. 235 (8 Sept. 1678).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 257 and 284.

<sup>43</sup> Locke to Toinard, 20 September and 13 October 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 116-7.

<sup>44</sup> See A. Battel, “The strange adventures of Andrew Battell of Leigh in Essex, sent by the Portugals prisoner to Angola, who lived there, and in the adioyning Regions, neere eighteene yeeres”, in S. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes: in Five Bookes*, vol. 2, W. Stansby, London 1625, ch. 3, pp. 970-85; Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 117, n. 1.

<sup>45</sup> Brit. Library, Add. MS 15, 642, p. 161 (11 October 1679).

<sup>46</sup> R. Jobson, “A true Relation of Master Richard Jobsons Voyage, employed by Sir William Saint John, Knight, and others; for the Discoverie of Gambia [...] Extracted out of his large Iournall”, in

did not mention the “Geloofs” but another black tribe living near the village of Tinda, who used to buy salt and slaves from European traders. Purchas mentioned the “Gilofi” in his *Pilgrimage*, where he described them as very talented horsemen living on the river Niger<sup>47</sup>.

Thus, there is evidence that Boyle was reading extensively in Purchas in 1679, focusing on English accounts on Angola, Congo and Guinea and discussing their content with Locke. A detail in another letter that Locke addressed to Toinard on 15 July 1679 suggests that this conversation began in the summer of 1679. In this letter, Locke reported that he had been informed – by Boyle, as he would reveal later – that there were many curious books on Eastern antiquities in the Bishop’s archive on the “Isle de St Thomas”<sup>48</sup>. Toinard answered that he did not know whether there was an archive in Saint Thomas, in Malabar, which however was not an island<sup>49</sup>. Locke’s *lapsus* is illuminating because the island of São Tomé is in the gulf of Guinea and was mentioned by Battel, who reported that the Portuguese used to send their black slaves there<sup>50</sup>. Now, Boyle was a member of the Board of the East India Company, which since the sixties had begun to ship West African slaves to Surat and other Indians ports<sup>51</sup>, so we may guess that his interest in the tribes of West Africa in 1679 had to do with this, or perhaps with his being a fervent promoter of Christian mission in American colonies. In 1662, Boyle had become the first governor of the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, which was mainly concerned with Christianising native people<sup>52</sup>, so he might have been thinking of broadening the mission to include black slaves. Locke seems to have been involved in this enterprise as well. His conversations with Boyle in 1679 might be related to the possibility of Christianising Africans in English colonies, an idea that Jack Turner has shown to be of great interest to

Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, cit., ch. 1, pp. 921-6. The story of the ship is to be found on p. 923. Jobson’s report had been published in 1623.

<sup>47</sup> S. Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimage: or Relations of the World and the Religions Observed in all Ages and Places discovered, from the Creation unto this Present. In foure parts*, W. Stansby, London 1614, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., bk. 5, ch. 14, p. 645.

<sup>48</sup> Locke to Toinard, 15 July 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 57.

<sup>49</sup> Toinard to Locke, 6/16 August 1679, *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>50</sup> See Battel, “The strange adventures”, cit., p. 970. Since the early sixteenth century, Sao Tomé had played a strategic role in the Portuguese slave trade. See H. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, cit., p. 83.

<sup>51</sup> See R.B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1850*, Ohio University Press, Athens 2010, p. 32.

<sup>52</sup> G. Glickman, “Protestantism, Colonization, and the New England Company in Restoration Politics”, in *The Historical Journal* 59 (2016), 2, pp. 365-91.

him already at the time he was involved in the writing of the *Constitutions*<sup>53</sup>. The text granted religious toleration to “heathens, Jews, and other dissenters from the purity of Christian religion” with the stated aim of facilitating their Christian conversion<sup>54</sup>, but it also provided for the promotion of Christianity amongst African slaves:

Since charity obliges us to wish well to the souls of all men, and religion ought to alter nothing in any man’s civil estate or right, it shall be lawful for slaves, as all others, to enter themselves and be of what church any of them shall think best, and thereof be as fully members as any freeman. But yet, no slave shall hereby be exempted from that civil dominion his master has over him, but be in all other things in the same state and condition he was in before<sup>55</sup>.

According to Turner, there are good reasons to believe that Locke was the author of this provision, because it strikingly resonates with the language of a gloss on 1 Cor. 7 : 21, containing Paul’s instructions to servants, in Locke’s posthumous *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*<sup>56</sup>. I shall add another reason to endorse Turner’s opinion. In a letter to Locke of 6 September 1679, Toinard reported having been informed by Justel that their English friend had “reformed the article concerning religion in Carolina [...] and improved the condition of the inferiors”<sup>57</sup>. Toinard added that Justel had not been able to explain in what the reform of the article on religion consisted, so that it is difficult to understand what he meant. The ten articles on religion remained almost the same in the second version of the *Constitution*, the one that Justel possessed, the only exception being the addition of an article establishing Anglicanism as Carolina’s official religion. Locke is said to have opposed this article, therefore it is very unlikely that Justel was referring to it. However, if the “inferiors” were slaves, as I believe, we may suppose that Locke had told Justel that he was the author of the provision that allowed them to embrace the Christian religion, and that the latter regarded this as a reform of what was happening in Barbados. By distinguishing the slaves’ spiritual condition from their civil estate,

<sup>53</sup> J. Turner, “John Locke, Christian mission, and colonial America”, in *Modern Intellectual History* 8 (2011), 2, pp. 267-97.

<sup>54</sup> *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina*, art. 97 (1670 version), in Locke, *Political Essays*, cit., p. 178.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179-80 (art. 107).

<sup>56</sup> Turner, “John Locke”, cit., p. 278. J. Locke, *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*, 2 vols., ed. by A.W. Wainwright, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1987, vol. 1, p. 198. See also J. Farr, “Absolute Power and Authority’: John Locke and the Revisions of the *Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina*”, in *Locke Studies* 20 (2020), pp. 1-49, p. 22.

<sup>57</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 6/16 September 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 95.

Locke had solved the problem highlighted by Ligon, who lamented that they were not allowed to become Christian in Barbados because their owners feared that this might interfere with their being slaves<sup>58</sup>. This might be what Justel had in mind when he said to Toinard that Locke had reformed the article on religion and improved the condition of the “inferiors”<sup>59</sup>.

Thus, Boyle and Locke might be conversing on how to promote Christian mission among African slaves in 1679. However, it should also be considered that Locke’s interest in West Africans was not limited to this. Following Shaftesbury’s example, he had invested in the Bahamas Adventurers in 1672 and in the Royal African Company in 1674, and had many other links to slavery. In his capacity as Secretary to the Council on Trade and Foreign Plantations from 1673 to 1674, he had scrutinized reports on colonial affairs including slavery, and he continued not to question enslavement as a member of the Board of Trade from 1696 to 1700<sup>60</sup>. Like the majority of Europeans at his time, he was utterly favourable to it.

The travel accounts Toinard cited in his correspondence with Locke suggest that he might have a certain interest in this traffic as well. He would continue to mention Massiac’s accounts in his letters, though without revealing his name. It is likely that he was alluding to what Massiac had written on Brazil in the letter he sent to Locke on 23 February 1681<sup>61</sup>, when he promised that, if he ever visited England (a possibility that never materialised), he would show him something newer and better than Acuña’s *Relation*. Moreover, it is likely that the information on the government of the Count of Chinchòn that Toinard promised to provide Locke with on 24 September 1681 had been given to him by Massiac, not by Peñalosa as de Beer suggests<sup>62</sup>, because Massiac’s

<sup>58</sup> See Ligon, “Histoire de l’isle des Barbades”, in [Justel (ed.)], *Recueil*, cit., p. 85.

<sup>59</sup> I would like to thank James Farr for discussing this hypothesis with me. I agree with him that there is no evidence supporting my argument in Locke’s correspondence with Justel. So, I can only guess that Locke had told Justel that he was the author of the charity article while they were together in France; however, there are 19 letters from Justel to Locke in the *Correspondence*, but none from Locke to Justel. This looks strange. It might be that Locke’s answers have been lost.

<sup>60</sup> See J. Farr, “So Vile and Miserable an Estate’: The Problem of Slavery in Locke’s Political Thought”, in *Political Theory* 14 (1986), 2, pp. 263-89; W. Glausser, “Three Approaches to Locke and the Slave Trade”, in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51 (1990), 2, pp. 199-216; J. Farr, “Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery”, in *Political Theory* 36 (2008), 4, pp. 495-522; B. Hinshelwood, “The Carolinian Context of John Locke’s Theory of Slavery”, in *Political Theory* 41 (2013), 4, pp. 562-90; M. Goldie, “Locke and America”, in M. Stuart, *A Companion to Locke*, Wiley-Blackwell, London 2015, pp. 546-63.

<sup>61</sup> Toinard to Locke, 23 February/ 5 March 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 386.

<sup>62</sup> Toinard to Locke, 24 September/4 October 1681, *ibid.*, p. 442. De Beer’s opinion on Toinard’s informant is to be found *ibid.*, p. 455, in note.

memoir on Brazil abounds with details on the history of the Count, who had been viceroy of Peru from 1629 to 1639<sup>63</sup>. Finally, one of the accounts on the river Senegal that Toinard reported having in his possession in a letter to Locke of 6 July 1698 was probably Massiac's memoir on Angola<sup>64</sup>. A few months before, he had informed Locke that he had invested in a company that dealt with trade on "a river from which immense wealth will be obtained if it is well managed"<sup>65</sup>. This letter was the first Locke received from Toinard soon after their correspondence resumed at the end of the Nine Years War, so we do not know when the latter had made his investment. The company to which Toinard referred might be the *Compagnie Royale du Sénégal* established in 1694, after the previous company of Senegal had gone bankrupt. Other French companies trading in that area had met the same fate, which explains why Toinard seemed unsure as to the success of the enterprise. He was certain that, if the company had been managed by the English, they would have made huge profits from trading on the river, because they "surpass all the Europeans in colonial matters"<sup>66</sup>. It is hard to doubt that the lucrative trade Toinard had in mind was the slave trade, because he mentioned three tribes of black people living in that area, "*Jalofes, Foïles, Mandingues*". The first was the tribe that Locke was investigating in 1679, possibly on behalf of Boyle. Toinard added a few details to his letter about the counting systems of these populations, capturing Locke's attention. On 25 March 1698, he asked Toinard for more information on this topic, of great interest to him<sup>67</sup>, and on the customs of the Senegalese people, but Toinard's letters are quite short in this period and do not answer Locke's questions on some occasions (as in the case of the many queries he put to him about François Froger's voyage)<sup>68</sup>. Toinard would provide very few informa-

<sup>63</sup> Simon (ed.), *Mémoires*, cit., pp. 39-43.

<sup>64</sup> Toinard to Locke, 6/16 July 1698, in J. Locke, *Correspondence*, ed. by E.S. de Beer, vol. 6, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1981, p. 445.

<sup>65</sup> Toinard to Locke, 26 November/ 6 December 1697, *ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361. There are several proofs of this interest in the journals. See for instance Locke's journal notes of 8 October 1677 and 28 March 1679, in Lough, *Locke's Travels*, cit., pp. 177 and 282, both concerning the manner of numbering of Hindustani populations (a detail Locke might have learned from Bernier).

<sup>68</sup> Toinard had sent Froger's book to Locke in January: see Toinard to Locke, 6/16 January 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 289; F. Froger, *Relation d'un voyage fait en 1695, 1696 et 1697 aux côtes d'Afrique, détroit de Magellan, Brésil, Cayenne et isles Antilles, par une escadre des vaisseaux du Roi, commandée par M. de Gennes*, M. Brunet, Paris 1698. The book also appeared in English in London in the same year. Locke's questions, which concerned the customs of the Indios living in Cayenne, the fauna of the region and the length of the pendulum recorded in that area, are to be found in the



tion on the Wolof's and Foules's way of counting in October 1698<sup>69</sup>.

A few months before, Toinard had reiterated how much might be earned by trading on the river Senegal, though he seemed concerned about the threat of turmoil hanging over that region<sup>70</sup>. He reported that a "great revolution" led by "a Moorish Mohammedan impostor" had taken place in Senegal in 1675 on account of religion, causing death and devastation. The "impostor", as de Beer suggests, might be the marabout that usurped the kingdom of Kayor in 1677, who was deposed by a revolt in 1681<sup>71</sup>. This event is narrated in the *Description des Côtes d'Afrique* written by the French Jean Barbot, who spent some time trading in Africa in the employment of the *Compagnie du Sénégal*, making two voyages to the Guinea coast between 1678 and 1682. The *Description* was completed in 1688 but was not published for many years, and would appear translated into English in the *Collection of Voyages* edited by the Churchills in 1732<sup>72</sup>. It is likely that Toinard was in possession of Barbot's original manuscript, because he advised Locke that his source was the handwritten account of a French commander who had witnessed these events, a description that fits Barbot. His text paints a vivid picture of the Atlantic slave trade, explaining how it was conducted and who was involved, moreover it provides information on the three tribes mentioned by Toinard.

The fact that Toinard had informed Locke of his investment in the *Compagnie du Sénégal* suggests that he might have been aware of his links to slavery. He had read the *Constitutions*, or learned something of their content from Locke and Justel, so he probably knew that the document replicated the Barbadian model of a slave society. Moreover, he and Justel believed that Locke had played a leading role in the writing of it<sup>73</sup>. Toinard expressed contrasting opinions on the text. In a letter of July 1678, he lauded the way the *Constitutions* established that justice was to be administered in Carolina<sup>74</sup>, whereas a year later

letter he sent to Toinard on 25 March 1698, *ibid.*, p. 358. They were left unanswered by Toinard, who corresponded with Froger.

<sup>69</sup> Toinard to Locke, 16/26 October 1698, *ibid.*, p. 492.

<sup>70</sup> Toinard to Locke, 6/16 July 1698, *ibid.*, p. 445.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 4.

<sup>72</sup> J. Barbot, "A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea: and of Ethiopia inferior, vulgarly Angola: Being a new and accurate Account of the Western Maritime Countries of Africa, in six Books", in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels, some Now First Printed from Original Manuscripts, Others Now First Published in English*, ed. by J. and A. Churchill, vol. 5, London 1732.

<sup>73</sup> Toinard and Justel often refer to "vos lois", "vos constitutions" in their correspondence with Locke. See Toinard to Locke, 2/12 July 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 47; H. Justel to Locke, 17/27 September 1679, *ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>74</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 12/22 July 1678, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, cit., p. 590. De Beer sug-

he complained that they stripped those not belonging to any church of the protection of the law<sup>75</sup>. In November and December 1679, he asked Locke whether there were “new laws of Carolina”<sup>76</sup>, probably referring to the 1682 revisions because Justel had received a copy of the 1670 version from Locke, so the “new laws” could not be the amendments made on the original 1669 version. Thus, Toinard seemed to be well acquainted with the document; however, he never mentioned slavery, either in commenting on the *Constitutions* or in speaking about Carolina. In his letters to Locke, as well as in those that he received from him, Carolina is an idyllic land where they dreamed of retiring together rather than a colony worked by enslaved manpower<sup>77</sup>. Probably, both regarded slavery as a subject inappropriate for their elevated philosophical correspondence, which was intended as a sort of evasion from their more important businesses. There is, however, one significant exception. Writing to Locke in 1680, Toinard commended the loyalty of his close friend Aleaume in these terms: “He is among those few people from whose hands I would like you received a million of pounds in guineas, then I would keep on (“vogue la Galere”) waiting for your incomes from Carolina”<sup>78</sup>. Here Toinard joked about the double meaning of “voguer la galère”, the literal (row the galley, a slave ship) and the figurative meaning (keep on, whatever may come), but the nature of the income he had in mind is clear. If he had had a huge amount of money, which was not the case because he often complained to Locke about his financial problems, he would have invested in slave trading in Carolina, just as Massiac had done in Brazil.

Another detail in the correspondence suggests that Toinard might have invested in the French *Compagnie des Indes orientales*, which had begun trading slaves in the Indian Ocean soon after the colonisation of Bourbon (Réunion) in 1663. In his letters, Toinard often mentioned Bourbon as an alternative to Carolina when he fancied fleeing away from Europe with Locke, but on one

gests that Toinard might be referring to art. 64 (1670 version), which established that a case could not come to trial twice. See *ibid.*, n. 1.

<sup>75</sup> This was a reference to art. 101. See Toinard to Locke, 2/12 July 1679, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 47. Justel had addressed a letter to Locke four days before, insisting that Roman Catholics should not be tolerated in the colony: Justel to Locke, ca. 28 June/8 July 1679, *ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>76</sup> Toinard to Locke, 26 November/6 December 1679, *ibid.*, p. 132; 13/23 December 1679, *ibid.*, p. 141. On the revisions of the text, see D. Armitage, “John Locke, Carolina and the *Two Treatises of Government*”, in *Political Theory* 32 (2004) 5, pp. 602-27; J. Farr, “Absolute Power and Authority”, cit.

<sup>77</sup> See for instance Locke to Toinard, 29 October 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 120, where Locke jokes about Toinard being king on Locke island (now Edisto island, in South Carolina), and him one of his servants; Toinard to Locke, 17/27 January 1680, *ibid.*, p. 149; etc.

<sup>78</sup> Toinard to Locke, 24 November/4 December 1680, *ibid.*, p. 294.

occasion he reported having some business on the island. On 16 June 1680, he spoke about a sea captain who had taken care of “certain affairs” he and other people had at Bourbon, and on 8 September 1680 he mentioned another very experienced captain who had just returned from Surat, the most important port for French commercial activities in the Indian Ocean<sup>79</sup>. Both the captains were probably employees of the *Compagnie des Indes*, and the first, as Toinard related, had taken part in the siege of St. Thomas alongside de la Haye. Other details in his letters suggest that he might have been aware of the content of the correspondence between Colbert and the governor of Bourbon Germain de Fleurimont, because the dramatic events occurring on the island that he related to Locke on 8 September were narrated in the letter that Fleurimont had addressed to Colbert two years before<sup>80</sup>. This brings us back to Toinard’s role in seventeenth-century French expansion plans, which seems to have been of a certain relevance.

### 3. *The exploration of the Mississippi. La Salle and d’Iberville*

The travel accounts that Toinard mentioned to Locke in 1679-82 show that he paid close attention to the colonial expansion of European countries, especially England and Holland. He manifested a special interest in Dutch travel books in his letters. On 2 October 1680, he mentioned the journal of the Dutch explorer Willem Schouten, the first to round Cape Horn in 1616, and on 15 January 1681 he referred to a work by the Governor of the Dutch Indies Cornelis Speelman, the *Notitie* written soon after the conquest of Makassar in 1669. On 22 June 1681, the journal of another Dutch explorer, Hendrick Brouwer, was mentioned by Toinard in connection with the data on the magnetic declination recorded on the coast of Chile, whereas on 6 July 1681 he announced that the French translation of Jan Struys’s *Voyages* had just been published, though he was dubious as to the reliability of its content. Later, on 25

<sup>79</sup> Toinard to Locke, 16/26 June 1680, *ibid.*, p. 197; 8/18 September 1680, *ibid.*, p. 246. The second captain is mentioned again in the letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 13 October 1680 in connection with the data on the magnetic declination recorded in the Indian Ocean. See *ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>80</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 8/18 September 1680, *ibid.*, pp. 247-8. On 20 November 1678, Fleurimont had advised Colbert that the Malagasy labourers (“leur negres” in Toinard’s letter) had devastated the island and killed some settlers, and that Bourbon was invaded by rats. Toinard reported all these facts to Locke. Fleurimont’s letter is to be found in I. Güet, *Les Origines de l’Île de Bourbon, et de la colonisation française à Madagascar*, Ch. Bayle, Paris 1888, pp. 133-4.

July 1698, Toinard would refer to another Dutch account on the discovery of Australia (possibly that written by Willem de Vlamingh, which is now lost)<sup>81</sup>.

Toinard also manifested a great admiration for Dutch colonial settlements. Interestingly, in the letter he sent to Locke on 8 September 1680 he contrasted the florid cultivations in the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope with the disastrous situation of the French colony at Bourbon<sup>82</sup>, making his sentiments about the Dutch's superiority over the French in colonial administration quite explicit. However, far greater was Toinard's reverence for the English, whose competence in this field he repeatedly extolled in his letters. He considered England as exceeding "all the other nations" in colonial affairs<sup>83</sup>. Hidden in these compliments there might be the desire to glean information from Locke on English colonial plans, which were of the utmost interest to the Orléanais and his associates, *in primis* Renaudot. In turn, Locke attempted to obtain information on French plans in North America from Toinard, as two letters he addressed to him in 1679 and 1684 highlight.

Writing to Toinard on 13 October 1679<sup>84</sup>, Locke asked whether he knew something about the extreme cold that Francis Drake had reported perceiving along the Pacific coast in June and July 1579, at 38 deg. 30. min<sup>85</sup>. Why ask this of Toinard? Because Locke was evidently aware that, by that time, La Salle had begun his expedition to the Canadian lakes with the aim of completing the exploration of the Mississippi river he had started in 1676<sup>86</sup>. In November 1684, that is to say a few months after La Salle had set off on a new expedition to North America, Locke would ask Toinard whether he had received any news

<sup>81</sup> Toinard to Locke, 2/12 October 1680, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 264; 15/25 January 1681, *ibid.*, p. 347; 22 June/ 2 July 1681, *ibid.*, p. 413; 6/16 or 7/17 July 1681, *ibid.*, p. 423; 25 July/14 August 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 452. W. C. Schouten, *Journal, ou Relation Exacte du Voyage de Guill. Schouten, dans les Indes, par un nouveau détroit*, M. Gobert, Paris 1618 (translation of the 1617 original); C. Speelman, *Notitie Diendende voor Eenen Korte Tijd en tot Nader Last van de Hoge Regering op Batavia voor den Ondercoopman Jan van Oppijnen* (printed version of the original ms.), KITLV, Leiden 1669; H. Brouwer, *Journael ende historis verhael van de reyse gedaen by oosten de Straet Le Maire naer*, Amsterdam 1646; J. J. Struys, *Les Voyages de Jean Struys en Moscovie, en Tartarie, en Perse, aux Indes, et en plusieurs autres païs étrangers*, trans. by M. Glanius, Amsterdam 1681. Locke possessed Schouten's book: see LL, no. 2587.

<sup>82</sup> See n. 80.

<sup>83</sup> Toinard to Locke, 9/19 January 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 292.

<sup>84</sup> Locke to Toinard, 20 September and 13 October 1679, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 114.

<sup>85</sup> See F. Drake, *The World Encompassed*, The Hakluyt Society, London 1854, pp. 115-7.

<sup>86</sup> See C. Dupré, "Cavalier René Robert de la Salle" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, University of Toronto-Université Laval, 2003, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cavelier\\_de\\_la\\_salle\\_rene\\_robert\\_1E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cavelier_de_la_salle_rene_robert_1E.html).

from Canada, which indicates that he was well informed about the activities of the French explorer<sup>87</sup>.

Toinard had evidently understood this and was willing to share some information with Locke. In December 1679, he reported that “a person of his acquaintance” had built a ship on Lake Erie during the summer, and was bound for the “south sea [...] which flows into the Gulf of Mexico”<sup>88</sup>. The ship was the Griffon and the south sea was Lake Michigan, which La Salle was sailing on at the end of October (he reached the mouth of the Saint Joseph river on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November). Toinard added that it would be better if La Salle headed West, South West and North-West, in order to discover a route to Japan. This detail suggests that he was aware of the plans of the learned abbé Claude Bernou, La Salle’s agent in Paris and a correspondent of Renaudot. To be concise, Bernou believed that it would be better for the French to reach the rich kingdoms of Theguayo and Quivira situated to the west of the Great Lakes of Canada, an idea that had germinated in his brain after becoming acquainted with the Peruvian Diego Dionisio de Peñalosa between 1674 and 1677<sup>89</sup>. Peñalosa had been the Governor of New Mexico but he had been forced to flee, due to his clash with the Inquisition, so he had resolved to place his sword at the service of France after a brief sojourn in England in 1670. He had shown Bernou a memoir on Theguayo and Quivira written by himself, where he listed the many advantages that France might gain from taking control of their territory<sup>90</sup>. Bernou submitted a petition to the French government for the conquest of Quivira and Theguayo in 1678, but fearing that it would not receive royal support, he proposed an alternative in 1682 and 1684, the conquest of the Spanish province of New Biscay west of the Gulf of Mexico that Peñalosa claimed he had visited in his memoir<sup>91</sup>. Whether La Salle was involved in this invasion scheme is a matter of dispute<sup>92</sup>; what is certain, however, is that he was entrust-

<sup>87</sup> See Locke to Toinard, ca. 13/23 November 1684, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 647.

<sup>88</sup> Toinard to Locke, 13/23 December 1679, *ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>89</sup> See J. Delanglez, “The discovery of the Mississippi. Secondary Sources”, in *Mid-America. An Historical Review* 28 (1946), 1, pp. 3-21, on p. 16.

<sup>90</sup> The undated memoir is to be found among Bernou’s papers: BNF, Clairambault 1016, Pièces relatives aux Colonies françaises de l’Amérique, et particulièrement à la Nouvelle-France ou Canada (1673-1697). Papiers de l’abbé Bernou, pp. 211-9.

<sup>91</sup> See P. Margry, *Mémoires et documents pour servir à l’histoire des origines françaises des pays d’outre-mer*, Part. 3: *Recherche des bouches du Mississippi et voyage à travers le continent depuis les côtes du Texas jusqu’à Québec (1669-1698)*, Maisonneuve et Co., Paris 1879, pp. 44-63.

<sup>92</sup> See R. Gross, C.P. Howard, “Colbert, La Salle, and the Search for Empire”, in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 113 (2020), 2, pp. 68-101, on p. 75. Regarding La Salle’s mistake, which was responsible for the failure of his 1684 expedition, see R. Gross, “A Second Look at ‘La Salle:

ed by the King with the command of the 1684 expedition that was to reach the mouth of the Mississippi.

It is likely that Toinard had read Bernou's proposals. One of the advantages from the conquest of Theguayo was, according to Bernou, that France might have reached the Sea of the South, which would supply an easy route for trading with China and Japan<sup>93</sup>. Toinard mentioned Japan in his letter to Locke. Other details in their correspondence suggest that he might have attempted to glean information on Peñalosa from Locke. On 23 February 1681<sup>94</sup>, Toinard advised Locke that he had come across an account written in Spanish by a certain "Olenker", whom the King of England had sent to cross the Strait of Magellan in 1669 to find the west passage to the South Sea. The man had deserted the expedition after crossing the strait and had gone to Valdivia. The expedition was that of Admiral John Narbrough, and the man was Carlos Enriques Clerque, probably a spy for the English who was imprisoned by the Spanish at Lima and executed for treason in 1682<sup>95</sup>. Locke did not comment on this information, nor did he answer a question by Thévenot relating to the same topic<sup>96</sup>. Interestingly, in 1684 the abbé Bernou would write to Renaudot that it was Peñalosa who had advised Charles II to send Narbrough to Chile to seize it from the Spanish<sup>97</sup>. Bernou regarded this as a proof that he was not a charlatan; this story however might have already come to the ears of Renaudot, who might have been the brains behind Toinard's questioning Locke in 1681 about Narbrough's expedition.

Surprisingly, a letter that Locke sent to Toinard on 15 October 1681 mentioned Peñalosa, which suggests that Toinard might have spoken of him in a lost letter. Locke assured Toinard that he was well acquainted with the Peruvian and asked him to send his greetings<sup>98</sup>. How he had become acquainted with Peñalosa is a matter of conjecture, but he seemed to have a high opinion of him, because he wrote, "I am honoured to be one of the acquaintances of the

Discovery of a Lost Explorer"; in *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 62 (2021), 1, pp. 5-32.

<sup>93</sup> BNF, Clairambault 1016, p. 214.

<sup>94</sup> Toinard to Locke, 23 February/ 5 March 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 387.

<sup>95</sup> The "relacion" Don Carlos submitted to King Charles II has recently been found: see R. J. Campbell, P.T. Bradley, J. Lorimer, *The Voyage of Captain John Narbrough to the Strait of Magellan and the South Sea in his Majesty's Ship Sweepstakes, 1669-1671*, Routledge, London 2018. Narbrough's mission was meant to glean information on the inhabitants of the coast of Peru.

<sup>96</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 22 June/2 July 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 413.

<sup>97</sup> See Bernou to Renaudot, Roma, 29 February 1684, in P. Margry, *Mémoires et documents*, cit., p. 73.

<sup>98</sup> Locke to Toinard, 14 October 1681, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., p. 455.

Count of Peñalosa”<sup>99</sup>. Locke was convinced that Peñalosa was going to publish his story, and that it would contain something unique and remarkable regarding America. Thus Peñalosa might have met Locke while he was in England and told him of his intention to write a memoir – the one he would show to Bernou later. Apparently, Locke did not know exactly what the memoir contained in 1681, yet he seemed to be aware that it might be of a certain relevance. In 1698, one of Toinard’s acquaintances, the French diplomat Jean Baptiste Du Bos, would inform Locke that Peñalosa’s book had not yet been published, probably in answer to his request for information<sup>100</sup>. A few months before, Toinard had once again mentioned the story of “Olerke” in a letter to Locke, in the hope that he could provide him with an account of his voyage to Chile<sup>101</sup>. However, even in this case Locke turned a deaf ear to his request<sup>102</sup>.

This curious episode serves to highlight Toinard’s involvement in Renaudot’s intrigues. His intense correspondence with the abbé, especially some enigmatic messages that he received from him, leave few doubts as to his playing a role in the secret plans underlying La Salle’s 1684 expedition<sup>103</sup>. Many documents relating to La Salle are to be found among Toinard’s papers, including an *extrait* of the journal of La Salle made by the cartographer Jean-Baptiste Minet, who took part in the expedition, and a letter by La Salle dated 22 May 1684 that thanked Toinard for the warm welcome some members of his crew had received at Orléans<sup>104</sup>.

Toinard’s involvement in French expansion plans in North America becomes more evident in his later correspondence, which abounds with letters from the explorer Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d’Iberville, and his brother Joseph La Moyne de Sérigny. The Canadian native d’Iberville had participated in 1686 in an expedition against the English outposts in the Hudson Bay region, aimed at weaken-

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Du Bos to Locke, 19/29 November 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, cit., vol. 6, p. 508.

<sup>101</sup> Toinard to Locke, 25 July/ 4 August 1698, *ibid.*, pp. 451-2.

<sup>102</sup> Locke answered that he did not know anything about Olerke’s account and that he would enquire about it; see Locke to Toinard, 15 August 1698, *ibid.*, p. 462. Toinard asked again in October 1698, without receiving any answer: see Toinard to Locke, 16/26 October 1698, *ibid.*, p. 491. However, when, in 1701, Toinard mentioned Narbrough’s data on magnetic variation at the Strait of Magellan, he soon received an extract from Narbrough’s journal from Locke. See Toinard to Locke, 18/29 August 1701, in Locke, *Correspondence*, ed. by E.S. de Beer, vol. 7, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1982, p. 420; Locke to Toinard, 30 September 1701, *ibid.*, p. 446.

<sup>103</sup> Toinard might have expressed some doubts on the royal assent to La Salle’s expedition, because in a letter of 30 April 1684, Renaudot reassured him that the «armada depended on the divine will». See NAF 9294, p. 52.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-51 and p. 42.



ing their commercial capabilities. He had returned to France the following year, then gone back to Canada, where he distinguished himself in several military actions against the English forts located around the Bay. In 1694, d'Iberville played a crucial role in the capture of Fort York (Port Nelson), reconquered by the English and again seized by the French in 1697 under his leadership. An allusion to this episode is to be found in a letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 6 January 1698<sup>105</sup>. In 1698, d'Iberville went to the Mississippi River with his younger brother Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne and Toinard's relative Charles de Beauharnois, in order to consolidate French territories in Louisiana; back home, he obtained the necessary funds for an expedition aimed at seizing Charles Town from the English, but he died soon after plundering Nevis island in July 1706. A proposal for expelling the English from Carolina, probably written by d'Iberville, is to be found among Toinard's papers along with the King's assent<sup>106</sup>.

Notably, a letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 6 January 1698 mentioned d'Iberville, reporting that he had gone to Hudson Bay "four times by sea and three times by land and river"<sup>107</sup>, and in the following years he would continue to emphasise his familiarity with him and to celebrate his enterprises. D'Iberville and Sérigny are mentioned together in another letter that Toinard sent to Locke on 21 October 1701 in connection with some observations on the magnetic declination at Hudson Bay. "The value of these two brothers is not ignored by the English who have an interest in Hudson Bay", Toinard commented<sup>108</sup>. As a member of the Board of Trade, which in Peter Laslett's words was "the body which administered the United States before the American Revolution"<sup>109</sup>, Locke was certainly aware of the losses that the English had suffered in the Hudson Bay area at the hands of the French. The Treaty of Ryswick, signed in September 1697, stipulated that the southern part of the Bay should return to the French along with Fort York, which had been assigned to the Canadian Hudson Bay Company. Only Albany remained in English hands, at least until 1713. Thus, Toinard's comment might be ironic.

Significantly, the letters that Toinard received from d'Iberville and Sérigny were not mere reports on what was happening in North America. In one of

<sup>105</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 6/16 January 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 289.

<sup>106</sup> Anon, "Proposition d'une entreprise sur la Caroline pour en chasser les Anglais", 1705, NAF 9294, pp. 114-18.

<sup>107</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 6/16 January 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 289.

<sup>108</sup> Toinard to Locke, 21 October/ 1 November 1701, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 7, cit., p. 475.

<sup>109</sup> P. Laslett, "John Locke as Founder of the Board of Trade", in J. S. Yolton (ed.), *A Locke Miscellany: Locke Biography and Criticism for all*, Thoemmes, Bristol 1990, p. 127.

them, d'Iberville asked Toinard for information on the battleships anchored in the Portuguese ports at Cape Verde and in South America, crediting him with a perfect knowledge of Portuguese colonies<sup>110</sup>, and in another letter Sérigny lauded Toinard for his knowledge of whatever was happening in the Indies<sup>111</sup>. This great competence the two brothers attributed to Toinard was due not only to his familiarity with Renaudot but also to his being related to the Beauharnois family. Charles de Beauharnois, who took part in d'Iberville's expeditions, was a naval officer who served in Quebec and from 1726 governor of New France; Charles's brother, François de Beauharnois, became intendant of Canada in 1702, while his other brother, Claude de Beauharnois, was engaged as a naval officer in supplying French troops in Canada. Toinard's correspondence includes many letters from the Beauharnois' family as well as from Du Bos, who was well acquainted with French plans for North America<sup>112</sup>.

Interestingly, most of the letters that Toinard addressed to Locke in the last years of their correspondence refer to Canada. On 9 January 1698, he advised him that he had a map of the entire region (perhaps that made by Jean Baptiste Louis Franquelin, cartographer and royal hydrographer at Quebec, in 1688), whereas in June he accurately described the way Canadians used to take care of their infants, leaving them uncovered and placing them into cradles made of bark lined with moss. Having read in the Preface of the French translation of Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education* that the inhabitants of Siam left their infants unfolded, Toinard highlighted a certain similarity with what happened in Canada<sup>113</sup>. In July, he shifted the conversation to the fur of the buffalos living along the Mississippi, from which he reported he was able to obtain a kind of wool. He would continue to boast of this invention in his letters to Locke in the following years, enquiring about the possibility of selling it in England<sup>114</sup>.

Most of the travel accounts that Toinard mentioned in these years concerned North America. In January 1698, he reported having read the French translation of Richard Blome's *The Present State of his Majesties Isles and Territories in*

<sup>110</sup> D'Iberville to N. Toinard, possibly before 1703, NAF 9294, p. 69.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p. 98, dated 3 March 1700.

<sup>112</sup> Evidence of this may be found, for instance, in the letters that Du Bos sent to Toinard on 29 June and 8 July 1699, *ibid.*, pp. 88-89. The first contains a piece of information on English settlers in Quebec, the second reports on d'Iberville's route to the Bay of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>113</sup> See Toinard to Locke, 8/18 June 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., pp. 424-5.

<sup>114</sup> Toinard to Locke, 6/16 July 1698, *ibid.*, pp. 444-5; Du Bos to Locke, 14/24 February 1700, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 7, cit., p. 11 (postscript by Toinard); Toinard to Locke, 19/30 March 1700, *ibid.*, p. 38; etc.

*America*<sup>115</sup>, and expressed his joy at seeing the name of his English friend on the map of Carolina in the book – an allusion to Locke island. Toinard asked Locke to procure the map of Philadelphia mentioned by Blome for him (probably the one that Thomas Holme had prepared for William Penn in 1683)<sup>116</sup>. Locke generously sent him a map of the whole of Pennsylvania<sup>117</sup>. This is the first of a number of requests that Toinard addressed to Locke in 1698, few months before d'Iberville set out on a new voyage to complete La Salle's work. In July, he asked Locke whether anything else had been published about Sir Francis Drake's voyage other than the account he had written<sup>118</sup>, moreover he hoped that he could send him the second part of the second volume of *Voyages and Descriptions* by the English explorer William Dampier, devoted to Mexico<sup>119</sup>. Significantly, Toinard advised Locke that some sheets of the book, which Du Bos had procured for him, contained an error concerning the longitude of the Panuco river. His interest in that area was evidently linked to the preparations for d'Iberville's voyage to the Gulf of Mexico that he followed with the utmost interest, as shown by his correspondence with Du Bos, d'Iberville and Sérigny.

Toinard died on January the 5<sup>th</sup>, 1706, a few months before d'Iberville attacked Nevis island. His frequent mentions of the latter in his letters to Locke suggest that he might have been willing to exchange information on the colonial affairs of their respective countries. Locke, however, seems to have been quite evasive in his answers.

<sup>115</sup> Toinard to Locke, 9/19 January 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 291; R. Blome, *The Present State Of His Majesties Isles and Territories in America*, printed by H. Clark for Dolman Newman, London 1687. The French translation was published in Amsterdam in 1688. The book included sections on Jamaica and the other English Caribbean territories expanded from Blome's 1672 *Description of the Island of Jamaica*, as well as extensive treatments of the North American colonies. These sections had appeared in Justel's *Recueil*.

<sup>116</sup> This is de Beer's conjecture: see Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 291, n. 3.

<sup>117</sup> Locke to Toinard, 1 November 1698, *ibid.*, p. 502.

<sup>118</sup> Toinard to Locke, 25 July/ 4 August 1698, *ibid.*, p. 452. This was *The World Encompassed* (1628). Locke owned the 1635 edition and a French text from 1588 containing an account of Drake's journey: see LL, nos. 994 and 994a. He also owned the 1628 edition of Philip Nichols' *Sir Francis Drake revived*: see LL, no. 993. Nothing new on Drake had been published since 1628, as Locke reported to Toinard. See Locke to Toinard, 15 August 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 462.

<sup>119</sup> W. Dampier, *Voyages and Descriptions*, vol. 2: *in three parts*, J. Knapton, London 1699; Toinard to Locke, 16/26 October 1698, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 6, cit., p. 492. It took Locke a while to procure this volume for Toinard. See Locke to Toinard, 14 January and 20 February 1699, *ibid.*, p. 567.

### *Conclusion*

I have mainly focused on Toinard's letters with the aim of emphasising his involvement in French expansion plans. I hope I have been able to show that, if Locke was credited with being one of the most knowledgeable of Englishmen about the colonial world in his own day, he had found his match abroad in Toinard. Far from being a learned diversion, their correspondence points out that they were both interested in colonial affairs and in the slave trade. Moreover, both regarded travel literature as a locus of potentially useful information on these topics. Toinard was reading Massiac's and Barbot's accounts while planning his investment in the Company of Senegal, and he was perusing Blome's and Dampier's books while following the preparations for d'Iberville's expeditions.

Another element in Toinard's correspondence with Locke highlights his involvement in colonial affairs, especially those concerning Canada, a country that his relationship with the Beauharnois family had certainly contributed to making of great interest to him. The many "machines" that he accurately described in his letters, some of which were of his own invention, were to be employed in Canada or in voyages and explorations. One of them, a copper vessel for cooking food in a seawater bath, was to be used during long navigations to spare drinkable water<sup>120</sup>, whereas the towing machine designed by Hooke about which Toinard enquired in some letters to Locke was to be adapted to navigate that section of the St. Lawrence River which runs from Quebec to Montréal<sup>121</sup>. Another of Toinard's inventions, the hand mill for grinding corn that Locke described in his journal, was probably inspired by the abbé de Galinée, who manifested a keen interest in the way mills might be usefully employed in Canada in their correspondence<sup>122</sup>.

<sup>120</sup> Toinard to Locke, 24 September/ 4 October 1680, in Locke, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 255-6. The machine, which Toinard continued to illustrate to Locke in other letters, was inspired by Boyle's *machina pneumatica*, though, unlike it, it was without seals.

<sup>121</sup> Toinard to Locke, 6/16 or 7/17 July 1681, *ibid.*, p. 423.

<sup>122</sup> Lough, *Locke's Travels*, cit., p. 206 (13 July 1678). See de Galinée to Toinard, 18 November 1677, NAF 9294, p. 74, where the former reported on the manner of building sawmills in Auvergne, which he believed might be of great use in Canada; de Galinée to Toinard, 26 November 1677, NAF 9294, p. 78, where he gave some suggestions on how to improve a mill (possibly the one devised by Toinard).

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