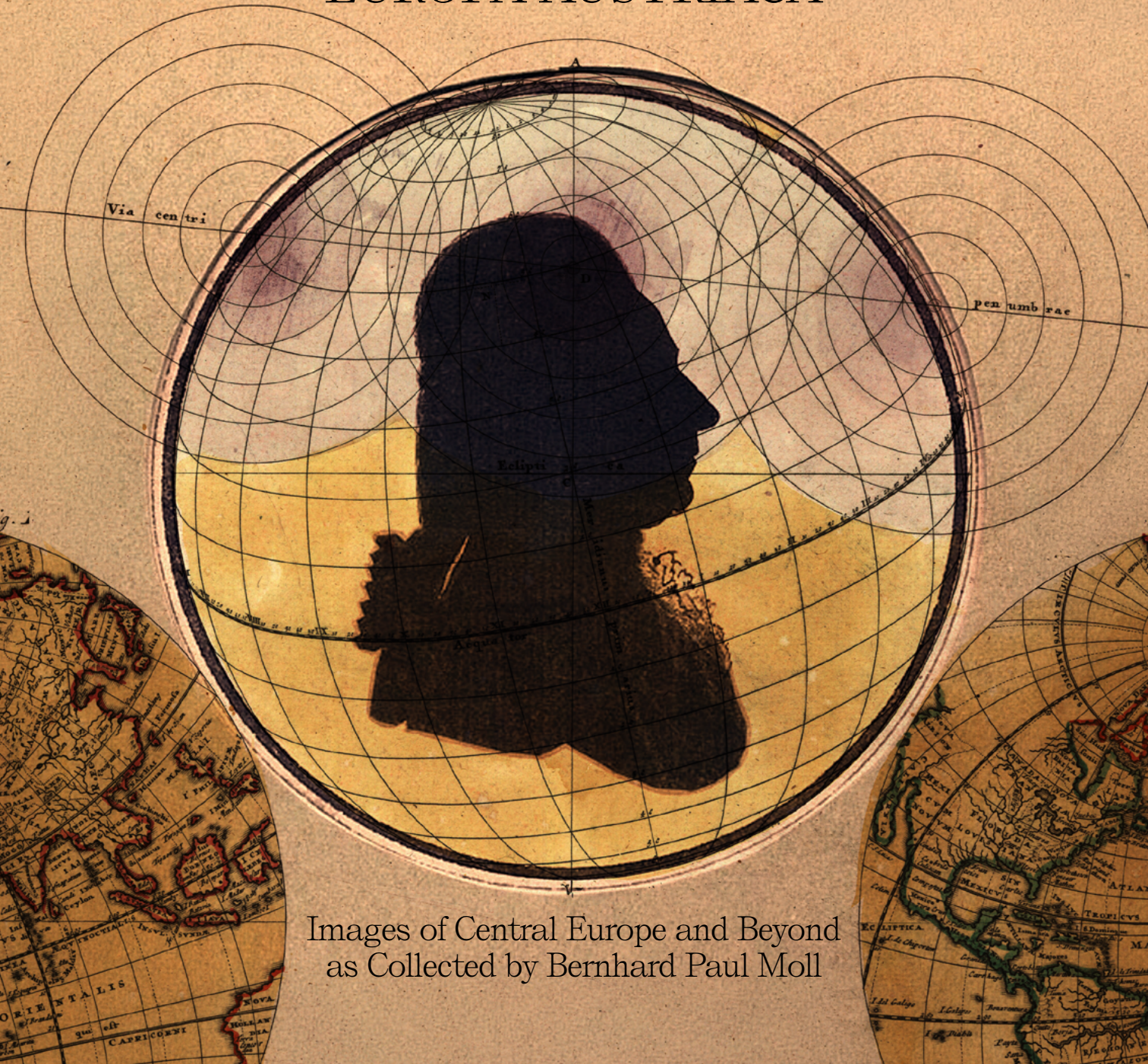


EUROPA AUSTRIACA



Images of Central Europe and Beyond
as Collected by Bernhard Paul Moll

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EUROPA AUSTRIACA

IMAGES OF CENTRAL EUROPE AND BEYOND AS COLLECTED
BY BERNHARD PAUL MOLL

Eva Chodějovská (ed.)

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INTRODUCTION

In premodern Europe, collectors were interested in paintings, sculptures, minerals, books, mathematical instruments, and a wide variety of curiosities. Maps also belong to this list. Collecting was, a passion, a hobby – and therefore an essential need for a particular person – and contains an element of self-presentation. Map collecting specifically, as implied by the very nature of pre-modern maps, has two principal dimensions. Firstly, the aesthetic: maps are viewed as decorative objects and aesthetically valuable works of art. Secondly, the practical: this comes to the fore in connection with the Enlightenment view of the world and is a common with some of the abovementioned items, a desire for fact-based and verified knowledge, and the fact that the collection became a ‘database’, a knowledge base that can be used for other specific purposes.

Collecting maps constitutes a relatively underexplored area within the history of collecting (Schütze 2025; Polleroß 2014; for Bohemia and Moravia Slavíček 1993; Slavíček 2007; Kubíková 2019; for the Low Countries Koeman 1961; Müller 2024). It has tended to attract the attention of map historians (Edney – Pedley 2019b; Tolias 2011), while leaving sufficient scope for further interdisciplinary research. The goal of this catalogue is to develop the basic characteristics of the B.P. Moll map collection, which has already been made accessible online as well as in analogue forms (Chodějovská – Dufka 2021; Kuchař – Dvořáčková 1959, recently Pápp 2005 and selected chapters in Reitinger 2024, The Moll Map Collection). We also seek to go beyond this and outline the context in which B.P. Moll’s collection was created in terms of its components as well as offering a brief overview of other collectors and scholars from Central and Western Europe.

Bernhard Paul Moll’s collecting was deeply rooted in Western (European) conceptions of the world and scholarly traditions, and was further shaped by his

profession, social standing, and place of residence. This suggests that the ‘mental coordinates’ of the central figure in this catalogue are shaped by the early Enlightenment and by Vienna’s intellectual milieu; B.P. Moll’s worldview can thus be understood as quintessentially Central European in character.

What is significant is not the number of items, but the collection as a whole: the existence of Moll’s manuscript catalogues – more precisely, cartobibliographies – which list and annotate the collection, demonstrate the owner’s comprehensive understanding of map production and present an original system of classification. These features make B.P. Moll’s collection a representative example of the collecting practices and spatial knowledge of the period. It is, therefore, worth placing within the context of similar scholars in Central Europe and beyond.

To characterize its uniqueness and importance for understanding the early modern perception of space in general, the term ‘composite atlas’ has proven useful (Wagner 1986; Wawrik 1986a). By its nature, such a collection excluded three-dimensional objects – such as stucco, mural decoration techniques, mosaics and oil paintings – but encompassed a wide range of other genres representing space in both manuscript and printed forms and codes: in words, images and symbols, regardless of whether modern standards of accuracy are applied. Therefore, in order to ‘represent the world’ to its owner, a composite atlas included up-to-date general and thematic maps, including historical ones, vedute (top views, side views and many other forms and combinations), plans (from town plans and individual building plans to design documentation for technical facilities and mining sites), topographic descriptions of countries, cities and peoples achievements (in building, landscape design and architecture), ‘theatres of war’ (depictions of current European battlefields and military troop movements, called “Kriegs-theatra”

or “armée journals”), and also those who had shaped this environment – e.g. portraits of prominent figures, the monuments that commemorated them and representations of special events ranging from natural disasters to political events and social life. Modern terminology fragments this assemblage and may obscure how such a collection functioned in its original context. From a technical point of view, the sheets which were included were usually printed and handwritten documents; the composite atlases often contain entire series of graphic sheets, smaller publisher’s atlases and chorographic books, but they have been uniformly adjusted according to the needs and tastes of the collector. Composite atlases varied in size from a few dozen sheets stored in special folders or bindings, to collections of tens of thousands of sheets, for which the owner purchased bespoke library furniture or allocated a special room in his residence. Each composite atlas is therefore unique.

While the atlas – as a bound collection of maps in the publisher’s sense, distinct from the composite or collector’s atlas – emerged in the late sixteenth century through the work of Mercator and Ortelius and metaphorically ‘guides’ the reader through the world, the composite atlas instead reflects the intellectual worlds of its collectors. In its entirety, it offers a glimpse into how these individuals, as representatives of their period, perceived the world.

Finally, it has to be stressed that many private map collections and composite atlases underwent a process of musealisation (Pomian 2014), i.e. they were turned into modern-era public collections that are housed and made accessible by universities and GLAM institutions (galleries, libraries, archives, museums). The same applies to B.P. Moll’s collection, which, after being transferred from Vienna to Brno, underwent a transformation in function, becoming a core component of a public memory institution’s holdings. In this capacity, it has contributed to shaping our knowledge of early maps and related aspects of cultural heritage in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.



Fig. 1: The title page of Domenico de Rossi’s famous atlas feature an allegorical scene with Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

Mercurio geografico, ouero Guida geografica in tutte le parti del Mondo, vol. 2. Roma: Domenico de Rossi, 1692, title page.

MASTERING SPACE: SPATIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SPATIAL AMBITIONS BETWEEN THE ERAS OF BOYLE AND MOLL

SPACE ON THE WISH LIST

When Robert Boyle (1627–1691), an early modern natural philosopher, chemist and founding member of the Royal Society, compiled his famous list of *desiderata* in the 1660s, he did far more than imagine a catalogue of possible inventions (Keller 2015: 3). The twenty-four “things to be endeavoured” were part of an ambitious programme of early modern curiosity, a catalogue of what the new science wished to know, make, and achieve. Almost half of the wishes concerned the acquisition and mastery of space. Flying through the air, travelling under water, the improvement of navigational instruments, curing diseases from a distance and, most prominently, the determination of longitude, widely recognised as one of the most intractable scientific and technical challenges of the age (Hunter 2004–2025; Sample 2010). Together, they illustrate the growing significance of spatial categories in early modern thought. Their primary concern was practical, reflecting the expanding spatial horizons of early modern Europe. But these practical ambitions went hand in hand with the changing ways in which space was understood, imagined, and represented.

Taken together, these concerns point not only to a single, unified concept of space, but to the increasingly complex ways in which early modern actors experienced and engaged with the world. What had once been conceived as a bounded and hierarchically ordered cosmos appeared as a domain that could be traversed, measured, and represented in new ways. Advances in magnetic knowledge and instrumentation refined navigation, painters articulated perspective, natural philosophers geometrised motion, astronomers reconfigured the heavens, mathematicians offered a universal language of measurement and proportion, while cartographers redrew the outlines of the inhabited world. In turn, these developments not only expanded the means of engaging with space, but also intensified the ambitions to master it and reach further.

None of these innovations simply displaced the authority of antiquity. Ptolemaic cosmology continued to be discussed, Aristotelian notions of locus remained part of learned teaching, and as a result, markedly different regimes of spatial representation continued to operate side by side. Texts and traditions retained their authority, yet they increasingly had to contend with new forms of evidence: the traveller’s report, the experiment, the chart, and the diagram. Within this constellation, the experience of space not only expanded but also became increasingly differentiated in its forms of articulation.

In this sense, Boyle’s list stands as one of the many testimonies that unwittingly bear witness to this diversity. Consistent with his experimental and programmatic approach to natural inquiry, early modern conceptions of space did not arise within a single discipline. Instead, they emerged as a shared object of interest across multiple fields, each engaging with it from distinct perspectives and for different purposes. Space was articulated through diverse practices, scales, and epistemic commitments. Natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, cartography, navigation, architecture and the arts each mobilised its own questions, methods, and representational practices.

BETWEEN THE COSMIC AND THE LOCAL

This heterogeneity found one of its most striking expressions in the intertwined practices of terrestrial and cosmic inquiry. The former was the domain of geography, topography and chorography, while the latter was the domain of astronomy and cosmology. In early modern culture, geography and cosmography were firmly embedded within the systematic organisation of knowledge. This is evident not only in literary traditions but also

in visual culture, where both were represented through consistent allegorical personifications. Geography and Cosmography appeared as female figures endowed with globes, maps and measuring instruments, visualising their status as abstract, universal, and theoretically grounded disciplines.

Chorography, by contrast, never acquired a stable personified image, despite its ancient roots and growing practical and cultural significance from the sixteenth century onwards. While early modern theory continued to privilege geography for its mathematical and universal claims, chorography gained prominence through its attention to locality, visual recognisability, and eyewitness description. Its epistemic authority resided less in allegorical personification than in representational practice itself (Nutti 1999). As it was defined by its focus on local spaces rather than by a distinct form of representation, chorography encompassed various manifestations, from descriptions of physical settings to the etymologies of place names and the reconstruction of local pasts, often overlapping with antiquarian concerns (Rohl 2011).

This plurality is also reflected in the different ways in which space was depicted. The three basic modes were already articulated by Vitruvius, who distinguished between *scenographia* (perspectival view), *orthographia* (elevation), and *ichnographia* (ground plan) (Vitruvius 1999, I.2.2). These categories designate not only technical-drawing conventions, but the distinct ways of apprehending space which were taken up and widely exploited by early modern authors, despite the difficulties of understanding Vitruvius’s terminology and adapting it to early modern conditions (Karmon 2024). Each operated according to its own epistemic logic and was used in response to different practical demands. *Scenographia* (Fig. 4) found particular expression in architectural perspectives and urban vedute; *orthographia* (Fig. 5) enabled precise frontal and profile depictions of architectural forms without

perspectival distortion; while *ichnographia* (Fig. 6) was used in urban plans and ground plans, which were frequently included in cartographic collections.

Contemporary map production was shaped by a comparable heterogeneity. While earlier historiography tended to emphasise increasing mathematical standardisation, implying a unification of epistemic status and the visual appearance of maps, recent scholarship has shown that “reading early modern changes in cartography as a story of increasing accuracy and scientific precision is anachronistic” (Branch 2013: 36), since different cartographic regimes coexisted in parallel, not only across different parts of the world but also within Europe (Edney – Pedley 2019a).

GEOMETRIA TEORETICA ET PRACTICA

Although spatial homogenisation was neither dominant nor uniform in global cartography (Yee 1994), it nevertheless became a concept with significant impact. It is within this context that Descartes and Newton are most often invoked. Yet it was also – and perhaps most importantly – mathematical practitioners and technical experts, surveyors, navigators and instrument makers who were primarily responsible for introducing measurement and mathematics into the description and ordering of the world. The ideal itself permeated a wide range of domains, surfacing in contexts far removed from abstract theory; for instance, in Boyle’s desideratum to build “a ship to sail with all winds.” Behind this wish lies the ambition to free maritime space from natural forces and to render it a neutral medium, traversable equally in all directions. This aspiration implied a shift from a spatial regime structured by favourable and unfavourable winds to a conception of space as a field of calculable relations, within which routes are not improvised in response to conditions but planned in advance.

Therefore, rather than focusing solely on abstraction, it is equally important to consider the popularisation and pedagogical dissemination of surveying techniques as a driver of early modern spatial knowledge. Surveying and basic geometric techniques were increasingly taught not only to specialists but also in broader educational settings, including secondary-level institutions. Therefore, even those who were not expected to produce maps or plans were often trained in related fields such as geometry, geography, or military architecture. These were part of the nobleman’s curriculum – the so-called noble disciplines (Stagl 1995). In this sense, the early modern period saw the emergence of a wider culture of spatial competence in which the ability to measure, orientate and conceptualise space became part of general learning rather than a narrowly defined technical expertise. From the seventeenth century onwards this meant that many patrons and collectors were themselves familiar with these forms of knowledge, shaping not only the production but also the reception and use of maps.

An apposite example of this broader diffusion of spatial knowledge is offered by Johannes Amos Komenský – Comenius (1592–1670). In the late 1620s and early 1630s, while teaching at a gymnasium in Leszno, he compiled a textbook introducing the basic principles of cosmography, opening with the definition: “*Cosmographia est mathematica mundi descriptio quoad quantitatem et partium dimensionem.*” (Comenius 1978a: 45) Cosmography was thus presented to his students as a mathematical description of the world in terms of quantity and the dimensions of its parts. Yet Comenius himself was no mathematician and the level of instruction he offered remained elementary, but it nonetheless played a formative role in acquainting his students with these techniques and shaping their understanding of mathematical approaches to the world. He also wrote a geodesy manual, which he characterised as a form of practical geometry that was concerned with the use

of instruments and the rudiments of measurement (Comenius 1978b). It should be noted, however, that when he had earlier worked on his map of Moravia, his approach relied primarily on personal experience and consultations with others who knew the region firsthand. The coexistence of these modes – formalised, mathematically framed instruction on the one hand, and empirically grounded, experience-based practice on the other – is not a contradiction, but rather a revealing indication of how spatial knowledge was produced, taught, and circulated in the early modern period.

The growing visibility of these practices is also reflected in contemporary visual culture. Illustrations in Andreas Cellarius’s *Harmonia macrocosmica* (1660), for instance, depict not only scholars and allegorical figures, but also groups of ordinary people learning about measuring instruments and using them. In several scenes, figures are shown on rooftops handling devices such as the cross-staff (Jacob’s staff), a simple instrument used to measure angular distances in astronomy, navigation, and surveying. These images should not be read as evidence that mapmaking itself had become a widespread activity. Instead, they indicate a broader process of familiarisation with the tools and techniques of spatial measurement. The presence of such instruments in pedagogical and semi-public contexts points to their increasing cultural accessibility and symbolic importance.

Fig. 2: Personification of Cosmography.

Cesare Ripa, *Della nouissima Iconologia*. Padova: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1625, p. 123.

Cosmography is shown as a female figure holding a pair of compasses and a geometric quadrant. At her feet lie two spheres representing the terrestrial globe and the celestial sphere, symbolising the integration of the earthly world and the cosmic order within cosmographic knowledge.

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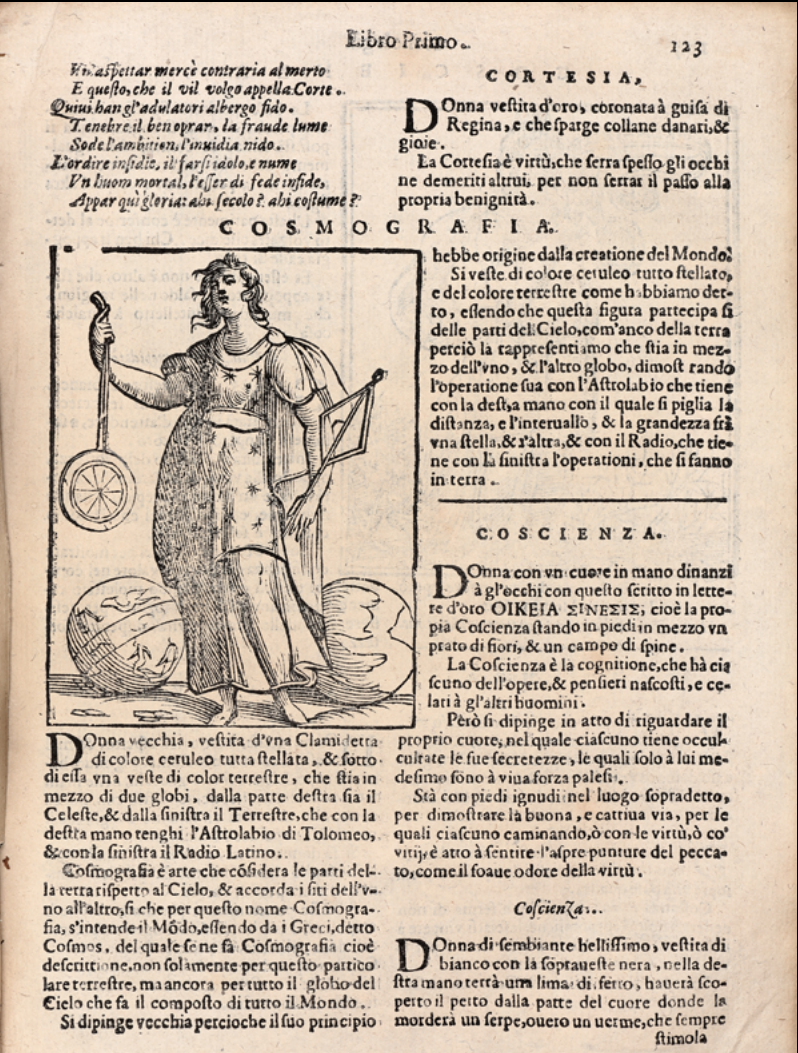


Fig. 3: Personification of Geography.

Cesare Ripa, *Della nouissima Iconologia*. Padova: Pietro Paolo Tozzi 1625, p. 242.

The Figure of Geography is closely related to the allegory of Cosmography in its use of the globe and measuring instruments. Unlike Cosmography, Geography is associated exclusively with the terrestrial globe, emphasising the measurement and description of the Earth alone.

MZK, sign. ST2-0620.949.

Fig. 4: Templi Hierosolymitani Scenographia.

Johann Jacob Scheuchzer,
Kupfer-Bibel (Physica Sacra).
vol. 3. Augsburg and Ulm:
Christian Ulrich Wagner, 1733,
tab. CCCXXIV, post p. 522.

Engraving presenting
a scenographic view of the
Temple of Jerusalem, combining
architectural reconstruction with
a perspectival landscape setting.

MZK, sign. CH-0006.957,3.

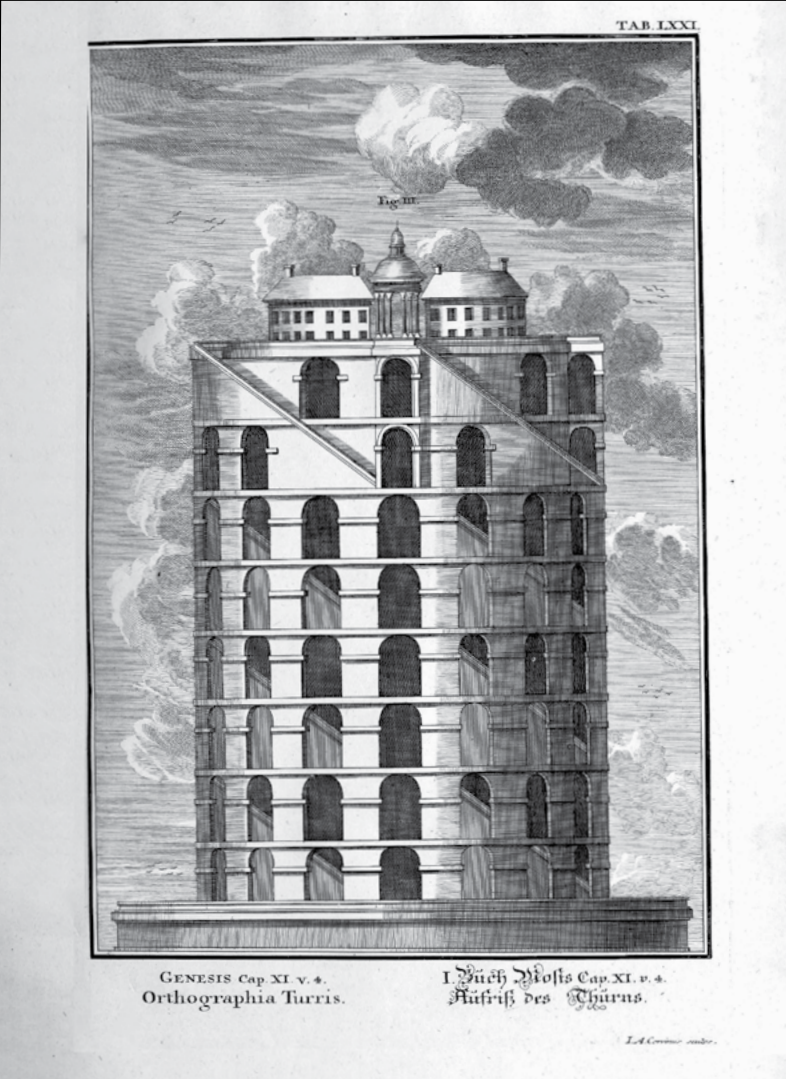
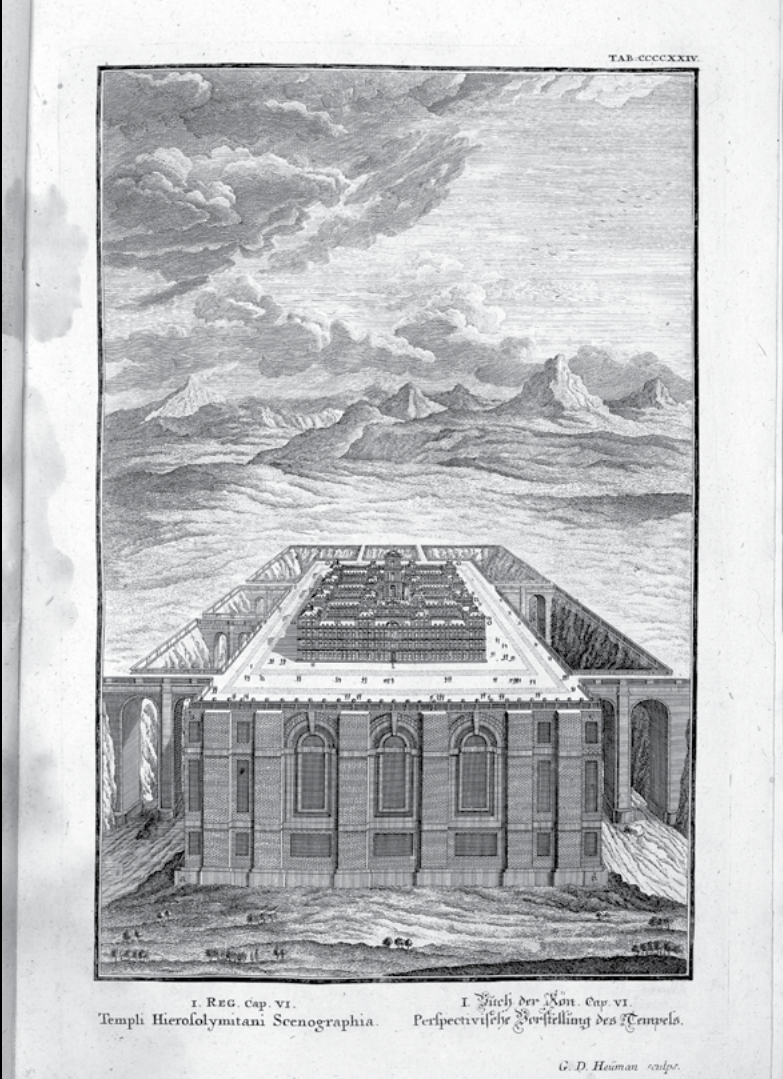


Fig. 5: Orthographia Turris.

Johann Jacob Scheuchzer,
Kupfer-Bibel (Physica Sacra),
vol. 1. Augsburg and Ulm:
Christian Ulrich Wagner, 1731,
tab. LXXI.

Engraving presenting an
orthographic view of the Tower
of Babel, emphasising its
vertical elevation and structural
articulation without perspectival
recession.

Fig. 6: Ichnographia.

Johann Jacob Scheuchzer,
Kupfer-Bibel (Physica Sacra).
vol. 1. Augsburg and Ulm:
Christian Ulrich Wagner 1731,
tab. CCCXXI.

Engraving presenting a ground
plan of the structure in schematic,
top-down view. The image
exemplifies ichnographia as a
mode of spatial representation,
reducing the building to its
geometric layout.

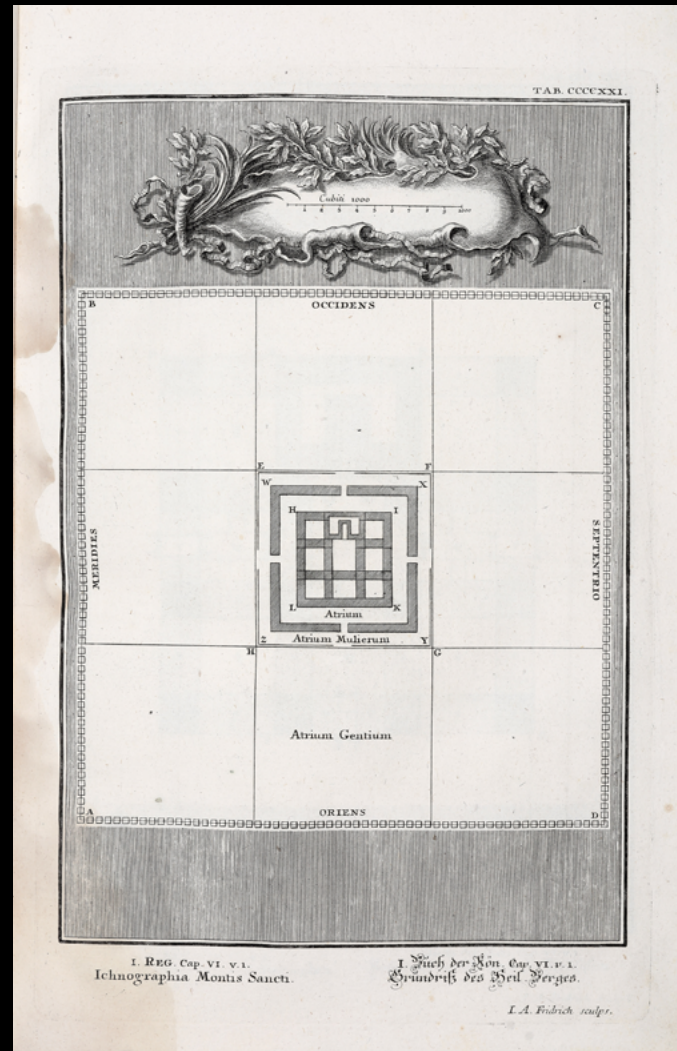


Fig. 7: A display of tools used by
astronomers and geographers.

Andreas Cellarius, *Harmonia
Macrocosmica*. Amsterdam:
Johannes Janssonius, 1660,
post p. 44.

The scene shows astronomical
measurement as a seemingly
routine activity used by various
groups of observers.

MZK, sign. BKB-0001.535,1.

Viewed in this light, premodern cartography should not be understood solely as the outcome of abstract mathematical developments, but as part of a broader field of spatial practices in which measurement, education, and visualisation intersected. The increasing availability of surveying techniques did not immediately transform all forms of mapping, nor did it produce a uniform cartographic regime. However, it contributed to a gradual expansion of the social base of spatial knowledge, creating the conditions under which more systematic and standardised forms of mapping, map reading, and map collecting could emerge.

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF MAPS

The transformations at stake were not solely confined to changing the epistemology of space or to developing various modes of spatial representation. Equally significant was the transformation which was unfolding over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the social status of the map as an item. By the early modern period, maps had become an integral component of European culture, extending far beyond their functions in navigation, administration, and scholarship. Cartographic images and their visual conventions advanced principles of territoriality and, in so doing, reshaped modes of governance (Buisseret 1992). Whereas in medieval society, governance had been conceived primarily as authority over people, in the early modern period, partly due to cartographic reasoning, it came increasingly to be understood as authority over territory (Branch 2013). Maps entered the domestic interiors of urban households, becoming a familiar element of bourgeois decoration as well as a sign of education and intellectual curiosity (e.g. for Prague, Fejtová – Pešek 2001).

This shift is vividly documented in paintings by Johannes Vermeer, whose interiors often feature

large wall maps or charts (Welu 1975; Landsman 2022). In works such as *Officer and Laughing Girl* or *The Art of Painting*, the maps function not merely as background objects but as visual anchors which place intimate domestic scenes within a wider spatial and geopolitical imagination. Their presence reflects the growing integration of cartographic knowledge into everyday life and underscores the role of representation in shaping early modern experiences of space.

This was not, however, confined to urban bourgeois interiors. In Central Europe in particular, it was the nobility who played a key role in cultivating the use of maps in a dual sense: first, as instruments for recording (often in connection with cadastral mappings and surveys) and managing landed property (Chodějovská 2020; Storms 2019; Baumgärtner – Stercken 2012; Kain – Baigent 1992), and second, as a medium of self-representation and display. Estate maps, such as the Harrach family's map of Jilemnice (Fig. 8), illustrate this dual function. Similarly, in the Bohemian lands, the use of wall maps and landscape paintings as interior decoration is most clearly documented in aristocratic settings (Šimůnek 2012).

As a result, the map acquired a metaphorical dimension: it could serve as a model for ordering knowledge, clarifying complex relations, or rendering abstract domains intelligible through spatial representation. The very fact that maps could function in this metaphorical capacity testifies to their cultural familiarity and epistemic authority. A particularly suggestive venue for observing the reconfiguration of early modern space was the theatre, which reinforced an understanding of space not merely as something to be inhabited but as something that could be constructed, ordered, and manipulated. Theatrical space functioned as a model of the world rather than its mere imitation. It is therefore no coincidence that the theatre, with



Fig. 8: Anton Graupar, *Mappa der Hoch Reichs Gräflich. Harrachischen Alldial Herrschaft Starkenbach und Majorat Branna, dann auch Zdiar.* Graphic scale [ca. 1:12,000]. 1765. Drawing, 355 × 199.5 cm.

The large general map of Harrach Family's Jilemnice Estate in North Eastern Bohemia was taken to the family's Vienna palace for the winter season 1775/6 to be displayed to visitors.

State Regional Archives in Hradec Králové (Eastern Bohemia / Východní Čechy), fund Ústřední správa Harrachů, map no. 2.

its carefully articulated spatial structure, became a key point of reference for early modern theories of memory and mnemonic practice, which relied on ordered spaces as frameworks for the organisation, storage, and retrieval of knowledge.

At the same time, it is important to avoid overestimating the role of maps in everyday life, particularly as tools for wayfinding on land. Even as cartographic techniques and measurement became more visible and culturally important, practical knowledge of how to get from one place to another was still mostly conveyed in verbal form well into the eighteenth century. Geographical treatises, accounts of places, travel narratives, itineraries and route guides remained the main means of navigating, offering step-by-step directions grounded in experience, in a way maps could only partly match. As Catherine Delano-Smith has shown (Delano-Smith 2006), even the greater availability of printed maps did not immediately lead to their systematic use by travellers: maps specifically intended for travel were slow to develop and only began to appear more regularly alongside other genres of wayfinding literature toward the end of the seventeenth century (Chodějovská 2025; Midura 2021).

A similar pattern can be observed in historiographical writing, where geographical information was frequently incorporated into narrative accounts. Here, too, it did not primarily serve the practical purposes of orientation. Rather, it provided a spatial framework for the organisation of events. In some cases, geographical descriptions and maps were combined in order to make complex or distant events more accessible to readers. In early modern historiography, however, such cases should not be taken as evidence of a general shift, but rather as relatively isolated experiments within broader historiographical practice that remained predominantly textual (Kasza 2024).

In this respect, maps functioned less as direct tools for wayfinding than as one medium among others, better suited to visualising and organising spatial knowledge than to its practical use in navigation.

MAP COLLECTIONS AND THE VISIBILITY OF DIVERGENCE

The rapid expansion of cartographic production in the early modern period had consequences that extended well beyond the accumulation of geographic knowledge, as it increasingly exposed the internal tensions and incompatibilities within cartographic practices. Non-uniformity emerged as one of the defining problems of early modern cartography, not only because maps suddenly became unreliable, but because their divergences became increasingly consequential and visible.

In practical terms, this problem was most acutely felt at sea. Maritime navigation offered no fixed routes, landmarks or terrestrial cues by which movement could be corrected in situ. The navigator was required to orientate himself almost exclusively by abstract coordinates. Discrepancies in longitude or relative position could not be compensated for by local knowledge or terrain experience, as might be possible on land. The ocean thus functioned as a space in which cartographic inconsistency was not a minor inconvenience but a structural hazard.

However, non-uniformity also became a theoretical problem which was internal to cartography itself. This did not arise exclusively from errors encountered in the field, but from the comparative practice of mapmaking and map collecting. The increasing circulation, collection and juxtaposition of maps made visible what isolated consultation could not: that different representations of the same

regions failed to coincide. Comparisons revealed patterns of divergence that could not plausibly be attributed to occasional mistakes in localisation. Instead, this exposed a deeper instability in the cartographic system, one that manifested itself precisely where consistency was most expected at shared points of reference.

These divergences were not just random. They stemmed from identifiable and widely acknowledged structural conditions. The indeterminacy of longitude prior to reliable timekeeping rendered east–west positioning fundamentally conjectural and resistant to standardisation. The absence of a universally accepted prime meridian fragmented spatial reference systems and displaced entire cartographic frameworks relative to one another. Cartographers of the sixteenth century were not unaware of these limitations. The selective omission of coordinate grids or numerical annotations on certain maps can be read not as a lack of precision, but as a deliberate acknowledgement of the conditions under which precision could not be responsibly claimed. Where proportionality was uncertain or inherited sources irreconcilable, silence was preferable to false exactitude. Such practices indicate an implicit understanding that cartographic authority depended not on the universal application of measurement, but on its judicious restraint.

In the seventeenth century, however, the problem of non-uniformity acquired new visibility and urgency. The growth of map collections, atlases and publishing enterprises transformed cartography into a comparative enterprise on an unprecedented scale. When maps were assembled, reissued and placed in systematic relation to one another, their inconsistencies became unavoidable. Collectors and editors began to recognise that these discrepancies could not be resolved by correcting individual maps in isolation. They pointed instead to a structural condition of cartographic knowledge itself.

However, even maps that might seem outdated or inaccurate from a modern perspective did not lose their value. Instead, they often remained in circulation for decades, and their continued use points to a different understanding of accuracy and truth than the one which prevails today. From the perspective of the producers, this was shaped not least by material constraints. The high costs and labour involved in producing new copperplates meant that maps were frequently just updated. This helps to explain the recurrent claims to novelty and precision in map titles, expressed in formulas such as “nova”, “novissima”, or “accuratissima”.

It is for this reason that Skelton (Skelton 1972) and Harley (Harley 1987) locate the origins of the history of cartography in the early modern period. Although Matthew Edney has raised important objections to this view (Edney 2025), he nonetheless acknowledges that early modern and Enlightenment scholars were already interested in historical maps, albeit not within a systematic historiographical framework, but rather in connection with contemporary philological, geographical, antiquarian, and encyclopaedic practices. It may be suggested that the strikingly rapid obsolescence of maps in this so-called ‘golden age’ of cartography played a particularly significant role in the historicization of knowledge itself, making visible with unusual clarity the contingent, provisional and time-bound nature of geographical knowledge, and thus contributing to the emergence of an explicitly cumulative, historically situated conception of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

To speak of maps in the early modern world is to invoke more than lines and symbols on paper. They crystallised a new way of seeing, a fresh disposition towards space itself. The age that redrew the outlines of continents and seas was also the age which redrew the very contours of human perception:

horizons widened, distances acquired number, directions became fixed and the world, once a tapestry of places and stories, began to appear as a field of extension, proportion, and order.

Cartography was both a symptom and agent of this transformation. It absorbed innovations in navigation, geometry, optics and print, while at the same time teaching Europeans how to imagine the earth as a single, coherent whole. The graticule of parallels and meridians, the convention of north-oriented maps, the growing precision of scale and projection – these were not merely technical devices but cultural operations recasting the relationship between body and world, experience and representation.

Maps offer a particularly revealing vantage point on the plurality of early modern and Enlightenment conceptions of space. Far from embodying a single, stable spatial logic, they brought together heterogeneous regimes of spatial knowledge. Maritime and terrestrial, descriptive and mathematical, local and global, each shaped by distinct practices, environments, and epistemic aims. At the same time, the very acts of compiling, comparing and systematising maps testify to an aspiration to render these divergent spatial orders mutually intelligible. Early modern cartography thus oscillated between multiplicity and unification. On the one hand, maps preserved the diversity of spatial perspectives, on the other, they fed the ambition to stabilise space as a coherent, comparable, and governable domain.

To study the development of cartography is therefore to engage with a broader history of space in the early modern and Enlightenment periods. It means tracing how changes in experience, practice and technical skill gradually unsettled inherited cosmologies and opened up new ways of thinking about the world. Maps did not simply register these transformations, they made them visible and workable, shaping how space was imagined, navigated, and lived.

COLLECTING MAPS IN EIGHTEENTH- CENTURY EUROPE: THE PARALLEL LIVES OF MAP COLLECTORS?

Map collecting became popular in Central Europe in the 18th century as maps became more accessible, both in terms of price and the quantity in which they were published, with the production by German publishers reaching its peak and the Dutch continuing to play an important role in the Central European market. They were joined by Italian, French and English producers and, to a significantly lesser extent, by other local publishing houses (Dörflinger – Kretschmer – Wawrik 2004; Dörflinger 1984–1988). Maps were collected by institutions – such as universities, schools and public libraries (for example, in Hamburg) – and by private individuals, who are the focus of this catalogue. The maps could be purchased as individual sheets, publishers’ atlases, or as already existing map collections at auctions (or inherited). Maps were sold by the publishers themselves, in bookstores, by itinerant map sellers, at fairs, but also by mail order through individuals such as Johann Hübner (1668–1731). Hübner was a scholar working in Hamburg who promoted, among other disciplines, the teaching of geography in schools, producing numerous theoretical treatises and textbooks. He found maps to be an important source of geographical knowledge and so he collected them, classified his collection, and traded them (Bibliotheca Hübneriana 1732: Appendix IV). His international network of customers remains undisclosed, though it certainly included Vienna and St Petersburg, while he also had a representative in Leipzig. The catalogue included the publication Museum geographicum (1726 and 1746), where he also provided instructions on how to collect maps and create your own individual atlas (Lange – van der Linde 2024).

After the death of Johann Hübner II (1703–1758), who had continued his father’s business until 1758, a private atlas was found in his possession consisting of nine volumes with 1,140 maps. There was also an old atlas with 19 maps and an atlas of Russia (1745) with 22 maps. In total there were 1,771 maps and topographical views, as well as

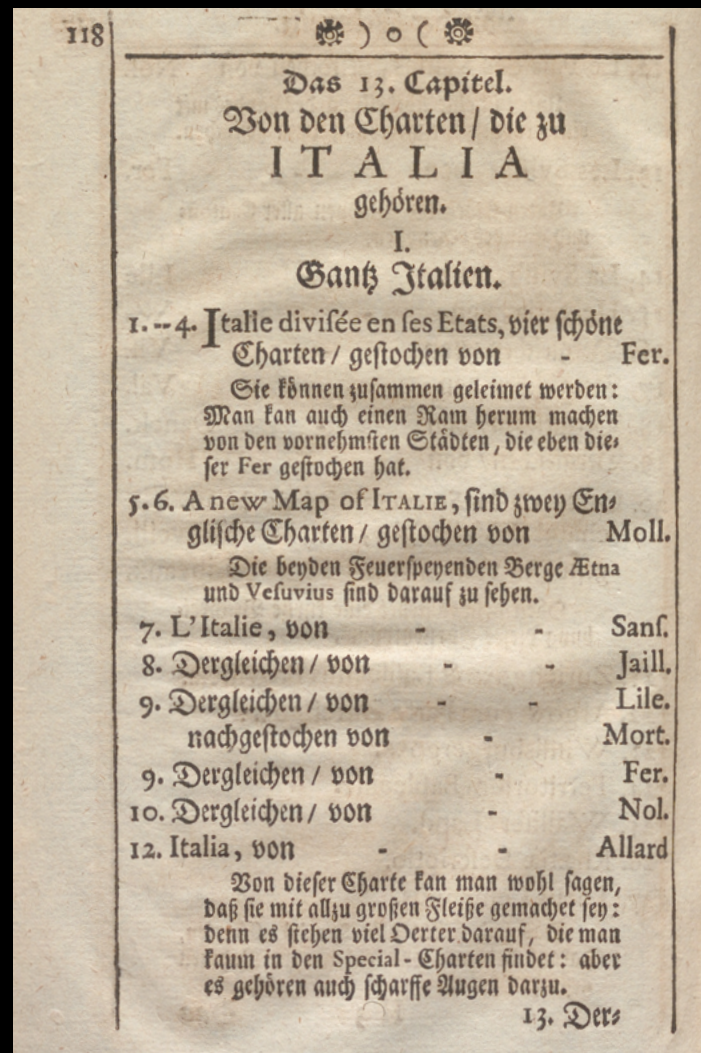
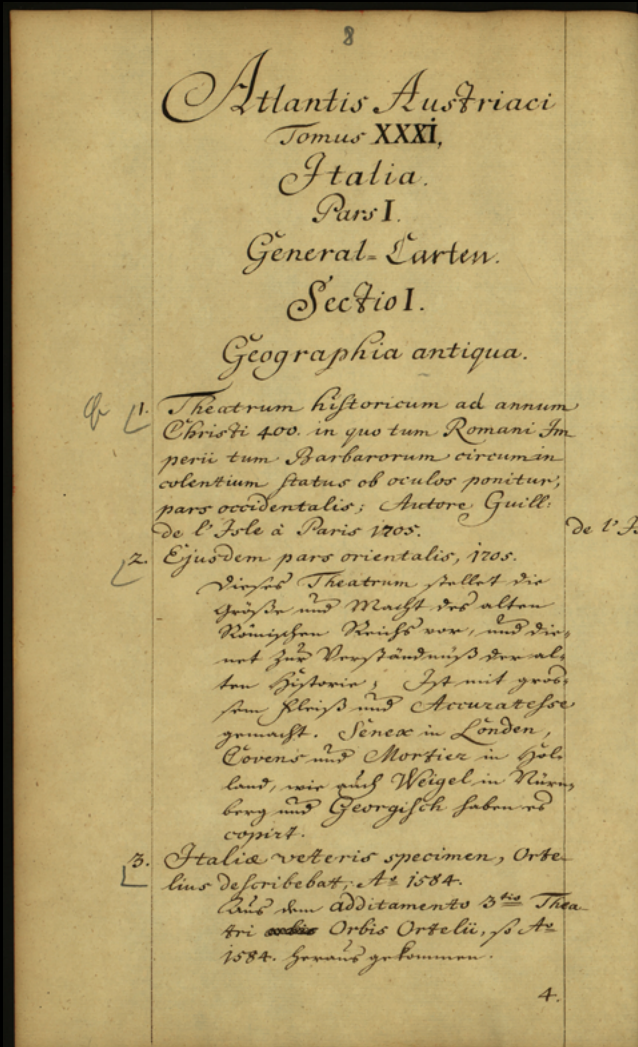
some additional copper prints showing Roman emperors and royal and princely figures of the time. (Neue Zeitung 1758. For a list of maps, see: Genaues Verzeichniss 1758).

Only a few composite atlases have survived in their original condition, and this applies even more to map collections which have survived in their entirety (e.g. for Hamburg and Dresden, van der Linde 2024: 44–47). The task of mapping the largest surviving composite atlases dating from approximately 1700 to 1800 is not straightforward. If such a map is conceived as a wayfinding tool for art historians or map historians, it would direct the reader to their present locations – Vienna, Brno, Dresden, Leipzig, Bern, Stuttgart, and Cambridge (Mass., USA). If, however, it is intended to indicate where these collections originated and where they were accessible to contemporary scholars, it would instead point to places such as Amsterdam, Rome, Florence, Vienna, Ludwigsburg, Bern and Leipzig, often for the same collectors. Who, then, were these map enthusiasts, and what became of their collections after their deaths?

For this very preliminary comparative overview of map collectors in Central Europe (in a broader sense), we chose Eugene of Savoy, Philipp von Stosch, Bernhard Paul Moll, Ferdinand Friedrich von Nicolai, Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner, Christoph Daniel Ebeling, and Ludwig Wilhelm Gilbert. Besides the time-space coordinates, the selection is also largely influenced by the fact that these composite atlases are comparable to B. P. Moll’s collection in extent and have already been studied, at least in a basic way, by modern researchers. In the first part of this chapter we will provide – in chronological order – short biographies and overviews of their collections, and we will also take into account any academic, scholarly and publishing activities; secondly, we will apply a comparative perspective and focus on their social status and a geographical and thematic assessment of their collections.

Figs. 9–10: The title page of the section on Italy in Moll's catalogues demonstrates that the layout and structure of entries was greatly inspired by Hübner.

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XV,
Tomus XXXI, fol. 8. MZK, sign.
Moll-RKP-0090.900; Johann
Hübner, *Museum geographicum*.
Hamburg: Felginer, 1726, p. 118.
Czech National Library, Prague,
sign. 65 E 5846/adl.1.



BERNHARD PAUL MOLL AND HIS CONTEMPORARY MAP COLLECTORS

Eugene of Savoy
1663–1736

Eugene of Savoy is widely considered one of Europe’s leading collectors of the Baroque era. He was born in Paris, though of Italian origin, and served the Holy Roman Emperor. He never married but amassed a considerable fortune during his military and political career, investing a substantial part of his income in works of art as a patron of architecture and in the support of scholars. When he served as governor-general of the Austrian Netherlands, he purchased the Blaeu-Van der Hem composite atlas.

Laurens Van der Hem (1621–1678) was a Dutch lawyer living and working in Amsterdam, who was greatly interested in maps and other landscape visual representations. He had his composite atlas drawn up based on Joan Blaeu’s *Atlas maior*. The atlas became a tourist attraction during its owner’s lifetime and was visited by many foreign dignitaries, including Cosimo III de Medici. This valuable atlas was kept in the family until 1730, when Van der Hem’s grandson sold it at auction to Eugene of Savoy, who then transferred it to Vienna, where it became one of the numerous items in the prince’s extensive collections of paintings, graphic sheets, 15,000 books, and 237 manuscripts. The collection also included additional maps and was divided between storage in Eugene’s Stadtpalais and display in his summer residence, the Belvedere, where it served representational purposes. Eugene of Savoy exercised careful oversight of his collection, particularly with regard to its proper storage, description, and practical use. Jean-Baptiste Rousseau was even one of the librarians there.

In 1737, the collection was purchased by Emperor Charles VI. As part of the Habsburgs’ private library (*Hofbibliothek*), the books – including maps – became part of the holdings of the Austrian National Library, where the ‘Blaeu-Van der Hem atlas’ is regarded as one of the most valuable items (UNESCO).

The Blaeu-Van der Hem composite atlas, the most precious atlas among the ‘geographica’ in the prince’s collections, comprises more than 2,400 items in 46 volumes. At its core are 11 volumes of Blaeu’s atlas. Van der Hem purchased the maps as unbound sheets and commissioned Blaeu’s leading map-finisher, Dirk Jansz van Santen, to colour them. A number of maps and vedute comes from a secret archive of the Dutch East India Company, while vedute of locations in southwest France were drawn by Laurens’ brother Herman, and those in Italy by Van der Helm himself. The Blaeu-Van der Hem composite atlas thus comprises visual representations of cities and towns, town plans and maps, as well as theatres of war across most European countries and other regions of the globe, including materials relating to the so-called voyages of discovery to the Americas and Australia. There are also maps and images representing mythological, classical and fantasy lands, portraits of outstanding or indigenous figures, as well as sketches of interesting devices and means of transportation (Van der Krogt 1996–2008; Ausserer 1929; van Gelder 2011; de Groot 2006; Wawrik 1986b).

Philipp von Stosch
1691–1757

Stosch came from the ranks of the lower Silesian nobility. He studied theology in Frankfurt an der Oder and then journeyed across Europe, staying in Italy, Prague, and The Hague. Based on older scholarly literature, Karel Kuchař characterised him in the 1950s as a polymath, art connoisseur,

antiquarian, diplomat, agent, merchant, and spy. Similar personality traits appear in other papers. (Dorothy MacKay Quynn: Collector, Bibliophile, Spy, Thief; (MacKay Quynn 1941)). The key characteristic for us is that of an antiquarian, a learned collector with an interest in the past, especially ancient history (art objects, epigraphic monuments, coins, etc.), but also in the natural sciences, medicine, etc., whose presentations mix scientific conclusions with mythology and legend, which places Stosch’s collection atlas and his collecting activities in general on the border between the Baroque and Enlightenment eras. In Stosch’s case, typical antiquarian interests were combined with a strong inclination towards the systematic organisation and analysis of collections, while he also had a passion for cartography. Stosch settled in Rome, where he had friends among the highest ranks of the papal court, including Alessandro Albani, the art-loving cardinal-nephew of Pope Clement XI. After being exposed as a British spy, he lived in Florence for a long period.

The inventory of the 324-volume composite atlas (approximately 26,300 printed and 2,550 manuscript maps and vedute), based on Blaeu’s eleven-volume atlas, was compiled after Stosch’s death by the art historian and classical archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who saw Stosch’s collections as a significant contribution to the emerging field of archaeology. Since 1769, Stosch’s atlas has been kept in Vienna, having been acquired for the *Hofbibliothek* (today the Austrian National Library). It has not been preserved in its entirety, but has been incorporated into this institution’s map collection. Stosch’s extensive library, on the other hand, remained in Rome and is part of the Vatican Apostolic Library’s collections, while the collection of engraved gems is preserved in Berlin and Krakow (Hansson et al. 2025; Lang 2007; Kinauer 1968; MacKay Quynn 1941).

Bernhard Paul Moll
1697–1780

Moll was born in Vestenberg in Upper Franconia (present-day Bavaria), and after his studies in Jena he began working as an envoy in Vienna in the early 1730s. He settled permanently in the city after marrying Maria Christina, the daughter of Saxe-Gotha legation councillor Daniel Hieronymus von Praun. In 1738, he took over the representation of the Landgraves of Hesse-Darmstadt from his father-in-law. In 1773, he retired from active diplomacy and died in Baden near Vienna in 1780 at the age of 83. He was probably involved in most of the diplomatic negotiations that took place in connection with the Wars of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years’ War in Central Europe.

Moll not only collected maps, but also books and natural specimens. While the latter two collections have not survived, his map collection has been preserved almost in its entirety and, despite its transference from a private collection to a public institution (in the 1820s from Vienna to the Francis Museum in Brno and later to the Moravian Library in Brno, Czechia), it has retained its original structure. This is also reflected in the preserved original catalogues as is demonstrated in detail in the catalogue section. They reflect Moll’s scholarly attitude towards his collection and a comprehensive overview of contemporary and historical European map production. All these aspects of the Moll Collection have been acknowledged by UNESCO, where the collection has been inscribed since 2023. The core of the composite atlas consists of maps produced by the Johann Baptist Homann publishing house, while the classification and description were strongly inspired by Hübner, as will be demonstrated further. It can be assumed that one of the main sources from which Moll obtained maps was the Viennese office of Homann’s publishing house, though there is no information about any agents Moll may have employed. Bernhard Paul Moll built

up his extensive collection over a period of at least forty years, but his descendants did not continue this tradition and attempted to sell the collection to prominent collectors, including the emperor and the tsar of Russia, but without success.

The Moll family’s social networks in Vienna, broadly speaking, extended into the highest strata of society. He was likely engaged in scholarly discussions with colleagues, although the surviving evidence does not identify any specific individuals. This is in contrast to the more clearly documented scholarly circles in Bratislava. Moll’s only son, Hieronymus Albrecht Bernhard (1738–1756), was educated at a Protestant lyceum where several prominent scholars of the eighteenth century taught. Bernhard Paul Moll donated a list of maps of Hungary from his collection to the school (1753), e.g., the earliest scholarly list of maps of the territory. After Moll’s death, this manuscript was published by Gottfried Kéler, son of the pastor of the Lutheran congregation in Bratislava. Some members of the Moll family were also collectors and engaged in a range of intellectual and artistic pursuits or professions. These included positions as priests, professional diplomats, theatre managers and specialists in fields such as geodesy and geology (Reitinger 2024; Chodějovská – Dufka 2021; Kuchař – Dvořáčková 1959).

Given its considerable size of roughly 12,000 sheets, Moll’s composite atlas required further structuring. The organising principle was devised by Moll himself and was based on geographical criteria. It is represented by the map he chose to be “number one” of the collection: the earliest printed map of the territories under Habsburg rule, published in various editions during the 1730s by the heirs of Johann Baptist Homann in Nuremberg. It shows the two main parts of the collection. The first part covers the Habsburg Hereditary Lands, outlined in yellow, which were grouped into the *Atlas Austriacus*. The second part, outlined in red and called *Atlas*

Germanicus, consists of maps of the territories where the Habsburgs ruled thanks to their election as Holy Roman Emperors. The two atlases were further subdivided. The collection includes both manuscript and printed maps. It predominantly covers the printed and hand-coloured production of German, Dutch, French and Italian publishing houses from the seventeenth and first two-thirds of the eighteenth century. The manuscript maps usually represent mining sites, fortifications, and military campaigns. In some of the cases they might be copies of printed theatres of war, and several of them are signed “Geyer”. The name most probably refers to an unknown copyist, presumably from Vienna, who worked for a number of different map collectors. Coats of arms and portraits, which were also typical components of composite atlases, are not included, though Moll had a keen interest in maps of mining plots and ancient inscriptions (The Moll Map Collection).

Ferdinand Friedrich von Nicolai
1730–1814

He came from a middle-class family and his father served as a major in Cannstatt (Stuttgart). Before joining the army in 1756 and actively participating in the Seven Years’ War, he studied law in Tübingen and undertook a trip to the Kingdom of Prussia and Vienna. He achieved a high level of expertise as a military engineer.

He spent his entire life in the service of the Principality of Württemberg in high positions, concluding his career as Minister of State and Minister of War with the rank of General Field Marshal (*Generalfeldzeugmeister*). He also served as an ambassador, representing Württemberg in Russia (1801–1803). He was twice married and the focus of his interests was ‘military science’. He devoted his life to advancing this discipline in line with Enlightenment ideals of science and world knowledge, as well as reflecting on the education and

training of officers. He founded the *Hohe Carlsschule* and wrote several theoretical treatises, textbooks, and manuals (Pust 2015; Hohrath – Henning – Kieven 1990; von Poten 1886).

Nicolai’s extensive library and collection of atlases, stored in his own house in Ludwigsburg, provided him with a source of knowledge in his field and a foundation (a kind of ‘knowledge base’) for his scientific and pedagogical activities. At the end of the eighteenth century, the library, manuscript collection and composite atlas formed the basis of the public Duke’s Library, now known as the Württemberg State Library. The size of the collection is known thanks to Nicolai’s own work: On the occasion of the transfer to the Duke’s library, Nicolai wrote a treatise *Memoire concernant un recueil de livres, manuscrits et imprimés, de cartes et plans dessinés et gravés, propoés a Servis a éclairer par une gradation de notions intuitives la marche et l’étude d’un cours de Science militaire methodique, au quel on a joint une Indication sommaire du nombre des plans et cartes* (1789): 197 volumes containing 28,221 “plans et cartes” including 5,604 manuscripts.

Today, the “Nicolai Collection” comprises 155 volumes (Württembergische Landesbibliothek. Bestand. 2026). They encompass roughly 23,000 sheets – both manuscripts and prints. Single graphic sheets were mounted on paper sheets. 65% of them cover the eighteenth century, 30% the seventeenth, and 5% the sixteenth. The core thus consists of contemporary maps, while the manuscripts by the collector are also present. Several smaller private collections are also incorporated within the Nicolai map collection as acquired holdings. After 1789, only minor additions were made; overall, the collection has been preserved intact as it was at the end of its owner’s collecting and topographical activity. The ensemble was, however, partly dispersed across other sections of the library. Despite this, the Nicolai Collection is treated as one unit featuring a unique internal structure.

Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner
1732–1803

Ryhiner was a Bernese statesman and geographer. He was born on the 1st of January 1732 and had a career in public service in the state of Bern. With his marriage to Rosina Sophie von Mülinen (1736–1815), he became connected to the most important families in the city. During his career as a statesman, he served on the Grand Council, the Council of Commerce, and the Minor Council. In his official work, he drew on both his geographical and legal expertise to contribute to the administration of the state of Bern. In addition to his political role, Ryhiner is regarded as a geographer. He was actively involved in issues of spatial organisation, transport, communication, and cartography (Klöti 2019; Klöti 2003; Klöti 1998; Klöti 1994).

It is not known when Ryhiner began collecting maps, but he was already expanding his collection in the 1770s. His nephew, Rudolf Friedrich von Ryhiner (1772–1817), later continued to add to it, which explains why the collection includes several maps dating from the early nineteenth century. Ryhiner regarded maps as “an auxiliary means for the development of geographic science” and therefore assembled the collection as a personal research tool (Sammlung Ryhiner, 2026).

Ryhiner and his wife had no children, and after his death the map collection was kept by his heirs for two generations. It was donated by Friedrich Ludwig von Effinger to the City Library of Bern (now the City and University Library) in 1867.

The Ryhiner map collection consists of 16,500 maps, plans and topographical views, which he bound in 541 volumes. The collection was regionally and thematically organised. Almost without exception the maps are printed, mostly copperplate engravings, but there are also some woodcuts. With his composite atlas, Ryhiner compiled a

cartobibliography of 25 volumes and a map catalogue of 23 volumes. The Ryhiner Collection is of particular importance since it is one of the few collections to have been preserved almost entirely in its original format of composite atlases.

Christoph Daniel Ebeling
1741–1817

Ebeling was born in the village of Garmissen near Hildesheim. He studied theology, philology, geography and history at the University of Göttingen. After his graduation, he worked as a teacher in Leipzig before moving to the *Hamburger Handelsakademie*, a private school for merchants. In 1784 he was appointed professor at the Academic Gymnasium in Hamburg. From 1799 until his death he was director of the Hamburg city library.

After his studies, Ebeling focused his attention on the geography and history of North America (Edney 2025; Denis 2018; Weimer 2018; Weimer et al. 2018). His magnum opus was the five-volume work *The Geography and History of North America* (Ebeling 1796–1816). Ebeling collected about 3,500 books and 5,000 maps (in 10,000 sheets) for a large section relating to the history of North America. Although he was a preeminent scholar on the geography and history of North America, Ebeling never crossed the Atlantic Ocean. However, he built up a scholarly network by corresponding extensively with American historians and geographers. Ebeling’s interests were broader than just the history of North America. Ebeling inherited a vast collection of printed and manuscript governmental maps of the German lands from Georg Friedrich Brandes (1701–1791), a lawyer and governmental official in Hanover, although it is unclear whether Ebeling took over his map collection in its entirety or only partly. The collection contains even more maps of Germany than of the United States.

Ebeling organised his map collection geographically. He started with general world maps, celestial maps and maps of the continents, then moved to larger scale maps of regions and countries in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe. He also compiled a *Catalogus Mapporum* and a *Catalogus Antlantum Mapparumque Illis Comprehensarum*, catalogues of his loose maps and atlases in which he noted the year and the price for which he purchased his cartographic documents. During the eighteenth century, scholars were almost compelled to develop private collections, since public and academic libraries were often poorly stocked. For scholars, politicians and other collectors, private libraries were essential for consultation. Ebeling also opened up his collection to others, but in his catalogue he noted: “I cannot lend any of the maps contained in this collection to anyone, no matter whom.” (Weimer et al. 2018: 49). After his death, the collection was purchased by Israel Thorndike, who donated it to Harvard University, where it became the foundation of the Harvard Map Collection: ‘With the arrival of this collection, Harvard’s library went from having no real map collection to having the best in the nation’. (Denis 2018: 8) However, during his lifetime, Ebeling never intended his collection to leave Germany and be transferred to America.

Ludwig Wilhelm Gilbert
1769–1824

Gilbert was born on the 12th of August 1769 in Berlin and his ancestors on his father’s side were French Huguenots. His father was a lawyer at the *Kammergericht*, the highest state court in Berlin. Gilbert’s father died when Ludwig was only six years old and soon after, his mother sent him to the *Philantropinum* in Dessau. There he shared a room with the painter and engraver Carl Wilhelm Kolbe (1757–1835), from whom he developed his love of copper engravings. Gilbert studied mathematics and geography in Halle and received his doctoral degree in philosophy in 1794. In 1795 he began lecturing

in mathematics and physics in Halle, moving up to professor in the same year. From 1801 he held the professorial chair in physics and chemics at the same university. In 1811 he moved to Leipzig, where he was appointed professor of physics. He kept this position until his death on 7 March 1824. He is best known for the *Annalen der Physik*, one of the oldest scientific journals on physics, which he was editor-in-chief of from 1799 until his death. He is less well known for his interest in geography, which his father had already inspired in him at a young age, when Gilbert was able to find his way on a map put before him. One of his first publications was his *Handbuch für Reisende durch Deutschland* in three volumes, though he rarely mentioned this work as he regarded it as disadvantageous for his career in physics and mathematics. However, Gilbert also taught geometry and astronomy.

As a result of hardships during his youth and student life, Gilbert was often described as physically frail and somewhat deformed. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), for example, described him as a “small, deformed physicist”, after a visit to Halle in 1802. Even more revealing is the characterisation of Gilbert by the lawyer and counsellor Reneke de Marees van Swinderen (1764–1848) from Groningen in the Netherlands. In the summer of 1816 he travelled across Germany with a group of scholars from Groningen and Leiden. During their stay in Leipzig, Gilbert – an experienced guide (Gilbert 1791–1795) – gave them a tour of the city and to the observatory, where they had a great overview of the area where the Battle of Leipzig against Napoleon had taken place three years earlier. In his travelogue De Marees van Swinderen wrote: “accompanied by Professor Gilbert, a man skilled in physics through and through, a true caricature by the way, only four feet tall and very humped from the front and back.” His physical limitations may have been one of the reasons why he never married. Later that year, in 1816, Gilbert became a corresponding member of the Royal Institute of the Netherlands

(now the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, KNAW). It is unknown whether this appointment was related to the visit by the Dutch scholars, but Gilbert’s membership of this and many other learned societies underline his scientific standing (Geyer 2024; Lommel 1879; Choulant 1826).

Like many professors, Gilbert was also a collector. During his career he amassed a significant and valuable collection of instruments. He also built up a collection of more than 7,000 artistic prints and a collection of minerals. His comprehensive library, focussing on geography, mathematics, physics and chemistry, was auctioned in November 1824 (Weigel 1824). This also included an extensive collection of maps, plans and topographical images. The collection is briefly described in the auction catalogue and was sold in lots. Gilbert’s map collection partly consisted of fifteen durably bound volumes of maps, published by Homann, Schenk and other eminent publishers. These volumes were classified partly by geographical region – encompassing the whole world – and partly by theme (nautical charts, coastal maps, city plans, siege maps, and celestial charts). Together, these fifteen volumes contain more than 1,100 maps. The greater part of the collection, however, comprised portfolios of loose-leaf maps, and a number of atlases were also auctioned. In total, Gilbert’s cartographic collection amounted to more than 3,000 maps. It is possible the Leiden map collector Johannes Tiberius Bodel Nijenhuis (1797–1872) purchased hundreds of maps here, although a complete overview is lacking. What we do know is that he met Gilbert in person. In 1816, at just eighteen, Bodel Nijenhuis joined a scholarly journey across Germany, documented in the surviving travel account by De Marees van Swinderen. Although Gilbert’s map collection has been dispersed, a large part of it ended up at Leiden University Library, where the Bodel Nijenhuis Collection is kept. The maps can be identified because the auction number

is written in verso, while in many cases the name Gilbert was also written in pencil.

Gilbert added annotations to some of the maps. The most comprehensive annotations can be found in the righthand margins of the *Tartariae Sinensis* map by the Homann heirs. The ‘Anmerkungen über diese Charte’ (remarks on this map) relate to the geography of the region, the expedition in northeast Asia, and the sources of the map. The second part, written in a different, black ink, focuses specifically on the voyage of discovery by Jean-François de la Pérouse (1741–1788), including the coordinates of specific locations around Sakhalin and Hokkaido. Below, more ‘Geographische Anmerkungen’ have been listed for specific locations on the map. It gives some insight into how Gilbert used these maps and how he studied them, at least in this example. Below Gilbert’s annotations, Bodel Nijenhuis wrote: ‘scr. Gilbert, Prof. Lips.’ (written by Gilbert, professor in Leipzig). This indicates that the provenance – the former owner of the map – was of importance to Bodel Nijenhuis. The fact he had met Gilbert in person might also have been an extra incentive to purchase part of his map collection.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND

It has been shown that the collectors came from diverse social strata. At the upper end were figures such as Eugene of Savoy, who ranks alongside the wealthiest art collectors, including Francis Stephen of Lorraine and the dukes of Saxony. Two of the collectors were part of the lower nobility (Philipp von Stosch and Bernhard Paul Moll), while Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner, Christoph Daniel Ebeling, Ludwig Wilhelm Gilbert and Friedrich von Nicolai can be regarded as members of the middle class, working as professionals in the service of the state or city.

The group under study is also diverse in terms of occupation. It includes diplomat-envoys, such

as Philipp von Stosch and Bernhard Paul Moll; a diplomat, high-ranking official and military commander, Prince Eugene of Savoy; state officials and civil servants, including Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner and Friedrich Nicolai; and teachers and university professors, such as Christoph Daniel Ebeling and Ludwig Wilhelm Gilbert.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

When comparing map collectors in early modern Central Europe, it is possible to look at both geographical and thematic focus. While some collectors were interested in maps of the entire world, others focused on particular regions. The collections of Eugene of Savoy, Johann Friedrich von Ryhiner, Ludwig Wilhelm Gilbert and Christoph Daniel Ebeling were of global scope, whereas that of Bernhard Paul Moll was devoted almost exclusively to Austria-Hungary and Germany, with additional material relating to Italy, the Low Countries, and Switzerland. As the number of sheets and their geographical coverage are best known for these five collections, they will be used to analyse the geographical focus of private map collections. The sources on which this analysis is based are the catalogue of the Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem (Van der Krogt 1996–2008), the website of Bern University Library, where the Ryhiner collection is digitally available, the auction catalogue of Gilbert’s library (Weigel 1824), the handwritten catalogue *Catalogus mapparum geographicum* of Christoph Daniel Ebeling at Harvard (Ebeling 1811), and the website of the Moravian Library in Brno, where the Moll collection is digitally available.

The collection of Eugene of Savoy, or more accurately, the seventeenth-century collection of Laurens van der Hem, was based on the *Atlas Maior* by Joan Blaeu. The atlas consists of eleven parts, of which only two and a half are devoted to regions outside Europe. This ratio is indicative of

the broader balance between maps of Europe and those of other continents. In other words, Central European collectors had access to far more maps of European regions than of other parts of the world. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the percentage of maps of Asia, Africa and the Americas is relatively small in these collections. To a certain extent, the geographical content of a collection depended on which maps were available for purchase. Van der Hem added other maps, prints and drawings to his Blaeu atlas. It seems he had a special interest in France as around 23% of the sheets in his atlas are devoted to France. The collections of Van der Hem and Ryhiner are comparable as their maps and prints cover the whole world. Ryhiner’s emphasis is slightly more on Germany and less on France, while the part devoted to Switzerland is larger (6%) in comparison to the other collections analysed (2–3%). Although still a modest share, the Swiss confederacy covers only a small area and was not a main centre of map production, whereas the Low Countries most certainly were. In all of the collections analysed, the Netherlands cover a significant percentage (9–12%). Apart from Van der Hem (12%), Germany has the largest share of maps in the collections of Gilbert, Moll (both about 33%), Ryhiner (22%) and Ebeling (18%). Of these five collectors, Van der Hem is the only one outside the German speaking world. In the eighteenth century, Germany was not a political union. This extensive area, combined with the fragmentation into numerous larger and smaller states and the presence of map production centres in places such as Nuremberg and Augsburg, helps explain the large number of maps and prints. The same applies to the relatively high percentage of maps of the Low Countries in these collections. Although the Netherlands cover a relatively small area, major map publishers were concentrated in Antwerp and Amsterdam from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

The Moll collection is notable because it is the only one which focuses on a specific geographical region: Austria and Germany. The Austrian empire

included Hungary, Bohemia, part of Italy, and parts of the Low Countries. However, the collection also includes maps of parts of Italy and the Netherlands which were not Austrian. Moreover, in the *Atlas Germanicus* two volumes are devoted to Switzerland. Other regions, like France, the British Isles, Russia and the other continents are almost completely absent from the collection. As a side note, it should be mentioned that Moll owned a printed atlas of Russia, which he donated in 1753 to the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava (Kéler 1781–1787; Atlas Russicus 1745). Supposedly, more maps and atlases of other regions were part of his library, but not of his *Atlantes*. Austria (including Hungary and Bohemia) covers about 39% of Moll’s collection. This falls to only 5–10% for the other collections. Above all, Moll’s collection has a distinctly Austrian focus. The Austrian section includes not only maps, but also numerous topographical prints (city views and building plans) and hundreds of drawings of ancient monuments and mines attributed to the author or workshop known as ‘Geyer’. Another collector who is known for his regional focus is Christoph Daniel Ebeling, who amassed one of the largest collections on the geography and history of North America. However, compared with Moll, his focus was less narrowly defined and he in fact owned more maps of Germany – his country of origin – than of the United States (Weimer et al. /2018/: 33). Although he is well known as a collector of Americana, only 11.5% of his maps relate to the Americas. To conclude, the geographical focus of private map collections reflects a combination of the availability of maps – sometimes shaped by the content of early modern European world atlases, such as Blaeu’s *Atlas Maior* – and the personal interests of the collector.

THEMATIC FOCUS

When attempting to analyse the thematic focus of individual collectors, less data is available.

A distinction could be made between ‘proper’ maps, plans, topographical images (*vedute*) and other prints, such as genealogical charts and portraits, which also are found in some cartographic collections. The collections of Ryhiner and Gilbert were limited to cartographic images, while other collections contain a significant number of topographical prints and drawings.

Another distinction is between printed – often commercial – maps and manuscript maps. In the collections of Van der Hem and Moll a substantial number of hand-drawn maps and topographical images are included, whereas they are almost entirely absent from the collections of Ryhiner and Gilbert. Ebeling’s collection also contains a number of manuscript maps of places in Germany (Weimer et al. /2018/: 33–34, 40), while Moll’s and Nicolai’s collections have many hand-drawn images such as building plans. The series of drawings by Geyer of mines and ancient monuments in Austria, Bohemia and Hungary in the Moll collection is particularly noteworthy. Another way to analyse the thematic focus is by the source of printed materials. We can distinguish between maps and atlases, maps and prints issued in books, and separately published loose sheets. The albums of Nicolai, for instance, contain numerous architectural, military, engineering, and topographical prints from various sources.

CONCLUSION

The group of private collectors under study displays both shared features and significant diversity. They, along with many of their contemporaries, including John Innys (ca. 1695–1778; England), Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697–1782; France), Otto Thott (1703–1785; Denmark), Jean-Baptiste-Michel Jaillot (1710–1780; France), Richard Gough (1735–1809; England), King George III (1738–1820; England), Hendrik Fagel

the Younger (1765–1838; Netherlands), Christian Friedrich von Cochenhausen (1769–1839; Hessen), Karl Seweloh (1771–1848; Hanover), and Franz von Hauslab (1798–1883; Austria) who were working in neighbouring regions of Europe, are worthy of further study either as individual cases or from a comparative perspective. However, even at this stage of research, the present study offers an outline of certain trends in the development of composite atlases and map collecting in general.

The reasons for collecting, summarized by Anke te Heesen and Brigitte Hoppe on collecting in early modern Europe (te Heesen 2010; Hoppe 2014), changed over time from the humanistic-baroque passion for accumulating objects because of their value or rarity and for self-presentation, to scholarly interest in describing and classifying the objects and sharing observations about them, which was typical of the Enlightenment period. In relation to maps, collecting can be considered part of the image of an early modern Central European aristocrat. During the Baroque period and the early Enlightenment, an art collection was an essential attribute of aristocratic prestige; a high-ranking nobleman had to present himself as a lover and connoisseur of art. Prominent collectors had agents working in European cultural centres who systematically devoted themselves to developing their collections, as well as gallery curators and librarians. Art collections, like libraries, were classified as indivisible family property – fideicommissum. The importance of individual works and the collections as a whole extended beyond the current owner to the prestige of the entire family. This was often reflected in costly customizations, where frames or bindings bore the family coat of arms. And not least, it is necessary to mention the construction of special rooms within aristocratic residences – galleries, curiosity cabinets, and library halls. Map collecting should be assessed primarily within the narrower context of collections of prints and drawings. Generally, there is far less evidence of collections of prints and drawings

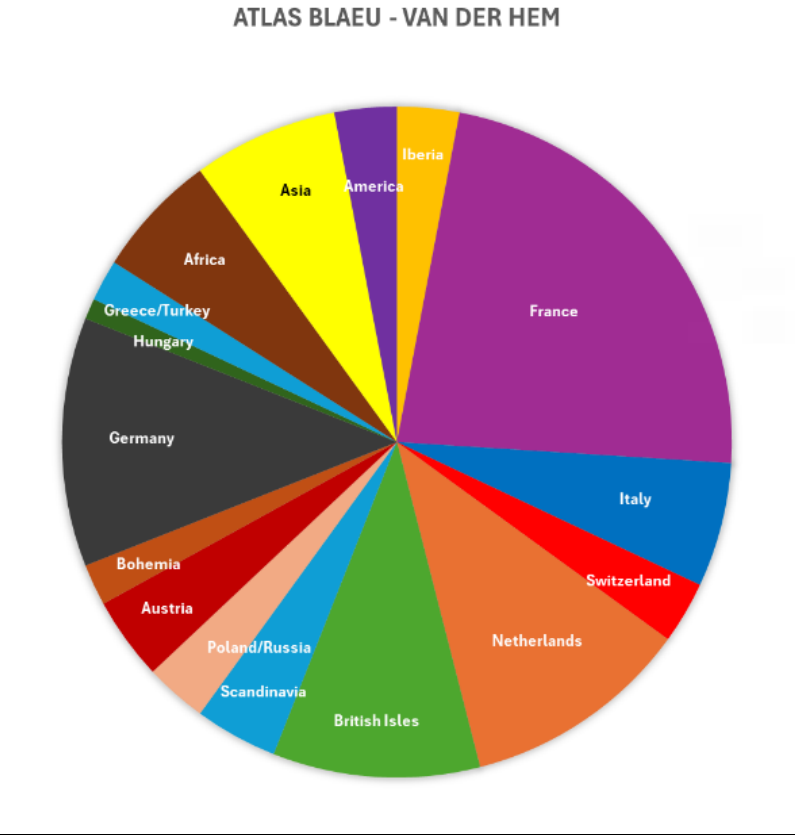


Fig. 11a–e: Comparison of the geographic distribution of maps and topographical images in the Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem (Eugene of Savoy), Ryhiner, Gilbert, Moll, and Ebeling.

Fig. 11b

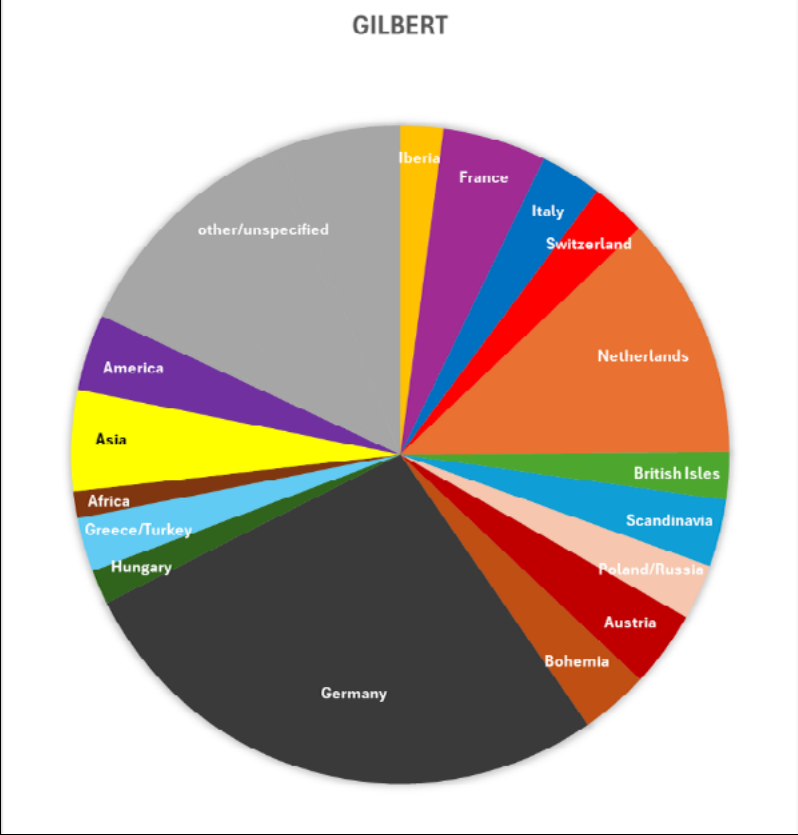
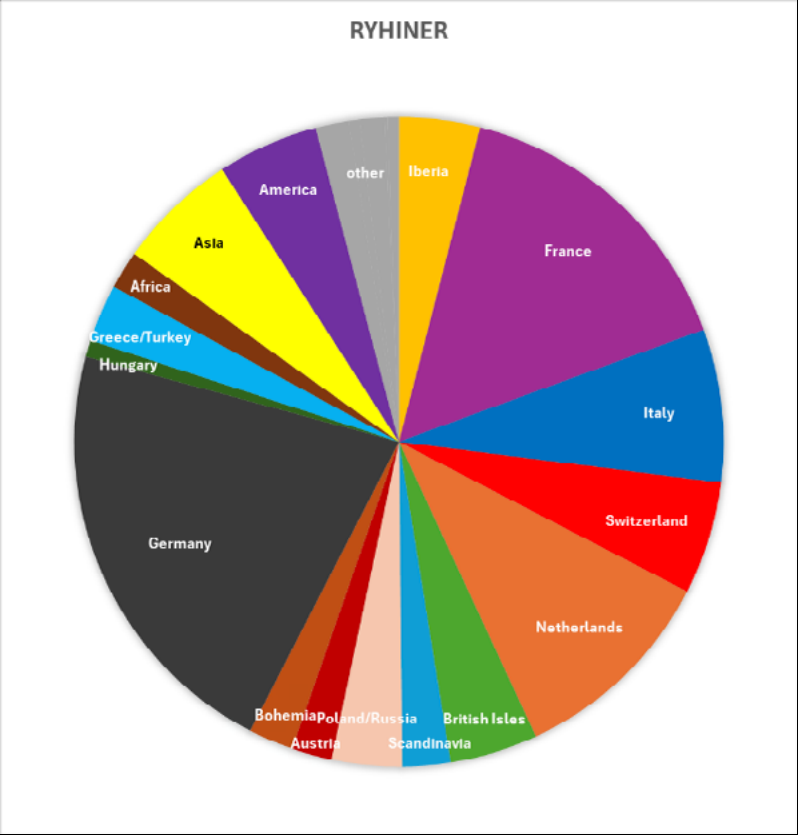


Fig. 11c

Fig. 11d

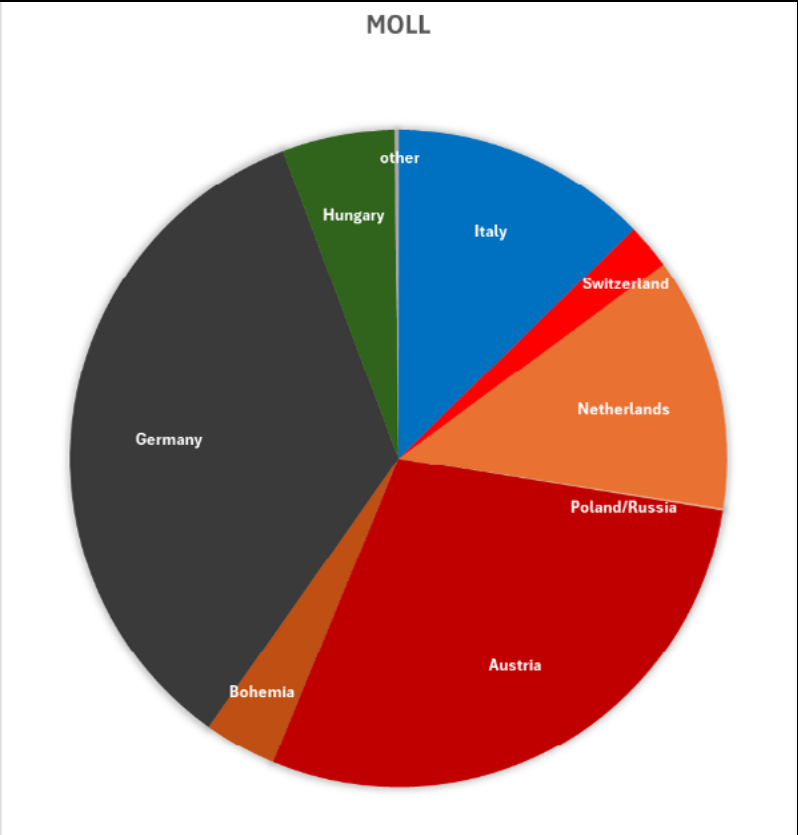
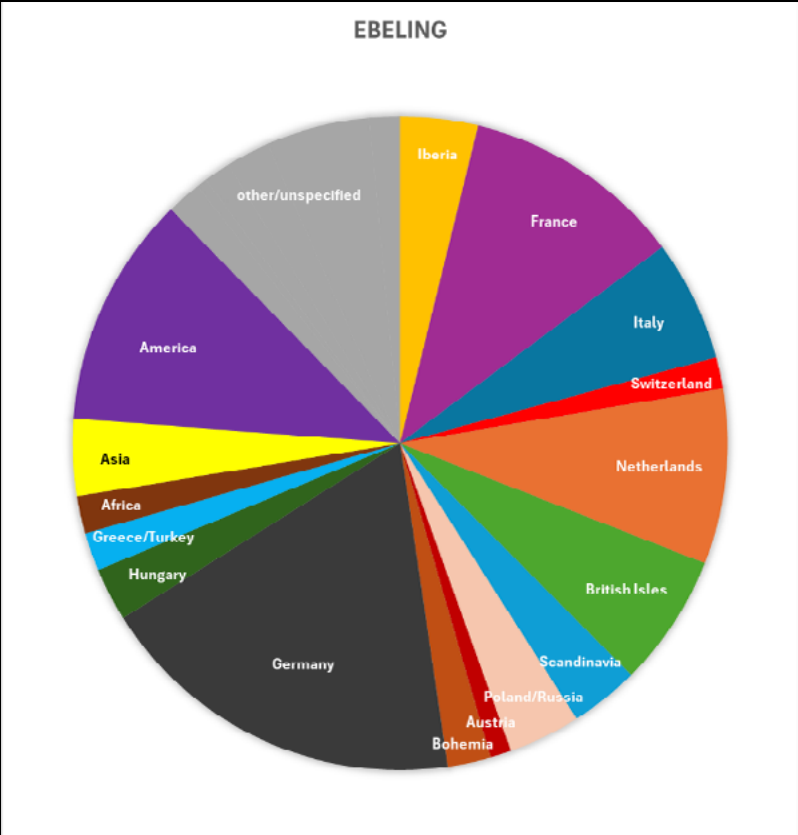


Fig. 11e



compared to collections of paintings. However, it has been established that prints adorned all aristocratic interiors and that individual works or albums were part of the libraries or other collections of even moderately wealthy aristocratic families. The maps and smaller composite atlases were usually acquired through agents, as were other single sheet prints, albums of vedute, and books. The group of owners of large composite atlases shows, however, that – as the collectors did not belong to the highest social strata or to long-established noble families with centuries-old genealogies – the collections did not remain in their possession for many generations. Instead, they were soon auctioned or transferred to an institution or to a richer and more powerful collector.

With the shift towards Enlightenment-era collecting, scholars – whether engaged in study and teaching at institutions of higher education or universities, or working in other profession – assembled their collections as databases of knowledge shaped by Enlightenment ideals. They did not primarily (or at least not exclusively) gather rarities and curiosities, or items intended to express and highlight their social and/or academic status, as described above, or to attract visitors from the highest strata of society. The Enlightenment era collectors perceived these items as objects of study, which they further described, classified, and analysed. They were interested in a wide range of fields; in general, their collections served as a tool for grasping and understanding the world (“macrocosmos in microcosmo”), helping them to disseminate scholarship and rigorous knowledge more widely. Enlightened collectors liked to share the knowledge they acquired, as well as information about discoveries and acquisitions; as early as the 1740s, the German poet, philosopher and playwright Gottfried Ephraim Lessing used the term Republic of Letters in one of his plays to describe this “virtual network”, a transnational and interdenominational scholarly organization; for Enlightenment intellectuals, the term “République des lettres” became established.

BERNHARD PAUL MOLL AND HIS COMPOSITE ATLAS: MAPOGRAPHIES AND MATERIALITY

Bernhard Paul Moll’s biography provides a framework for understanding the sources and inspiration which likely shaped his passion for collecting, as well as the aspirations underlying his collection. Therefore, we have provided a more detailed curriculum here than the brief, structured version used as the basis for the comparison above. It remains unclear whether Moll himself was aware of the strong ideological potential of his atlas, or whether he was unconsciously assembling an image of his era which appears more readily legible from today’s perspective. In any case, linking the surviving corpus to a specific individual offers a unique vantage point from which to examine one contemporary mode of understanding the world. This biographical framework naturally leads us to examine Moll’s early life and the familial and educational influences that shaped his career.

Most of his biographical information was compiled by Karel Kuchař (Kuchař – Dvořáčková 1959). He was born in 1697 into a family of Lutheran pastors. Many of his paternal ancestors were clergymen, and the Lutheran faith clearly formed an essential component of his identity. Although his studies in Jena and Halle reinforced his family’s religious orientation, he did not follow in his ancestors’ footsteps, instead pursuing a career in diplomacy (Reitinger 2024: 9394). His presence among Viennese diplomatic circles has been documented as early as the late 1720s. He represented several German rulers of the Holy Roman Empire at the imperial court, and it was there that he met his wife, whose marriage brought not only two estates in Saxony, but also her father’s extensive contacts and a consolidation of Moll’s position within the Viennese diplomatic corps. These early familial and professional experiences laid the foundation for the networks that would later generate significant social capital for Moll.

Building on these networks, Moll represented the dukes of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel – something

which may have been linked to the careers of his predecessors who had served in territories ruled by the princes of the House of Öttingen. Two of his brothers were likewise in the service of this family (Chodějovská – Dufka 2021: 10–11; Reitinger 2024: 123–201). It was from the House of Öttingen that Duchess Christiane Luisa of Brunswick originated; she was the mother of Empress Elisabeth Christine, who lived in Vienna with her daughter. As a Lutheran, Christiane Luise was an important patron of the small diplomatic Protestant community centred on the chapel of the Danish embassy, and also served as godmother to some of Moll’s children (Chodějovská – Dufka 2021: 11). At the same time, Moll acted as a representative of the dukes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and, in 1738, took over from his father-in-law in representing the landgraves of Hesse-Darmstadt. In that same year, he was elevated to the nobility. It was within this professional and social milieu that Moll began to develop his interest in collecting, particularly maps, taking inspiration from contemporary collections and publications. His interest may have been inspired, for example, by the extensive collection of Laurens van der Hem, which Prince Eugene of Savoy brought to Vienna, and which was later acquired by Emperor Charles VI in 1736. At the same time, Moll was also likely to have been receptive to a broader range of contemporary influences. During the 1730s, systematic local map production began to develop in Vienna – somewhat later than in Western European capitals – probably in response to the Habsburg reconquest of Hungary. Officers were professionally trained in surveying and terrain mapping, and there was considerable demand across Europe for their sketches in printed form (Reitinger 2014; Dörflinger 1984: 33–63). Moll was thus almost certainly influenced by publications which actively promoted map collecting and offered guidance on the formation of map collections. In this regard, the works of Johann Hübner had a particularly clear impact on the form and conceptual structure of his cartographic enterprise (Hübner 1726). His collecting activities took place within a

Fig. 12: A page from Hübner's influential work.

Johann Hübner, *Museum geographicum*. Hamburg: Felginer, 1726, p. 142.

Czech National Library, Prague, sign. 65 E 5846/adl.1.

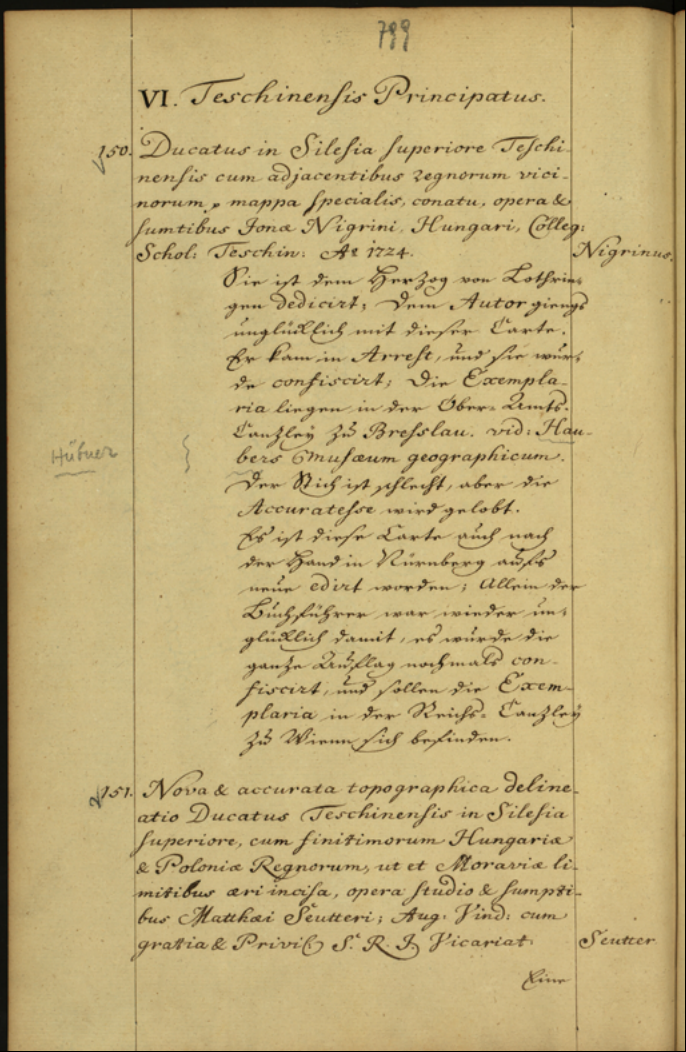
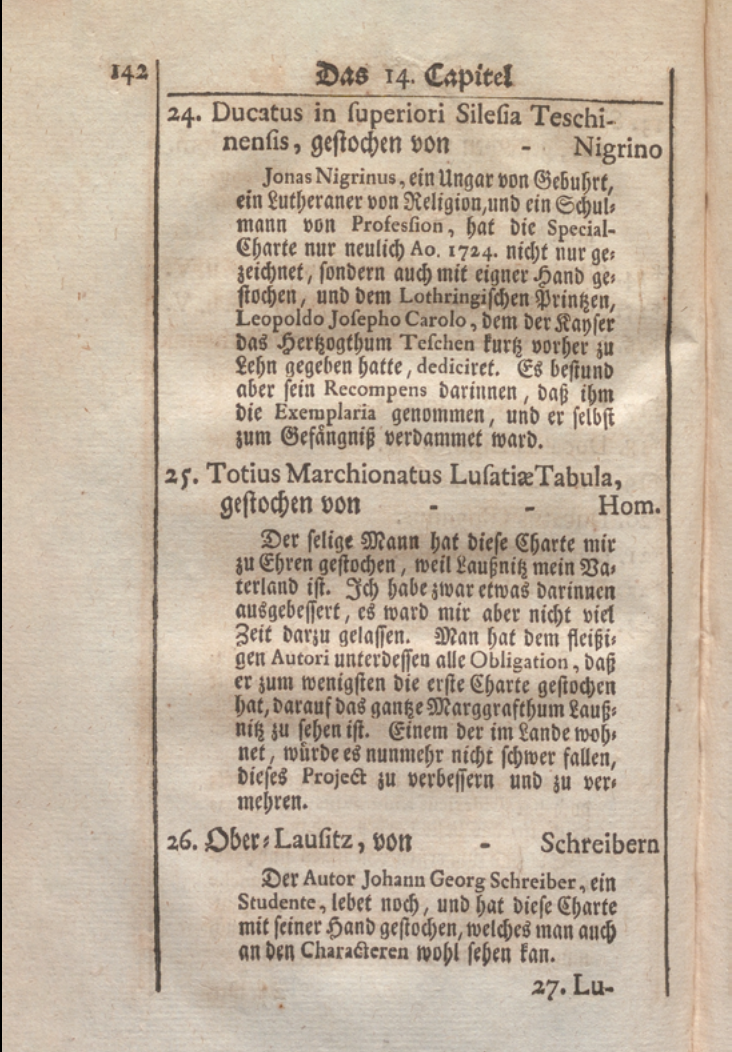


Fig. 13: An entry for the 1724 map of Silesia in Moll's catalogue, with a reference to Hübner.

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XXIII, fol. 799.

MZK, sign. Moll-RKP-0090.900,13.

broader intellectual environment which included his family, whose members were engaged in scholarly and diplomatic pursuits.

It was most likely within this environment that Moll further developed and systematised his collecting practices. His brother Albrecht Theodor, himself a diplomat, was also a collector of natural history specimens, and several of Moll’s nephews distinguished themselves in the following generation. Equally important for Moll’s intellectual interests was the family of his wife, Marie Christiana von Praun. Her cousin, Georg Septimius Andreas, served as director of the renowned library of Duke Augustus in Wolfenbüttel during the 1750s and 1760s (Chodějovská – Dufka 2021: 10–11; Reitinger 2024: 123–201).

Judging from the annotations on maps and in map catalogues, his active period of collecting can be placed between the 1730s and the early 1760s, with notable peaks in the 1740s and 1750s. He died on 26 September 1780 in Baden near Vienna. Following his death, the fate of his collections reflected both practical considerations and the enduring significance of his work.

The full extent of Moll’s collecting activities nevertheless remains difficult to reconstruct. It is only known that after his death his family sold both his natural history collection and his library, the inventories of which have unfortunately not survived. A buyer could not be found for the map collection alone, and after four decades it was therefore donated to the Francis Museum in Brno. Among all of Moll’s holdings, the atlas stands out as the most coherent and historically significant work.

Moll’s atlas remains, even from today’s perspective, a unique and coherent work, which can be described as both state-building and identity-forming. Whether deliberately or simply as a tribute to the reigning sovereign, it demonstrated not only

domination over territories controlled by the Habsburgs, but also the power to conceptually unify particular regions. To a large degree, it drew upon the ideological force of the opening map of Homann’s *Europa Austriaca*, and it could indeed serve as the foundation of an Austrian atlas.

MAPOGRAPHIES AND THE MATERIALITY OF THE COLLECTION

With the biographical and historical context established, we can now focus on the collection itself, examining both its materiality and organizational structure. A collection can be understood both as a set of artefacts and as a structure that connects individual items into a single whole. The structure is represented by handwritten volumes. Although these also serve as catalogues, this is not their sole function; instead, they more closely resemble the concept of an atlas. Individual items are traditionally recorded with the name of the author and publisher, the title of the map, and the place and date of publication. The format is also noted, and if the item is a sheet from a more extensive work, this is indicated as well. However, the volumes also contain Moll’s personal evaluations of each map, noting the quality, accuracy and significance, as well as extensive lists of maps that he considered desirable, thus making them among the earliest systematic records of cartography for specific territories. This annotated list of related items is referred to as a mapography, a term introduced by Karel Kuchař in the 1950s. It is actually a work in the style of a cartobibliography adapted for use as an unfinished catalogue. The mapographies – their structure and content – will be the subject of the first part of this chapter.

We understand artefacts primarily as engraved and drawn map sheets and views of places, as well as the handwritten volumes themselves. Maps and depictions may be preserved in various forms: folded, cut from a larger sheet or book, or, conversely, joined together. This chapter focuses in detail on the materiality of preserved artefacts – or more precisely, not on the particular maps as such, but on the ways in which the maps were adapted in the collection.

MAPOGRAPHY

Karel Kuchař’s neologism *mapography* is a compound term meaning “description of maps”. Kuchař wanted to emphasize the descriptive dimension of Moll’s catalogues because he rightly appreciated the individual contribution of the collector and, at the same time, clearly recognized that the handwritten volumes function not only as a record of the maps owned, but also a list of desiderata.

But let us begin with the physical appearance of the mapographies themselves. Most of them take the form of thick folio volumes bound in white parchment, with a clear label bearing the title on the spine. They are substantial in size, but not text-heavy, with every second folio left blank. The reason for this was to ensure space for additional entries. The volumes therefore function as working records rather than definitive ones.

Each handwritten folio has an identical layout. The page is divided by two vertical lines, creating a main central field and two side columns. This was not Moll’s invention as the contemporary manuals available to him at the time for compiling the collection were structured in the same way. The left-hand column contained the serial number of the map within the relevant section of the collection, while the right-hand column listed the names of the publishers.

The main central field contained a bibliographic citation of the map, including its format. In many cases this was followed by a short text in German, visually set off from the preceding text – usually written in Latin in humanistic cursive – by its use of neo-Gothic cursive. This commentary normally included a personal evaluation of the quality and accuracy of the map, its geographical coverage, its relationship to other copies, notes on the work from which the map was extracted, and, in rare cases, information on its provenance.

Additional text often provides information about maps and depictions not included in the collection, thus constituting a list of known desiderata. This is an excellent source for understanding the collector’s range of knowledge. Vienna lay outside the main distribution centres of cartographic material; most of the available stock was supplied by the Homann’s firm from Nuremberg. The huge number of maps he purchased from Homann’s heirs required special agents to procure the latest maps for him. It is likely that his former office staff provided the necessary direct link to the most important German cartographic publishing house (Reitinger 2024: 100–101). Moll was therefore able to familiarize himself with map production primarily through works represented in other collections or known from the secondary literature.

Some of the volumes have been preserved in more than one edition. This is another extraordinary feature which allows us to trace Moll’s collecting activity over time. Most of these volumes are still preserved in the Moravian Library; others, however, were given during Moll’s lifetime to local institutions which used them as inventories of the available maps for particular regions. In some cases, these were the very first inventories of their kind, and their existence represents a significant milestone in the history of cartographic representation for certain countries.

Fig. 14: Content of the volumen XIII (Bohemia) divided in tomi and sections – an illustrative example of the structure of B.P. Moll's composite atlas.

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII,
fol. 1.

MZK, sign.
Moll-RKP-0090.900,13.

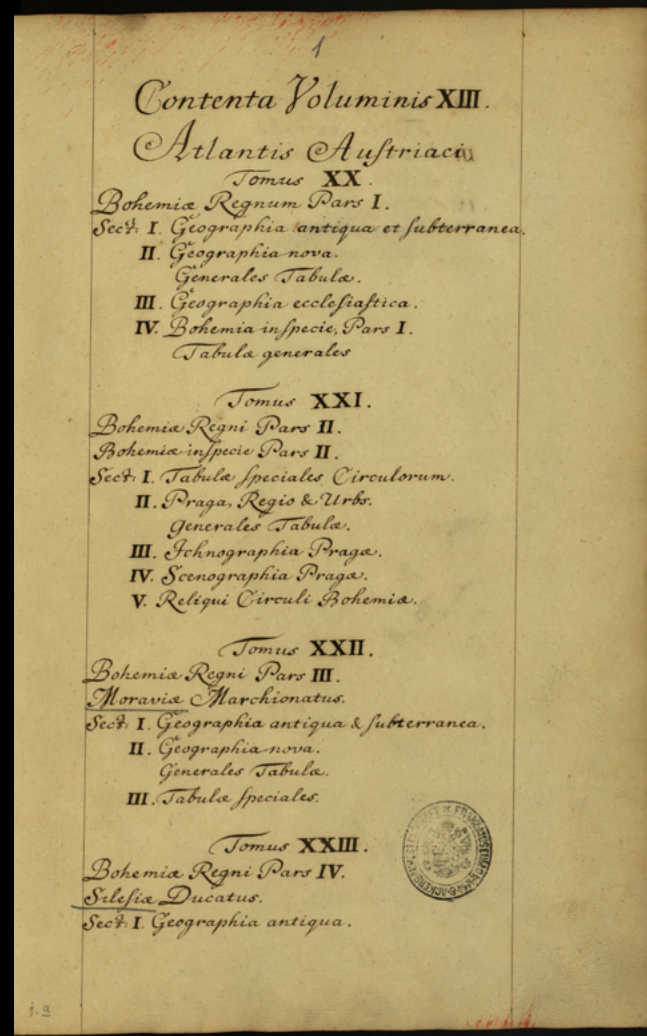


Fig. 15: A sheet of B. P. Moll composite atlas with the glued vedute.

MZK, sign. Moll-0004.265.

55 × 65 cm.

The collection consists not only of the volumes but also the less visible structure, which itself has extraordinary value. Such a large number of maps had to be organised into a clear system which, while maintaining a uniform approach, would create appropriately comprehensive categories in order to preserve their clarity. The above-mentioned division into *Atlas Austriacus* and *Atlas Germanicus* was not sufficient.

The basic division into two main atlases is refined in the mapographies along two complementary lines (Fig. 14): firstly, in terms of the actual physical books, i.e. the bound volumes (*volumina*), and secondly, in terms of their content into parts (*tomi*). Thus, *Atlas Austriacus* comprises sixteen volumes, inside which are variously distributed 44 tomi (one *volumen* may therefore contain more than one *tomus*), while the less extensive *Atlas Germanicus* comprises four volumina containing 24 tomi. Each *tomus* within these atlases focuses on specific territories – primarily featuring maps of the Habsburg lands (specifically, their historical regions and imperial circles). In the instances where Moll managed to gather a particularly extensive set of material for a specific territory, the sheets might have been organized into multiple tomi. The *tomus* was itself further divided according to a subject-based key into sections (*sectiones*). The subject-based key was not always applied comprehensively in its entirety; it was flexible and depended on the currently available content. This means that not all *sectiones* were present in every *tomus* and were sometimes merged or completely absent. The basic guideline for ordering *sectiones* was the progression from historical maps to contemporary ones, and from general maps to special or thematic ones. Separate *sectiones* were also designated for some complete published sets, typically series of topographical depictions or sets focused on a specific type of building, such as fountains, gardens, churches, or squares. Within individual *sectiones* or their subject-based sub-divisions, the sheets were then arranged

alphabetically. The collection has been preserved in this form to the present day, with one significant exception in the part dedicated to the Bohemian lands, where a portion of the visual depictions was detached and placed into the graphic collection of the Moravian Library.

THE MATERIALITY OF THE SHEETS

Bernhard Paul Moll referred to his collecting work as an atlas. Today, an atlas generally denotes a collection of maps – more precisely, a physically bound set, usually in the form of a volume. However, Moll’s atlas did not conform to this standard, and in accordance with the second contemporary meaning of the word atlas, he compiled his atlas from loose sheets.

In Moll’s case, the sheets in the collection were of uniform size, which undoubtedly represented a highly practical solution. This standardization greatly facilitated the storage of the set and helped prevent potential damage. The size was based on the typical dimensions of map sheets produced by Dutch, French, Italian and German workshops, both as individual sheets and as parts of larger atlases. Smaller sheets were usually backed with paper of a standardized size and sometimes trimmed to match the map’s frame. A single sheet could accommodate multiple maps or small-format views from different sources. This was not simply a collage, but a deliberate regrouping of works which created a new contextual framework (Fig. 15), allowing Moll to provide his own evaluations concerning quality and relevance. In certain series, the sheets were attached along only one of the vertical edges so that they could overlap; in such cases, the sheets had to be turned carefully when consulted. It was not uncommon for entire sets of prints to be disbound and adjusted to the dimensions of Moll’s collection.

Conversely, map sheets whose size exceeded the standard dimensions were folded to fit this size.

A key question is why Moll chose not to have his atlas bound. Beyond the fact that contemporary practice did not preclude leaving sheets unbound, a plausible explanation relates to the lists of desiderata in Moll’s mapographies. The most likely hypothesis is that the work was incomplete: binding it would have given it a definitive form and made it more difficult to add additional items. To a considerable extent, the unbound sheets thus reflect the structure of Moll’s extensive mapographies, in which every other page is left blank to allow for later additions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Bernhard Paul Moll’s collecting activities and his composite atlas provide a rare insight into the intellectual, social, and material culture of mid-eighteenth-century Europe. His mapographies are notable not only as a pioneering form of the systematic documentation of maps for specific territories, but also as a platform for his personal evaluations, providing unique assessments of quality, accuracy, and significance. Moll’s atlas exemplifies not only a personal endeavour but also a sophisticated system of organisation, combining aesthetic, practical, and conceptual dimensions. The uniformity of the sheets, their careful preparation, and the structured yet flexible layout of the mapographies demonstrate a deliberate method designed to preserve, expand, and interpret knowledge. The choice to leave sheets unbound, likely reflecting the ongoing accumulation of items and the extensive desiderata lists, highlights the dynamic nature of the collection as a living corpus rather than a finished product. Ultimately, Moll’s work bridges biography, social networks and material culture, demonstrating how an individual collector could shape, systematize and give meaning to the world through maps, while also creating

the first systematic inventories of cartography for many regions. His atlas continues to stand as a historically significant and coherent artefact, offering invaluable insights into both the history of cartography and the broader cultural environment of the Habsburg lands.

CONCLUSION: PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

The drive to “accurately describe, measure, and quantify the world” – expressed through visual representations such as vedute and maps – intersected with the curated display of personal power and achievements. This convergence is already clearly evident in the palaces of the Italian elite as early as the sixteenth century. Examples include the Medici and their Guardaroba del Palazzo Vecchio and Terrazzo delle Carte Geografiche in the Uffizi in Florence (Schulz 1990). Other notable examples include wall paintings, stucco work and other decorative schemes, as well as the furnishings of workrooms and cabinets of curiosities (studiolo), particularly in Italy. Among them is the Galleria delle carte geografiche in the Vatican, commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII and executed by Ignazio Danti (1580–1585). However, these successful rulers and owners of flourishing domains also collected maps, as demonstrated once again by the example of the Medici and recent studies (Cattaneo/Corbellini 2019). The map collection or composite atlas itself could serve as an attraction for visitors, as evidenced, for example, by records of visits to Van der Hem in Amsterdam. Such scale and concentration were, however, not typical for Central Europe. Smaller representative collections have nevertheless been preserved among the high nobility and religious orders; e.g. a fresco-secco paintings mural cycle in, the summer residence of the Thun family in Ledec nad Sázavou in Central Bohemia (Šimůnek 2018). Maps have been documented as decorative elements in residences (for example, Český Krumlov Castle, Southern Bohemia), but most often – and frequently in considerable numbers – they were part of libraries. It is impossible to even roughly estimate the number of composite atlases that were created in Central Europe or purchased there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What is known with relative certainty, however, is that composite atlases were generally imported to Central Europe. It can be assumed that the reach of Hübner’s business extended from Hamburg to Leipzig, while – much like in the case of single-sheet prints or vedute

albums – the primary sources were Augsburg and Nuremberg, with Italy, France, and the Netherlands contributing to a lesser extent. However, one of the most significant Central European atlases was brought from Amsterdam: the Blaeu-Van der Hem atlas, based on the largest seventeenth-century atlas, the *Atlas maior* by Joan Blaeu, which was bought at auction by Prince Eugene of Savoy, the *stadtholder* of the Austrian-controlled Southern Netherlands. After its transfer to Vienna, following the death of Eugene of Savoy, it was acquired in 1737 by Emperor Charles VI. At the imperial library (*Hofbibliothek*), it was joined by the Stosch composite atlas in 1769. The *Hofbibliothek* was a semi-public institution and should be distinguished from the *Fideikommissbibliothek*, the private library of the Habsburg family founded by Franz Stephen of Lorraine, which was only incorporated into the Hofbibliothek in the twentieth century. Together, these collections became part of the Austrian National Library in the 1920s. This is an illustrative example of the process which many originally private composite atlases underwent. They were transferred to public, state or university libraries across Europe – often far from where they had originally been acquired – or, in some cases, to institutions in North America. This may have happened ‘directly’ through the original owner (Nicolai), or ‘indirectly’, including via auctions or sales carried out by descendants disposing of an unwanted inheritance. The different methodologies applied by GLAM institutions (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) during the twentieth century meant that composite atlases and the original map collections were not always kept together; in many cases, the associated records were also lost. In the era of digital catalogues and virtual search engines, provenance search and the virtual reunification and reconstruction of collections have come to the fore. This has made composite atlases all the more valuable – particularly those which, despite changes in location, ownership and custodianship, have survived intact, such as the Blaeu-Van der Hem atlas or B. P. Moll’s collection.

CATALOGUE

The uniqueness of the Moll Collection consists in its surviving handwritten cartobibliographic catalogues. Moll's notes (or the telling absence thereof) indicate several areas of his interest as a collector: bibliographic data on the works from which they were extracted, their accuracy, and their relevance compared to other maps and depictions of the same territory. They also provide concise descriptions of the content, assessments of both cartographic and engraving skill, as well as the circumstances of the creation or acquisition of each sheet.

The selection of exhibited maps links Moll's notes directly to the corresponding sheets.



Johann Christoph Homann, *Tabula Geographica Europae Austriacae*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:1,430,000]. Nürnberg, 1729–1738.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 46.5 × 54.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 50 × 58.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0000.001.



“It is dedicated to Emperor Charles VI. Alongside it is the Habsburg-Austrian genealogy from Rudolf I to Charles VI, as well as the coats of arms of the lands possessed by the Most Serene Archhouse in 1733; it is the fundamental map according to which this atlas is arranged.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen I, Tomus I, fol. 28.

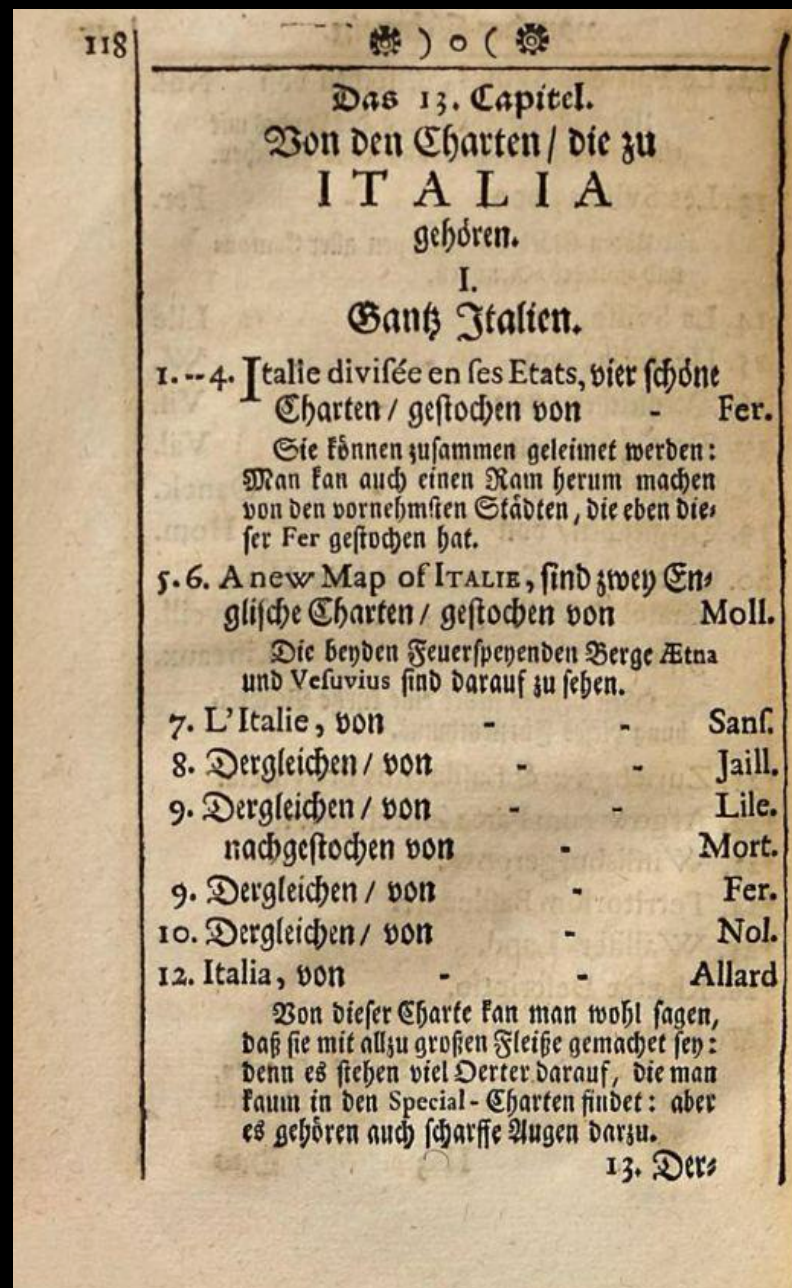


A volume of Moll’s catalogue (cartobibliography).

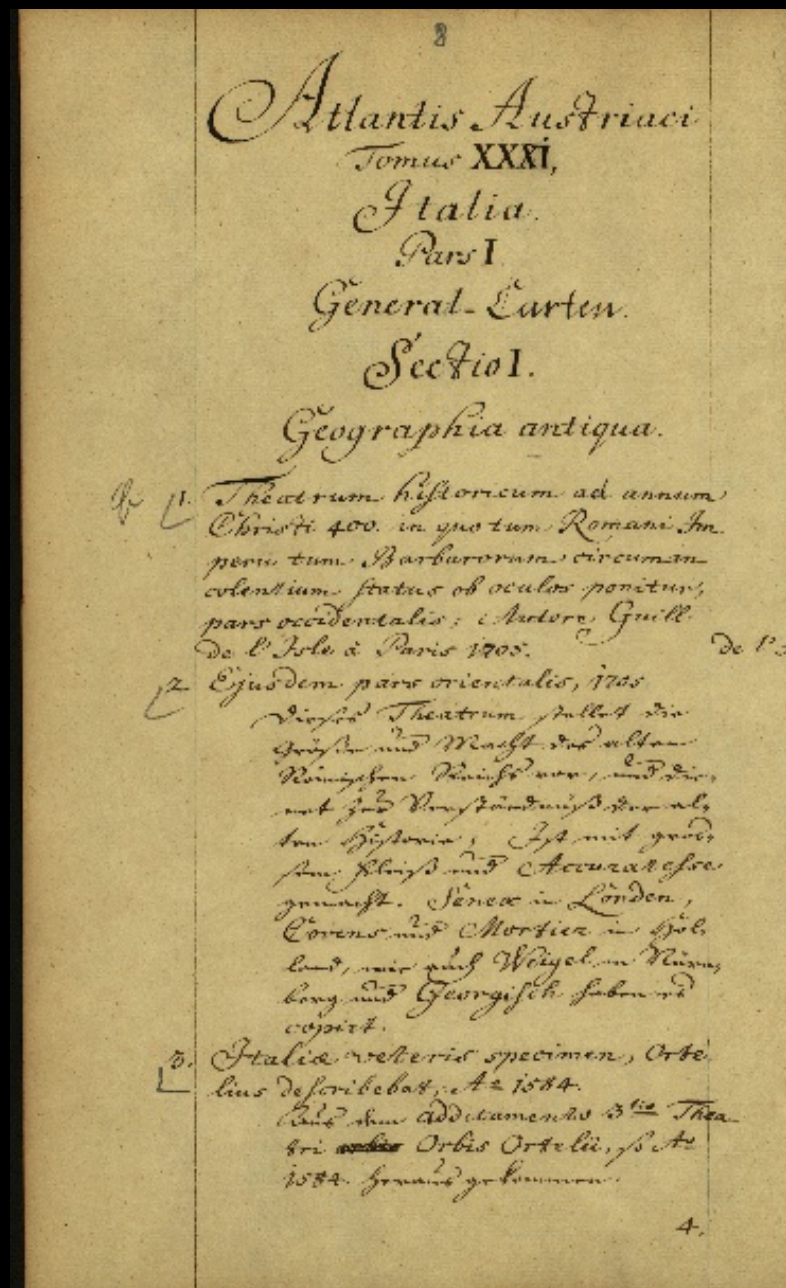
Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomi XLI-XLIV.

MZK, sign. Moll-RKP-0090.900,16.

Layout of Hübner's
carthobibliography.



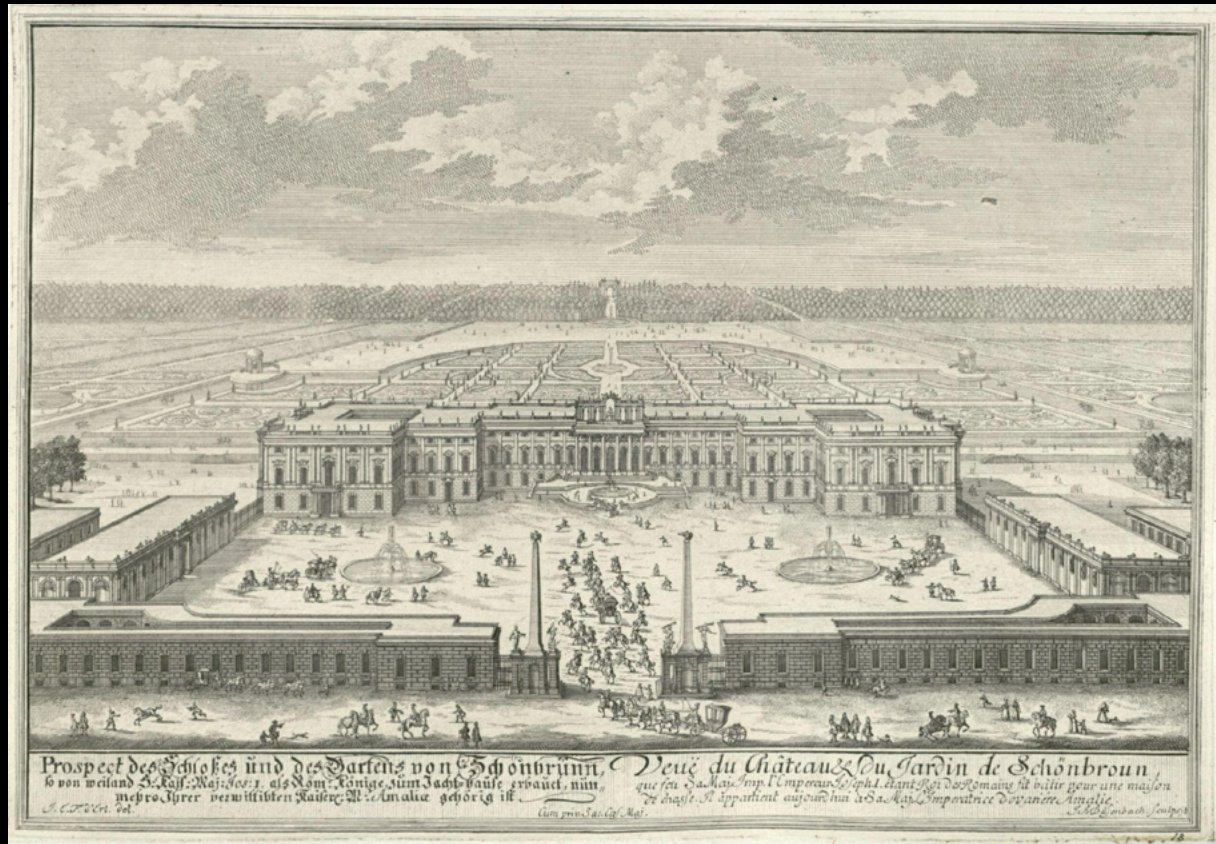
66



Layout of Moll's catalogue
(cartobibliography).



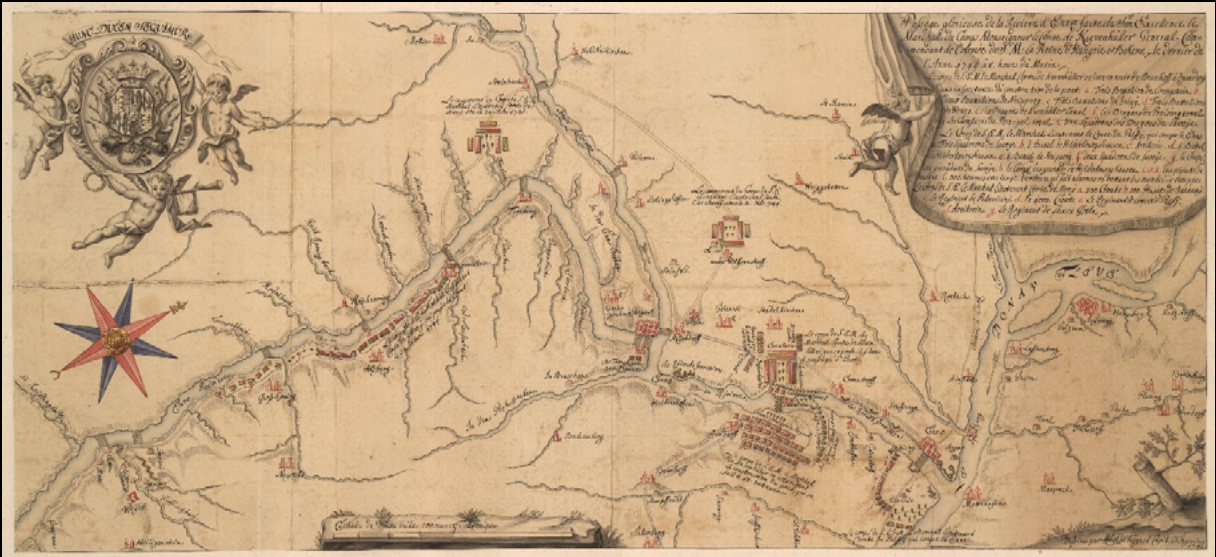
67



Johann Emmanuel Fischer von Erlach, *Prospect des Schloßes und des Gartens von Schönbrunn*. Augsburg, 1719.

Engraving, 19.5 × 31.5 (paper sheet dimensions 22.5 × 33 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0000.437,priv.



Charles de Faiguet, *Passage glorieuse de la Riviere d'Ennez*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:125,000]. 1742.

Manuscript, 29.4 × 65.5 cm.

MZK, sign. Moll-0000.732.

“This is the original prototype for the following printed maps.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen VII, Tomus X, fol. 892.





Janez Vajkard Valvasor, *Tabula Ducatus Carnioliae, Vindorum Marchiae et Histriae*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:510,000]. Nürnberg, 1715–1724.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 48 × 57.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 56.5 cm × 65 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.251.



“At the top is a prospect of Ljubljana, and below it the remarkable Lake Cerknica. The map is likewise a copy of Valvasor’s map, improved in certain parts.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen X, Tomus XVI, fol. 133.



Jakob Wilhelm Heckenauer, *Neu Accurat und Corrigirter Plan von der Kay[serlichen] Haupt und Residenz Statt Wienn*. No scale indicated [ca. 1:5,700]. Wien, 1734.

Engraving, hand coloured, 42.5 × 54.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 61 × 61 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0000.412.

“The title sounds a bit strange, but the plan is very accurate. It is dedicated to Empress Elisabeth.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen VI, Tomus VII, fol. 262.



Geyer, *Plan des Blei und Kupfer Bergwerchs, Tanberg, in Unter Inthal, in Tirol*. 1754.

Manuscript, 57.5 × 89.5 cm
(paper sheet dimensions
63 × 95.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0000.917,1.

“This plan contains:

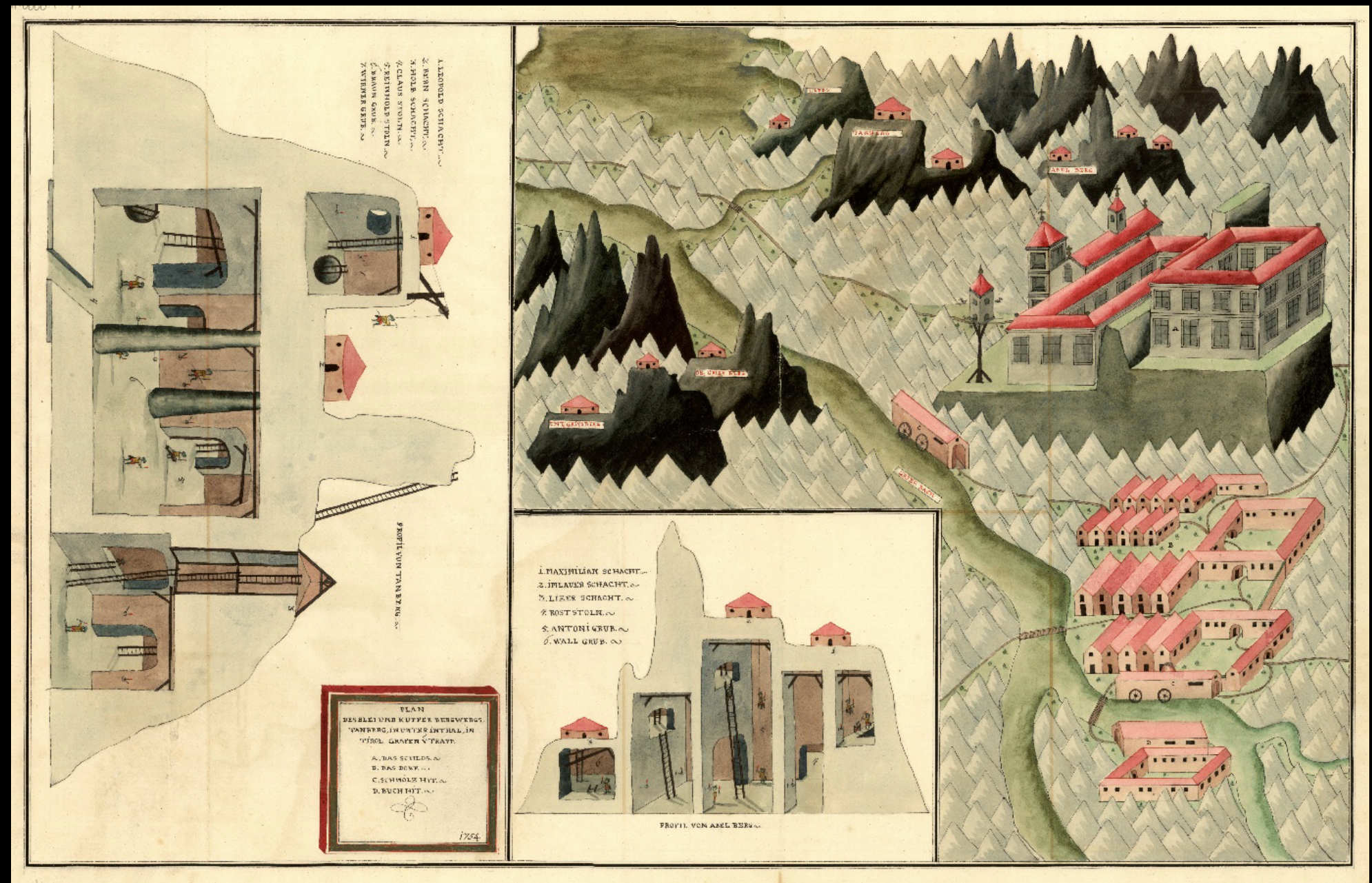
1. The Tanberg Castle, situated in the lower part of the Inn Valley. A. On the right bank of the Gries stream, which flows into the Lech, including the appertaining village. B. A stamp mill and a smelting house located at the site.

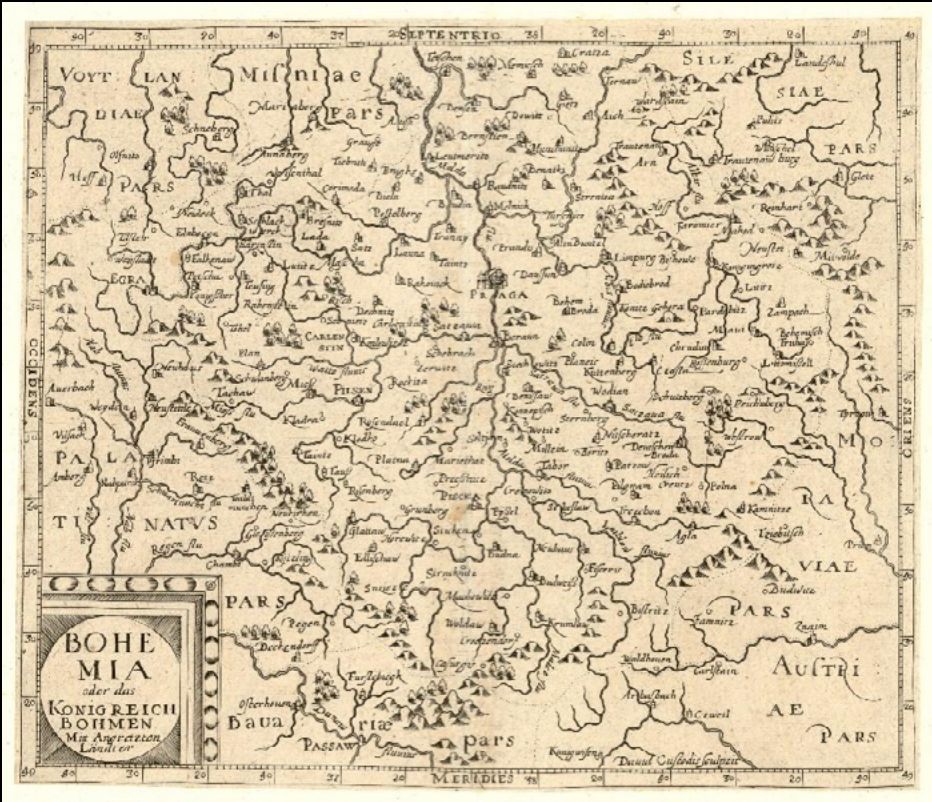
2. A prospect of the appertaining mines. Towards the west (evening side), on the left bank of the Griesbach: 1. Obergriesberg, 2. Untergriesberg. Towards the north (midnight side), on the right bank of the Griesbach: 3. Tanberg, 4. Lebesberg, 5. Abelberg.

3. A profile of Abelberg with its shafts and mines, which are: [...].

4. A profile of Tanberg with its shafts and adits, namely: [...].”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen VIII, Tomus XI, fol. 439.





David Custos, *Bohemia oder das Königreich Böhmen*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:820,000]. Frankfurt am Main, 1627.

Engraving, 24.5 × 29.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 26 × 31 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.565.



“It is of poor quality.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XX, fol. 233.



Plan De la Bataille près de Krzeccor, entre Planian & Collin en Bohême. Graphic scale [ca 1:25,000]. Wien, 1757.

Engraving, print, 31 × 44.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 63 × 50 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.632.

“From Friederich’s Kriegs-Theatre. Augsbург 1758.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XXI, fol. 270.



Norbert Wenzel von Linck,
Mappa des March-Flus. Graphic
scale [ca. 1:170,000]. 1719.

Engraving, hand-coloured,
42.5 × 111 cm (paper sheet
dimensions 45.5 × 113.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.753.

“Norbert Wend[!] von Linck, a
major of the imperial garrison
in the frontier fortress and royal
town of Hradiště, undertook an
inspection of the Morava River
with the Imperial Commission in
August 1719, and drew this map
on two royal sheets.

On this occasion, he utilized
Vogemont’s earlier map; the
canal is treated as shorter,
leading from Polouvsí along the
Kamenec stream directly into the
Bečva near Choryně, rather than
extending as far as Mezíříčí.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII,
Tomus XXII, fol. 653.





Johann Christoph Müller, *Circuli Brunnensis pars Meridionalis*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:240,000]. Nürnberg, ca. 1750.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 46 × 58 cm (paper sheet dimensions 52.5 × 62.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.743.



“As Müller’s previous maps were too large and cumbersome for daily use, Homann published them on 8 separate sheets according to their regions; these are likewise very neat and accurate.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XXII, fol. 633.



Jonas Nigrin, *Ducatus in Silesia Superiore Teschinensis*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:160,000]. Sine loco, 1724.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 47.4 × 58.3 cm (paper sheet dimensions 49.5 × 60 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.876.



“It is dedicated to the Duke of Lorraine, but it brought no luck to the author. He was imprisoned and the map was confiscated; copies are kept at the Upper Office in Wroclaw. See Hauber’s [!] Museum Geographicum. The engraving is poor, but its accuracy is highly valued. This map was later reissued in Germany. Here, too, it brought misfortune to the publisher—the entire edition was again seized, and copies are held in the Imperial Chancery in Vienna.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XXIII, fol. 799.



Florian Strachowsky, *Prospect des Hoch-Reichs-Gräffl[ichen] Schaafgottsch[en] Riesen-Gebürges bey Hirschberg in Schlesien*. Wrocław, ca. 1712–1759.

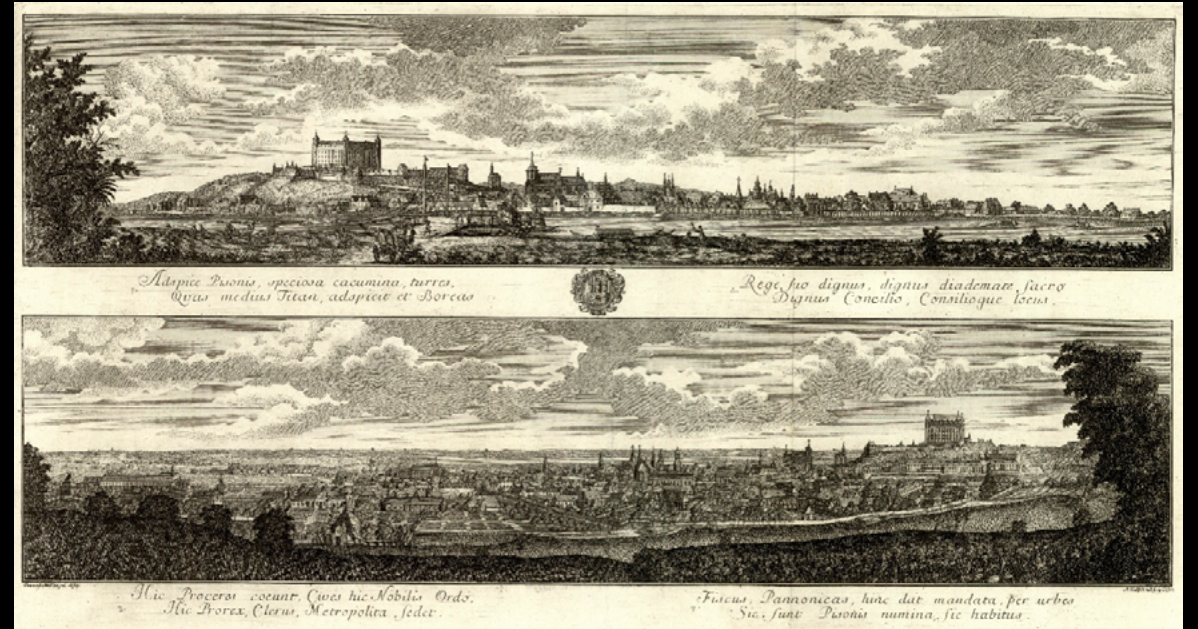
Engraving, 15.5 × 33.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 17.5 × 34.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.845.



“It is an immensely beautiful piece of land, well-known for its mountains, the cloth trade, and thermal baths. This engraving can also be found in: 1) *Travels to Krkonoše Mountains*, published for the fourth time in 1736 in Jelenia Góra; 2) *An Attempt at a Poem about the Krkonoše Mountains* by Mr. Tralles, published in octavo in 1750; and 3) in a slightly modified copy in *Antiquities of the Elbe’s Course*, published in octavo in 1740 in Frankfurt.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIII, Tomus XXIII, fol. 771.



Samuel Mikoviny, *[Bratislava]*. Wien, 1735.

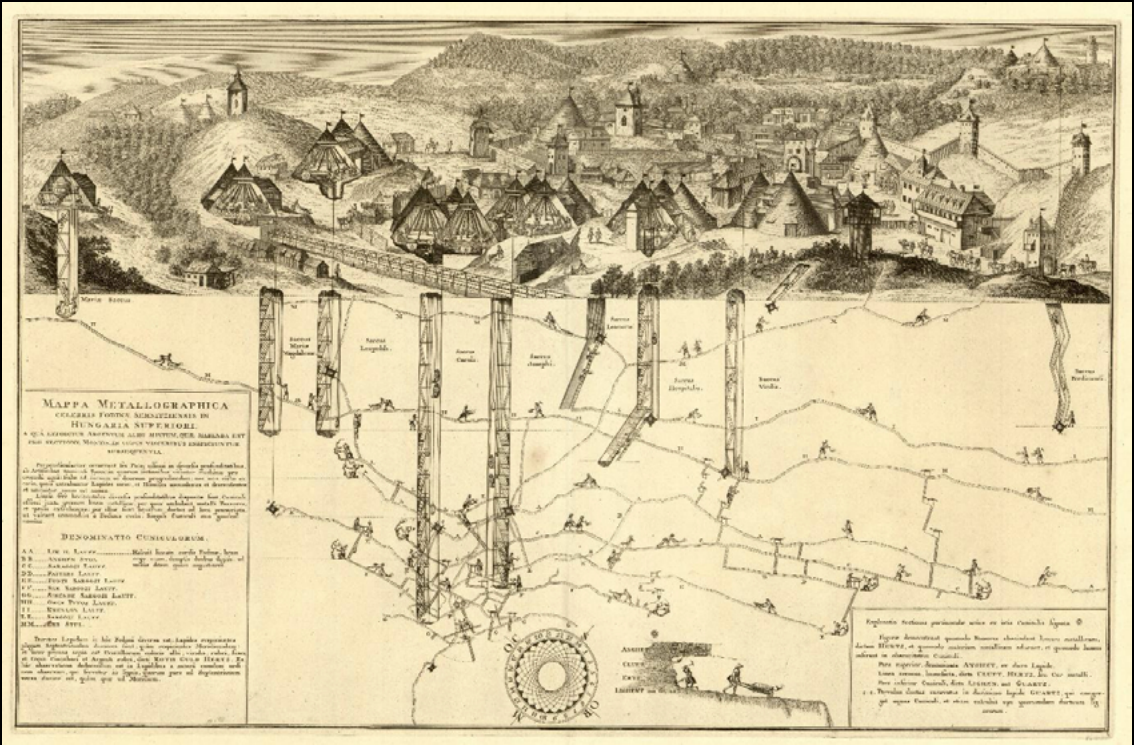
Engraving, 38 × 70.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 38 × 70.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.259.

“A large royal-sized sheet. 2 views from the water and land sides. From Bel’s *Notitia Hungariae*, Vol. 1.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLII, fol. 315.





Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, *Mappa Metallographica Celebris Fodinae Semnitzensis In Hungariâ Superiori*. Den Haag, 1741.

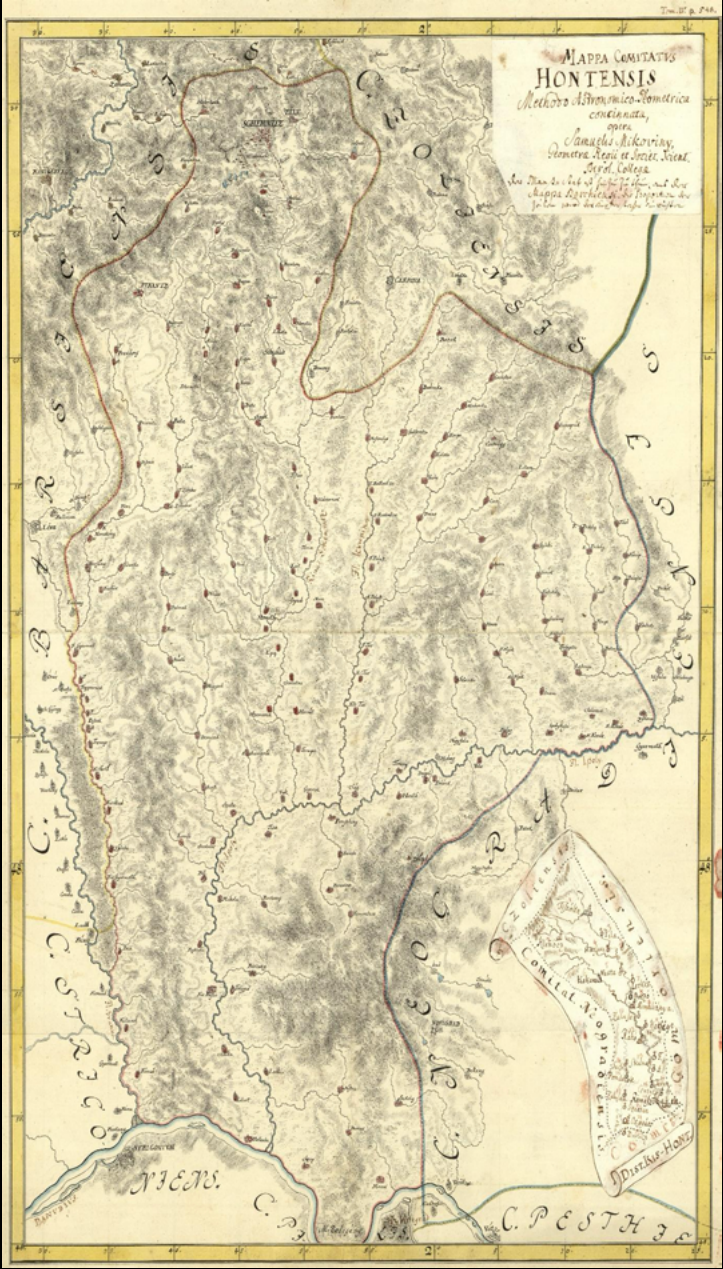
Engraving, 45 × 70 cm (paper sheet dimensions 56.5 × 77 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.128,07.



"It is contained in the great work [of Marsigli], Tom. III, Tab. 10."

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLI, fol. 52.



Samuel Mikoviny, *Mappa Comitatus Hontensis*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:162,000]. Ca. 1740.

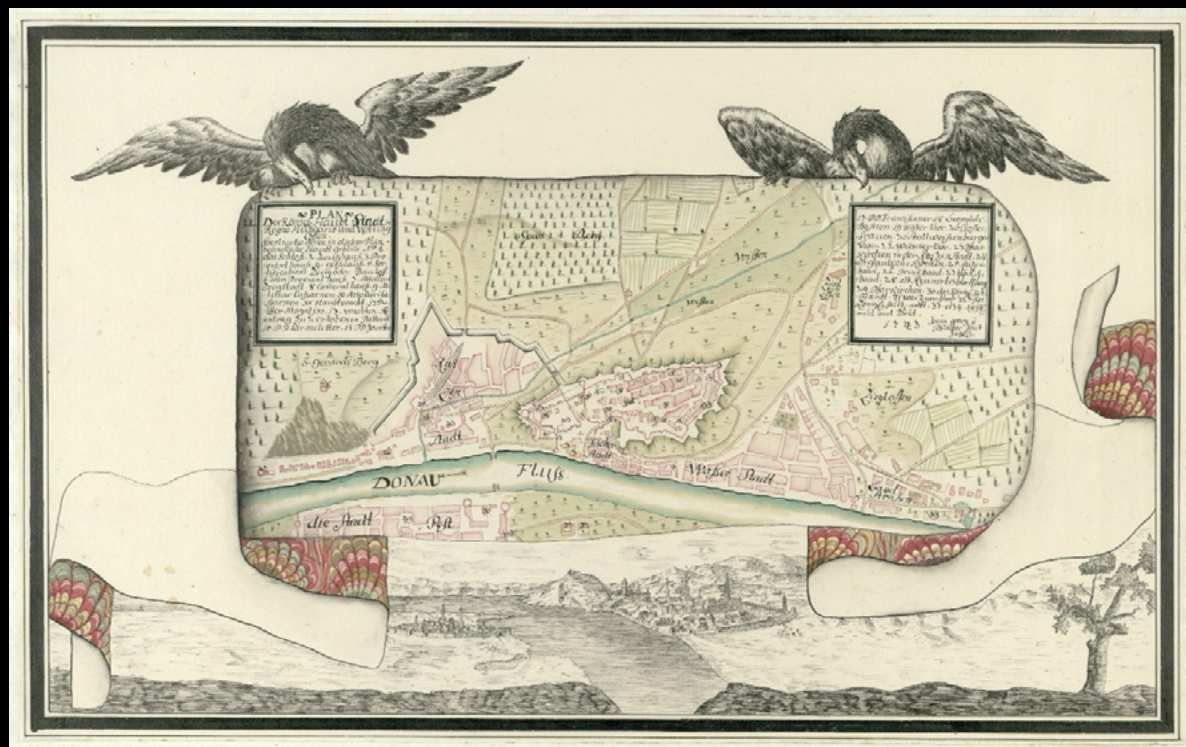
Manuscript, 56 × 40.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 57.5 × 43 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.226.

"From Bel's work *Notitia Hungariae*, Volume 4, page 548. This first map is an original manuscript from the pen of Mr. Mikoviny and is a gift from Bel."

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLII, fol. 244.





Johann Georg von Pfacher, *Plan der Königl[ichen] Haupt Stadt in Regno Hungariae und Vestung Offen.*
No scale indicated [ca 1:15,000]. 1743.

Manuscript, 28 × 46.3 cm (paper sheet dimensions
30.5 × 48.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.247.



“Plan and prospect. Very clean.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLII,
fol. 299.



Gottfried Jacob Haupt, *Danubii Fluminis Pars Infima.* Graphic scale [ca. 1:2,000,000]. Augsburg, ca. 1737–1750.

Engraving, hand-couloured, 45 × 55 cm (paper sheet
dimensions 59.5 × 76 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.136,3.

“They consist of three large royal-size sheets, with
basic fortifications along the sides; but they are of
dire quality.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLI, fol. 66.





Etienne Briffaut, *Théâtre de la Guerre dans le Bannat de Temeswar*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:520,000]. Wien, 1738.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 51.5 × 46 cm (paper sheet dimensions 58 × 49 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.387.



“A good original map. The Banat of Temeswar is here divided into the following twenty districts: [...]. The last six, situated on the right bank of the Danube and bordering Serbia, along with half of the Orsova district, were ceded back to Turkey in the last Treaty of Belgrade in 1739.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLIV, fol. 569.



Benedikt Vorholzer, *Belgrad oder Griechischweissenburg*. Wien, ca. 1720.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 13.5 × 47 cm (paper sheet dimensions 24.5 × 47 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.367.

“A panorama with a description.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XVI, Tomus XLIII, fol. 541.





Manuscript, 36 × 69.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 52 × 73.5 cm).

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Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XV, Tomus XXXVI,
fol. 648.



Luca Carlevarijs, *Cortile del Palazzo Ducale à Venetia*. Augsburg, 1703–1756.

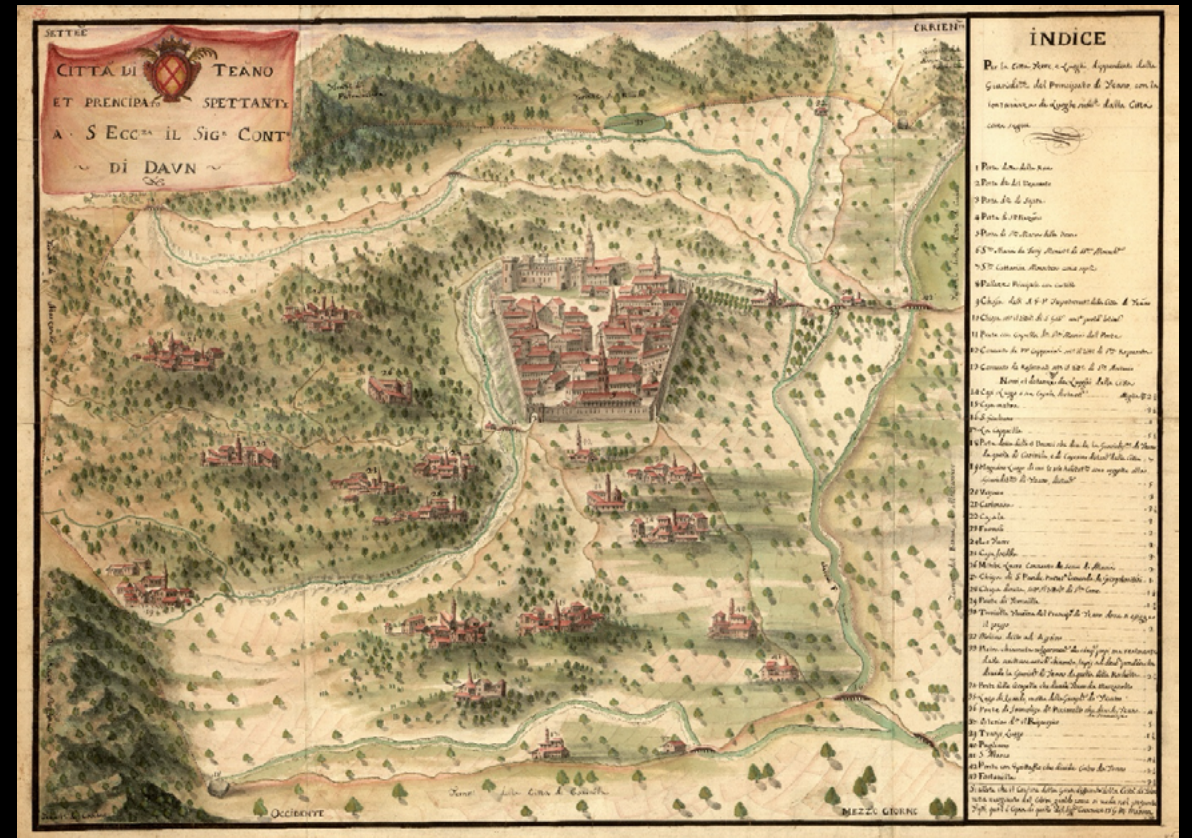
Engraving, 18 × 28.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 22 × 35.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0002.674,1,přiv.23.



“It contains 104 views, each half the size of a foolscap sheet, arranged on a total of 5 royal-size sheets.” [regarding the entire set]

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XV, Tomus XXXIII, fol. 252.

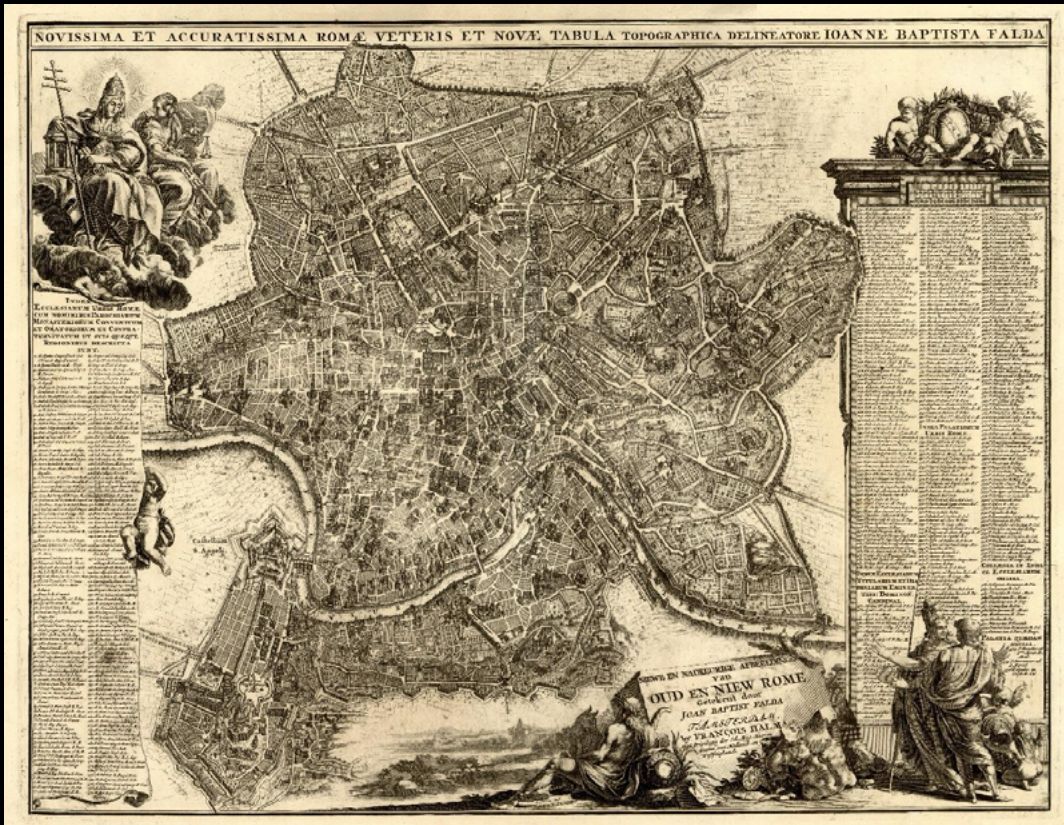


Menna, D. G. M., *Citta di Teano et Prencipato Spettante a Seccoza il Sign. Conte di Daun*. No scale indicated [ca. 1:10,000]. Ca 1730–1765.

Manuscript, 64 × 73 cm (paper sheet dimensions 67 × 92.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.028.





Giovanni Batista Falda, *Novissima et Accuratissima Romae Veteris et Novae Tabula Topographica*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:10,000]. Amsterdam, ca. 1701–1720.

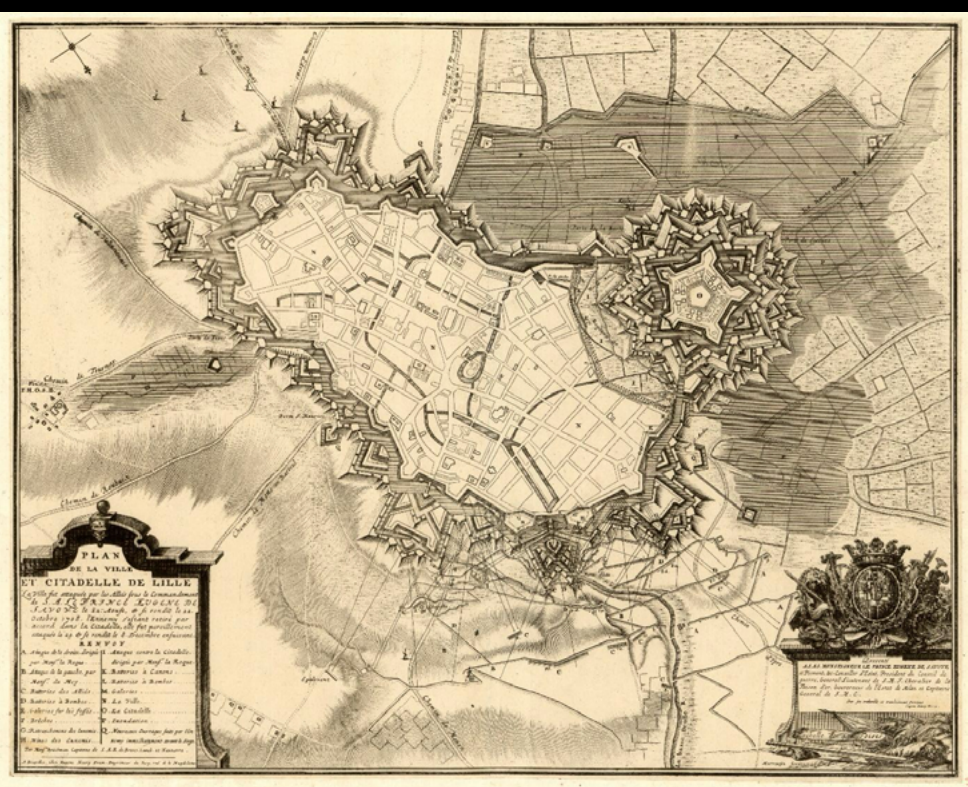
Engraving, 47.5 × 53.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 55 × 69 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0002.910.



“A neat plan, with an index of streets and buildings along the sides. It also has a title in Dutch.”

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XV, Tomus XXXVI, fol. 666.



Eugène Henry Fricx, *Plan de la Ville et Citadelle de Lille*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:25,000]. Bruxelles, 1709.

Engraving, 44.5 × 56.5 cm.

MZK, sign. Moll-0001.950,36.



“This is a complete atlas of the Netherlands, which is now unobtainable. It was compiled on the occasion of the War of the Spanish Succession. The drawings were produced by French officers, mostly with great precision, though not entirely without errors. Covens and Mortier had the maps re-engraved in Amsterdam; the copies are almost as clean as the originals, yet the latter are still preferred.” [regarding the entire set]

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIV, Tomus XXV, fol. 90.



Romeyn de Hooge, *Austriaci Caesaris Insignia ad Triumphale hoc Castrum appensa conspiciuntur*. [Bruxelles?], 1697–1705.

Engraving, 37.5 × 54.5 (paper sheet dimensions 55 × 66 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0002.026,09.



“These 9 fine views represent various streets and buildings of the city of Brussels.” [regarding the entire set]

Atlantis Austriaci Volumen XIV, Tomus XXVI, fol. 179.



Justus Danckerts, *Ultraiectini Domini Tabula*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:120,000]. Amsterdam, 1680–1700.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 44 × 52.5 cm (paper sheet dimensions 54.5 × 65 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0002.438.





Laurens Scherm, *Stadt-Huys Waegh en Marckt van Amsterdam*. Amsterdam, ca. 1651–1700.

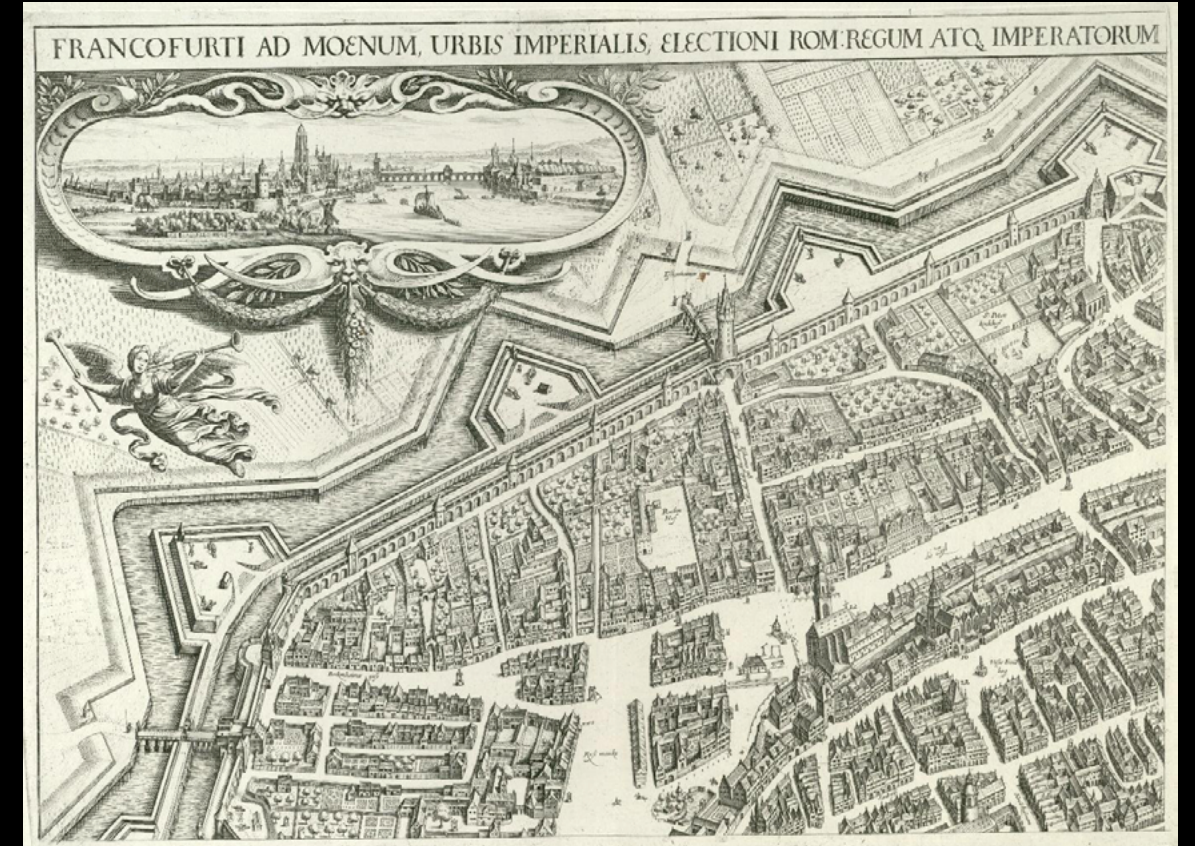
Engraving, 26 × 31 cm (paper sheet dimensions 31 × 37 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0002.370,1,přiv.2.



“All the copper engravings are very neat and engraved with great effort.” [regarding the entire set]

Atlantis Austriaci XIV, Tomus XXIX, fol. 535.



Hermann Ritter, *Francofurti ad Moenum* [...] *accurata delineatio*. No scale indicated [ca. 1:5,000]. Frankfurt am Main, ca. 1628.

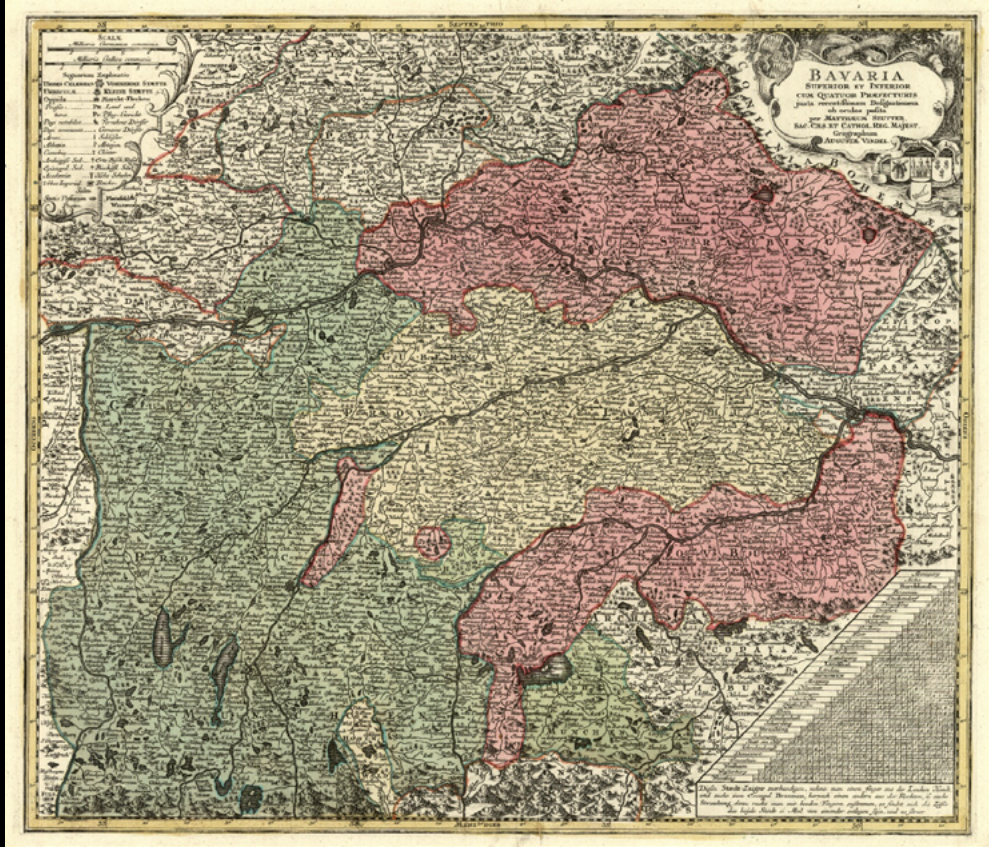
Engraving, 35.5 × 52 cm (paper sheet dimensions 55.5 × 69 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0004.254,1.



“Four large sheets that can be joined together; a very fine perspective plan which, however, may be some one hundred years old.” [here one of four sheets]

Atlantis Germanici Volumen II, Tomus VII, fol. 208.



Matthäus Seutter, *Bavaria Superior et Inferior*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:475,000]. Augsburg, ca. 1710–1757.

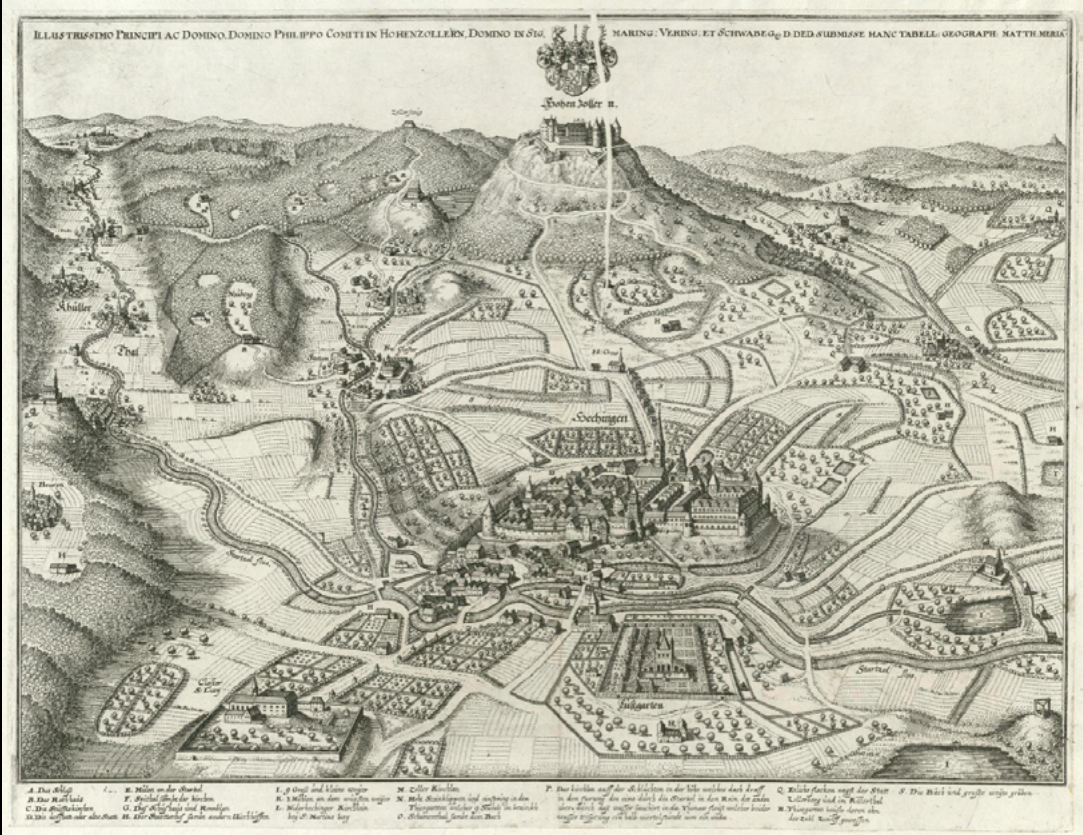
Engraving, hand-coloured, 47.5 × 55.3 cm (paper sheet dimensions 57 × 66.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0003.739.



“The previous [map] is a copy by Homann, likewise engraved lengthwise. What the author intends with the second map is difficult to fathom; it is, in fact, a copy (albeit somewhat improved) of an ancient map by Jansson, and furthermore, it is incomplete, as a portion of the Munich area is missing at the bottom. The best feature is the distance indicator between cities; the engraving is of high quality.”

Atlantis Germanici Volumen I, Tomus II, fol. 190.



Matthäus Merian, *Hohenzollern*. Frankfurt am Main, 1743.

Engraving, 29 × 38 cm.

Moll, Moll-0005.654.

“A view of Hohenzollern, Hechingen, and the surrounding landscape; very fine.”

Atlantis Germanici Volumen IV, Tomus XVIII, fol. 146.





Gerard van Keulen, *Nieuwe Afteekening van het Eyland Rugen en de Straalsond*. Graphic scale [ca. 1:170,000]. Amsterdam, ca. 1716.

Engraving, hand-coloured, 51.5 × 62 cm (paper sheet dimensions 52.5 × 62.5 cm).

MZK, sign. Moll-0005.186.

“Also a very fine map, and a sea chart as well. At the bottom is a plan of Stralsund. These two maps [along with the preceding one] are perhaps the best maps of Rügen ever engraved.”

Atlantis Germanici Volumen III, Tomus XV, fol. 512.

The dimensions indicate the size within the map frame and, where applicable, the overall sheet size.

Abbreviations

MZK = Moravian Library in Brno

sign. = signature



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