Early Modern Cultures of Translation
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When Pliny the Elder, in the fourth book of his *Natural History*, turns to a description of Europe’s northeastern coast, moving past the Don (Tanais) River, he halts before the Riphean Mountains. These mountains, he contends, are in a part of the world that lies under the condemnation of nature and is plunged in dense darkness, and occupied only by the work of frost and the chilly lurking-places of the north wind. Behind these mountains and beyond the north wind there dwells (if we can believe it) a happy race of people called the Hyperboreans, who live to extreme old age and are famous for legendary marvels. Here are believed to be the hinges on which the firmament turns and the extreme limits of the revolutions of the stars, with six months’ daylight and a single day of the sun in retirement. . . . Some authorities have placed these people not in Europe but on the nearest part of the coasts of Asia, because there is a race there with similar customs and a similar location, named the Attaci.¹

Pliny locates the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains at the edge of the world. Beyond these mountains dwell the Hyperboreans, the legendary *gens felix*; here also may be the hinges of the world (*cardines mundi*). But in Pliny’s text the mountains are made to serve as a twofold and ambiguous border. They
mark the limits of the *oikoumene*, the inhabited world known to the Romans, as well as dividing Europe from Asia. Thus, the mountains concomitantly separate one continent from another and the inhabited world from the legendary world of the Hyperboreans. Far from being a straightforward line of demarcation, then, Pliny’s Riphean and Hyperborean mountain range emerges as a *limes* whose location cannot easily be determined, if indeed it can be located at all.

In fact, the fictitious chain of the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains had already been introduced by Homer and Aristotle, and described by ancient geographers such as Strabo, Pomponius Mela, and Ptolemy, as well as Pliny. The idea of their existence was revived during the Renaissance, when the rediscovery of Ptolemy’s *Geography* in Europe prompted the emergence of the discipline of cartography. Absent from medieval *mappae mundi*, the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains started to emerge on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century maps as mobile markers of boundaries and “natural” demarcation lines of Europe’s eastern territories. As we shall see, it was the Polish humanist Maciej Miechowita who first challenged Ptolemy’s description of the Riphean Mountains in his 1517 treatise titled *Tractatus de duabus Sarmatiis*. Yet despite Miechowita’s claim that these mountains were imaginary, cartographers continued to inscribe them on maps throughout the sixteenth century.

The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, I discuss the rediscovery of Ptolemy’s *Geography* in Europe as a linguistic and visual translation process. Ptolemy’s *Geography* was translated from Greek into Latin in the early years of the fifteenth century and enjoyed immediate success across Europe in various Latin and, subsequently, vernacular editions. These editions triggered the rise of cartography as a complex process of visualizing the ancient treatises in an appropriate way, of translating words into images and maps. Second, my reading of Miechowita’s treatise together with the contemporary production of maps centering on eastern Europe offers a unique—and hitherto little studied—vantage point from which to examine the collision between two epistemological frameworks: the slow and nonlinear translation and visualization process of partially mythical and ill-informed ancient geographic knowledge against the backdrop of the growing empirical knowledge about Europe’s East. Taking the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains as a powerful and quite unique example of erroneous mapping, I explore the creation of early modern cartographic knowledge as well as the persistence of
nonknowledge inscribed on maps as a resistance to empirical knowledge—a resistance that arose from two factors: the persisting authority of ancient geographic and historical sources and a process of mistranslation.

Translating and Visualizing Ptolemy’s *Geography* in Fifteenth-Century Italy

Early modern cartography emerged as a process of visualization and translation of ancient geographic knowledge. Cartography as the translation of geographic knowledge and the figurative codification of shifting spaces became particularly crucial during the “epoch of translations,” the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when voyages of exploration and the mapping of hitherto unexplored territories significantly influenced the understanding of Europe’s contours. Maps call our attention to the oblique relationship between words and images. They serve as a reminder that words do not “illustrate” images or vice versa, but are subject to a complex hermeneutics that requires a skillful interpretive navigation between these two types of figuration. Maps encapsulate knowledge, which unfolds diachronically, as well as the manifold linguistic, cultural, and visual translation processes at their very core. Renaissance cartography and cartographic writing, defined as writing between a poetic and geographic space, emerged together with and as a humanist practice of translation.

In the last years of the fourteenth century, Byzantine émigrés such as Manuel Chrysoloras, who settled in Florence to promote the study of ancient Greek, introduced hitherto unknown ancient Greek and Latin texts to Italy. Among the manuscripts Chrysoloras brought in 1397 was Claudius Ptolemy’s *Geography*, already partially translated by Chrysoloras himself. Ptolemy, a Roman citizen whose mother tongue was Greek, lived and wrote in Alexandria. His seminal work on geography and cartography, *Geographike Hyphegesis* (written ca. 150 CE), circulated widely in Arabic in the Middle East, where it served as the basis for medieval Arab maps and charts. But it remained unknown in Europe until the last years of the fourteenth century, when it became one of the most—if not the most—authoritative texts on the geography and cartography of the oikoumene. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, Ptolemy’s *Geography* served as an undisputed catalyst for the rich production of maps and charts in Renaissance Europe. Ptolemy’s practical instructions for representing the globe on a two-dimensional surface were taken up as a novelty by cartographers and artists alike.
Early fifteenth-century translations and editions of Ptolemy’s *Geography* reveal the instability of cartographic terminology due to the hesitant application and location of ancient toponyms in a period radically different from Latin antiquity. According to some historians of cartography, the Renaissance translations of Ptolemy and humanist reflection upon the *Geography*’s nomenclature made more of an impact on the creation of early modern cartographic terminology than the actual discovery of new territories. David Woodward has claimed that “more printed maps of the world owed their allegiance to Ptolemy in the first fifty years of map printing than to the new discoveries, even though by the end of that half-century period Magellan’s *Vittoria* had sailed round the world.” As John W. Hessler has recently pointed out, “the influence of Ptolemy’s *Geographia* during the Renaissance in Europe cannot be overstated.”

The *Geography* was first translated from Greek into Latin in the first decade of the fifteenth century. The Italian humanist Leonardo Bruni, one of Chrysoloras’s students and the author of the first theoretical Renaissance treatise on translation, *De interpretatione recta* (ca. 1424), followed Chrysoloras in his attempt to translate Ptolemy’s *Geography*. From a letter he addressed to Niccolò Niccoli we know that Bruni finally abandoned this translation project, which was eventually completed by Jacopo Angeli da Scarperia. Angeli da Scarperia, who had owned a manuscript of the *Geography* since 1400, was encouraged by Cardinal Peter Filargis of Candia to revise and complete Chrysoloras’s version for publication, a task Angeli accomplished in 1409–1410. Ptolemy’s *Geography* then appeared under the title *Cosmographia*.

Angeli da Scarperia dedicated his Latin translation to Pope Alexander V. In the dedication, he emphasized the importance of Greek language and culture for the study of geography and cartography. According to Angeli, the Romans (and Pliny the Elder in particular) were “unambitious, unmathematical, and anecdotal”: they neglected the “problems of depicting scale, the calculation of longitude and latitude, and techniques of celestial measurement.” None of the Latin writers, Angeli continues, “explains how our globe, which is spherical, can be described on a two-dimensional surface.” For this reason he had undertaken the task of translating Ptolemy from Greek into Latin. Furthermore, Angeli traces the translation of power and knowledge from antiquity to his own times. He establishes a *translatio imperii*, creating a genealogy that runs from Alexander the Great to the Alexandrian geographer Ptolemy to Pope Alexander V, under whose aegis Italy will come to realize its imperialist project: “A kind of divine presentiment of your [Pope Alexander V’s] soon-to-be-realized empire impelled you to desire the work,
so that you could learn clearly from it how ample would be the power you
would soon hold over the entire world.”\(^{18}\) Angeli’s project is thus more than a
linguistic translation—it strongly promotes the idea of imperial expansion un-
der the guidance of the Roman pope.

Already the chancellor of the Republic of Florence, Coluccio Salutati, as
well as the banker and humanist Palla Strozzi, “the most important backers
of Chrysoloras’ mission,”\(^{19}\) had envisaged a *translatio studii* through the trans-
lation and dissemination of important and powerful texts from Greek antiq-
uit\(\text{u}\)ity. Ptolemy’s *Geography* was considered to be such a text. Despite the fact
that the *editio princeps* of Angeli’s translation did not contain maps,\(^{20}\) which
were added only in subsequent editions,\(^{21}\) quite understandably “the visual
and theoretical elements of Ptolemy’s work . . . came to exert far greater influ-
ence across the Italian peninsula” than its exhaustive catalogues of ancient top-
onyms, which “even to many committed antiquarians, must have seemed ar-
cane, dry, and hopelessly out of date.”\(^{22}\) In the first half of the fifteenth century,
Florence was known for its *botteghe*, the workshops of illuminators, bookbind-
ers, scribes, and, later on, printers; and the production of the *Geography* soon
became part of the flourishing publishing industry. The gridded maps pro-
duced by these workshops allowed for a radically new cartographic design that
significantly differed from the schematism of the medieval *mappae mundi*.\(^{23}\)

Although there is no evidence that Ptolemy himself had actually produced
maps, Renaissance humanists considered the maps that Chrysoloras brought
with him from Byzantium to be contemporaneous with Ptolemy. Yet of the
fifty-three extant Greek manuscripts of Ptolemy’s *Geography*, none was pro-
duced before the late thirteenth century. Hence, a time span of over one thou-
sand years separates the earliest extant manuscripts from Ptolemy’s original
text,\(^{24}\) allowing the translational uncertainties posed by single words and top-
onyms to enter the interpretive spaces between geographic description and
depiction. Florian Mittenhuber notes that “the drawing of a map is the trans-
lation of a text into an image. When the text contains instructions on how to
create the drawing, and the original maps have also survived, the text and maps
can be checked against each other.”\(^{25}\) In the case of Ptolemy’s manuscripts,
this was obviously not possible. However, the cartographic relationship be-
tween text and image is not only a question of comparing extant materials: it
is also a careful process of resisting errors—while inevitably introducing them.

Jonathan Bloom has argued that “ancient authors such as Vitruvius, Pliny
the Elder, and Galen actually avoided illustrating their works and advised oth-
ers against the practice because images would soon be corrupted in the hands
of copyists.” Copying a word, though, was understandably less difficult than copying a map. “Complex visual data could not be communicated via visual media; for the most part, such data had to be translated into verbal discourse, primarily that of the written word.” From the purely pragmatic perspective of an ancient scriptorium, “if a reader dictated a text to ten copyists, there resulted ten copies of the same text, albeit with potential variations in the styles of handwriting that would not, in principle, compromise the legibility of the alphabetic text. Images could not, of course, be dictated in the same fashion.” Images followed a different logic of replication and circulation, and it is not surprising that Ptolemaic map production rapidly increased during the second half of the fifteenth century, concomitantly with the development of printed books, when the reader-copyist system slowly became obsolete. While ancient geographers rarely copied maps, Ptolemy’s interest in visualizing space allowed him to perfect “a system of plotting geometric coordinates in which a pair of numbers (representing longitude and latitude) could describe every significant point on a map.” It seems, however, that Ptolemy’s system of map production remained hypothetical and was, as far as we know, never put into practice. While favoring potential map productions, his system was, at the same time, designed to allow the translation of images into numbers. Or as Jonathan Bloom observes: “The alphanumeric data in his commentaries contained all the necessary information to generate these images afresh without recourse to earlier drawings. Ptolemy’s greatness lies, therefore, in his discovery of how to transform images into a sequence of letters and numerals that could be recorded and transmitted without distortion. In effect, he was the first to digitize images.”

Ptolemy was thus the first to theorize and elaborate a system of digital cartographic translatability and the conversion of iconic into numeric data. While his maps are not extant—or never existed, as some scholars claim—his Geography offered, for the first time, a method for producing and reproducing visual images by transposing alphanumeric data onto a gridded and uniformly scaled surface.

Charting Cartographies in Europe’s East

Around 1460, Nicolaus Germanus, a Benedictine friar of German origin, developed a new set of Ptolemaic maps. Germanus recognized that previous models as well as older Byzantine maps could not have used the techniques
that Ptolemy described in his work. Germanus based his own maps, one of which he presented to Borso d’Este of Ferrara, on a sustained reading of the theoretical part of Ptolemy’s *Geography*, which enabled him to offer a new visualization of the *oikoumene*. His maps became a crucial point of reference for subsequent cartographers and were disseminated across Europe (Figure 7). On Germanus’s map, eastern Europe is imagined after Ptolemy, who had posited the *limes* between Europe and Asia as the Don River (also known by the Greek name Tanais), and named the borderlands on each side of the river the “two Sarmatias.”\(^3\) In Ptolemy’s *Geography*, the territory of Sarmatia (nowadays Poland, the Baltic States, and Ukraine) is permeated by numerous (and fictitious) mountain chains, such as the Riphean Mountains, which gives it the appearance of a tightly knit web of knotted ropes, forming the region’s centerpiece and the map’s distinctive visual feature. The mountain chains span the region diagonally,
Erroneous Mappings

from northeast to southwest: from the source of the Tanais River (the Riphean Mountains, according to the imagery of the ancients) to “Germania.”

The rediscovery, translation, and visualization of Ptolemy’s Geography, which allowed the localization of the source of the Tanais River, thus triggered the question about the precise location of the Riphean Mountains. Renaissance cartographers like Germanus placed the Riphean Mountains in eastern Europe. However, Germanus moved the mountains like a mobile set piece across the map from Europe’s borders with Asia, where Pliny had located them in his Natural History, to the very center of eastern Europe. On Germanus’s map, the Riphean Mountains do not function as a natural boundary between two continents or a powerful line of demarcation between the world of the Hyperboreans. Rather, they occupy the entire region like an obstacle course, turning eastern Europe into an inaccessible and impenetrable part of Europe.

The Polish historian, astronomer, and physician Maciej Miechowita (1457c.–1523), the author of the first printed history of Poland, Chronica Polonorum (1519), was the first European humanist to challenge Ptolemy’s description and the Renaissance cartographers’ mapping of the Riphean Mountains. It is to a particularly complex boundary that Miechowita dedicates his treatise: the continental divide between Europe and Asia. In his 1517 Tractatus de duabus Sarmatiis Asiana et Europiana et de contentis in eis, Miechowita dismissed the Riphean Mountains as a fictitious mountain chain. Published in Kraków, the capital of the Polish kingdom, the treatise was disseminated across Europe in successive Latin editions as well as in German, Polish, Italian, and Dutch translations. Its 1535 translation into Polish by Andrzej Glaber z Kobylina makes the Tractatus one of the first texts published in the Polish vernacular. Moreover, it was the first work by a Polish author to be translated into Italian, and was included in Giovanni Battista Ramusio’s seminal 1583 travel anthology, Navigazioni e viaggi, in a translation by Annibal Maggi, alongside such authors as Marco Polo, Columbus, and Vespucci. Immediately after its publication, Miechowita’s Tractatus provided a blueprint for European cosmographers, historians, travelers, and politicians to rethink the topographies, languages, and cultures of eastern Europe and to conceptualize Europe’s eastern boundaries. Highly invested in a study of both ancient and medieval geographic and historical accounts and of cosmographers’ descriptions of the origins and migrations of European and Asian peoples, Miechowita understood that territories are subject to continuous movements and shifts.

Miechowita wrote his treatise at a time when several other Polish humanists, cosmographers, and cartographers were reflecting upon the cartographic
representation of eastern Europe, and of Poland in particular. In 1506, Jan of Głogów, a professor of astronomy at Jagellonian University, published a commentary on Sacrobosco’s *Introductorium in tractatum Sphaerae*, which, according to Leszek Hajdukiewicz, contains fragments commenting upon the discovery of the New World. The next year, 1507, marked a crucial moment in discovery-related mapmaking for both the East and the West: in that year Martin Waldseemüller and Matthias Ringmann famously included the name “America” in their world map titled *Universalis Cosmographia*. The same year, the Polish cartographer and historian Bernard Wapowski (ca. 1450–1535), cathedral canon at Kraków, collaborated on Marco Beneventano’s 1507 Rome edition of Ptolemy’s *Geography* (Figure 8). This edition included twenty-seven ancient maps depicting the Ptolemaic *oikoumene* next to six modern maps of newly discovered territories. In particular, Wapowski helped to map Europe’s hitherto unknown eastern territories, creating what is considered to be the first modern map of Poland. Among the map’s most
prominent cartographic features are the Riphean Mountains, here called “Rissei Montes” (Figure 9).

In 1512, Jan Stobnica published an edition of Ptolemy titled *Introductio in Ptolemaei Cosmographiam* (a second edition followed in 1519). Besides providing references to Amerigo Vespucci and the “mundus novus,” Stobnica’s *Introductio* contains an abridged version of Enea Silvio Piccolomini’s treatise *De Europa*—which Stobnica titled *Epitoma Europe*—as well as Piccolomini’s treatise *De Asia*, Isidore of Seville’s *Sirie compendiosa descriptio*, Paulus Osi-rius’s *Africe brevis descriptio*, and Anselm’s *Terrae sancte & Urbis Hierusalem apertior descriptio*. Stobnica contends that the western boundaries of the *oikoumene* have shifted with the discovery of the “mundus novus,” the site of territories “unknown to Ptolemy and other ancients,” while Sarmatia, Europe’s eastern part, has remained unchanged. Piccolomini’s description of *Europa* thus exemplifies and underscores what Stobnica considers to be “the immutable [immutabile] parts of Sarmatia.”

A look at the different texts assembled in Stobnica’s *Introductio* makes it clear that the western and eastern parts of the *oikoumene* belong to two epistemologically disconnected frameworks. Similarly, Waldseemüller’s *Universalis Cosmographia* map features the portraits of both Vespucci and Ptolemy, juxtaposed as geographic authorities contemplating the shifting
boundaries of the “mundus novus” in the first case and the immobilized borders of the *oikoumene* on the other. While Vespucci gazes at “America” (Figure 10), Ptolemy contemplates Europe, Asia, and Africa (Figure 11), the three continents described in his *Geography*.\textsuperscript{44} Termed a “transitional” or “synthetic” map,\textsuperscript{45} Waldseemüller’s map contains updated geographic knowledge in the west, while displaying an ancient, specifically Ptolemaic, spatial and toponymic organization of the *oikoumene*, in particular “the northern and eastern parts [which] have Ptolemaic, schematic or even imaginary shapes.”\textsuperscript{46} John W. Hessler has argued that “the Mediterranean and the north of Africa on the Waldseemüller 1507 map are very much Ptolemaic representations. The majority of the shapes and outlines of the coastlines of these regions are similar in appearance to those found in Ptolemy’s *Geographia*, even though Waldseemüller would have known them to be quite different.”\textsuperscript{47} Yet the example of Sarmatia—and, in particular, the question of where to locate and how to map the Riphean Mountains—shows that Europe’s East was perceived as a territory whose borders had been rendered unchangeable in deference to the long-standing authority of the ancients.

Stobnica’s *Introductio* is a unique example of cartographic writing organized analogously to Waldseemüller’s map. Stobnica’s choice of texts to
describe the “four parts” of the world shows that he relies on both Ptolemy and Vespucci: “Ptolemy translated [tradidit] the three parts of the world known to the ancients into twenty-six images [tabulis], of which ten are on Europe, four on Africa and twelve on Asia.” The other, fourth, part—that is, the New World—“has been invented by Amerigo Vespucci, a man of acute genius, and they want to name it ‘Amerige,’ ‘Land of America,’ so to speak, or ‘America’ after its inventor Amerigo himself.” Waldseemuller’s map as well as Piccolomini’s treatise De Asia, first published together in Paris in 1509 by the French humanist Geoffroy Tory and then in Stobnica’s Introductio, recognize the Riphean Mountains as an intrinsic part of Europe’s East. In De Asia, Piccolomini writes that “the Apennines cut across all of Italy. On the other side, high summits run across Histria and Dalmatia to the Peloponnese and Thracia, and between the Rhine and the Danube emerges a mountain ridge, which, deriving from the Alps, dissolves toward Germany and Sarmatia. Above the sources of the Tanais River it reaches the Riphean Mountains, from which it joins the Caucasus and then the Taurus through the Caspian Antitaurus. Beyond the Taurus, the Romans allowed Antioch the Great to rule. One concludes that the entire continent can be understood as a series of mountains, although in many places it appears as not much more than a swelling [tumor].” Thus
Piccolomini describes Europe’s geography and cartography as mountain chains stretching across the continent like a more or less pronounced “swelling.”

The Riphean Mountains did not disappear from early sixteenth-century maps, and the cartographic image of eastern Europe as an ill-defined network of orographic protuberances persisted. Considered “immutable,” these mountains took on the function not only of boundaries between Europe and Asia but also of natural highways traversing and connecting Europe’s hitherto poorly understood and described geography. The Riphean Mountains were translated not only onto modern maps but onto the first globes as well. In 1515 the bishop of Babenberg, Johann Schöner, “one of the great neglected personalities of the scientific revolution,” created a globe along with a cartographic work titled *Cosmographia* to describe and explain it. In the chapter focusing on “Europa,” Schöner states that “the Alps put forth three branches. The first extends across Swabia, Bohemia, Silesia to Poland, where [Nikolaus] Krumpach calls the vernacular language Carpathian. Continuing, one proceeds to Russia, where the Riphean [Mountain] seems to rejoice in the perpetual breeze of winds.” Thus for Schöner in his *Cosmographia* the Riphean Mountains originate in Europe and terminate in Asia, as orographic extensions of the Alps.

Only two years later, in 1517, Maciej Miechowita published his *Tractatus de duabus Sarmatiis*—the first European treatise to overtly challenge the existence of the Riphean Mountains. In several passages Miechowita underscored that the Riphean Mountains are a mere invention of ancient geographers who had never even traveled to those territories. In the dedication to his treatise, Miechowita writes:

[Ancient] writers claim that in the northern regions there are world-famous [orbe terrarum nominatissimos] mountains, called the Alan, Hyperborean, and Riphean mountains, from which flow no less famous rivers such as the Tanais, the major and minor Borysthenes, and the grand river Volga, described by cosmographers and famous poets in words and songs. Yet this is far from being true, since this information does not originate in a consideration of the thing itself (abs re)—experience is the teacher of sayable things—and has to be rejected as a profane and inexperienced declaration [prophanum, in-experteque provulgatum]. We know for certain and have seen that the Hyperborean, Riphean, and Alan mountains do not exist and that the above-mentioned rivers originate and have their sources in a flat plain [ex terra plana].
The publication of Miechowita’s treatise fueled discussions about the toponography of eastern Europe and, in particular, about the veracity of the ancient cosmographical claim that a lofty mountain chain, the mythical Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains, cut through Europe’s eastern regions, dividing not only the different northeastern peoples from each other but also the inhabited from the uninhabited zones. Miechowita claimed that Europe’s East was entirely flat and girded by a few fully passable hills. This claim—a bold rejection not only of ancient authorities, but also of authoritative near-contemporaries and influential Italian humanists such as Enea Silvio Piccolomini and Flavio Biondo—received attention from Europe’s humanists, geographers, and politicians alike. Emperor Maximilian I sent his delegate Siegmund von Herberstein to the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, where he had already been on a diplomatic mission in 1517, in order to verify Miechowita’s geographic claims. Von Herberstein returned with an affirmation of Miechowita’s findings and a new travel account, Rerum Moscovitarum comentarii (1549), the first sustained description of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, albeit highly indebted to Miechowita’s Tractatus.

In fact, Miechowita himself had never traveled to the lands that he described. His knowledge of the nonexistence of the Hyperborean, Riphean, and Alan Mountains stemmed from the accounts of political emigrants, soldiers, merchants, and prisoners of war. Thus his claim to have seen for himself the flat plain where the ancients had located the alleged mountains should be taken with a grain of salt. Miechowita did base his treatise on ancient sources—traceable even in the choice of his Ptolemaic title—even while altering or dismissing them in a few specific instances. Familiar with maps such as Nicolaus Germanus’s “Sarmatia Europe,” where eastern Europe is depicted as a dense and formidable orographic grid, Miechowita proposed not only a new cartography but also a different perception of Europe’s East, which now became open and accessible. Miechowita’s concomitant appropriation and rejection of Ptolemy constitutes a unique vantage point that discloses the selective adaptation of ancient geographic knowledge in early modern Europe. The specific example of the mountains offers a particularly powerful insight into this adaptation and transformation process. As scholars have claimed, Miechowita’s emphasis on the absence of the mountains was politically motivated—which may explain why this specific deviation from Ptolemy seemed so important to him. It allowed both the author and the Polish king Sigismund I (1467–1548), in whose service Miechowita was writing, to imagine and project Poland’s expansion to the east.
In the years during which Miechowita was writing the treatise, the Polish king and the grand duke of Muscovy were competing for the territories east of the Polish Commonwealth—territories that Miechowita referred to by the Latin name “Sarmatia.” Although Muscovy was defeated in the battle of Orsha in 1514 and the Polish kingdom was charting an expansionist politics to the east, Muscovy’s subsequent conquest of Smolensk, as well as its increasing power, which resulted in the establishment of the Russian tsardom in 1547, made “Sarmatia” a contested battleground—a flat plain, devoid of mountain chains, that could easily be traversed.

The flatness of Europe’s East was strategically important, not only politically but also economically. In his dedicatory epistle to Stanislas Turzo, bishop of the Bohemian town of Olomouc and member of a powerful banking family, Miechowita describes the topic of his treatise:

I wrote the subsequent Treatise on the two Sarmatias, which the Ancients referred to by lesser known names than our contemporaries, to tell you, most learned patron, truthfully about these and many other things contained in the Sarmatias [in Sarmatiis]. I write to you briefly, my dearest master and patron, as the topic demands, and will make sure [curabo] to encourage others, who have discovered greater things to write more freely and in more elegant words. Just as the Portuguese king discovered the Southern Hemisphere with peoples adjacent to the ocean as far as India, so the Polish king shall venture into the northern hemisphere and reveal and illuminate, through the discoveries undertaken by means of military campaigns and wars, peoples oriented toward the east living close to the northern ocean.60

Here, Miechowita establishes an analogy between the discoveries of India and the Southern Hemisphere by the Portuguese king (referring to Manuel I) and, as Miechowita hopes, the new territorial discoveries of northeastern Europe under the aegis of the Polish king (Sigismund I). Miechowita suggests that Sigismund I venture into and disclose (aperta) the hitherto unexplored Northern Hemisphere by means of military campaigns and wars (per militia et bella). Like the Portuguese king61 who discovered and colonized the Southern Hemisphere, Sigismund I will thus illuminate (clarescat) the Northern Hemisphere, inhabited by peoples bordering on the northern ocean facing the East, in order to make it accessible to the world (mundo pateat). Miechowita’s
use of a wide range of verbs that denote openness,\textsuperscript{62} such as the participle “aperta” or the verbs “clarescat” and “pateat,” gestures toward the discovery and disclosure of the Northern Hemisphere, beyond the present boundaries of Poland.\textsuperscript{63} Miechowita’s powerful geostrategic positioning of the Polish king as a discoverer of new territories—by translating the vertical Ptolemaic landscape into a horizontal and trafficable territory—created, for the first time, a larger European awareness not only of the geography but also of the geostrategic potential of Europe’s East.

From Maciej Miechowita to Abraham Ortelius

Yet despite the manifold editions and translations of Miechowita’s new reading of Ptolemy, the myth of the Riphean Mountains persisted in the imaginary of Renaissance cartographers. Abraham Ortelius’s 1570 \textit{Theatrum orbis terrarum}, considered to be one of the first atlases, is a powerful case in point that illustrates the complex relation between early modern cartography and the translation and visualization of ancient geographic sources.\textsuperscript{64} While Ortelius relies on sources such as Miechowita and dismisses the Riphean Mountains from his maps, a mountain range still occupies the northeastern part of the \textit{oikoumene}, east of Tartaria, at the borders of the “Oceanus Sciticus.” Ortelius names this mountain range the “Orbis zona montes”\textsuperscript{65} (Figure 12) or the “Zona mundi montes.”\textsuperscript{66}

The Riphean Mountains have disappeared in name only: a generic mountain chain now takes their place as a remnant of a fading yet persistent Ptolemaic geography. But here the “natural” mountain chain has been transformed into an artificial and symbolic, rather than effective, marker of boundaries. At the same time, the divergent cartographic nomenclature associated with the mountainous zone, which oscillates between “orbis” and “mundus,”\textsuperscript{67} gestures toward early modernity’s multiple—and conflicting—epistemological frameworks and its wavering mapping and irresolute naming of the “world.”

While the name of the Riphean Mountains has vanished from the map proper, it persists in the \textit{Album amicorum} written for Ortelius by several of his friends with the purpose of chronicling and commenting upon the creation process of his \textit{Atlas}. These comments and testimonies offer a look not only into the workshop of a famous Renaissance cartographer, but also into the
etymology of the noun théatron (theater) and the verb théaomai (to see, look), especially in the context of the new territorial discoveries. One commentator, Pietro Bizzarri, writes that Ortelius has brought to light a territory that many people had ignored and that has now been made visible to everyone. For Jean-Marc Besse, a “new visibility of the world” emerged precisely with Ortelius, whose entourage found that accurate vision and visualization offered a new way of representing the world in its totality. Even the title of Ortelius’s work, *Theatrum*, turns the focus onto the etymological meaning of “theatron” as
vision and visualization. Yet a careful reading of other contributions to the *Album* shows that this new visibility and process of visualization were still obscured and obstructed by readings drawn from ancient geographical sources. Thus the antiquarian Cornelis Claesz Van Aecken from Leiden can note:

> Who would deny that you [Ortelius] have mastered all the sciences? You certainly have mastered all those pertaining to the lands. What could be more famous than your world, which you dared suspend on a thin paper, after having it cut into gores [=sectors of a map’s curved surface] on several maps, so that what had previously been unknown, and what one could enjoy up till now only as if through a sort of haze, has been proposed to the eyes, to the senses of humans? This very universe is accessible by the virtue and the genius of your Theater from the rise of the sun to the Sea of Azov; one can traverse it beyond the occidental isthmus, to the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains.70

For Van Aecken, Ortelius’s “genius” consists in his ability to present the world in such a way that the boundary separating the onlooker and the cartographic representation disappears. In a crossing of empirical and fictional boundaries, this newly discovered world itself becomes accessible to the readers of the atlas in the form of a sequence of regional maps71 and comprehensible in its globality and universality, all the way from the west to the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains. What might surprise, however, is Van Aecken’s choice of topographic examples to help the reader visualize the widening extent of the world in an age of territorial “discoveries.” Instead of citing territories discovered by his contemporaries, Van Aecken hearkens back to the imaginary and mythical places described by Greek and Roman geographers. The world he describes is indebted to Ptolemy more than to Magellan, in stark contrast to the topography of the already known and circumnavigated world. Van Aecken’s reference to the Riphean Mountains reveals the slow, nonlinear process of implementing, applying, and expanding early modern cartographic knowledge. It also sheds light upon Van Aecken’s doubt about cartography as a new science whose task it was to translate ancient geographic knowledge into early modernity. What Van Aecken seems to underscore in his comment is, instead, cartography’s performativity, its ability to represent and visualize the world as a *theatron* of nonknowledge.
In one of his works on early modern cartography, Tom Conley states:

[New historicists] ask how the “world” could be both imagined and experienced when its boundaries were expanding at exponential rates. Cartographic studies have shown where the unknown, vital for any definition of consciousness or even the drives of life itself, was located and bracketed. The unknown was an integral part of cartography prior to the eighteenth century. But to assert, as many have, that cartography sought to contain the unknown within the *terrae incognitae* it indicated on its maps does not solve the relation of the discipline with the unknown. Evidence shows how much in the early modern age the unknown inhabits most written and schematic representations of the world. Unnamed patches that we retrieve on maps printed in the sixteenth century prompt reverie of spaces that can be fancied as unknown by virtue of the maps themselves.72

Although the world was potentially known and navigable in its entire extent since its circumnavigation by Magellan in 1519–22, cartographers and humanists continued to depict the Riphean Mountains on maps and to describe them in geographic texts as a way of indicating the remaining areas of non-knowledge. The Riphean Mountains powerfully reveal that several topographic “patches” remained unnamed or were misinterpreted on early modern maps even after Magellan. Early modern cartography was composed of “reveries of spaces” creating visualized fictions based on ancient geographic knowledge in an age of territorial discoveries. For J. P. Harley, who describes “mapping and silencing knowledge on maps” as an “active human performance,”73 cartographic activity involved the translation, visualization, and representation not only of knowledge, but also, as for Conley, of nonknowledge. In Harley’s view, the consciously inserted lacunae and topoi of nonknowledge from Homer’s *Odyssey* to early modern cartography can be understood as a complex and nonlinear interaction between geographic knowledge and nonknowledge, where “silence and utterance are not alternatives but constituent parts of map language, each necessary for the understanding of the other.”74

The complex interaction between knowledge and nonknowledge, concretized in the creation of early modern maps, is a process of translation. As the case of the impossible translation and repeated visualization of imaginary mountains shows, the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains revealed the persistence of nominal and spatial mistranslation. One might ask whether ficti-
tious mountains are not bearers of an additional translational dimension, serving as tokens that facilitate cartographic translation by rendering chaotic landscape more comprehensible and thus meaningful. In his “Essai de géographie physique” (1751), the French geographer Philippe Buache advanced the theory that a mountain range spans the entire globe, enclosing it like an exoskeleton, partly under sea level, partly in the shape of dispersed islands. The cultural geographer Bernard Debarbieux argues that Buache’s insistence on this chain of mountains is an “expression of his desire to find order in this apparent disorder, and to identify some principles by virtue of which natural objects may hold together. The theory of the continuity of mountain ranges rests upon these assumptions. It treated mountains analogically as a kind of framework, which [Buache] envisages as the support for different parts of the terrestrial globe and which is formed of high ranges encompassing and crossing it.”75 These visualized mountain chains serve as systems for organizing objects in space. They are not empirical objects that can be represented and measured scientifically. Rather, they function as conceptual frameworks and theoretical constructs that help translate and visualize knowledge. Thus, for Debarbieux, “Buache’s system is therefore first and foremost a logical ordering of natural objects in space, objects which are organised into reasonably simple and complementary categories.”76

In his early essay on uninhabited islands, Gilles Deleuze compared islands with mountains. For him, islands are mountains set in bodies of water, while mountains are islands on dry land. Both islands and mountains are not primary original sites, created by God, but sites created by the human imagination. They constitute sites of a second origin:

The island, and all the more so the deserted island, is an extremely poor or weak notion from the point of view of geography. This is to its credit. The range of islands has no objective unity, and deserted islands have even less. . . . The essence of the deserted island is imaginary and not actual, mythological and not geographical. At the same time, its destiny is subject to those human conditions that make mythology possible. Mythology is not simply willed into existence, and the peoples of the earth quickly ensured they would no longer understand their own myths. It is at this very moment literature begins. Literature is the attempt to interpret, in an ingenious way, the myths we no longer understand, at the moment we no longer understand them, since we no longer know how to dream them.
or reproduce them. Literature is the competition of misinterpretations that consciousness naturally and necessarily produces on themes of the unconscious, and like every competition it has its prizes.\textsuperscript{77}

For Deleuze, there are no maps without an imaginary element—a desert island or an unknown mountain—which serve as productive nuclei of cartographic productions and translational activities. Here, literature becomes an attempt to interpret and translate “myths we no longer understand.” No wonder, then, that the Riphean Mountains have not entirely vanished from our maps. While twenty-first-century GIS-based digital mapping leaves little space for cartographic nonknowledge on our globe, the Riphean Mountains have undergone a \textit{translatio} from the earth to the moon. The “Montes Riphæus, or the Riphæan Mountains” is now the name for “an isolated range on the Oceanus Procellarum, the Ocean of Storms. Running in a north-south direction these low peaks are not particularly high, the tallest is just short of being 1 mile above the plain.”\textsuperscript{78} The isolated and island-like Riphean Mountains continue to function as a productive source of spatial translations and cartographic visualizations. They serve as a mobile \textit{limes}, now transported to the moon. As such, they help to chronicle the complex boundaries between knowledge and nonknowledge, charting the intrinsic relationships among cartography, translation, and visualization in an age of digitalization.
39. On Charles’s macaronics, see John Fox, “Glanures,” in *Charles d’Orléans in England, 1415–1440*, ed. Mary-Jo Arn (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell and Brewer, 2000), 89–108. Charles d’Orléans, father of Louis XII, was held prisoner in England for twenty-five years after the battle of Agincourt. During his captivity he wrote French lyrics and also some sixty-five hundred lines of skillful English poetry, now MS Harley 682, the first single-author English lyric sequence. A large, bilingual (French-Latin) vellum codex, Grenoble MS 873, was made by his secretary Astesano; on MS 873, see A. E. B. Coldiron, *Canon, Period, and the Poetry of Charles d’Orléans: Found in Translation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 112–44.

40. Archibald, “Tradition and Innovation,” explores the medieval poetic backgrounds and the macaronics of Skelton and Dunbar, creating a taxonomy of how English medieval macaronic verse works (p. 18). Her four categories are Latin refrains or burdens; regularly alternating Latin lines, half-lines, or stanzas; randomly inserted Latin words, phrases, or lines; and blocks of Latin lines that do not conform to a standard verse pattern. The English medieval macaronic tradition also includes prose, songs, and verse, and a thriving line of Latin-English sermons, aimed, according to Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, at a late medieval bilingual discursive community (see “Bilingualism in Action,” 105–29, on the status of late medieval Latin and English).


42. Trotter, *Multilingualism*; Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, ed., *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain* (Woodbridge, UK: York Medieval, 2009). On the aureate line, Archibald (“Tradition,” p. 130, n.12) reminds us that Patrick Diehl “sees auration as a natural development from macaronic verse: ‘As the vernaculars sought to make themselves as much a grammatical as Latin, it was natural that they should move from juxtaposing Latin with themselves to an effort to annex it’ (p. 166),” citing Diehl, *The Medieval European Religious Lyric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

43. Marie Hause, however, finds that they do not turn up much in the *Private Libraries in Renaissance England*.

44. Full discussion of the patterns of printing and translation that reveal the foundational foreignness of English literary nationhood is beyond my scope here but forms the subject of my *Printers Without Borders: Translation and Textuality in Renaissance England* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). A version of this chapter will appear in part there.

4. ERRONEOUS MAPPINGS


2. In his book on Renaissance translation theory and practice, Włodzimierz Olszaniec calls the Renaissance an “epoch of translations” (*epoka przekładów*). Włodzimierz Olszaniec,


7. The author of numerous books on astrology, astronomy, cosmology, and geography, Ptolemy was known in medieval Europe for his *Almagest*, a description of the heavens, and *Tetrabiblos*, a tract on astrology. His treatise on optics was known “only sporadically in the fifteenth century and was quickly eclipsed by the more theoretically exhaustive theories of Al-Hazen.” See Sean Roberts, *Printing a Mediterranean World: Florence, Constantinople, and the Renaissance of Geography* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013), 21.


10. According to Paul Botley, “in October 1405, in a letter to Niccoli from the papal court at Viterbo, Bruni recorded his intention to prepare a version of Ptolemy’s *Geographia*. He asked Niccoli to send him the Greek text and that part—*eam particulam*—which Chrysoloras had already translated. In fact Jacopo Angeli, who had had a Greek manuscript of the work since 1400, eventually completed the translation [no later than 1409].” Botley, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance*, 13–14.


13. While it is not entirely clear why Bruni abandoned this particular translation project, it is well known that Bruni and Angeli were competing for the position of apostolic secretary to Pope Innocent VII—a post that Bruni won after a literary contest with his rival Angeli. Bruni’s letter to Niccoli shows, according to Paul Botley, that “shortly after taking up his new position in the papal court, and with his command of Greek now assured, Bruni was looking for a substantial text to Latinise.” Botley, Latin Translation in the Renaissance, 13–14.

14. Today the manuscript is in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ 5. For a description of the manuscript see Hankins, “Ptolemy’s Geography in the Renaissance,” 457.

15. Ibid., 459.


17. “Vt autem ea quae ab illo absoluta diuino quodam ingenio sunt cum nostris etiam habeatur, in latinum ipsa curaui transferre sermonem.” 1v–2r. See ibid.

18. Ibid., 459.

19. Ibid., 459.

20. The maps were added, as James Hankins observes, “through the combined efforts of Francesco di Lapacino and Domenico di Lionardo Boninsegni, both members of the circle around the bibliophile Niccolò Niccoli.” Hankins, “Ptolemy’s Geography in the Renaissance,” 458. It was specifically in Florence that the development of techniques to represent three-dimensional space on two-dimensional surfaces and to construct Ptolemaic mapmaking models first began to thrive.


22. Roberts, Printing a Mediterranean World, 22.

24. While most scholars consider the Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 82, today in the Vatican Library, as the primary source for research on the *Geography*, the so-called Codex X from the second half of the thirteenth century, known as the Vaticanus Graecus 191, “is of particular significance, because it contains many local names and coordinates that differ from the other manuscripts mentioned above, and which cannot be explained by mere errors in the tradition. Unfortunately, none of the coordinates from . . . this codex were ever copied.” Florian Mittenhuber, “The Tradition of Texts and Maps in Ptolemy’s *Geography,*” in *Ptolemy in Perspective: Use and Criticism of His Work from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Alexander Jones (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 96.


27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., 90–91.

30. Ibid.


32. According to Ptolemy, “European Sarmatia is terminated on the north by the Sarmatian ocean adjoining the Venedicus bay and by a part of the unknown land. . . . The terminus of Sarmatia, which extends southward through the sources of the Tanais river is 64° 63°. It is terminated in the west by the Vistula river and by that part of Germany lying between its source and the Sarmatian mountains but not by the mountains themselves. . . . Sarmatia is divided by other mountains, which are called Peuce mountains . . ., Amadoci mountains . . ., Bodinus mountains . . ., Alanus mountains . . ., Carpathian mountains as we call them . . ., Venedici mountains . . ., Ripaei.” Ptolemy, *Geography*, trans. Edward Luther Stevenson, book 3, chap. 5, 79.

33. Ancient geographers and historians thought that rivers necessarily had sources beneath mountains. Aristotle thus defined mountains not only as a natural boundary in themselves, but also as a site generating rivers, which, in turn, function as natural markers of territorial divisions. Already the Greek historian Hecataeus of Miletus located in *Periegesis* the sources of rivers beneath the Riphean Mountains creating a powerful and authoritative hydrological and orographic landscape that persisted in time and that was considered authoritative and true until the Renaissance period. See O. A. W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 57. According to Marica Milanesi, the ancient belief that rivers necessarily originate beneath mountains was challenged only in the eighteenth century. For Renaissance geographers, “big rivers emptying into the Northern coast of the Black Sea had to originate in large lakes or preferably in big and faraway mountains. Until the nineteenth century, no Mediterranean people conceived of the origin of a river—be it big or small—differently. It was only Alexander von Hum-

34. Maciej Miechowita, Chronica Polonorum (Kraków: Hieronimus Wietor, 1519).


36. The Tractatus was printed in Latin in 1517, 1518, 1521, 1532, 1537, 1542, 1555, 1558, 1588, and 1600. It appeared in German translation in 1518 and 1534 and in Polish in 1535, 1541, and 1545. It was published in Italian in 1561, 1562, 1584, 1606, and 1634, and in Dutch in 1563. See Marshall T. Poe, “A People Born to Slavery”: Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography, 1476–1748 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000), 37. The Dutch translation of Miechowita’s treatise is included in Die Nieuwe Weerelt der Landtschappen ende Eylanden, die tot hier toe allen oorden weerelt beschrijveren onbekent geweest sijn, trans. Cornelis Ablijn (Antwerp: Van der Loe, 1563), a Dutch translation of Simon Grynaeus and Johann Huttich’s travel anthology Novus orbis regionum (1532), where Miechowita’s treatise had already been published.

37. Hajdukiewicz contends that Głogow’s commentary contains references to Brazil. I was unable to find Głogow’s specific references to Brazil or the New World more generally. See Leszek Hajdukiewicz, Biblioteka Macieja z Miechowa (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich, 1960), 152, and Elizabeth Armstrong, Before Copyright: The French Book-Privilege System, 1498–1526 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 190.


41. Stobnica’s volume also contained an abridged version of Piccolomini’s De Asia, Isidore’s Sirie compendiosa descriptio, Paulus Osorius’s Africe brevis descriptio, and Anselm’s Terrae sancte & Urbis Hierusalem apertior descriptio. See Jan ze Stobnicy, Introductio in

42. “Ptolomeo alisque vetustioribus ignotas”; Jan ze Stobnicy, fol. 5. “Epitoma Europe Enae Silvii, paucis quibusdam in ea de partibus nostrae Sarmaciae immutatis”; Ze Stobnicy, Introductio, fol. 5.


47. Hessler, Renaissance Globemaker’s Toolbox, 59.


53. “Montes Alpium tres ramos extendunt. Quorum primus per Sveviam, Boemiam, Slesiam, usque Polonianum extenditur, ubi Carpatus, lingua vero vernacula Krumpach dicitur, & sic continuando progreditur per Russiam, ubi Rhipheus dicitur perpetuo ventorum flatu gaudent.” The second ramification of the Alps extends “per Helvetiorum territorium,” and the third is the Appeninus, which traverses Italy. See “De Europeae provintiis,” in Schöner, *Cosmographia* (Nuremberg: Johannes Stuchssen, 1515), fol. 18.

54. Maciej Miechowita, *Tractatus de duabus Sarmatijs Asiana et Europiana et de contentis in eis* (Kraków: Johannes Haller 1517), n.p.

55. In a reference to Miechowita, who had derived the toponym “Polonia” from pole, the Polish word for field, Abraham Ortelius opens his description of Poland by claiming that “Polonia, quae a planitie terrae, (quam ipsi vernacule etiamnum Pole vocant) nomen habet, vasta Regio est.” Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Antwerp: Aegidius Coppenius Diesth, 1570), 44.


57. Before von Herberstein, the Swedish bishop and geographer Olaus Magnus, whose brother Johannes corresponded with Miechowita immediately after the publication of the treatise, relied on the *Tractatus* for his in-depth description of northern Europe, *Sea Map and Description of Northern Regions* (1539). See Poe, “A People Born to Slavery,” 33.


59. I do not concur with Zantuan, for whom Miechowita’s *Tractatus* signifies “a victory of Renaissance empirical experience over the traditional classical knowledge.” Zantuan, “Discovery of Modern Russia,” 330.


62. In the quoted passage earlier, Miechowita uses three other words, besides *aperta*, that denote disclosure and openness: *patefacta, aperta, pateat*, and *clarescat*. *Patefacio* means “to make visible, reveal, uncover, lay bare,” “to make or lay open, to open,” and, more specifically, “to open the way as a discoverer or pioneer; to be the first to find.” *Pateo* denotes “to stand open, lie open, be open,” especially in the context of doors, gates, and buildings. It
further means “to stretch out, extend; to be accessible, attainable.” Of a road and of a space, it signifies “to offer unimpeded passage” and “to extend in space, stretch or spread out.” See *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 1996, s.v. “patefacio,” and *Harper’s Latin Dictionary* (New York: American Book Co., 1907), s.v. “patefacio” and “pateo.”

63. Interestingly, in his later “Discorso sopra vari viaggi per li quali sono state condotte fino a’ tempi nostri le spezierie e altri nuovi che se potriano usare per condurle,” Giovanni Battista Ramusio would take up Miechowita’s focus on Europe’s northeast and discuss how traditional passages to India “by way of the Red Sea” [“per la via del mar Rosso”] have been foreclosed. Alluding to the rise of the Ottoman Empire and the “great transformations of both religions and Signorie” [“mutazioni grandissime e delle religioni e delle signorie”] in recent history, Ramusio emphasizes the potential of Europe’s and Asia’s north to guarantee the free flow of intercontinental transactions and the transfer of merchandise. While the Portuguese, a constant reference for Ramusio, have chosen to take “la via del ponente, circondando tutta l’Africa, per la virtu e industria de’ gran capitani dell’serenissimi re di Portogallo,” the hitherto foreclosed Northern Hemisphere could be opened up for the European navigators. In this endeavor, the Polish king would have a clear advantage. See Ramusio, “Discorso,” in *Navigazioni e viaggi*, ed. Marica Milanesi, vol. 2 (Turin: Einaudi, 1978–88), 981–82.

Sebastian Münster and Abraham Ortelius relied on Miechowita’s specific information about Europe’s East when publishing the *Cosmography* (1544) and the *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570), respectively. The atlas of the “geographicus regius,” as Ortelius was named by the Spanish king Philip II, was a major cartographic work, continuously expanded, updated, and translated into numerous European languages.

64. Ortelius does not mention the Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains, and when quoting his sources for his information on Poland, Russia, Lithuania, and Tartaria, Ortelius explicitly mentions Miechowita: “You [reader] have a lot about these regions from Maciej Miechowita, in his book on the Sarmatias, in Albert Krantz’s description of Vandalia, and [Antonio] Bonfini’s De rebus Hungaricis [=Hungaricarum Rerum Decades]. Yet everything has been best described by Marcin Kromer in his *Chronica Polonae* and in Sigismund von Herberstein’s *Moscoviticarum commentarii*. See also Sebastian Münster.” “Plura habes de his Regionibus apud Mathiam à Michou, in libello de Sarmatias, Alb[ertum] Crantzium in descripicio Vandaliae, Bonfinium de rebus Hungaricis. Sed omnium optime eas descriptis Martinus Cromerus in Chronico [sic!] Poloniae, & Sigismundus ab Herberstain in suis Moschoviticis Commentariis. Vide & Seb[astianum] Munsterum.” Ortelius, *Theatrum*, 44.


66. Ibid.


70. Quoted in ibid. My translation.

71. As Van Aecken argues, one no longer needs to travel around the world: a careful look at Ortelius’s cartographic *Theatrum* provides the same sensations and pleasures as circumnavigating the globe. See Besse, *Les grandeurs de la Terre*, 275.


75. The skeleton was a popular simile from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment period to describe the continuity of mountain chains. In his entry for “mountain” in Diderot and d’Alembert’s *Encyclopedia* (vol. 10, 1751–65, 672), D’Holbach argued that mountains can be compared to bones, since they bear the world just as bones support the human body. See Bernard Debarbieux, “Mountains: Between Pure Reason and Embodied Experience,” in *High Places: Cultural Geographies of Mountains, Ice and Science*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Veronica della Dora (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 93. See also Bernard Debarbieux and Gilles Rudaz, *Les faiseurs de montagne: Imaginaires politiques et territorialités, XVIIIe–XXIe siècle* (Paris: CNRS, 2010).

76. Debarbieux, “Mountains,” 93.


5. TAKING OUT THE WOMEN

