

Zeitschrift: SPELL : Swiss papers in English language and literature
Herausgeber: Swiss Association of University Teachers of English
Band: 45 (2025)

Artikel: Anglo-Swiss travel networks at the turn of the seventeenth century
Autor: Heeg, Stefanie
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-1090387>

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STEFANIE HEEG
(UNIVERSITY OF BASEL)

Anglo-Swiss Travel Networks at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

Reading travel accounts in terms of networks of people, places, and publications offers a new way to investigate Anglo-Swiss mobility and transcultural exchange in the seventeenth century. Using Thomas Coryat and Thomas Platter's travel accounts as a starting point, this paper traces their social encounters both in Britain and in the Swiss cantons. The emerging network of people is then extended with further, connected, travel accounts, including Kaspar Thomann's and Kaspar Waser's. It thus reveals how tightly connected this group of travellers was. Reading these travel accounts relationally offers a new level of understanding of their social encounters in terms of diverse strategies, purposes, and motivations. Encounters offered the social prestige associated with meeting eminent people, and access to exclusive institutions or people, or served as an important orientation and support for travellers, and therefore functioned as 'mobilizers' or intermediaries. Importantly, intermediaries were both people met on foreign ground and supporters from home, sending letters and setting up connections from afar.

Keywords: Anglo-Swiss Travel Accounts; social networks; Thomas Coryat; Thomas Platter

For scholars tracing Anglo-Swiss transcultural exchange and relations, travel accounts offer a unique perspective on interwoven histories, social networks, and early modern mobility. This article adopts what Paul Nelles and Rosa Salzberg describe as a “‘connected’ approach to mobility—surveying different kinds of journeys alongside one another as well as acknowledging how movement could have multiple, intersecting, and overlapping motivations and consequences,” putting the emphasis on the relational web, rather than insulating individuals (17). Tracking social encounters described in travel accounts allows a transnational network to emerge, revealing what Stephen Greenblatt calls “contact zones” and

“mobilizers” (251). This article draws on microhistorical methods, which are particularly productive for this endeavour (17, Ghobrial 246), and are conducted here using a synchronic approach to the social encounters emerging and extending from Thomas Coryat’s *Coryat’s Crudities* and Thomas Platter’s *Beschreibung der Reisen durch Frankreich, Spanien, England und die Niederlande*. Both are well known travel accounts and, on the surface, are not connected to each other in any way. Platter, a medical student from Basel, travelled to England in 1599 and Coryat, an English Courtier, travelled to Basel in 1608. Although Platter was back in Basel when Coryat visited, there is no evidence that they ever met or knew of each other. Yet they were connected by mutual acquaintances, and reading their accounts through their social encounters offers new perspectives into how interwoven Anglo-Swiss transcultural exchange was.

Travel and mobility at the beginning of the seventeenth century tended to be seen as early forms of the Grand Tour, which is inadequate, given that such an approach is not only Anglo-centric, typically focusing on British travellers visiting Italy, but also fails to acknowledge the diversity of co-existing forms of early modern travel and travellers (Ansell 2–3). More recently, looking beyond written accounts of travel by the social elite has demonstrated just how mobile early modern societies were in general (Nelles and Salzberg 10). While this article focuses on travel accounts, they should not be understood as a homogenous genre of writing. In the broadest sense, the travel accounts featured in this article are ego-documents that detail what can be loosely described as educational mobility. The majority of the travellers touched upon in this article came from an academic context and were motivated to travel as part of their education and/or studying abroad, which, in the case of students at the Lectorium of Zürich, was an established and central practise of higher learning (Crousaz 191).¹

The exception to this pattern is Thomas Coryat who stands out as the only non-academic travel writer in this network. He is also more widely understood to be an outlier whose work presents an idiosyncratic form of self-fashioning (Youngs 30). Even so, in his justification of his own

¹ Prophezei, Schola Tigurina, or Lectorium, is best known today under the later name Collegium Carolinum (for more on the name see Goeing). Interestingly, Karine Crousaz notes how Basel, the only true University in the Swiss cantons at the time, did not specifically encourage students to go abroad as the other non-University institutions of higher learning did, such as the Lectorium (192). Perhaps this partially explains Platter’s impressive tribute (in the form of his travel account) to his half-brother for funding his travels, given that it was not as common in Basel to study abroad.

travels as an endeavour to “better encourage Gentlemen” to follow suit, describing travel as “the sweetest and most delightfull” pleasure (b2v), he stresses the educational perks of travelling, including conversing with scholars:

[For] flourishing Universities [...] furnished with store of learned men of all faculties, by whose conversation a learned traveller may much informe and augment his knowledge. What a singular and incomparable comfort is it to conferre with those learned men in forraine Universities and noble Cities, whose excellent workes we reade in our private studies at home. (b3r)

As we will see, Coryat followed his own advice during his visits to Zürich and Basel. Moreover, his account is the only one that was published, while all other travel accounts considered here are either letters or manuscripts. While the letters were written while still abroad, Waser, Platter, and Coryat’s travel accounts were all written several years after the completion of their travels. Waser’s account was written as part of an unpublished autobiography, likely decades later, Platter’s were written four to five years after his return to Basel, and Coryat’s *Crudities* was published three years after his journey.

Importantly, while educational mobility, academic networks, and institutions of higher learning are central contexts to consider, this article focuses on the social networks that emerge from travel accounts regardless of social backgrounds, and extending beyond academic exchange. The majority of the travel writers examined here were scholars and their journeys can be understood as a form of educational mobility—reflecting broader patterns in who was writing about travel at the time. However, my interest lies less in authorial identity and academic purpose than in how their narratives construct, reflect, and participate in networks of social exchange. By examining these texts relationally—across individual cases—I aim to illuminate diverse forms of social interaction, uncovering not only contact zones but also what Rosa Salzberg calls the “quotidian mechanics” of mobility (4–5), including intermediaries who may fall outside strictly academic networks.

1. Thomas Coryat and the Logistics of Language and Travel, 1608

Thomas Coryat’s (ca. 1577-1617) walk through “Helvetia—otherwise called Switzerland” (372) in 1608 only took a couple of days and is but a

short segment of *Coryat's Crudities*, yet his descriptions of Zürich as well as Basel offer a variety of transcultural encounters. In Zürich, he met the eminent Professor Rudolph Hospinian, who appointed a student, Marcus Büeler, as his guide (375–376). Büeler played a key role in Coryat's exploration of Zürich, accompanying him throughout and offering context, which Coryat evidently valued highly, often remarking when Büeler related information as well as calling him his "friend" (390, 395). When Coryat departed from Zürich, Büeler and Rudolf Thomann, another friend, accompanied him for some time before Büeler "at our final departing bedewed his cheekes with teares" (395).

Coryat's other friend, Rudolf Thomann, was, like Coryat himself, not an academic, but nevertheless held a high office in Zürich as "the Prefect of the corne market." He is not only described as extremely generous to Coryat but also shares a connection to England as "[a] sonne of his called *Gaspar Thomannus* a man of good gifts, and a lover of learning hath beene many yeaeres commorant in our Universitie of Oxford" (390). This shared link to England not only establishes a connection between Thomann and Coryat, perhaps paving the way for their friendship, but is also deemed interesting by Coryat to his readers in England.

Shortly after introducing Büeler, Coryat describes his next encounter while sightseeing at the armoury:

I was in their armory unto the which I had accesse by the meanes of a worthy learned man of the citie, a great professor of eloquence, a singular linguist. For he spake seven languages, being very skilfull in the Hebrew and Greeke tongue, and a famous traveller. For besides Italy, Germany, and France, which he had well travelled over, he had been also in England, Scotland, and Ireland, a man of so rare and excellent gift [...]. His name is Gaspar Waserus. (378)

This passage exemplifies three key elements of transcultural exchange common in these kinds of encounters. First, Coryat gains access to the armoury through Waser's influence: though it is unclear whether he could have visited without it, Coryat frames the visit with a notion of exclusivity. As we will see, these kinds of recommendations, whether from local people or influential people at home, are crucial for travellers. Secondly, Coryat's mention of Waser's travels to England, Scotland, and Ireland introduce a connection and common ground. Transcultural encounters are often left out of travel accounts of this period, yet when they are included, it is often to signal either a sense of othering and distance—such as when Coryat visits the baths of Baden (398–406)—or a sense of connection,

often relating back home, through Waser's travels to Great Britain in this case. Lastly, this eloquent introduction of Kaspar Waser not only flatters Waser but also positions Coryat in the text as conversing with important, powerful, and "famous" people, social prestige serving as another reason for describing an encounter.

What Coryat deems worthy of description and what conveys a successful journey to Basel and Zürich to his readers is very much focused on the social connections he established. Waser's introduction gives an impression of how smitten Coryat was by the scholars he met:

[...] [Zürich] hath bred more singular learned writers (at the least in my poore opinion) then any one of the famousest Universities of all Christendome. [...] Yea many of them have bene such as have shined like most glittering blazing starres, not onely in their owne country of Switzerland, but also in all other regions and kingdoms of the Christian world that doe sincerely embrace the doctrine of the reformed Church. (393)

Coryat attributes to the scholars an enormous amount of social power extending to "all other regions and kingdoms of the Christian world." To be sure, this flattery is to some extent self-serving, as it elevates his interactions and invitations with these scholars. Yet his descriptions of their scholarship and lectures witness to the significant legacy of the reformation. The reformation and its aftermath formed a crucial connection between the reformed Swiss cantons and England, and especially Zürich theologians kept up an intense correspondence with England (compare with Hastings). Coryat also includes epistles between him and Marcus Büeler, Kaspar Waser, and Rudolf Hospinian, covering twenty-three (unnumbered) pages written upon his return to England, as further evidence of their friendship.

In Basel, Coryat listened to the lecture of Amandus Polanus (422) and proudly reports on conversing with Johann Jakob Grynæus—"a glittering lampe of Gods house" (422). Although Coryat was not an academic, he was drawn to the scholars of the Lectorium of Zürich and the University of Basel not only by a sense of prestige. These institutions and scholars were also instrumental in helping him make sense of his foreign surroundings. Coryat cites Sebastian Münster's authoritative *Cosmographia* to relate the history and background of both Zürich and Basel—citing it twice in Zürich (390, 382) and four times in Basel (416, 417, 424, 434). Yet scholars' personal communications about the city are of equal importance—mentioned five times in Zürich (374, 376, 375b, 390) and four times in Basel (417, 419, 434, 436). Both in Zürich (390) and in Basel

(434) there are instances where he combines personal communication with information from the *Cosmographia*. Thus, the importance of these interactions for Coryat cannot be overstated: the scholars function as “linguistic mediators” (Salzberg 56) or “mobilizers” (Greenblatt 251) for Coryat’s stay.²

In contrast, when Coryat visited a small chapel in Baden “wherein I saw an exceeding multitude of dead mens bones and skulles laid together. I never saw so many dead mens bones together in all my life before,” he can describe what he saw, but in the absence of guiding information, he has to “confesse” that he does not know why there are so many bones (397). Language barriers and the lack of linguistic mediators could leave travellers puzzled by what they saw and vulnerable while travelling. When Coryat got lost upon leaving Baden, “those that met me by the way could not understand my speeches and so gave me no certaine directions,” and it was only when he met a scholar who understood Latin that he was able to find his way back, an ordeal he describes as “such a sinister accident” (397–398). Thus, during Coryat’s visits to Zürich and Basel, the academic institutions hold diverse functions, from being attractions where he might enjoy prestigious interactions, to facilitating access to sites such as the armoury and providing guidance through intermediaries and interpreters.

2. Thomas Platter’s Social Ladder in England, 1599

Unlike Coryat, who travelled alone, the Basel scholar Thomas Platter (1574–1628) embarked on his academic journey with a whole party of companions and reached England in September 1599. Most famous for its eye-witness description of a performance of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, Platter’s account is an incredibly rich source, detailing how well connected and skilful he was in establishing and using social networks. It was written as a tribute to his half-brother, Felix Platter, who had funded his several yearlong studies and travels abroad, and the travel account serves

² In terms of the quotidian mechanics of establishing contact with the scholars and Rudolf Thomann, Coryat is, as was typical for his time, rather silent. However, in another account, Fynes Moryson reports upon visiting Basel in 1592: “My selfe dietet with the Ouerseer of the Coledge, and paied two Guldens a weeke; for strangers may hire chambers in the Coledge, and the Ouerseer willingly admits them to diet with him” (28). This offers an insight into how the university served as an established contact zone for travellers.

to show to Felix that his investment had been worthwhile (Keiser xv). Upon his arrival in Dover, Platter, who had just completed his medical studies in Montpellier, was asked by the mayor of Dover, Edward Kempe, to advise him on his health. Platter obliged and personally brought his prescription to the apothecary in Canterbury. In return, he received a letter of recommendation addressed to Henry Brooke, Baron of Cobham and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (666r).

What Platter does not mention is that his brother-in-law,³ Heinrich Jeckelmann, was working for the mayor at the time, which may explain the mayor's interest in considering a foreigner's advice. Certainly, being the half-brother of the famous Felix Platter did not hurt either (Herzog 365–366, Rother 158, Staehlin 571). Another factor in favour of Jeckelmann's involvement in the meeting between the Kempe and Platter is the effortless communication between the two presented in the text. It is unclear whether Kempe knew any Latin, but comparing it to the great difficulties Platter had in communicating with the mayor of London later in the text, it is surprising how easily the two discussed medical issues and how impressed Kempe was by the advice, supplying him with the letter of recommendation. Jeckelmann was fluent in English and could have served as a linguistic mediator between the two (Zwinger 20). He not only worked—presumably—as a broker between Platter and the mayor of Dover but is explicitly mentioned when Platter visits George Brooke, Henry Brooke's younger brother, in London “bey dem mein schwager Heinrich Jäkelmann gewohnt hatt” (699v), revealing how well connected Jeckelmann was and how Platter benefitted from his network.

Platter visited another already established connection in London, James Meddowes, a theologian who had studied in Basel from 1595 to 1596 while Felix Platter was the principal of the university (Wackernagel 432). After his visit to the Tower, Meddowes and his wife join Platter and his party, spending the rest of the day together, visiting the palace at Greenwich and eating lunch and dinner (680r, 744r–747r). It is possible that Platter and Meddowes had not known each other previously, as Platter was travelling through France when Meddowes was at Basel (compare with Platter), so their contact may have been set up by someone else. In any case, they seemed to have got on well as, two days later, Meddowes made an entry into Platter's album amicorum, specifically mentioning the professors Coryat would meet nine years later, Gynaeus and Polanus as

³ Platter married Chrischona Jeckelmann in 1602, after his travels but before the completion of the travel account which he wrote between 1604–05. Later in the text Heinrich Jeckelmann is described as his brother-in-law (699v).

well as Felix Platter (fol. 182). All of these encounters illustrate how Platter, and therefore also his travel party, oriented themselves in these new places through his social network, showing how important these connections and friends were for travellers (Salzberg 14–15). While in Platter’s account they are not presented as essential to the success of his travels in the way they appear in other accounts, they enhance his social prestige and demonstrate the value of the journey to Felix Platter.

One exciting new acquaintance Platter managed to make was the mayor of London:

Unndt weil der (maieur) stattmeister vernommen, daß wier doch ihm unbekante lust hetten, mitt ihme zeeßen, hatt er uns, junker Stüber, herren Julium unndt mich, durch der statt dieneren einen auf den 13 octobris zum imbiß eßen lassen betten [...] (674v).

This is one of the few instances on his English journey where Platter names his travel companions, revealing that only part of his entourage was selected, which indicates further exclusivity. Noteworthy is also the implied passivity on Platter’s side: the mayor *heard* they were interested and *invites* them; Platter’s active part in *telling* the right person and how he went about it is unfortunately omitted, though it is possible that Meddowes had facilitated this contact.⁴ Although the “imbiss” lasted until the evening, the conversation proved difficult “dann wier nichts verstanden, weder waß sie auf latein, frantzösisch oder spangisch mitt uns redeten,” but luckily they had a translator called “Mr. Boutton,” who also accompanied them on their outing to Richmond (676r, 747v). Clearly, Platter’s privileged status—social and monetary—, travelling in a group with servants, and being able to hire a translator, made his travels much more comfortable than Coryat’s. He writes confidently about his experiences and not being able to understand the language did not create any serious friction or difficulties.

For Platter’s crowning social encounter in England he, and again his two selected friends, went to Nonsuch Palace where he found Henry Brooke, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, for whom Platter had the recommendation letter from the mayor of Dover. They were then granted a guide to tour the palace and were admitted to the “presentz kammer, stellet uns woll herfür, damit wier die königin desto besser sehen konnten” (710v). They got to observe the queen, an encounter that Platter describes

⁴ Johann Jakob Grasser (1579-1627), another academic traveller from Basel, likewise mentions dining with the mayor of London and specifies that James Meddowes had set it up (260).

in great detail, asserting that “man thate uns alle ehr an” by additionally allowing them to watch her eat (712v). He then requested a passport of Lord High Admiral Charles Howard: “als ich erscheine, fulen ettliche auf die knye nider, die waß von ihm begereten; ich aber grüßet ihn auf frantzösisch unndt zeiget ihm mein begeren in frantzösischer sprach an,” contrasting his direct address to the Admiral in French with other people falling to their knees. Howard then wrote a special recommendation “an alle, so in königlichen heüseren wohnen” to grant Platter and his companions special access, including to the usually restricted areas and cabinets (711r). The access Platter was able to gain not only to institutions but also to the most powerful individuals of the country is truly remarkable and proof of the power of his social network and his social status.

When Platter reached Richmond to see the queen for a second time, he met none other than Kaspar Thomann, the son of Rudolf Thomann who in 1608 would tell Coryat about his son who had studied at Oxford. In 1599, Kaspar Thomann was at Richmond trying to get a stipend and permission to study there: according to Platter, he asked him for advice on how best to go about it and also showed him a letter of recommendation from the Zürich magistrate.⁵ Platter asserts that he managed to mediate between the royal secretary and Thomann and thus helped him to obtain the stipend (748r). This is not the last time Thomann appears in a travel account, as the *Jtinerarium* of Marcus Stapfer, who travelled in England between 1611-1613, recently discovered and analyzed by Lukas Erne (2023), advises the reader upon entering London to seek out “Mr. Tomman” as well as the pastor of the French church “Mr. Capel” for advice on how to find good and affordable lodgings (fol. 176r-v). Thomann, alongside the pastor of the French church, thus became himself an intermediary and supporter of other travellers, appearing in three separate travel accounts discovered to date.

Figure 1 illustrates the social encounters in Coryat and Platter as a sociogram, which, although simplified, shows crucial connections they made. This is purely text driven: an encounter originates from a source, describing an event with a place and time, branching into the people encountered in said event, illuminating the author’s social connections. Thus, Thomas Coryat wrote in *Coryat’s Crudities* how he was in Zürich in 1608 and met Büeler, Waser, Hospinian, and Rudolf Thomann. If a person is mentioned but not present this is shown with a dashed line, as with Kaspar Thomann in Zürich and Jeckelmann in London. The same

⁵ The letter is still extant at the National Archives (SP 96/1/45 fol. 45) and a copy is at Zentralbibliothek Zürich (Msc. S 155, fol. 72).

applies to other types of relationships, such as Hospinian appointing Büeler and Jeckelmann's relation to George Brooke.

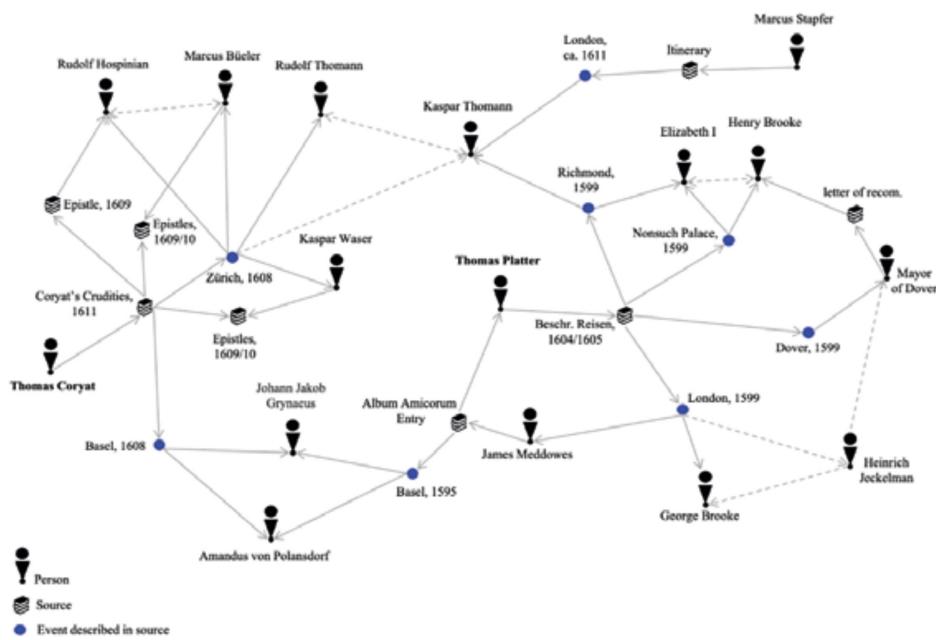


Figure 1. Sociogram centring on Thomas Coryat and Thomas Platter's travel accounts showing a selection of events and resulting social networks described in the connected sources.

3. Kaspar Thomann, a Ghost between Travel Accounts, 1599-1633

Kaspar Thomann's (1574-?) point of view is more elusive, and to date he has been studied very little. There is a set of letters at the Zentralbibliothek Zürich, some of which Rut Keiser (the editor of Platter's account) mentions in her two footnotes. They mainly comprise letters to his support network in Zürich, especially Rudolf Simler and Kaspar Waser, Coryat's acquaintance (100 fol. 5, 866 fol. 2). By far the most elaborate account of Thomann was made by Arnold Lätt, quoting a letter from Thomann to Waser detailing his travels and efforts to be admitted to Oxford as well as the support he received from James Meddowes and Jean Castoll, the pastor of the French Church in 1599 (317–318). Lätt does not make the link between Platter and Thomann, because although Thomann gives a long list of people who supported him and also talks about his efforts to get the Queen's permission at Richmond, he is notably silent

about meeting Platter there. Furthermore, Lätt did not consult the original letter but only read an English translation from 1845 (Hastings 326), which gave the year incorrectly as 1601, giving Lätt no grounds for assuming he could have met Platter. In fairness to Lätt, Hastings only indicated that the letter was in the Simlersche Sammlung, which is to date uncatalogued, and the letter is furthermore in the incorrect volume considering that they are ordered chronologically (Msc. S 155 no. 74).

Thus, here is a brief account of Thomann and his relations to England based on the materials I have found so far. Kaspar Thomann, son of Rudolf Thomann, was baptized on November 16, 1574 (*Taufbuch St. Peter* fol. 80). According to the letter of recommendation to the Queen, he had previously studied at Zürich, Geneva, and Montpellier, though, unfortunately, there are no matriculation entries for him (SP 96/1/45 fol. 45, Msc. S 155 no. 72). He did, however, meet Platter in 1596 in Montpellier (59r), where he likely also made his *album amicorum* entry to him (no. 146).⁶

Sometime in summer 1599 he reached Dover from Dieppe and travelled up to London, immediately connecting with Jean Castoll, the pastor of the French church, with a letter of recommendation from Waser (Msc. S 155 no. 74). In February 1600 he related to both Simler and Waser the long and complicated struggles he had had to go through to be able to study at Oxford, revealing an intricate network of supporters that cannot be discussed in detail here (Msc. S 155 no. 74, MS F 57 fol. 178).⁷ According to Thomann, when James Meddowes learnt about him—this must have been through Platter—he went on a quest to find him and from then on hosted him (Msc. S 155 no. 74). Shortly after the Richmond incident, Thomann fell seriously ill with phthisis and Meddowes and his wife nursed him back to health (MS F 57 fol. 178).

He left for Oxford on December 14 with more letters of recommendation from his new friends in London and was able to gain the support of two Professors there (Msc. S 155 no. 74, MS F 57 fol. 178). On January 24, a committee was set up at Oxford to consider yet another recommendation letter, this time from Rudolf Hospinian—who assigned Büeler to be

⁶ Translated from Latin by Alessandro Lattanzi: “‘Lack of skill also counts as fault, as where a doctor kills a slave by operating on him badly or by giving him the wrong medicine.’ Institutes, §7 on the Lex Aquilia,” and then in French “Damage makes you wise.”

⁷ Apart from Castoll and Meddowes these include: Roger Manners 5. Earl of Rutland, Sir Anthony Hungerford, John Reynolds (Rainolds), Thomas Thornton, Bartholomew Warner, and Christoph Schwyzer another Swiss expatriate.

Coryat's guide—which became grounds to admit Thomann and grant him a stipend to study at Oxford (Clark 151). Of Thomann's time studying in Oxford there are several letters to Zürich voicing increasing disappointment and frustration on not receiving any letters in return and asking for more support (MS F 57 113–118, 177–182). He is also mentioned by Anthony Wood who notes how Thomann “corrupt[ed] the Students” with his “calvinistical Doctrine” (786), and he was recorded as one of the first foreign admissions to the Bodleian library in 1603 (*Liber admissorum* fol. 55v, Clark 264).⁸

As demonstrated, social networks were at the core of the success of Thomann's stay in England,⁹ especially as he wanted to study at Oxford. Both the connections from home, Hospinian, Simler, and Waser's support and letters, and the local intermediaries, especially Meddowes and Castoll who also lent him money, facilitated Thomann's admission to Oxford. The pastor and the French Church, Castoll in 1599 and Capel in 1611, emerge as another anchor point for Swiss (reformed) travellers, with both

⁸ By 1608 he had moved back to London “at Mr Rymes his howse, in the Blackfriers” (MS F 81.40, fol. 62) and by 1611 he mentioned his patron William Seymour as well as Arabella Stuart (Ms F 169 fol. 170, fol. 114b). At around 1611 Stapfer met Thomann in London and mentions him in his account (fol. 176r-v). At some point Thomann started practicing medicine and in 1623 married Anne Wetherall in Shoreditch (*Register of Baptisms and Marriages* 275). Thomann also became friends with Richard Napier (Sawyer 84, 94, 117; Kassell et al.) and discussed astrological and medical matters with Johann Joachim von Rusdorf between 1627 to 1629, still living in London (2° Ms. iurid. 47 Nr. 182–186). This culminated in several censorial hearings by the Royal College of Physicians spanning the years 1627–1633, decrying him as an unlicensed practitioner (“TOOMAN, Gaspar;” *Medical Conflicts in Early Modern London* 185; *Annals* 73r, 102v, 115v, 117v, 118r, 126r, 133v). The outcome of the trials is inconclusive, as is what became of Thomann after this, yet it seems his connection to Zürich had become tenuous over the years (MS F 80.68, fol. 84).

⁹ Some of Thomann's other Swiss connections in England include: Johann Georg Grob (1577-12.10.1642) a fellow scholar from Zurich at Oxford (MS F 57, fol. 180; MS F 57, fol. 177; MS F 57, fol. 179), for more information on Grob see René van der Driesche and Ulrich Gäßler (52); Wolfgang Meyer (Ms F 169, fol. 114b); Christoffel Schweitzer (MS S 154 fol. 74); and two unidentified fellow Swiss travellers “Kippenhannus” and “Werdmullerus” (MS F 57, fol. 178). Further encounters include: Otto of Hesse-Kassel (1594-1617) (Ms F 169, fol. 114b); Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland (1576-1612) (MS S 154 fol. 74); Robert Cecil, 1. Earl of Salisbury (1563-1612) (MS S 154 fol. 74); Thomas Thornton (c.1541–1629) (MS S 154 fol. 74); and a certain Hungerford appears in the majority of letters: this could possibly be Anthony Hungerford (1567-1627).

Stapfer and Thomann sent there upon entering London and even Platter, who evidently did not need a lot of support, visiting and listening to a sermon (673r). Castoll himself was from Geneva and had studied at Oxford as well (Dent 78, Stelling-Michaud 431). He also sent letters to Waser updating him on Thomann's news, likewise recounting Thomann's stay in London and efforts at Richmond (Msc. S 155 no. 73a–b).

4. Kaspar Waser's Travels, 1591-1592

Kaspar Waser's (1565-1625) support of Thomann in England and his hospitality towards Coryat may have been rooted, as we know from Coryat, in his own experiences of travelling through Great Britain as the tutor of Hainzel von Degerstein. Waser was not only an important professor of theology at the Lectorium in Zürich but also a key figure in the foreign networks of Zürich in the seventeenth century, as Sarah Rindlisbacher Thomi has demonstrated (186). It is outside the scope of this article to consider Waser's wider network as Rindlisbacher Thomi has done, so I will only focus on what emerges through the travel accounts. Waser recorded his travels in two itineraries, a German and a Latin version, which are still extant in his biography at the ZB Zürich (MS L 461) and have been carefully studied and transcribed by James K. Cameron. There are a few discrepancies between the two itineraries, most significantly that the German version breaks off after Daventry. Combining and mapping the Latin and German version in figure 2 reveals just how extensive Waser's travels really were—in fact the most extensive of German-speaking travellers at the time ("The British Itinerary" 260), spanning 120 described travel stops.

Considering the extent of the travels, the itineraries are concise in their descriptions. However, there are two notable incidents: at Dalkeith, Waser met King James through a letter of recommendation by Théodore de Bèze (MS L 461 84, 132) and at Aberdeen, Waser visited John Johnston and Robert Howie (85, 133). Howie and Johnston were two friends from Aberdeen. Like many Scottish scholars at the time, they came to Europe to study at different Universities, mainly in Germany and Switzerland, and formed friendships with various Swiss academics best described in Cameron's edition of their correspondences, *Letters of John Johnston and Robert Howie*. Howie and Waser studied at Basel at the same time, and Howie continued to correspond with Johann Jakob Grynæus, whom

Coryat also met, and to whom he reported Waser's visit to Aberdeen in a letter (*Letters of John Johnston and Robert Howie* 303).

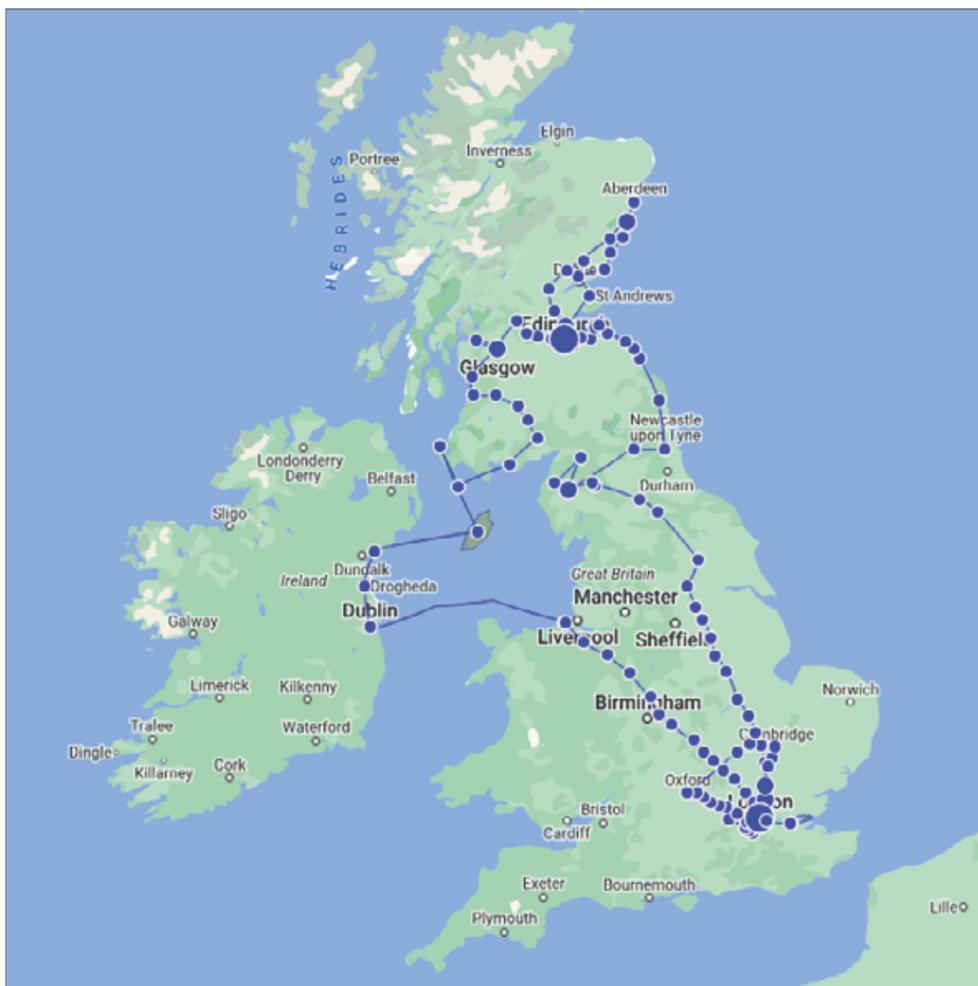


Figure 2. Mapping of Kaspar Waser's 120 travel stops described in his itinerary combining the German and Latin versions using Nodegoat.

Johnston established an incredibly intricate network of connections and correspondences. To mention only people we already know: he first met Waser while studying at Heidelberg where he also met Amandus Polanus, another acquaintance of Coryat, and tutored Rudolf Simler, Thomann's other supporter from Zürich (xxxv). Simler was one of Johnston's favourite students, and there are seven letters to Simler in Cameron. Johnston further visited Zürich, Basel, and Geneva, consequently corresponding with Théodore de Bèze and Johann Jakob Grynaeus. Thus, Waser's itineraries not only reveal two more Anglo-Swiss travellers, but like the tip of an iceberg, offer a glimpse of a highly complex academic network.

Outlining some of the social network emerging through Kaspar Thomann and Kaspar Waser demonstrates an expansion from Coryat and Platter. Coryat's previously illustrated network has been simplified and, as Platter is not mentioned in Thomann's letter, he has been limited to his connection to Meddowes. The Richmond incident described by Platter in figure 1 now has two new narrators, Thomann and Castoll, both omitting Platter but mentioning Meddowes. Hospinian, Waser, and Thomann are now connected. The two events described in Waser's account expand on Johnston and Howie, who have been limited to mentions in the correspondences, but properly tracking their mobility and encounters would reveal an even more complex and intricate social network.

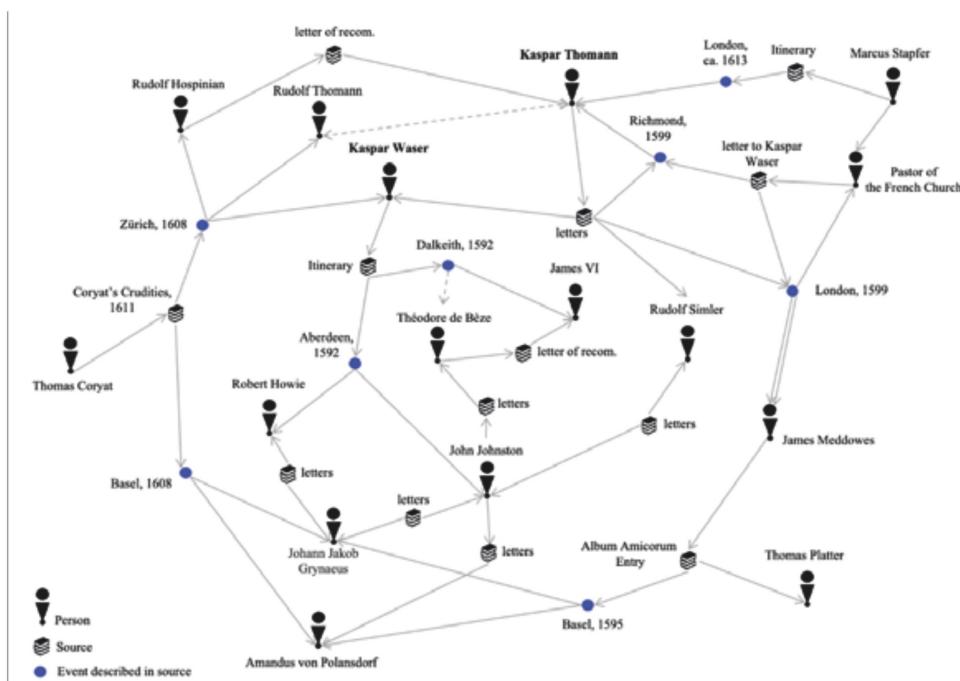


Figure 3. Sociogram centring on Kaspar Waser and Kaspar Thomann's travel accounts, showing a selection of events and resulting social connections. Traces of Robert Howie and John Johnston are limited to selected correspondences, but they both also studied at or visited Basel and Zürich.

5. Conclusion

Using Thomas Coryat's and Thomas Platter's travel accounts as a starting point and selectively tracing their social encounters, contact zones, and intermediaries has revealed just how rich these sources are and how in-

tricate the social network that emerges from them is. Their social encounters shed light on their mode of travelling and the functions of their networks, and we have seen how mere mentions of other people can bring to light more Anglo-Swiss travellers.

To recapitulate, Coryat met Kaspar Waser and was told of Kaspar Thomann; and Platter talks about—and perhaps met—Heinrich Jeckelmann, visited James Meddowes, and met Kaspar Thomann. Marcus Stapfer likewise met Thomann and advised his reader to connect with Thomann as an intermediary, as well as with the pastor of the French church. Thomann himself wrote about his travels to England in a series of letters, documenting not only an intricate support system both in England, including Castoll and Meddowes, and from home, especially Waser and Simler, but also recounted the same event described in Platter, notably omitting Platter from it. Castoll also sent a letter to Waser detailing Thomann's stay in London and efforts at Richmond, likewise naming Thomann's support system, again including Meddowes and omitting Platter. Thomann's presence at Richmond is thus described by three different sources. Waser's itinerary including visits to Howie and Johnston opens up another, new, and decidedly academic, dimension of the network which must be studied further with Cameron's edition.

We thus have a range of writing travellers and we also have travellers with no surviving travel accounts such as Jeckelmann, Castoll, Meddowes, Christoph Schwyzer (another Swiss supporter of Thomann in London), or the unnamed English Gentleman Coryat met at Basel, who called it the “most delectable place” (417). The other encounters described in this article, mainly with academics and politicians, are but a small selection, the true dimensions of the network being far more expansive, yet they highlight different functions and motivations for contact and transcultural exchange, tied to both social prestige and mobilizers.

Meeting a—in Coryat's words—‘famous’ person certainly held social prestige and was documented by Coryat, Platter, and Waser. Platter emerges as exceptionally skilful in navigating the highest circles of English politicians. Additionally, letters of recommendation and the right social connections could provide access to both people and institutions, as demonstrated by virtually all our travellers. At the same time, many of these connections were crucial in allowing travellers to navigate foreign surroundings, overcome language barriers and make sense of what they witnessed. This could include encounters based on guiding or offering orientation, for example with Büeler, but also encounters serving more generally as support and hospitality, as with Meddowes, Castoll, Capel,

and Thomann. Importantly, many of these could also flourish into friendships and genuine connection and should not be limited to just a transactional ‘use.’ Lastly, the importance of academic relations and networks cannot be overstated; again, serving as both a motivation for exchange and a useful support system. None of these considerations exclude others, and collectively they exemplify the diverse meaning of all these connections.

What all of these accounts and people demonstrate is how fluid the role of ‘mobilizer’ truly was and how travelling could transform a person into an intermediary, as with Waser, Castoll, Meddowes, and Thomann.¹⁰ To extend from this, the medium of the travel account itself becomes a ‘mobilizer’ and intermediary. The social functions these texts held and the motivation for writing about social encounters are as diverse as the travellers themselves. Certainly, they not only depict travel—they mobilise themselves. Just as the travellers became intermediaries, the texts too were active agents: facilitating contact; mediating between home and abroad, and, in the case of letters, travelling between countries. In doing so, they helped shape and inspire further mobility, including, eventually, the Grand Tour. The microhistories presented in this article have thus highlighted the potential of reading travel accounts relationally to trace transcultural exchange and to gain a deeper understanding of the different functions of social encounters.

¹⁰ Perhaps also Platter when he advised Thomann at Richmond, yet Thomann certainly did not see it this way.

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