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# THE RENAISSANCE WORLD

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 **Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group  
NEW YORK AND LONDON

2007

## THE INVENTION OF EUROPE

John A. Marino

The "idea of Europe" developed dramatically during the Renaissance. Global expansion and imperialism transformed what once had been a rather vague geographical and historical conception founded upon mythological and literary traditions into the self-conscious representation of a relatively well-defined civilization. The sharp division between ancients and moderns, between East and West, and between local and international politics became the lens through which inhabitants of the old continent viewed their new contact and conquest of America, Africa, and Asia, which in turn reinforced, accelerated, and contested their emerging notions of Europe and their identity as Europeans in the Renaissance.

## SETTING TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL LIMITS

The Middle Ages had given birth to an earlier idea of European civilization. Diverse peoples forged a common culture on the western peninsula of the Eurasian landmass in the aftermath of the late Roman Empire through the exchange of peoples, goods, and ideas, and from political rivalries. Upon the contraction and expansion of its economic and demographic base, a new society different from that of the ancient world emerged, yet one culturally dependent on the heritage of classical, biblical, and Germanic traditions. That society adopted a classificatory conception of itself founded upon a functional division of labor or duties into three hierarchical castes or orders – priests, warriors, and workers – that was shared by the great arc of Indo-European language-speaking peoples between the Arctic and the Mediterranean from the Atlantic to the Urals and beyond to India. The piecemeal development of Europe as a place and an idea proceeded – as it has continued to do today from the end of the Second World War into the twenty-first century – in steps and starts through cooperation and competition, integration and conflict.

A decisive turning point in the conception of Europe occurred, however, in the fifteenth century in the reconstruction of society after the crisis of the fourteenth century, the demographic and cultural shock of the plague, and the schism and fracturing of the Church. Four new developments from the mid-fifteenth century had dramatic repercussions for the theory and practices of Europe during the long

sixteenth century from 1450 to 1650: (1) printing and its effect on the dissemination and standardization of knowledge; (2) the Turkish conquest of Byzantium and the expansion of Ottoman power toward Western Christendom; (3) the Iberian–Genoese maritime, commercial, and colonial expansion outside of the Mediterranean basin to West Africa, the Americas, and Asia; and (4) the rise of the New Monarchies and the increased national competition by their ruling elites for power and resources. While all periods contributed to the idea of Europe through gradual and incremental developments, the "new world order" of the Renaissance made the idea of Europe a commonplace in European thought and practice by the mid-seventeenth century.

The humanist Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, who became Pope Pius II (1458–64), famously equated the medieval term *Respublica christiana* with "Europe." Indeed, he is often seen as the thinker most responsible for putting the word "Europe" into common usage. Moreover, where Dante had avoided the adjectival form by calling Europeans "inhabitants of Europe," and Boccaccio had proposed the abortive neologism "Europico," Pius is credited with being among the first to use the adjective "europæus" ("European"). From his vast humanist learning, the Siennese pope called for a united, Christian Europe to launch a crusade against the Ottoman Turks and recounted his broad international diplomatic experience, and described in chorographic texts on *Europa* (1458) and *Asia* (1461) the similarities and differences between the two continents, observing in his *Germania* (1457/58) that "the inhabitants of Asia are always considered inferior to the inhabitants of Europe." Similarly in his *Mémoires* on the reigns of Louis XI and Charles VIII from 1468 to 1498, Philippe de Comynes did not distinguish between "Christendom" and "Europe," with the newer word winning out. In Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) – "In Europe, and especially in those parts where the faith and religion of Christ prevails" – Europe is larger than Christendom, which was under siege in the Balkan by the Turks. Erasmus, on the other hand, still preferred the unity of Christendom and did not much use the word "Europe" until after the decade-long advance of the Turks in the 1520s, with the capture of Belgrade (1521), Rhodes (1522), Hungary and the greater part of Dalmatia following their victory at Mohács (1526), and the siege of Vienna (1529). Thus, in letters from 1529 and 1530, Erasmus referred to "the most powerful princes from all of Europe" and even uses the adjectival form "European." In his *De Europæ dissidiis et bello turcico dialogus* (1526), the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives compares the Turkish invasion of Europe to the war between the ancient Persians and Greeks, even predicting on such classical precedent an inevitable Turkish defeat. In championing the call to arms against Ottoman expansion, Renaissance humanism identified Europe with Christendom at the very moment when the term "Europe" first found wide acceptance.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the papal *possesso* of Innocent X in 1644 made it clear how commonplace the idea and representation of Europe had become. The inaugural procession of the new pope from the Vatican through the streets of Rome to take "possession" of the Lateran Basilica was styled a "Gran Teatro del Mondo, and among the numerous ephemeral exhibits along the road of march was a stage set/fireworks display of "Roma triumphans" in front of the Palazzo Borghese. The two coats of arms of the ecclesiastical and secular powers loom above the temporary stage designating papal Rome, at the center of the Christian world, ruler over the

four continents, each portrayed with her traditional gendered iconography. In first place, stage right, as we see below, stood Europa, crowned and holding a scepter and orb, in front of a bear. Such public festivals continued to glorify the theme of Europe at the head of the four continents both in Catholic principalities (such as the 1658 Neapolitan commemoration of the royal birth of the Spanish infante, Philip Prosper, with the four continents center-stage as four decorative horse-drawn carts, and the wedding of Cosimo III de' Medici to Margherita Luisa of Orléans in Florence in 1661 with cavalry and infantry representing the four continents), as much as in Protestant lands (such as the Amsterdam town hall marble frieze of 1656-58 depicting people of the four continents bringing goods and tribute to a female Amsterdam enthroned on a ship, and a festival arch in London during the 1661 English Restoration coronation of Charles II displaying figures of the four continents).

France provides the exception that proves the rule, since earlier representations of Europe among the four continents (with a fifth group of the northern peoples) in

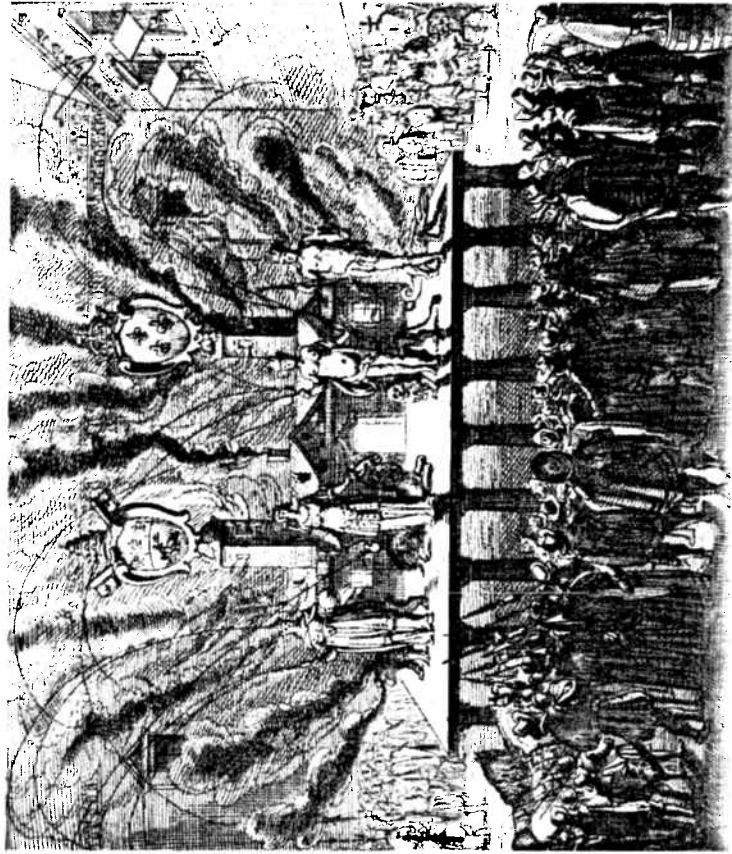


Figure 7.1 The Four Continents at Palazzo Borghese from Innocent X's *possevo* in Laurentius Gunnari Banck, *Roma triumphans: seu actus inaugurationum & coronationum Pontificum Romanorum, & in specie: Innocentii X. Pont. Mex. brevis descriptio cum omnibus triumphis & ceremoniis eidem actui additis* (2nd edn, Franekeræ: Typis & sumptibus, Johannis Arcerii, 1656). The Newberry Library, Chicago.

a ballet during the 1626 carnival under Louis XIII were no longer present when Louis XIV styled himself King of the Romans in the 1662 festival of the great *carrousel*, at the head of four other nations - Persians, Turks, Indians of India, and Americans. Where Dutch pamphlets after Louis XIV's attacks on the United Provinces in 1672 referred to "Europe," the French described Louis as the most Christian king and defender of the *respublica christiana*; where William of Orange's motto as "*handhaver der Europese vrijheid*" ("preserver of the liberty of Europe") was taken up by English propaganda after the Glorious Revolution in 1688 as the fight for "the freedom of Europe and the Protestant religion," the French preferred the term "Chrétienté." The political and diplomatic struggle between France and Spain in the mid-seventeenth century and between Catholic France and its Protestant neighbors led Louis to prefer his traditional title as head of Christendom.

As a place, however, Europe was a reality born of physical boundaries and frontiers. The physical geography of mountains and plains, rivers and seas, and climate and rainfall divided the continent into six natural units: first, three peripheral arcs (a "Nordic arc" from Iceland through the tips of Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the Baltic States, Finland, and Russia to the White Sea; an "Atlantic arc" from Portugal and northwestern Spain through Brittany and the British Isles; and a "Mediterranean arc" from Gibraltar along the Spanish and French coast through northern Italy, the Adriatic, the northern Balkans, and the Aegean coast of Anatolia to Cyprus); and second, three interior regions (the northern European plain stretching from the French and English basin to the Polish plains; an alpine divide between north and south; and the great continental steppe from the Oder to the Urals). Climate and soils determined medieval crops, livestock, and farming techniques from horses and the heavy moldboard plow in the northern plains to viticulture, olive trees, and the lighter scratch plow south of the Garonne and the Alps. In turn, material life gave rise to divergent social and economic structures in the continent's various regions.

Medieval boundaries were, nevertheless, not hard and fast, but rather permeable and shifting. Forests and heathlands, swamps and marshlands were reclaimed and dynastic territories consolidated. At the same time, the European river network constantly opened up the interior and often connected regions in loose political confederation, such as along the Rhine and Danube (the old lines of ancient Roman expansion), the Ebro valley in Iberia, and the Po valley in northern Italy. Germanic peoples expanded east beyond the Elbe and the Oder to Slavic and Baltic lands; Christians from Castile and Leon launched their *Reconquista* of Iberia the Normans conquered Sicily and southern Italy; Angles and Saxons established colonies along the frontiers of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland; Russian contacts with Byzantium, Islam, and the Judeo-Khazar state spread from the Baltic to the Black Sea; and Byzantine Greeks inherited the Eastern Roman Empire that stretched from Trebizond through ancient Ionia (coastal Anatolia) and the Levant to Egypt before its erosion by Muslim expansion and crusaders' aggression. The Venetians traded with Byzantium and later the Ottomans, and Genoese slaved along the Black Sea; by selling military manpower from Central Asia and the Caucasus to the Mamluks in Egypt, while Italian merchants brought back to western Europe Asian products such as pepper and spices as well as Arabic (really Indic) ideas such as the positional

decimal numeral system for the developing practice of double-entry bookkeeping. At the same time, the three principal Iberian states of Portugal, Castile, and Aragon each formed fluid partnerships with the Genoese in rivalry with one another to exploit and colonize first North Africa within the Mediterranean basin and then West Africa outside it.

Mental and cultural frontiers were as decisive as geographical, political, and economic ones. The continent was linguistically diverse, though of the some 50 to 70 languages (not counting hundreds of regional dialects) most Europeans spoke vernaculars in the Indo-European family (Romanic, Germanic, Slavic, Celtic, Hellenic, Baltic, and Albanian). Finno-Hungarian languages (Finnish, Estonian, and Hungarian), Euskera (the Basque language), and Turkish were the notable exceptions. But they all made use of only three alphabets: Greek, Latin, and Cyrillic. Before the fracturing of Latin Christianity during the sixteenth-century Reformation movements, the heirs of the Roman Empire were divided into three major cultural and religious polities, Orthodox Christian and Islamic in the East and Latin Christianity in the West, with enclaves of Judaism among all three. In the Latin West, the traditions of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean, the Judeo-Christian world, and native peoples and tribes (Germans, Celts, Scythians, Goths, Scandinavians, and Slavs) met and meshed as a new basis for unity spread through the Latin Church, Roman law, and the Latin language.

Where the material life of agricultural production set the norms and rhythms for the vast majority of peasant society over time, medieval avenues of trade and communication forged a unity through the exchange of ideas and practices in three socio-cultural milieux — the Church, the nobility, and towns. The ecclesiastical organization of the Church and the spread of religious movements from monasticism to the mendicant orders; the long-distance travel of pilgrims to Rome or Santiago de Compostela; the spread of universities, scholasticism, and the international circulation of teachers and students; the diffusion of styles of art and architecture; and the survival of the imperial ideal of a universal government in Germany and beyond served to consolidate the cultural unity of Europe in the late Middle Ages. Equally important was the spread of the techniques and ideology of warfare, court culture and its refined tastes for luxury goods, music, the arts, tournaments, and festivals; local and international fairs; merchant associations such as the Hanse in northern Europe; commercial companies such as the Bardi, Peruzzi, Medici, or Fugger with branches across the continent; communal organization and the spread of urban literacy — all means of fusion coexisted with the political divisions and almost permanent state of war to make Europe a land of unity in a sea of diversity. The Renaissance rediscovery of antiquity in both its Greco-Roman and New Testament—Church Fathers traditions fostered the illusive ideal of European peace and unity — first with the papacy and the Eastern Orthodox Church at the Council of Ferrara—Florence (1438–45), later in the sixteenth century between Protestants and Catholics, and throughout the period as a military alliance, rarely achieved among national rivalries, against the Ottoman Turks who had planted Islam in the Balkans and threatened both Vienna and Italy. Contact with peoples, goods, and ideas from Asia, Africa, and America increased European assertions of primacy, lordship, and mission, all of which were tied up in dynastic rivalries as the Habsburg juggernaut attempted to impose

its hegemony over the continent, only to have it collapse in the devastation of the Thirty Years War.

## REPRESENTING THE IDEA AND PERSONIFICATION OF EUROPE

During this two-century period of transformation, 1450–1650, the representation of Europe can be traced in three main forms: the visual arts (through cartography iconography, and public rituals or festivals), printed books (literary and political tracts), and diplomacy. From this explosion of references and practices on the ide of Europe, two major representational images of the continent emerged: (1) *Europa Virgo Crowned*, a motif that first appeared in 1537 as a symbol of the Spanish world and that was reanimated with pro- and anti-Spanish adaptations after 1587; and (2) Europe as one of the Four Continents, which now included, in addition to Europe Africa, and Asia in the earlier three-continent model of the world, the figure of America, a motif that became especially popular in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The geographical-cultural meaning of modern Europe also developed in the sixteenth century through the active invention of humanists, who filtered their contemporary experience in European courts, Turkish conflict, exploration of the New World, and state rivalries through their learning from ancient texts, such as Ptolemy's *Geographia*.

Cartographic representation of the continent in world maps is the first place to see Europe. The earliest medieval world maps, such as Ambrosio Macrobius's fifteenth-century zone map, as reproduced in a 1492 Venetian book, and Isidore of Seville's seventh-century T-O map from a 1472 Augsburg book, represent Europe and the world most often in schematic, symbolic form. For the zonal map tradition Macrobius's five climatic zones, derived from Pythagorean cosmography, influence early Renaissance preconceptions about the impossibility of crossing the Tropic Zone because of its heat and the impossibility of life in the uninhabitable frigid pole zones. For the T-O map tradition, the mystical meaning of the peopling of the three continents by Noah's sons and the figural meaning of the crucifixion with the Tropic a cross within the O of the inhabited world pointed to the Christian's spiritual world more than to the structural realities of the physical earth. The medieval world map (*mappe mundi*) conflated time and space in a moralized, didactic representation of a biblical, narrative history according to the dominant Christian world-view.

Medieval *mappe mundi* conventions began to change with knowledge of the wider world through the discovery of ancient texts and direct contact through commerce, war, and the exchange of ideas with Byzantine and Islamic societies in the Mediterranean. Sometime before 1300, and produced often in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, portolan maps (medieval navigation charts) influenced the visual construction of the Christian West on the world map and literally put the name "Europe" on a separate, continental map. Then, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, humanist scholars brought Ptolemy's *Geographia* from Constantinople to Florence and translated it into Latin. Ptolemy's *Geographia* had been rediscovered during the late thirteenth-century Greek revival in Byzantium and circulated i

manuscript editions throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in a number of versions - some without maps, some with its original 27 maps, and after 1427 some with as many as 65 maps and plans. It was first printed with maps at Bologna in 1477, and early printed world maps followed Ptolemy's cartographic principles. To introduce the Second Age of Man, the world after the Flood, for example, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* of Hartmann Schedel reproduces the Ptolemaic world map surrounded by the sons of Noah, who look over the corners of the map to their respective parts of the world - Japheth to Europe, Shem to Asia, and Ham to Africa. Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum* was published in June 1493, soon after Columbus's letter on his first voyage had been published in April 1493, but the wide and rapid dissemination of the news of Columbus's discoveries by the end of that year in 11 editions in six cities and in three languages would change everything. From the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese established the *Armação da Guiné*, a hydrographic office, to provide nautical charts for their ships. The anonymous world chart of 1502 called the Cantino Map, which was probably produced there and smuggled to Modena by an agent of the duke of Ferrara, contains accurate details of the Portuguese-explored African coast, India from Vasco da Gama's voyage of 1497-99, and even the fragmentary shore of Brazil discovered by Cabral in 1500. As details of Africa, Asia, and the New World became available, map-makers incorporated the new findings,

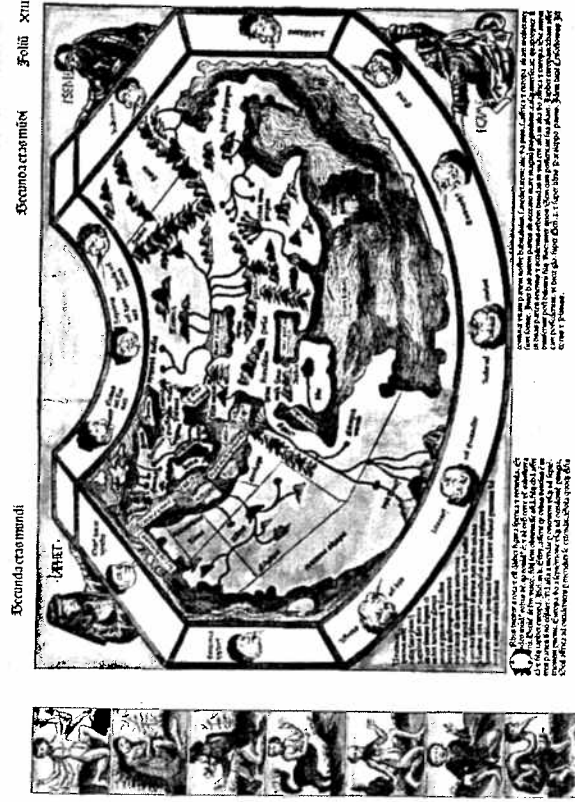


Figure 7.2 Ptolemaic world map in Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* (Nuremberg: Antonius Koberger, 1493). Private collection, courtesy of Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California.

and Martin Waldseemüller's *Universalis cosmographia* (Strasbourg, 1507) was only the first map to name the New World "America," but also was the first print map to include the coastline of Africa on the basis of Portuguese exploration, at 360° of latitude, put Japan as an island off China, and make space for the yet undiscovered Pacific Ocean (Figure 7.3). Working at St. Dié in Lorraine, Waldseemüller did not center the known world near his homeland along the Rhine in Nuremberg as did Schedel's *Chronicle*, but along an axis reaching up the Strait of Hormuz into Persia and a misshapen Caspian Sea. Early printed world maps did not necessarily situate the center of the world in Jerusalem, Mesopotamia, or Europe. Matteo Ricci's late sixteenth-century Chinese world map, derived from Ortelius and Mercator, for example, had its center in the South Pacific well east of the Philippines.

Waldseemüller was also the first to print a map of Europe as a whole, with its original 1511 first state map lost but the extant second state map published in Strasbourg in 1520 (Figure 7.4). Waldseemüller's 1520 *Carta itineraria Europa* reproduces the coats of arms of the European states along the map's borders and is dedicated to the newly elected emperor, Charles V, whose two primary titles are the Holy Roman Empire and Spain and are represented by fully armed soldiers bearing their respective flags standing guard in the upper left and right corners. Europe is oriented to the south with Germany at the bottom looking up to Greece, Italy, and Spain at the top. Waldseemüller's map was probably influenced by two earlier maps of Central Europe, the Eichsträtt map of Nicolas Cusa (c. 1491) and the *Weg Karte* (c. 1492-1501), a map of German and Dutch pilgrim itineraries in the North Sea by Erhard Etzlaub. Thus, in addition to the coastal particulars from portolan charts, the Waldseemüller map is able to incorporate significant details of the continent's interior of mountains, forests, rivers, towns, and names of regions.

The printed map of Europe as a separate continent falls into three periods: (1) 1511-54, from Waldseemüller's first map of Europe to Gerard Mercator's influential scientific synthesis; (2) 1554-70, from Mercator to the printed atlas of Abraham Ortelius; and (3) after 1570, with Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* setting the standard for what followed. Sebastian Münster, working in Basel, was the most important cartographer diffusing images of Europe in this first period. His first map of Europe was published in Frankfurt in 1536 in *Mappa Europae*, a concise cartography and manual for map-making. Published in Basel, a first state map of south-oriented Europe (*Europa Prima Nova Tabula*) appeared in his Latin edition of Ptolemy, *Geographica Universalis*, in 1540; the second state map (*Moderna Europa Descriptio*) appeared in 1544 in his *Cosmographiae oder Beschreibung aller Ländter, oder der welt aller Theil*, the most popular books of the sixteenth century with 40 editions in six languages up to its last edition in 1628, although the second state map of Europe was replaced in 1588 by a more modern map based on Ortelius. Maps of Europe became a European phenomenon during the first period in the first half of the century with other extant examples from Venice (Benedetto Bordone, 1528; Giovanni Domenico Zorzi, 1545), Nuremberg (Heinrich Zell, 1536), Zurich (Johannes Stumpf, 1548), and Lyons (Guillaume Gueroult, 1553). Mercator's first state 1554 map of Europe (and his second state 1572 map), published in Duisburg from 15 copper plates, marks the beginning of the second period in maps of Europe because it is the

Figure 7.4 Martin Waldseemüller, *Carta Linnearia Europae*, 1520. Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandum, Innsbruck.

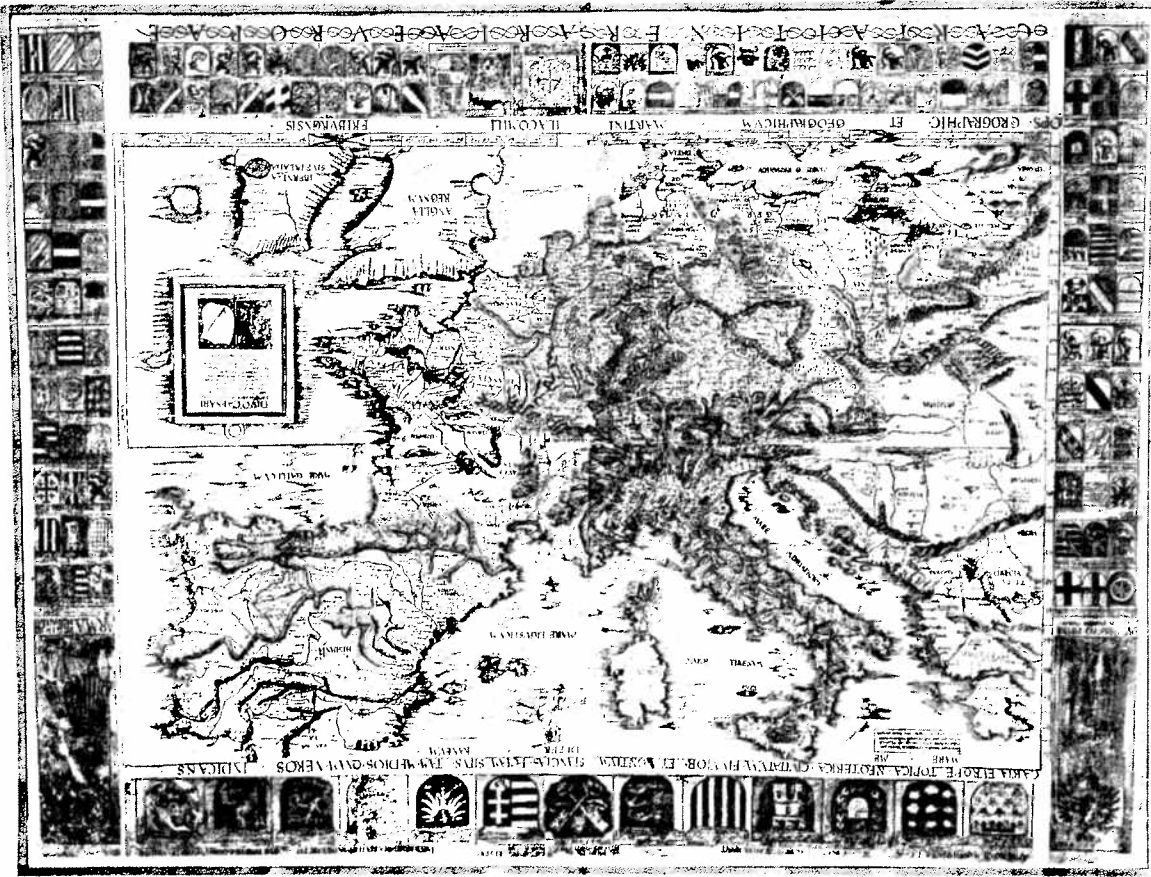
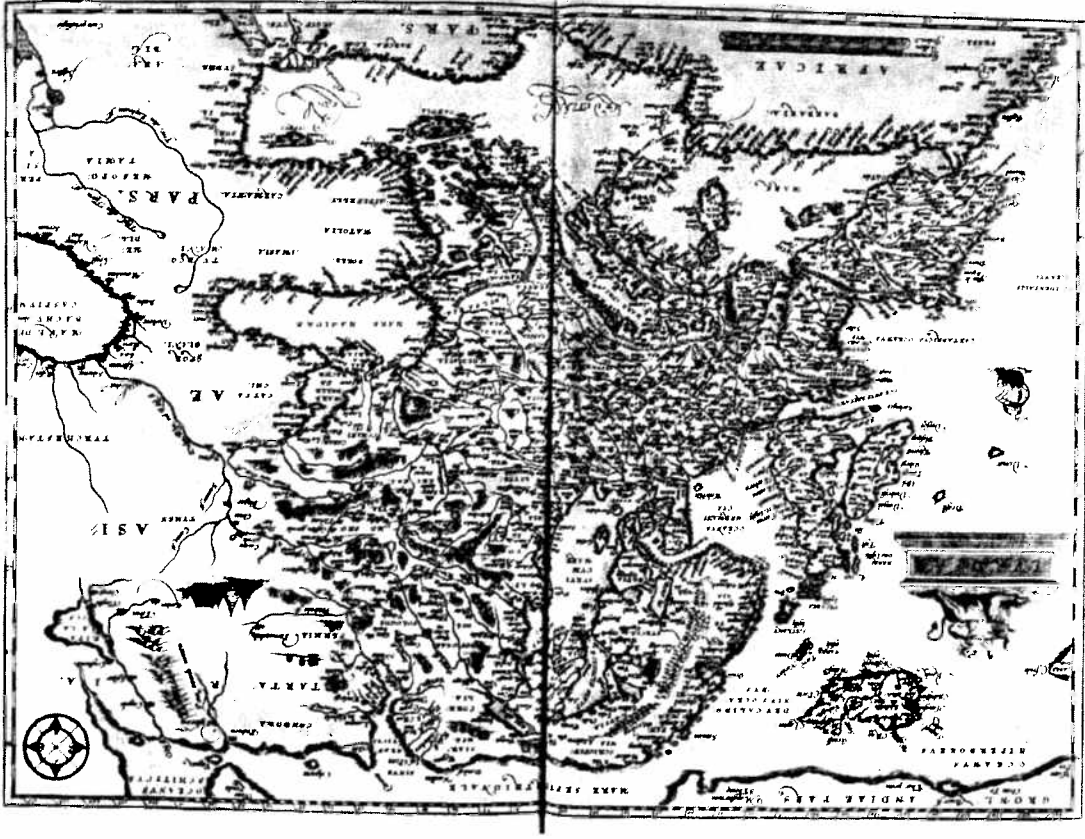


Figure 7.3 Martin Waldseemüller, *Universalis cosmographica secundum Ptolemaei traditionem et Americi Vesputii altiorumque Illustrationes* (St. Die: s.n., 1507). The Library of Congress, Washington, DC.



map to revise Ptolemy by correcting the exaggerated east-west distance of the Mediterranean. This large wall map of Europe (measuring approximately 165 x 134 cm) was dedicated to Charles V's minister Antoine Perrenot, lord of Granvelle and bishop of Arras, and remained the definitive map of Europe through the seventeenth century. While attempting to flatten the globe and minimize distortions at the edges of the map, Mercator had not yet reached the level of accuracy in the projection method of his revolutionary 1569 world map. The 1569 world map's title explains that it is a "New and More Complete Representation of the Terrestrial Globe Properly Adapted for Use in Navigation," similar to linear perspective's representation of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. By progressively increasing the separation between adjoining meridians and parallels by ten degrees, Mercator's cylindrical projection straightened out rhumb lines on a flat map, but created greater distortions as one moved away from the equator. (In seamen's language, rhumb lines are lines that intersect all meridians at the same angle and define a constant bearing, which is the angle between a course and a meridian.) Ortelius's *Europæe* in his 1570 *Theatrum* begins the third period in printed maps of Europe (Figure 7.5). This map's importance comes from its accuracy (based upon Mercator's 1554 map and a host of other earlier exemplars) and its size (plate size of 342 x 466 mm), so that it became the model for all later maps of Europe. After its first printing in Antwerp in 1570, it appeared in some 42 editions of the *Theatrum* until 1612; the first state map from 1570 to 1581 in 3,300 copies; a second state map replaced it from 1584 to 1612 in 4,950 copies. Mercator's *Atlas* of 1585, rather than Ortelius's *Theater*, however, was to give its name to book collections of maps.

Sixteenth-century cartographers, with an imaginative eye on Europe in the world map, even turned the map of the continent into a female figure. The iconographic image of Europa Virgo Crowned first appeared in 1537 as an untitled map of Europe in Paris by Christian Wechel (Figure 7.6). With Spain as her head, the coats of arms of Aragon and Navarre tattooed on her cheeks, Bohemia her heart, Italy her right arm holding Sicily in the form of an orb, and the whole figure studded with the coats of arms of the various states, this was clearly the Europe dominated by Charles V's Habsburg Empire in the year after his triumphal march through Italy following his victory in Tunis. Guillaume Postel, Michael Eitzinger (who mapped the Netherlands as a Lion, *Leo Belgicus*, in 1579), and Ortelius all commented on Putsch's European Virgin Queen, but it only began to be imitated in two maps of 1587: one at Catholic Cologne by the Netherlander Mathias Quad that included cartouches on the left describing Europe with the coats of arms of the seven electors and on the right a German translation of the myths of Europe with the imperial arms, and the other at Protestant Wittenberg as a woodcut, "Europa Prima Pars Terræ Forma Virginis," in Heinrich Bünting's *Itinerarium Sacrae Scripturae* in a much-simplified version with the coats of arms removed and the names of the various kingdoms predominant, redone as a copper engraving in 1638 and 1650 editions. In commemoration of the intended marriage of the Austrian Habsburg emperor Rudolf II and the Spanish infanta Isabella, the hardened Bünting visage with the more detailed Quad raiment even appeared in the center of a silver bowl made in Nuremberg in 1589. The simpler image of Bünting was reworked in a more aggressive regal pose, and this



Europa Virgo replaced an earlier map that first appeared in the 1550 edition of Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia* in the 1588 and subsequent 1592, 1598, 1614, and 1628 editions. In 1598 two anonymous anti-Spanish pamphlets, *Het Spaens Europa* (one published at Amsterdam, the other without place), have Spanish Europe brandishing a sword instead of holding her scepter. In the second version, the dispersal of the Spanish Armada around the British Isles discomfits an image of Philip II while a lone Sea Beggar holds off a menacing, clerical fleet led by a three-headed Antichrist pope (Figure 7.7). Europe on a map continued to be used positively or negatively, with the Virgo still symbolizing Spanish power in Manila in 1761, and reappearing in 1804 in a Dutch print from Haarlem depicting the Napoleonic repatriation of Europe.

Printed maps heavily influenced the creation of images and allegorical figures of Queen Europe reigning over the Four Parts of the World. After 1570, the Four Continents assumed allegorical shape on the title page of the new atlases such as Ortelius (Anrwerp, 1570), Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg's vol. 5 (Cologne, 1598), Quad (1600), and Willem Janszoon Blaeu's Latin edition (Amsterdam, 1645). In the Ortelius frontispiece, a naked America with spear, bow, and arrows lies at the feet of the other continents and in cannibalistic primitivism proudly displays a

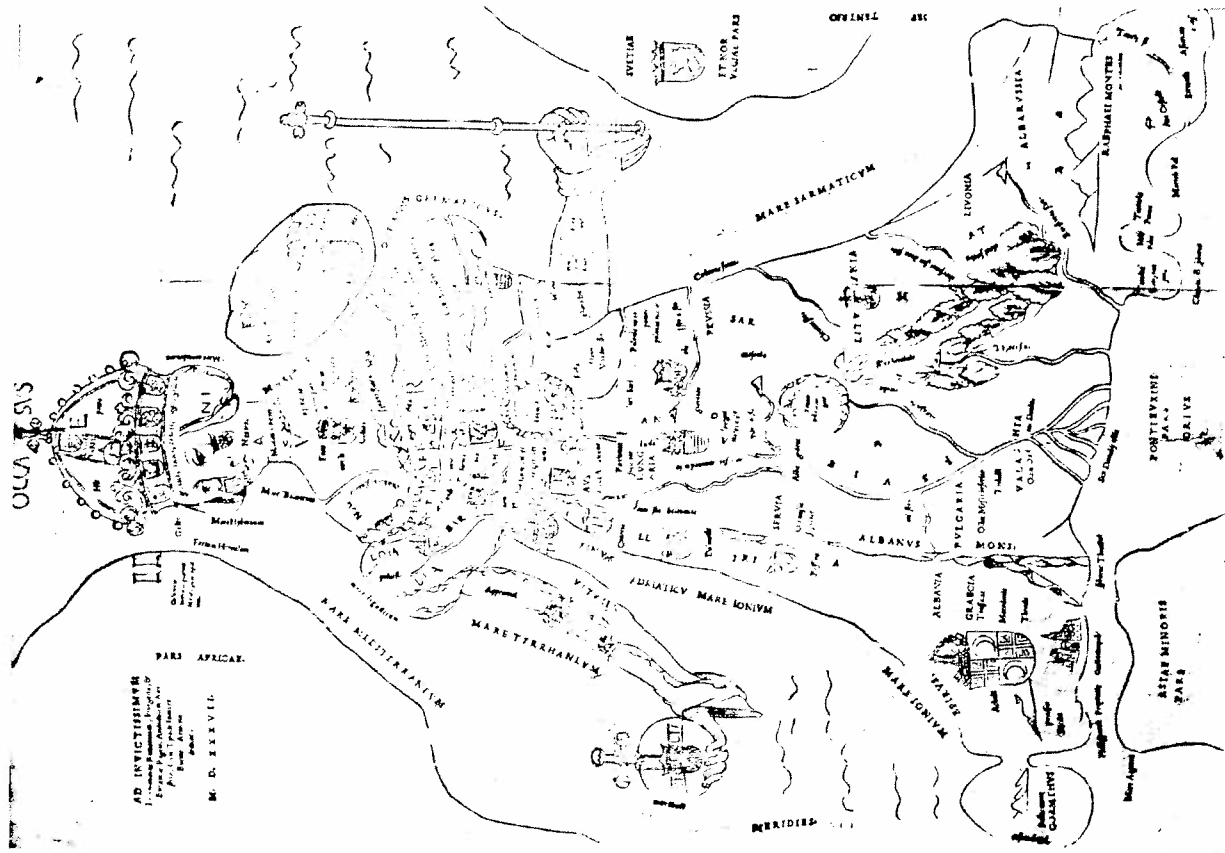


Figure 7.6 Johann Putsch, *Europa Virgo Crowned*, 1537. Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck, Austria.



Figure 7.7 *Het Spaens Europa*, anonymous Flemish print, 1598. Stewart Museum, Montreal, Canada.



severed human head in her left hand. Next to her is a bust of Magellanica, the yet undiscovered landmass to the south where the fires of Tierra del Fuego were sighted. Asia and Africa stand on pedestals to the sides, in front of columns supporting the high porch where Europe sits crowned and enthroned. Europe presides under a pergola garlanded with grape-vines; her right hand holds a scepter and her left clutches a rudder (in the shape of the cross) to steer the large globe. In the Braun and Hogenberg frontispiece, Europe crowned stands prominently in the left front with scepter in hand and Asia attentively gazing from behind; America and Africa attend on the other side of the title cartouche. Below, burghers, one of them a turbaned Turk, are in discussion. World maps also often presented the theme of European dominance over the continents in marginalia. In Peter Plancius's 1594 world map, Europe commands from the upper left corner and is surrounded by a cornucopia and the symbols of civilization from the arts, sciences, and warfare. So too, the wall maps of Pieter van den Keere (1611) and Henricus Hondius (1630) both glorify Europe as receiving tribute from the other continents. In 1653, the four corners of Nicolaes Visscher's world map reproduce the Flemish engraver Adriaen Collaert II's personifications after Martin de Vos's *The Four Parts of the World* (c. 1595). The regal queen Europe holds her scepter and the grape-vine symbol of civilization, while cattle graze peacefully, horses buck, two wild bears sniff each other out, and two armies collide in the background. Where Europe sits upon a large globe, her sister continents ride upon their respective native animals – Asia on a camel, Africa on a crocodile, and America on an armadillo.

Working in the same Antwerp workshop as Collaert, Philip Galle had engraved a crowned Europe in his 1579 emblem collection, *Prosopographia*. And not surprisingly, Elizabeth I was portrayed as Europa in a 1598 Dutch engraving now in the Ashmolean Museum. Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, first published with illustrations in 1603, included a figure of Europa holding in one hand "the temple, to indicate that in her at present is the perfect and true Religion, and superior to all others," while her other hand points to crowns, papal tiara, and scepter to show that "in Europe reside the greatest and most powerful Princes in the World, such as the Emperor and the pope, whose authority extends over everyone where the Most Holy and Catholic Christian Faith is established." Europe is seated upon the crossing of two overflowing cornucopias and backed by spears and horse. Later editions add mathematical and musical instruments, books, a palette, and the owl of wisdom – all to illustrate her superiority in arms, letters, and all the liberal arts. Crowned Europa is ubiquitous, even appearing brandishing a tree-sized branch of a grape-vine and raising her scepter in the c. 1610 plasterwork cornice above a fireplace in the Queen's Room, Burton Agnes House, Yorkshire, and on tapestries c. 1630–40 from either Tours or Blois in the Hôtel de ville of Beaugency. The image of the Four Parts of the World only grew over time, with the 16 recorded paintings of the theme before 1650 almost tripling to 43 paintings in the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth. The crowned queen is a pan-European representation of the sixteenth-century European conquest of the world and symbolizes Europeans' belief in their salvific mission of spreading Christianity and civilization.

These images of the continent Europa as a crowned queen competed with another earlier image of Europa from Greek mythology. The title of Ortelius's 1570 map

*Europæ* is printed on the pedestal of a statue of the bull carrying off Europa on the waves, while in Nicolaes Visscher's 1652 map, *Nona Europæ*, a combined image of queen and abducted virgin above the title placard has Europa sitting enthroned on the bull and surrounded by her attributes of orb, sword, shield, and flags. In 1577, John Dee published *General and Rare Memorials pertaining to the Perfect Arte of Navigation*, a treatise against pirates and foreign fishermen in English waters, whose frontispiece represents Europe with her name on the ship of state carrying Queen Elizabeth sitting at its helm and with the mythological semi-goddess Europa on the bull in the water alongside. An unusual map of the Virgo Europa – with Spair still her crowned head, but Italy now holding a scepter in her right hand – rides the continent in the shape of a woman on a bull in a 1588 pamphlet published by Michael Eitzinger at Cologne, the same year that he saw a new edition of his *De Leonæ Belgicæ* through the press (Figure 7.8).

The Greek myth of the Rape of Europa carried off by Zeus in the form of a bull as told by Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 2: 833–875), was a popular subject in Renaissance art. While Dürer's drawing (c. 1495) and paintings by Titian (c. 1559–62) and Veronese (c. 1570) may be the most well-known examples, there were some 40 paintings of this theme in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and even a bronze sculpture c. 1520 by the Paduan Il Riccio (Andrea Briosco) now in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts. The British Museum has a maiolica dish c. 1550 with the scene painted on it, and a 1580s painted stucco relief is in Bucovice (Butschowitz Castle near Brno in Moravia). The drama and pathos of the abduction may tempt u to read the myth anachronistically with marriage by abduction unwanted and violent but, at a time of familial control and arranged marriage, the image confirmed an alternative mode of attaining one's desire by either or both partners, as the hopeful expressions of many a triumphantly rendered Europa suggest. Above all, we should remember that the myth does not end with the flight to Crete; rather, the abduction leads to new story threads. The search for Europa by Phoenix and her other brothers the marriage of her brother Cadmus to Harmony, the founding of Thebes by Cadmus Europa as queen and mother of Crete, Europa's three sons by Zeus – Minos, king of Crete and later a judge in the underworld; Rhadamanthus, one of the judges in the underworld along with his brother Minos; and Sarpedon, king of Lycia in Asia Minor – as well as the sacred bull himself, are all ancient, generative myths that lie at the foundation of civilization, power, and authority in this world and the next. The story does not disappear or dissipate over time, but seventeenth- and eighteenth-century art counts 84 works in Italy, 39 in the Netherlands, 47 in France, and 15 in Germany.

The influence of the visual arts went beyond the printed map and the painted or sculpted object to ritual practice in public displays that reached a wide audience in city streets and squares. Festivals around Europe had been incorporating the theme of Habsburg rule over the continents and Europe Crowned Queen of the Four Parts of the World from the mid-sixteenth century. Antwerp, which had become the great port for the Portuguese Asian trade and center of a significant publishing engraving, and map-making enterprise, had numerous such live performances (Europa and her sister continents). In 1549, Antwerp greeted the royal entry of Charles V and his son Prince Philip on their visit to the emperor's ancestral home wit

homage from actors representing the three Old World continents, but not America. In 1564 during Antwerp's annual July "Ommegang" festival, the Four Continents were represented in a tableau vivant. And in 1594, the entry of Archduke Ernst saw the Four Parts of the World on the skirt of the female figure of Spain represented with Austria and the Low Countries in an allegorical painting of the Habsburg states. In Portugal itself in 1619, the guild of Lisbon merchants sponsored a four-fronted arch with each front representing a continent for the royal entry of Philip III; again in 1623 for the canonization celebration of St Ignatius Loyola, Lisbon had four ambassadors from the Four Parts of the World pay homage. In another canonization celebration for St Ignatius, albeit in much humbler circumstances in the provincial town of Pont à Mousson in Lorraine, local Jesuits also included a Four Continents display. In Florence, the obsequies for the death of Philip II in 1598 included paintings of the Four Continents in the church of San Lorenzo and mourning figures of them in Santa Croce; as similarly in Naples for the same obsequies in its Duomo, Domenico Fontana designed a commemorative mausoleum centerpiece whose four corners each had niches to shelter statues of the four continents. Later in Naples in 1639 to celebrate the birth of the Spanish infanta, Maria Theresa (Philip IV's eldest daughter and the future wife of Louis XIV), an elaborate viceregal celebration centered around a new play performed for the occasion, the *Rapimento d'Europa*. The ideas that printing had spread were made real in festival drama, paintings, and statues. Thus, long after the event, Franz Francken's 1636 painting, *Allegory on the Abdication of Charles V in Brussels*, was able to recreate the 1556 abdication ceremony of the emperor at Brussels with Crowned Europe leading the continents in their homage.

Cartographers and their inventions were well known to the great writers of the sixteenth century and references to Europa as the demi-goddess carried off to Crete or as queen of the continents can be found in a wide linguistic range. Francesco Colonna's Latin *Hyperboreomachia Poliphili* extolled the Ovidian tradition of the Rape of Europa. In combining the myth and the parts of the world together, Rabelais has Pantagruel, commenting on the Virgilian lottery (Bk. 3, Chap. 12), deliver a paean to Jupiter, who "bulled, and lastauriated in one day the third part of the world, beasts and people, floods and mountains; that was Europa." Later Frère John finds Panurge's beard to look like a map of the world with Asia, Africa, and Europe (Bk. 3, Chap. 28), and likewise Pantagruel swearing an oath on his honor invokes the three continents, "nothing greater could I stake even were I sole and peaceful ruler in Europe, Africa, and Asia" (Bk. 3, Chap. 46). In the *Lusiads*, Camoens praises Europe as "the home of strong and warlike peoples" and "more advanced and more renowned in its governance than the others." In his poetry Ronsard emphasizes that despite her small size Europe still rules the world. Shakespeare refers to the Rape of Europa three times, and to Europe the continent ten times with two general meanings — by way of extent in space, such as "JACK FALSTAFF with my familiars, JOHN with my brothers and sisters, and SIR JOHN with all Europe" (*Henry IV, Part II*, II, 2) and "Whose bloody deeds shall make all Europe quake" (*Henry VI, Part I*, I, 1), or as a superlative, "It is the best horse of Europe" (*Henry V*, III, 7) and "Thou hast slain the flower of Europe for his chivalry" (*Henry VI, Part III*, II, 1). Commenting on the illusions of the theater in *Don Quixote* (Pt. I, Chap. 48), Cervantes

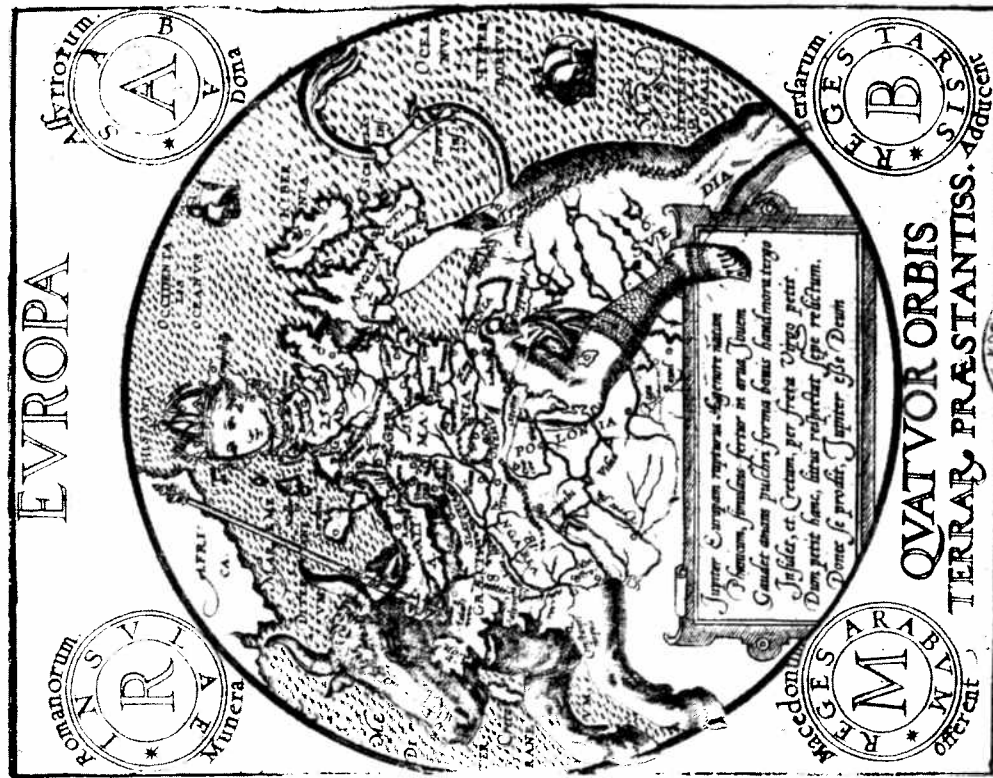


Figure 7.8 Michael Eitzinger. *De Europæ virginis, tamto insidentis, topographica atque historica descriptione* (Cologne: Godtfridum Kempensem, 1588). Austrian National Library, Vienna: D.7.7.66.C.

refers to contemporary disregard for the dramatic unity of place, with plays having their first act open in Europe, the second in Asia, the third in Africa, and if there were a fourth, in America. Nevertheless, poets such as John Donne in "The Second Anniversary" found the ability to traverse the boundless globe in a couplet irresistible, "The Western treasure, Eastern spicerie, / Europe, and Afrique, and the unknown rest." In his essay "On Cannibals," where one finds his lone use of the word "Europe" as a geographical expression with Africa and Asia, Montaigne castigated the topographers for their lying exaggerations: "would they make detailed accounts of the places which they had actually been to. But because they have the advantage of visiting Palestine, they were want to enjoy the right of telling us tales about all the rest of the world." In such examples from the sixteenth-century canon in Latin and the French, Portuguese, English, and Spanish vernaculars, Europe is everywhere in the imaginative literature of the Renaissance.

Renaissance writing on politics and society looked to Aristotle's *Politics* as their starting point. Aristotle had contrasted the peoples of Europe and Asia from the Greek experience resisting the Persian invasions. For Aristotle (*Politics* 1327b), Europeans were spirited but lacked intelligence and skill, while Asians were the opposite – they lacked spirit but were intelligent and inventive. The result was that Europeans kept their freedom, but lacked political organization and could not rule others; Asians, on the contrary, were always in subjugation and slavery to their rulers. And of course, his Greeks, in between Europe and Asia, constituted, in all their attributes, the perfect mean. Medieval scholastics reasserted the dichotomy between European freedom and Asian despotism, a topos that Machiavelli's insights reaffirmed with his characteristic twist. In *The Prince* (Chap. 4), Machiavelli compares government in Turkey and France. His knowledge of Ottoman administration allows him to use their own word "sanjaks" (*sangiacbi*) to identify Turkish political districts and to conclude that the difference between the king of France and the sultan *vis-à-vis* their subjects makes the state of the Turk difficult to conquer but, once conquered, easy to hold; whereas France would be easy to conquer but difficult to hold. In the *Art of War* (Bk. 2), Machiavelli extends Aristotle's argument on Europeans and Asians to the three continents by explaining why there have been many famous warriors in Europe, few in Africa, and still fewer in Asia. For Machiavelli: "these two parts of the world have had one or two princes and few republics, but Europe alone has had several kingdoms and infinite republics." Because excellent men of *virtù* derive from their ruler, "it follows that where there are many rulers many valiant men arise; where few, few." Rivalry between states breeds warlike men of military *virtù*.

Thinking more about peace than war, Andrés Laguna, a Castilian born in Segovia with a medical degree from Bologna, published his *Europa eorum tuorumque hoc est misere se discripians summaque calamitatem deplorans* ("Discourse on Europe") in Cologne in 1543 under the influence of Erasmus's *Querela Pacis* (*Complaint of Peace*), which in 1517 had not used the word "Europe." The title page of Laguna's treatise announces "This lugubrious declamation was delivered at a funeral ceremony at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Cologne . . . on Sunday 22 January 1543." Cologne was a "holy city" that boasted of the relics of the three Magi (who had become associated with the three continents – Balthazar, Africa, Melchior, Asia; and Caspar, Europe) and the inscription and cult of St Ursula and her 11,000 martyred

companions (whose legend recounted their three-year, pan-European voyage and pilgrimage from England to Cologne, Basel, and eventually Rome). In Erasmus's manner, Laguna's speaker not only eulogizes the deceased by describing her recent unhappy and pallid visage, but even calls upon her to appear and speak. Europa is presented in terms of the traditional organic metaphor of a body, whose head is the pope and the various Christian states its members. But the disease of war has ravaged her body and only the good doctor's remedy of peace between the Christian states can restore her to life. Some 25 years after Erasmus's *Complaint of Peace*, where Peace speaks of Christian division and the need to fight the real enemy, Turkey, sectarian differences have split Germany, religious war has wracked the continent, and in the most recent outbreak of war between Francis I and Charles V the French have allied themselves with the Turks. Laguna, who had earlier written a "Voyage to Turkey," knew well that the incompatibility between Erasmanian peace and the inevitability of the emperor's military campaigns was much greater and more dangerous for Europe than at the time of Erasmus's lament over the unity of Christianity.

The Dutch Revolt from Spanish Habsburg rule that constituted an Eighty Years War (1568–1648) of secession had a ceasefire in 1609 that established a Twelve-Year Truce until 1621, when hostilities arose again in the European-wide fighting between 1618 and 1648 called the Thirty Years War. War and peace in the context of the renewed religious warfare of the late sixteenth through mid-seventeenth centuries again stimulated writers with pan-European perspectives. Johannes Althusius, a German Calvinist with a law degree from Basel, published *Politica methodice digesta* (Herborn in Nassovia, 1603) that saw eight editions and was the first great theoretical work on federalism based upon the idea that all human politics and society were a symbiosis/symbiosis or "the art of living together." In reference to the peacemaking ambassador Cineas in Plutarch's life of Pyrrhus of Epirus, Emeric Crucé, a Parisian humanist in the Erasmanian tradition, published *Le Nouveau Cynée ou Discours d'Estai* (Paris, 1623), which was the first call for a lasting peace in Europe through general alliances between nations in a kind of united nations that would meet in Venice under the leadership of the pope. The Duke of Sully, Maximilien de Béthune, a Huguenot treasurer of Henry IV, published *Le grand dessein de Henri IV* (Amsterdam [but really from retirement at his chateau], 1638), which proposed pragmatic peace recognizing the three dominant religions of Catholicism, Calvinism, and Lutheranism as established fact and identifying the permanent major states that would send representatives to a European senate. Jan Amos Comenius (Komenský) was a Protestant exile philosopher, theologian, and educator from Moravia, whose universal peace proposals from 1633 to 1638 would establish a confederation of states founded on the science of the education of Europe and were collected in his *Opera Didactica Omnia* (Amsterdam, 1657). Both sides, but especially the minority Protestants, were active in peace and confederation proposals during the seventeenth-century religious wars.

From the time of the Peace of Lodi in 1454, diplomacy among the Italian states had meant a balance of power and the establishment of resident ambassadors to keep the peace and protect themselves from the great powers of France and Turkey. The French invasions of Italy in 1494 precipitated a centuries-long struggle between France and Spain for dominance in Europe. As the Spanish star rose with union of

the crowns of Aragon and Castile in 1469 and their new-found wealth in the New World, the marriage of the eldest daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella to the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian's son gave them a grandson, Charles, born in Ghent in 1500, who was to inherit the largest empire in Europe since the fall of Rome. With his American holdings, moreover, he was able to create a new world order around the dynastic union. In the diplomatic precedence practiced at courts, which recognized a semi-official hierarchy of the four European crowns – Holy Roman Emperor, King of the Romans, King of France, King of Spain – the union of emperor and Spanish king in the person of Charles V subordinated France to Spain. Theory was reinforced in fact with the Spanish victory in Italy (at Pavia in 1525, the Sack of Rome in 1527, and his crowning as emperor at Bologna in 1530) and in France (at St Quentin in 1557 and the subsequent Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559). But the failure of Charles to pass his dynastic holdings undivided to his son Philip in 1556 meant that the Spanish king was no longer the German emperor and, consequently, theoretically inferior in diplomatic status to the defeated French Valois dynasty, a fact that the Spanish were able to contest because of the reality of their power. With Spanish power on the wane in the mid-seventeenth century after the Thirty Years War, Philip IV had to renounce these pretensions to priority to Louis XIV in 1662. The rise and fall of the Spanish Habsburgs in Europe fits roughly within the arc of the long sixteenth century, and their rivalry with France was the driving force behind the diplomatic theorizing about the idea of Europe.

The representation of Europe as more than a mere geographical expression had gained momentum in these 200 years as ideas and images of Europe – in sets of twos, groups of threes, and then quartered in fours – reinforced one another. Binary logic had divided the world by directions (north/south, east/west); by zones (habitable/inhabitable, temperate/antipodes); by peoples (civilized/barbaric, democratic/despotic, free/slave); by caste and class (patrician/plebian, haves/have-nots). Trinities of space and time had created typologies of place (the three sister continents, the three brothers who were sons of Noah, the three Magi) and habits of history around the three rings of religion (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), the three ages (ancient, medieval, modern), and the three philosophers (Aristotle, Averroes [Ibn Rushd], Aquinas). The sign of the four welcomed America to make the continents four sisters and the world four-cornered to join the four rivers of paradise, the four elements, the four winds, the four seasons, the four humors, and the four moral virtues. Numerology, iconography, and emblemology were all Renaissance games par excellence that revealed deeper, often hidden meanings.

Those meanings all pointed to power, authority, and control. The images carry a double valence of virtue and gender: the virgin queen is pure and good, strong and beneficent, triumphant and secure in war and peace. She is defined as much by her own attributes as those of her sisters; she is the opposite of nakedness, primitivism, and exoticism. Before Europe's other became the new sister of America, the exotic East of "orientalism" from Islam and Asia, as well as the danger and untamed wilds of Africa, played upon the personification of Europe. She is the goddess of power, beauty, and wisdom: a composite Juno, Aphrodite, and Athena. Her reign brings order to the world and draws abundance from the earth. And in the new world order of the Habsburg imperial project of the sixteenth century, it is Habsburg Europe

that imposes her will on subjects near and far, defends and restores the Old Faith and spreads the arts of civilization. The history of her reign is the story of those who embrace and resist her advances in the push and pull between center and periphery: imperial and local rule.

## FINDING THE PRESENT IN THE PAST

Like the Renaissance idea of Italia, Europa was a geographical designation, not a political reality. Its boundaries were indeterminate and its people diverse. As if Italia, geography invented a history for Europa. Ortelius's *Parergon*, the ancient historical map appendix to the *Theatrum*, which first began to appear with the supplementary maps in 1579, prominently announced on the foot of its first separate title page in 1595 that "Geography is the eye of history" (*Historiae Oculis Geographicis a mortuo* that Ortelius had included in his introduction to the original 1570 *Theatrum*). The 39 historical maps in the separately published 1624 edition constituted a sacred and classical atlas of the topography of ancient lands, biblical geography, classic history, and three particular views of "paradises" on earth. Geography incorporated history in a narrative exposition of such historically provocative comparisons as those posed by "A Geographical Map of the Old World" (*Aevi Veteris. Typis Geographicis* first published in 1590. It presents "the entire geography known to the ancient world until the salutary year 1492" centered in the much larger, contemporary world map. Small round maps of the four continents rim its corners and "spectator(s)" can see a juxtaposition of past and present knowledge, with the highlighted Old World centered, yet dwarfed, in the expanse of ocean.

Among Ortelius's ancient maps, Europe itself is discovered first in 1579 among the three original *Parergon* maps in an "Image of the Roman Empire" (*Romani Imperii Imago*) with "a short account of the origins, development, and culmination of the Roman Empire" and a genealogical tree of the seven Roman kings – "all shown in this map for the benefit of those studying history." It had previously appeared in separate publication in 1571. But Ortelius created such maps less for the student of history than for the making of history. A map added in 1595, "Europe, or Oceltrica" (*Europam. sive Celticam*), is "a new map of ancient Europe" and based on classical sources – Hecataeus of Miletus, Pliny, Pomponius Mela, Ptolemy, Strabo and Dionysius of Alexandria. It uses the same base map as that for the Roman Empire and shows the continental unity of the land of the Celtæ from Iberia to Russia. The northern coast of Russia along the Barents and Kara seas is inaccurate, especially around the Urals and the mouth of the River Ob, which, nevertheless, has a letter showing Ortelius's attempts at accuracy: "In ancient times it was thought that through this river mouth the Caspian sea empties itself." If the far reaches of Tartar had not yet been mapped, Ortelius's attention to the best available information is impressive, with the Ob, Volga, and Don forming the eastern border of Europe with Asia. From the middle of the fifteenth century, the geographical and ethnographical division between Europe and Asia and the distant European East of Scythia, Sarmatia, Ruthenia, the state of Moscow, and Kievan Rus had been of central concern to educated Eastern European elites, such as the Poles Jan Długosz (1415–80), J.

of Glogów (1455–1507), and Maciej of Miechów (1457–1523). And even if Ortelius shows the imaginary Isles of the Blessed (“Fortunatae insulae”) in the top left above the British Isles rather than off Africa in the Canaries as Europe’s traditional western border, the dreams of bliss that they promised might still be hoped for. Legends from the ancient geographers may have been slow to die, but the visualization of new constructs such as Celtic Europe fueled the imagination of a common continental history.

From a place, continental maps created a people. After Gerardus and Cornelis de Jode’s 1593 *Nova Totius Europae Tabula* portrayed 20 “costumed men and wives,” including even a scantily clad African, soldiers from Turkey and Persia, and women from Turkey and Macedonia in a cartouche, many seventeenth-century mapmakers continued to decorate the borders of their maps of Europe with natives dressed in traditional regional costumes. Such a Europe was not a binary world of civilized and barbarian, us versus them, but a much more nuanced and complex world that included male and female couples from every corner of the continent, such as Hondius-Jansson’s 1623 *Nova Europae descriptio* with its English, French, Belgian, Castilian, Venetian, German, Hungarian, Bohemian, Polish, and Greek husbands and wives. National consciousness and rivalries were at play, creating a European identity from its constituent parts.

Over the course of the long sixteenth century, Europeans traveled around the world and into the past literally and literarily to find themselves; the last three plates in Ortelius’s 1624 *Parergon* reproduce earthly paradises to provide rest and recreation from their page-turning journeys in print: “After this long and tedious peregrination over the whole world, I should think of some place to rest, where exhausted students, faint and wearied by their long and tiring journeys might recreate themselves.” Two of the three plates present paradises lost: Tempe of Thessaly at the foot of Mount Olympus where “people dwell . . . meet in companies . . . and having done divine service and ceremonies in due form and manner, they banquet and make merry,” and Daphne, a pleasant suburb of Antioch in Syria, which Apollo, “preferring it above all other places in the world, honoured and graced more than ever any other.” The third of these earthly paradises, the *Parergon*’s last plate, first appeared in the *Theatrum* in 1601 and reproduced an earlier 1591 engraving of El Escorial, the palace of Ortelius’s patron Philip II, set above a 36-line poem by Michael van der Hagen of Antwerp. The text lauds Philip himself, “the greatest Ruler of the Occident,” and the Spanish king’s colossal construction of the college-church-monastery-palace as exceeding the seven wonders of the ancient world. The trajectory of Spanish Habsburg power in the sixteenth century had forged such “glory,” “honor,” “riches,” and “splendor” that defied mortal thoughts and words, one of the “paradises” on earth. “Who can match the King, and Spain?” From Antwerp within his realm, all praise continued to flow, with calls that his “great Power continue to grow.” While from across the rivers in Holland or from outside his kingdoms in France, England, and Electoral Saxony, a different Europe grew.

When 12 new states entered the European Union on May 1, 2004, to change the balance of power and broaden the ideological and practical project of debate and politics maturing since the Second World War, a new chapter in the invention of Europe was put in play. Much as in the Renaissance, objective truths and subjective

myths, universalist ambitions and local realities once again look to the past to reinvent the present. The dispute between the Greeks and Italians on where to establish the European Union’s capital — Athens or Rome — is not so much a battle for clout and patronage as it is over the meaning and origins of Europe as a democratic or imperial federation. Similarly, the papacy’s attempts to make the European constitution acknowledge the role of Christianity, expansion of the union to former Soviet states in the east such as Ukraine and Georgia, or division over the admission of Turkey reflect the ever-evolving questions: What is Europe, both spatially and temporally? What does it mean to be European, both politically and culturally? Is there continuity with Europe’s history in its present unification or is there a disjunction between Europe’s past and its present course?

The invention of today’s Europe is a continual process of rediscovering, common values as much as markets, of finding Europe before as much as after nationalism and of returning to the radical, self-conscious identity-formation begun in the Renaissance. Today’s Europe is an idea and an ideal born in the ashes of war that Europeans could resolve to stop consuming themselves. Yet, it is a Europe still threatened by the bitter fruits of militant colonial conquest and by the fearful betrayals from crusading religious fervor begun in the Renaissance quest to rule the four corners of the world. If Europe is to exorcise its inner demons that still reject the other because (with Montaigne’s irony) “they do not wear pants” or (in today’s French secularism) they do wear scarves, Europe will have to discover how history is the heart and soul of geography, and that multi-culturalism is not political correctness but historical fact. Pariah peoples such as Jews, Armenians, and gypsies have been essential participants in European development; Turks in the Balkans and around the Black Sea integral actors in modern European history and culture and Asians, Africans, and Americans critical, if often coerced, contributors to the material and ideological making of Europe. From the time of the old continent’s rebirth in the Renaissance, history has invented Europe’s future.

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