

Conclusion: *Looking Back and Looking Ahead*

Abstract: The conclusion reflects on the main arguments of the book and the reasons found for the *Imago mundi*'s enormous success in the medieval period. This success is due to two main factors: the fact that the text was already archaic and thus by definition could not become outdated, and the fact that the geographical areas described constitute what we can now define as fuzzy sets. The lack of definite boundaries allowed subsequent translators and adaptors of the text to superimpose their own maps of Europe onto the geographical template provided by Honorius's treatise. The conclusion also looks forward in time to the continued preservation and transmission of the text and its adaptations in incunabula and early modern printed books.

Keywords: fuzzy framework; retargeting; refocusing; *Imago mundi* tradition; early printed books

Transforming Europe is about conceptualised space. Its focus is on how the medieval geographical texts of the *Imago mundi* tradition described Europe. My main argument is that two factors, archaism and fuzziness, contributed to the enormous success (measured by its spread and amount of texts that use it) of this tradition, based on *Imago mundi* Book I.¹ The archaism factor is that the textual map provided by Honorius remained in use for centuries and did not go out of date because it was out of date to start with. The fuzziness factor is that this textual map was adaptable to different regions because it did not assign regions a stable and fixed position within its spatial framework. All of the regions described belong to (and themselves are) what we can now describe in technical terms as fuzzy sets.

1 Other factors include the simplicity of Honorius's language, for example.

The importance of understanding the medieval geographical concept of Europe lies in its use as an analytic category. If we do not know what the term means, we cannot use it, and, as Klaus Oschema points out, risk reading into it meanings that are significant to us but that were not primary to its original users.² Despite the lack of a real geographical ‘continent’, texts, including the medieval texts discussed in this book, construct a geographical entity called ‘Europe’ and thus make it real.³ These texts help the audience locate themselves in the world. Multiple narrative texts in different languages employed Honorius’s fuzzy framework to frame their view of their world, providing a setting for the action. In the case of some of the adaptations, this use is subject to alterations inherent not only in the refocusing of the text on its new host region, but also in the context of the author’s own repositioning (of the work and of himself). For the *Image du monde*, for instance, crucial is the text’s own position within the progression of the *translatio studii et imperii* movement, as an expression of the French status as the heirs of the empire and learning of the ancient world.⁴ The framework being used is both spatio-temporal and cultural. The French text thus places itself and its information (the *Imago mundi* map) into a model formed in its host culture.

A consistent feature in the adaptations examined here has been the reordering of the material to reposition the reader within the geographical framework provided. As Caroline D. Eckhardt observes, ‘Whether the lands on the margins of Europe would represent themselves as distinct from the continent, or as integral to it, was a contingent rather than consistent decision, then as now.’⁵ The observation has particular poignancy in the twenty-first century. Eckhardt’s focus is on fourteenth-century England, but although the marginal position of England, and Britain more generally, in medieval geographical and cartographical representations of the world has attracted much attention, as Kathy Lavezzo points out, ‘the English held

2 The concern is voiced by Klaus Oschema in *Bilder von Europa im Mittelalter*, *Mittelalter-Forschungen*, 43 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2013), p. 18.

3 Compare the discussion of medieval spatial representations of France in Nathalie Bouloux, ‘From Gaul to the Kingdom of France: Representations of French Space in the Geographical Texts of the Middle Ages (Twelfth–Fifteenth Centuries)’, in *Space in the Medieval West. Places, Territories and Imagines Communities*, ed. by Meredith Cohen and Fanny Madeline (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 197–217, esp. pp. 197–98 on terminology.

4 O. H. Prior, ed., *L’Image du monde de maître Gossuin. Rédaction en prose* (Lausanne and Paris, 1913), p. 77.

5 Caroline D. Eckhardt, ‘One Third of the Earth? Europe Seen and Unseen in the Middle English Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century’, *Comparative Literature*, 58.4, ‘The Idea of Europe’ (2006), 313–38 (p. 314).

no monopoly on geographic marginality in the West'.⁶ Thus, Eckhardt's observations on the relationship of lands on the margins of 'Europe' to the perceived whole can be applied to a broader range of corpora. Caxton's addition of material relating to his own position and geographical understanding thus opens another layer of enquiry: the role of the author's (taking the term broadly to include redactors and translators) position in determining their attitude to the information conveyed by the text.⁷ In terms of geographical definitions of Europe this becomes particularly important for authors and versions of the text originating from marginal areas. The concept of the fuzzy set is particularly useful for understanding the flexible and equivocal state of these marginal areas.

The alterations we find in some of these texts, such as the *Semeiança*, for instance, might seem to call into question their status as 'translations' of the *Imago mundi*, but, before pronouncing judgment, it may be useful to call to mind the distinction, offered by Umberto Eco, between two types of faithfulness in translation – faithfulness to 'not necessarily the intention of the author [...], but the *intention of the text* – the intention of the text being the outcome of an interpretative effort on the part of the reader, the critic or the translator'.⁸

In the case of the tradition examined in this book, it may be necessary to add two additional considerations, which constitute the retargeting and refocusing of the material. We have seen an example of such retargeting in Gossouin's adaptation, which retargeted the Latin encyclopedic *Imago mundi* I towards a new, lay audience, giving it a new genre label, *livre du clergie*.⁹ The retargeting of the *Semeiança* is not as sharp as for the *Image du monde*, but the (relatively common) re-attribution to Isidore can be read alongside the added focus on Spain as a retargeting for a Castilian audience. In most of the rewritings, refocusing has also been a feature, recognisable in the addition of information concerning the region local to the adaptation itself. An even more striking feature of this refocusing is found in the changes made to the order in which the regions are presented in some of these texts, leading to the repositioning of the local region as the

6 Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000–1534* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 53. Lavezzo follows this observation with a discussion of the representations of Ireland, in particular by Gerald of Wales, cited above, p. 119.

7 See above, p. 84 n. 3 and p. 112.

8 Eco, *Mouse or Rat? Translation as Negotiation* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2003), p. 5, emphasis Eco's.

9 See Chapter 4.

last in the sequence within Europe. This has been a feature of the *Image du monde*, the *Semeiança*, and *Laberinto de Fortuna*, for instance.

It remains to be seen whether the features I have outlined for the *Imago mundi* tradition are shared by other medieval encyclopedic traditions or whether this particular construction is unique to Honorius and his direct successors. Before we let the hippogriff fly us to new and uncharted lands, however, let us look briefly over our shoulder to see where we have been.

Looking Back

Transforming Europe began with two main objectives: to introduce the incredible range and influence of the *Imago mundi* family of texts, and to provide some sense of why it had that incredible range and interest. With regard to the latter, I used the texts' changing descriptions of Europe as a focal point for the discussion. Chapter 1 set the scene by providing a brief introduction to what is currently known of the *Imago mundi* itself, its classification as 'encyclopedia', issues surrounding its authorship and attribution, composition context, and finally its contents. Like the *Imago mundi* itself, this section presented the reader with well-trodden territory, material long known and well established. This was followed in Chapter 2 by an introduction to the large family of *Imago mundi* translations and related texts. Like many large families, this one is difficult to encompass and its members sometimes have complicated interrelationships. Genre boundaries appear to be routinely crossed by this material both in transmission between languages and into new literary contexts, and within texts, adding didactic, textbook material to romance and narrative texts, and adding narrative to encyclopedic material. As with the interaction of text and illustration, the emerging pattern is one of spectacular symbiosis rather than of parallel or converging traditions. I have attempted to introduce some order into this complicated tangle of texts by grouping them into fuzzy sets. The choice to keep the sets intentionally fuzzy was made in order to provide the classification with the necessary flexibility for subsequent research to introduce alterations and shift members from one set to another, without requiring that the entire classification system be totally redrawn. Adjustments can be made to how I have classified individual texts, and more texts can be added, without the need to rebuild the system. The fuzzy sets are:

- vernacular translations of the *Imago mundi*;
- adaptations inserting translations of *Imago mundi* fragments into new encyclopedic texts;

- translations and adaptations of fragments and extracts incorporated into non-encyclopedic (narrative) texts;
- adaptations into other Latin texts.

To the first category belong – to my mind, unambiguously – *Semeiança del mundo*, *Delwy Byd*, the Italian text of the bilingual Estense manuscript, and the German *Das buch von der Forme und pildnuss der Welt*. In the second group I have placed the *Mappemonde* of Pierre de Beauvais; the *Image du monde* of Gautier/Gossouin de Metz; *La Petite Philosophie*; the *Divisiones mundi* of Perot of Garbelei/Garbelai; the *Mirrouir of the World* of William Caxton; *L'Ymagine del mondo*; the *Mapa del mond* of Vivaldo Belcalzèr; and perhaps somewhat controversially, Brunetto Latini's *Trésor*. The two Hebrew versions are placed here also, but I have not been able to study them in detail and they do not feature further in this book.

The third category, which takes the material from the *Imago mundi* across genre boundaries (though these are also fuzzy) includes, in my classification: the Catalan Atlas/Ecumene Chart, which contains extracts verbatim translated into Catalan (or extracts from a verbatim Catalan translation); Jacob van Maerlant's *Alexanders geesten*, which contains a section likewise translated quite closely; Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna*, which contains an adaptation; and the Old Norse *Fóstbræðra saga* and *Eiríks saga víðförla*. The latter two texts were not discussed further in the book, either, as they do not contain sections on Europe. To this category – with something of a question mark – also belongs the *Dittamondo* of Fazio degli Uberti. While this text has often been assumed not to have drawn on the *Imago mundi*, in the discussion of the hodoeporical structure of these texts in Chapter 5 I have argued that it belongs in this group after all.

From the final category of Latin texts that use the *Imago mundi*, I have only discussed the work of Gervase of Tilbury as it is balanced in interesting ways with that of Brunetto Latini. Further work is needed on the use of *Imago mundi* by Thomas of Cantimpré, Vincent of Beauvais, Michael Scot, Gervase of Tilbury, Godfrey of Viterbo, and John of Saint-Victor. A full study of the Latin tradition of adaptations and uses of *Imago mundi* is a major endeavour and may well prove that the current estimation of the influence of Honorius's text does not fully acknowledge its significance.

Where Chapters 1 and 2 served as an introduction to the breadth of the material, bringing it together for the first time, Chapters 3 and 4 provided tentative answers to the question of why this material spread so widely. Chapter 3 explored the striking archaism of Honorius's textual map. The

example chosen is the chapter beginning his section on Europe, where the marginal areas of that region are described in terms which are already outdated by the twelfth century. The chapter then moved to explore the implications of this purposeful antiquarianism for the text's transmission. It illustrated somewhat different attitudes to the original displayed by its translators. Their choices seem to have been dictated by the requirements of the new text, attesting to the flexibility of the original, despite – or perhaps because of – its archaising nature. An example of the retention of archaic nomenclature is seen in the Welsh and Spanish translations, while in the works of Gervase of Tilbury and Brunetto Latini an ecclesiastical map of Christendom is overlaid on Honorius's underlying map that, depending on our attitude towards it, we might choose to call either 'anachronistic' or 'timeless and therefore flexible'.

In Chapter 4 we saw that in the text these regions are mapped – as Jostkleigrew has shown for the *Image du monde* – according to a historico-geographical view that is not exclusively spatial. This patterning might present conceptual difficulties to a modern viewer used to a sharply delineated geometric representation of geographical space. Within the texts in question it often works alongside a hodoeporical method to the description and the world is described by taking the audience on a virtual journey through it, discussed in Chapter 5. This might also explain why it is that the regions can be fuzzy and that the borders might not matter – as the text moves through space, taking the audience on a journey of textual exploration, it matters what they find *inside* the different regions visited, not necessarily how the regions are bounded.

Following on the discussion of the why of the material's popularity in Chapters 3 and 4, the focus of Chapter 5 was how and in what context this material was presented to its audiences. Chapter 5 dealt with the issue of directed reading of the map. I have termed this the hodoeporical description technique, and have argued that the lack of boundaries works well with the itinerary-like flow of the narrative. We also explored how this itinerary changed in some of the *Imago mundi* adaptations, and why.

As Roger Ellis aptly describes it, 'Translation in the Middle Ages, as, indeed, at any time, witnesses parodically, after the manner of a distorting mirror, to frontiers geographical, cultural and linguistic, and assists routinely in their creation and dissolution'.¹⁰ This observation is particularly true of

10 Roger Ellis, 'Translation and Frontiers in Late Medieval England: Caxton, Kempe, and Mandeville', in *Frontiers in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the Third European Congress of Medieval Studies* (Jyväskylä, 10–14 June 2003), ed. by O. Merisalo and P. Pahta, *Textes et Etudes du Moyen*

the *Imago mundi* texts, which describe the boundaries they themselves cross, and provides a useful perspective on the twofold problem presented by the *Imago mundi* tradition in its relationship to Europe: as a text that crosses cultural, linguistic, political, and genre boundaries while traversing the regions it itself describes. Ellis's use of the term 'frontier' also resonates strongly in the argument of this book: that we are dealing here not with linear borders – whether between geographical territories or between text types – but with areas of overlap between fuzzy sets.¹¹

This book has aimed to outline the evolution processes of two fuzzy sets: the development of the *Imago mundi* tradition and the transformation of the geographical description of Europe specifically. I have aimed to show that Honorius's template of Europe is so malleable and so easy to use for later authors because it is already antiquated and purposefully and formally fuzzy. It yields itself to overlay with an array of multi-layered topographical, cultural and political maps, often providing varied and not necessarily overlapping definitions within the framework of the same text. As Michael Wintle observes, there is more than one type of border: geographical, cultural, and political, and these rarely coincide.¹² We might adapt this statement to say there is more than one type of spatial fuzzy set: geographical, cultural, and political, and these often partly overlap. There is also, consequently, more than one Europe.

The present study was limited to the examination of the different perceptions of the borders and content of the geographical, spatial entity of Europe, as present in the various vernacular translations and adaptations of the *Imago mundi*. The aim was to show that the boundaries, if they can be described as such, were fluid, and that even the seemingly objectively quantifiable value of geographical territory, with its 'natural boundaries' of, for instance, bodies of water, was subject of transformation in the process of translation between languages and cultures.¹³ Indeed, water provides a suitable metaphor for the transformation of geographical boundaries, and ironically it is the European boundaries on land that are often described as

Age, 35 (Louvain-la-neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2006), p. 560.

¹¹ For an illuminating discussion of the interplay between the 'linear' and 'zonal' meanings of 'frontier', see Nora Berend, 'Preface' to *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. by David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Abingdon, 2016), pp. x–xvi.

¹² Michael Wintle, *The Image of Europe: Visualising Europe in Cartography and Iconography Throughout the Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 35.

¹³ For water as natural geographical boundary of Europe, see Wintle, *The Image of Europe*, pp. 35–36.

fluid.¹⁴ By contrast, the Mediterranean, in the *Imago mundi* itself, is not so much a boundary as a fourth part of the world, constituting a fuzzy set in its own right, on a par with Asia, Europe, and Africa. This is not maintained in most of its rewritings, which move the various islands to different part of the texts, as part of the major type of change they make: the change to the order of description, the way of leading the reader through the material, direction of perusal of the textual map. Along with the addition or updating of place-names, these constitute the major techniques of rewriting used in these texts.

The *Imago mundi* tradition also demonstrates the interrelation between the perception of space and the traversal of space, as the geographical description inside the text travels within the physical object of the manuscript through the geographical space it describes.¹⁵ The ‘mastery of space’, to use Wetzstein’s term, inherent in this movement, was a product of the activity of the monastic orders, and it is significant that the provenance of many of the manuscripts of the original Latin text of the *Imago mundi* points to the use of monastic networks in the transmission of this text.¹⁶ However, it is also clear from the discussion above that the *Imago mundi* texts were not transmitted exclusively, and not even primarily, through ecclesiastical channels, with many of the rewritings heavily indebted to princely patronage. The spread of the *Imago mundi* tradition in Europe also echoes the pan-European network of intellectuals and their patterns of mobility and patronage in the period.¹⁷

This multilingual tradition also shows the applicability to a much broader period, of the characterisation given by Marie-Odille Garrigues to

14 See, for instance, discussion in Wintle, *The Image of Europe*, pp. 37–38, and references therein.

15 Cf. Thomas Wetzstein’s discussion of the connection between ‘remote communication’ and mobility; ‘New Masters of Space: The Creation of Communication Networks in the West (Eleventh–Twelfth Centuries)’, in *Space in the Medieval West*, ed. by Cohen and Madeline, pp. 115–32 (p. 119).

16 For more on medieval monastic networks and transmission of text, see, for instance, T. Falmagne, D. Stutzmann, A.-M. Turcan-Verkerk, and P. Gandil, eds, *Les cisterciens et la transmission des textes (XIII^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); Wetzstein, ‘New Masters’, pp. 126–28 on the Cistercians; and most recently for Franciscans in the Norse context, for instance, Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen, ‘Friars of science: Dominican transmission and usage of scientific knowledge in medieval Scandinavia’ in *Medieval Science in the North: Travelling Wisdom, 1000–1500*, ed. by Christian Etheridge and Michele Campopiano (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), pp. 141–58.

17 See, for instance, William Chester Jordan, ‘“Europe” in the Middle Ages’, in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. by Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 72–90 (pp. 73–74).

Europe of the twelfth century: 'Europe sans frontière [...] où les hommes se déplacent et se rencontrent aussi facilement et plus profondément que de nos jours' ('Europe without borders [...] where people moved and met as easily and more profoundly than in our days').¹⁸ Brunetto Latini provides an illustrative example of this. His *Trésor* is linked on the one hand to the *Imago mundi* itself, on the other to the *Image du monde*, and belongs to the same intellectual context of the francophone world. It also may have served as a model for the *Dittamondo*, for example. Brunetto travelled from Italy to Spain, and his connection to the court of Alfonso X brings his work closer (though not perhaps into direct contact) with the Spanish branch of the *Imago mundi* tradition, represented by the *Semeiança del mundo*, the Castilian translation of the *Imago mundi* pre-dating the grand Alfonsine programme of translation.¹⁹ I have argued that the Italian map of the *Trésor* compared to the Latin source, with the focus on ecclesiastical rather than secular territories, is a reflection of the political circumstances of the text's production. The incorporation of a translation from *Imago mundi* into a different encyclopedia by another Italian notary, Vivaldo Belcalzèr, demonstrates that Latini's was not an isolated case, and the brief reflection on Rudolf of Ems's *Weltchronik*, which shows a similar approach, suggests that the refocusing and rewriting of *Imago mundi* for a new audience in this manner was not unique to Italy. This is supported by the parallels drawn earlier between the ecclesiastical focus of Brunetto Latini and Gervase of Tilbury's adaptations of geographical descriptions.²⁰ Like Latini's, both Rudolf's and Gervase's texts can be read in the context of the politics of the Holy Roman Empire. Since this is a study of Europe in *Imago mundi* texts, and not of Empire, these themes could only be briefly introduced here as topics for future research and must await their scholar(s).

The overlapping maps we have seen in our analysis of the Roman imperial provincial terminology used by Honorius and its overlay with ecclesiastical structures in the rewritings of Gervase and Brunetto Latini provide a model very similar to the model of historico-geographical reading proposed by Jostkleigrewe as a solution for the seeming confusion and overlap of areas in the *Image du monde*. The notion of overlapping maps, coupled with the

18 Marie-Odile Garrigues, 'Honorius Augustodunensis et l'Italie', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Moyen Âge, Temps Modernes*, 84 (1952), 511–30 (p. 512). The translation is mine.

19 It is worth noting, however, that the conventional date of this text is based on the arguments in the edition of 1959 and tends to be reproduced without question in newer discussions.

20 See above, pp. 101–02.

historico-geographical model (which we can also discuss in terms of the spatio-temporal model of modern physics and Bakhtin's *chronotope*) is also useful in thinking about the extended family of *Imago mundi* texts as a whole, since the vernacular rewritings were produced in areas where the Latin text was available and also continued to be copied alongside its subsequent adaptations and translations.²¹

In order to understand this phenomenon, we should take into account the fact that the transmission of the information carried in the *Imago mundi* into other cultural environments by means of rewritings does not constitute a process of replacement but rather of progressive growth. The geographical entity as it was imagined in this tradition underwent a number of transformations most of which, as we have seen, were dictated by the interests of the new audiences.²² As Rita Copeland observes in relation to encyclopedias, the 'passage of the genre across languages can suggest how intellectual life too has a literary history, a history of form that adapts to new linguistic and cultural environments and that, with each new adaptation, signals changes in epistemological outlook'.²³ The dual effect of acceptance of the *Imago mundi* text as authoritative, and incorporation of minor alterations and refocusing of its geographical descriptions, echo the characteristically medieval tension identified by William Chester Jordan, which he describes as 'the tension between cosmopolitanism [...] and intense localism'.²⁴

The refocusing and retargeting of descriptions of Europe, its shifting borders in the texts of the *Imago mundi* tradition examined in the present study, echo recent observations regarding the polyphony of identities within Europe from the twelfth century to the fifteenth. This illustrates Copeland's point that 'tracing certain textual forms from their Latin origins to their many vernacular ramifications, can offer us a way of breaking down [...] vast generalities about the history of ideas'.²⁵ The local versions' refocusing of the descriptions of Europe, through the addition, for instance, of details relating to their own place of provenance to it, as did Caxton and Maerlant, amongst others, echoes Claire Weeda's argument regarding competition among the

21 For the *chronotope*, see above, pp. 24–28.

22 A connection is drawn between 'imagination' and 'traditions' by Keith Lilley in his 'Introduction' to *Mapping Medieval Geographies: Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and Beyond, 300–1600*, ed. by Lilley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1–20 (p. 2).

23 Rita Copeland, 'Language Frontiers, Literary Form, and the Encyclopedia', in *Frontiers in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Merisalo and Pahta, pp. 507–24 (p. 524).

24 Jordan, 'Europe' in the Middle Ages, p. 73.

25 Copeland, 'Language Frontiers', p. 523.

various elites.²⁶ In this family of texts, such competition is expressed by shifting the focus points of the Europe description. In this respect, though at first glance purely geographical, the definition of Europe in the *Imago mundi* texts is connected to the much-debated issues of (territory-based) identity, including both the notion of Europeanness and national/ethnic identities. The precise ways in which one set of concepts may have influenced another or had a common source elsewhere would be a subject for a separate study.²⁷

The thirteenth century, when many of the *Imago mundi*-based texts examined here were produced, has long been considered a turning point in medieval European political thought, particularly in thinking about territory and sovereignty.²⁸ It may well be worth examining the connections between this development and the increased production of vernacular rewritings of the *Imago mundi* tradition for princely patrons in the period and later. Such an endeavour may benefit from further integrating several important corpora that had to be excluded from the present study due to considerations of space. For instance, the use of the geographical frameworks discussed here in chronicles and historical texts produced throughout Europe in the medieval period may yield further data on the interrelation of space and time in the medieval worldview, and thus on the medieval *chronotope* of Europe, particularly in the context of discussion of 'national' histories.²⁹

26 Claire Weeda, 'Images of Ethnicity in Later Medieval Europe' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2012), p. 11.

27 For a discussion of the interrelation between geographic areas and identity, see Weeda, 'Images of Ethnicity', pp. 26–27, 66–68.

28 Summarised by Chris Jones, 'Understanding Political Conceptions in the Later Middle Ages: The French Imperial Candidatures and the Idea of the Nation-State', *Viator*, 42 (2011), 83–114 (pp. 83–86), who proposes a re-evaluation. The perceived tension between universalism vs the idea of the sovereign state, particularly in Jones's nuanced reading, could be usefully taken in context of the geographical descriptions in the rewritings of the *Imago mundi* which I examine here.

29 E.g. in the *General Estoria*; see above, pp. 123–33. It may also be worthwhile to consider Europe in the medieval geographical tradition as no more and no less than one item in a tetrad of the fuzzy sets. As such, we might also keep in mind that approaches to understanding the medieval development of the geographical idea of Europe discussed in this book might also help develop an approach that could be fruitfully applied to the study of the other parts of the world. Both Asia and Africa have been treated in previous scholarship as concepts as problematic as that of Europe. We might take the history of the concepts of the geographical unit 'Africa' as an example. Francesc Relaño has recently argued that 'the idea of Africa' as a separate unit did not exist until the Renaissance, as in both Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 'the southern shores of the Mediterranean were easily integrated into the classical *ecumene*', which he sees as a spatial continuum 'not fragmented into continents'; Relaño, *The Shaping of Africa: Cosmographic Discourse and Cartographic Science in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 1.

Investigations of these processes, and the role of traditional (antiquated) geographical information derived from the *Imago mundi* therein, would have to take into account the continued existence of the tradition I have introduced in this book in the early modern period, and the transition from manuscript to incunabula.

Looking Ahead

The decision to limit the narrative of this book to manuscript texts and take it only as far as the end of the fifteenth century is dictated more by convention and convenience than a belief in any great watershed at that point, either in terms of geographical writings or in terms of textual transmission.³⁰ However, the importance of the end of the fifteenth century in introducing changes, albeit gradual, in the way the *Imago mundi* and its worldview continued to influence minds, requires at least a short introduction. In that sense, the end of this book is the beginning of a different story.

One of the greatest changes to the European understanding of world geography came in the fifteenth century with the discovery of the Americas, but it came gradually. Even here one can argue that the process of development of geographical thought was one of evolution rather than of revolution. It is something of a commonplace that Columbus's worldview had been informed by classical and medieval geography.³¹ One of these texts which Columbus is known to have read, for we have an annotated copy surviving with notes in his own hand, is the *Ymago mundi* of Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly.³²

30 In terms of the knowledge organisation, as Marcom Parkes points out, there is more difference between early and late medieval books than between those and modern printed books, particularly in use of scholarly apparatus tables of contents, separation of the text into sections, use of notes; Parkes, 'The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book', in *Medieval Learning and Literature. Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. by J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 115–41 (p. 135).

31 See Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Imaginative Landscape of Christopher Columbus* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Pauline Moffitt Watts, 'Prophecy and Discovery: On the Spiritual Origins of Christopher Columbus's "Enterprise of the Indies"', *The American Historical Review*, 90 (1985), 73–102.

32 The annotations are in Buron's edition; Edmond Buron, ed. and trans., *Ymago mundi de Pierre d'Ailly*, 3 vols (Paris: Maisonneuve Frères, 1930); Flint, *The Imaginative Landscape*, pp. 45–47; Watts, 'Prophecy'. Columbus refers to Pierre d'Ailly by name in the account describing his third voyage; *Select Letters of Christopher Columbus with Other Original Documents, Relating to His Four Voyages to the New World*, ed. by Richard Henry Major (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1847, digitally reprinted in 2010), p. 140.

The importance of the geographical discoveries in the early modern period for the development of the concept of Europe is a subject for a different volume. Yet it must be noted here that, as Baumgärtner remarks, Europe became a more 'coherent space' with boundaries that came to need ever clearer demarcation as a response to the expansion of the outside world toward the end of the Middle Ages.³³ Nevertheless, representations of geographical space did not undergo an immediate revolution following the translation of Ptolemy's *Geographia* and Columbus's voyages.³⁴ It is for this reason that the term 'Renaissance' has been largely avoided in the present discussion. As has been judiciously observed recently by Patrick Gautier Dalché, the common representation of the Middle Ages opposed to 'modernity' is misleading as far as geographical representations of the world are concerned, and the rediscovery of Ptolemy did not mean the disappearance of other (e.g. medieval, T-O) modes of cartographic representation.³⁵ *Imago mundi* manuscripts such as Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 2 Cod 108 (s. xv, Eichstatt?) and various vernacular rewritings continued to be produced well into the period, alongside the creation of new rewritings and new adaptations (Figure 10). Some of the fifteenth-century adaptations, those by Juan de Mena and William Caxton in particular, were mentioned in this book. Caxton's is the only printed book discussed in *Transforming Europe*. I have made an exception in discussing this text because it is the only Middle English adaptation, and because it is closely connected to the *Image du monde*. The inclusion of these texts in this book is partly a tribute

33 Ingrid Baumgärtner, 'Europa in der Kartographie des Mittelalters: Repräsentationen – Grenzen – Paradigmen', in *Europa im Weltbild des Mittelalters. Kartographische Konzepte*, ed. by Ingrid Baumgärtner and Hartmut Kugler (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008), pp. 9–28 (p. 16).

34 See especially the discussion in Patrick Gautier Dalché, 'The Reception of Ptolemy's *Geography* (End of the Fourteenth to Beginning of the Sixteenth Century)' in *The History of Cartography III: Cartography in the European Renaissance, Part I*, ed. by David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 285–364, and the more extensive discussion in Dalché, *La géographie de Ptolémée en Occident (I^{ve}–XVI^e siècle)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009). The argument for the importance of the shifts in the representation of Europe, at the close of the Middle Ages, is put forward in Michael Wintle, 'Renaissance Maps and the Construction of the Idea of Europe', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 25 (1999), 137–65.

35 Patrick Gautier Dalché, 'Hic mappa mundi considerata est: lecture de la mappemonde au Moyen Âge', in *Itinerari del testo per Stefano Pittaluga*, ed. by C. Cocco et al. Pubblicazioni del D.A.R.F.I.C.L.E.T. 'Francesco Della Corte', Third Series, 254 (Genova: Dipartimento di Antichità, Filosofia e Storia, 2018), pp. 495–516 (p. 506); see also Dalché, 'The Reception of Ptolemy's *Geography*', pp. 285–86. See also Natalia I. Petrovskaia, '地図を読む: ヨーロッパの世界地図、中世からルネサンスにかけて' (= 'Reading Maps: European World Maps, from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance'), *書物学 Bibliology*, 13 (2018), 1–6.

to the continuity of the geographical tradition across artificially drawn boundaries of historical periodisation.

Incunabulae containing the *Imago mundi* and its adaptations constitute a significant corpus in themselves, and are yet to be studied. This tradition presents its own fascinating mysteries. Versions of Honorius's text were printed, and new translations produced as late as the eighteenth century. The editions are too numerous to produce a full catalogue here, but examples include Anton Koberger's version printed in Nuremberg in the fifteenth century, a later edition printed as part of *De Honorii Augustodunensis Presbyteri Libri Septem* in Basel, in 1544; one by Bernardus Albinus (1583) entitled *Mundi synopsis*, and many more up to the 1677 edition as part of the *Maxima Bibliotheca veterum Patrum XX*.³⁶ Several features of the earlier textual tradition, such as the misattributions to various authors continued well after the medieval period and made it into print. The misattribution to St Anselm of Canterbury is a case in point. *Imago mundi* forms part of Petrus Danhauser's edition of Anselm's *Opera* (published in Nuremberg by Caspar Hochfeder, 1491), as well as the edition of Anselm's works (published in Basel by Johann Amerbach, sometime before 1497).³⁷ This appears to be part of a wide pattern of misattribution, and the association of Mena's source, even when identified by title as the *Imago mundi*, with Anselm appears to belong to the same phenomenon.³⁸ This issue of misattribution deserves its own study.

Mena's *Laberinto* is in its turn one of many adaptations of the Latin text that went through multiple early modern print editions.³⁹ The *Image*

36 Edition ISTC number ih00323000; *British Library ISTC* <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ih00323000> (accessed 11 April 2024). Annie Angremy, 'La Mappemonde de Pierre de Beauvais', *Romania*, 104 (1983), 316–50 (p. 319); France Autesserre, 'La vision du monde dans le *Laberinto de Fortuna* de Juan de Mena, réécriture de la représentation du monde dans le *De Imagine Mundi* d'Honorius Augustodunensis', *Cahiers d'études romanes*, 20, 'Traces d'autrui et retours sur soi' (2009), 127–70 (§§ 16–17).

37 Edition ISTC numbers ia00761000 and ia00759000; *British Library ISTC* <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ia00761000> and <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ia00759000> (accessed 11 April 2024).

38 The attribution of the *Imago mundi* to Anselm appears in the 1499 edition of Hernán Núñez and is maintained in subsequent scholarship; see discussion in Autesserre, 'La vision du monde', §§ 12–13.

39 Florence Street, 'La vida de Juan de Mena', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 55 (1953), 149–73 (p. 149). For in-depth discussion of the editions of the *Laberinto*, see Maxim P. A. M. Kerkhof and Rob Le Pair, 'El *Laberinto de Fortuna* de Juan de Mena: las ediciones en relación con la tradición manuscrita', in *Homenaje al Profesor Antonio Vilanova*, I, ed. by Marta Cristina Carbonell and Adolfo Sotelo Vázquez (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1989), pp. 321–39; Maxim P. A. M. Kerkhof, 'Sobre las ediciones del *Laberinto de Fortuna* publicadas de 1481 a 1943, y la tradición manuscrita', in *Forum Litterarum: Miscelanea de estudos literários, linguísticos e históricos oferecida a J. J. van*

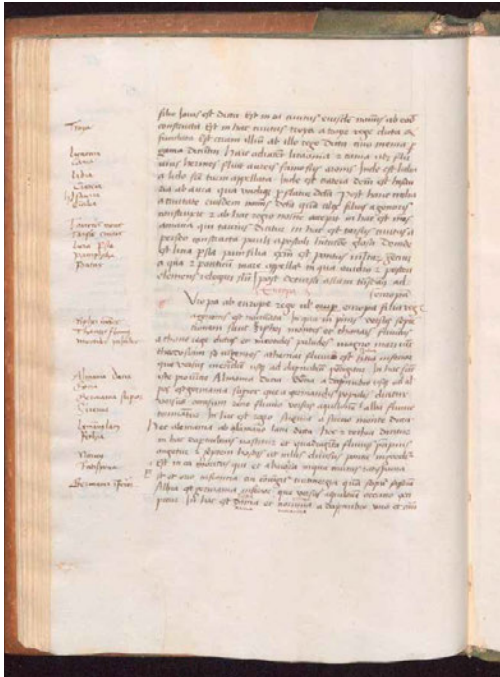


Figure 10: Beginning of the Europe section of the *Imago mundi* in Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg 2 Cod 108, f. 65v. Reproduced with kind permission of the Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg.

du monde, unsurprisingly given the number of surviving manuscripts, is another example.⁴⁰ Late-fifteenth-century editions include two by Antoine Caillaut (c. 1485–91 and c. 1491–92), Jean Trepperel (c. 1493–98).⁴¹ Subsequent editions include *Le livre de clergie nommé l'Ymage du monde* (Paris, 1501) and J. Vivian's *Le mirouer du monde* (Geneva, 1517).⁴² It is also the *Image du monde* that formed the basis of both the Hebrew and the Middle English

den Besselaar, ed. by J. A. H. Bots and Maxim P. A. M. Kerkhof (Amsterdam and Maarssen: APA and Holland University Press, 1984), pp. 26–82.

40 Neil Kenny mentions the Renaissance transmission of the *Image du monde*, and refers to its 1495, 1517, and 1520 editions (but describes it as an encyclopedia based on Vincent de Beauvais, not Honorius); Kenny, *The Palace of Secrets: Béroalde de Verville and Renaissance Conceptions of Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 18.

41 For more on these and references to four more sixteenth-century editions, see Christine Silvi, 'Petite histoire d'une appropriation réussie: François Buffereau plagiaire de Gossuin de Metz', *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 94 (2016), 661–89, n. 3; and for discussion of eight editions of the prose version, see Silvi, 'La mise en recueil de l'*Image du monde* (rédaction en prose) dans les premiers imprimés: diffusion et réception d'une *livre de clergie* médiéval aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles', *Seizième siècle*, 13 (2017), 293–328.

42 These editions are referred to in Chet Van Duzer, and Sandra Sáenz-López Pérez, *Tres filii Noe dividerunt orbem post diluvium: The World Map in British Library Add. MS 37049*, *Word & Image*, 26 (2009), 21–39 (p. 32, p. 39 n. 92).

printed texts, which I have mentioned in this book. It is worth noting at this point that Caxton's *Mirror* in its turn was also subsequently reprinted with additions by Laurence Andrewe in 1527.⁴³

Importantly in light of our discussion of the text's purposeful archaism, this continuation of the printed tradition into the early modern period belies any notion of a post-Columbus watershed. Honorius's text and its rewritings continue being printed and being read, with new ones being produced. Some of these in turn were also subsequently republished many times. An example is Delacrut's צל העולם (*Zel ha-'Olam* / *Şel ha-'olam*), republished at least eleven times, well into the nineteenth century, mostly in Eastern Europe.⁴⁴

The circulation of these materials in print represents a new chapter in the history of the *Imago mundi* tradition with its own complexities and must await its own dedicated study. It must be noted that the circulation of *Imago mundi*-derived geographical descriptions of the world in print illustrates the phenomenon of conservatism and archaism observed by scholars of incunabula. I would tentatively suggest that the *Imago mundi* did well here because this characteristic was something the text already had to start with. It fitted perfectly in the world of the antiquarian and conservative early printed book. The wide dissemination of this tradition in print supports the observation that it was more often material derived from ancient authorities and popular (old) traditions that would find its way to print, rather than innovative and revolutionary scientific advances.⁴⁵ Thus, the apparent break modern historiography places between medieval

43 *The Myrroure: [and] Dyscrypcyon of the Worlde* (London: Laurence Andrewe, 1527), replace link with: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2240950435?sourcetype=Books> (accessed 27 November 2024). A. Neubauer, 'Les traductions hébraïques de *l'Image du Monde*', *Romania*, 5 (1876), 129–39 (p. 139), notes the existence of this edition, but does not identify it; see item 413 in C. E. Sayle, *Early English Printed Books in the University Library Cambridge (1475 to 1640)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), I, pp. 85–86, and William E. Engel, Rory Loughnane and Grant Williams, eds, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 41–42.

44 Abraham Melamed, 'The Hebrew Encyclopedias of the Renaissance', in Harvey, ed., *The Medieval Hebrew Encyclopedias of Science and Philosophy: Proceedings of the Bar-Ilan University Conference*, ed. by Steven Harvey, Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought, 7 (Dordrecht: Springer Science + Business Media, 2000), pp. 441–64; Robert Singerman, *Jewish Translation History: A Bibliography of Bibliographies and Studies* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), p. 96 under item 679; and Gustavo Sacerdote, 'The Ninth Mehabereth of Emanuele da Roma and the *Tresor* of Piere de Corbiac', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 7 (1895), 711–28 (p. 711 n. 2).

45 Linda Ehrsam Voigts, 'Scientific and Medical Books', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375–1475*, ed. by Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 345–402, esp. p. 351, cited in Matthew Boyd Goldie, *Scribes of Space: Place in*

and early modern, the European encounter with the Americas, and the invention of print did not immediately affect the influence or cultural importance of the worldview represented by the *Imago mundi* tradition or its pattern of organisation.

The present study stops, with only a minor foray into the world of print, at the gates of the sixteenth century. In such a division lies the danger of reinforcing the view that manuscript culture was more fluid than that of the printed word, but some of the examples touched on in this book (such as Caxton's text) show that this view also needs to be qualified.⁴⁶ The increased mobility of the Renaissance, including the mobility of printers as well as scholars and artists, provides a context for the circulation of ideas and the dissemination of geographical and encyclopedic knowledge represented by the *Imago mundi* tradition.⁴⁷

The continued evolution of the text even in printed form, evidenced by additions, alterations, corrections, and translations made after the Middle Ages, attest to a more flexible relation between text reception and text production than is usually represented in the dynamic of redactor–reader relations. Mary Franklin-Brown's 'more protean knowing "subject" that is opened up by encyclopedic texts', whom she characterises as 'neither a traditional author nor a passive reader' and who is 'actively engaged in the constitution of the text', is a useful concept for expressing this phenomenon.⁴⁸ Through the various adaptations, *Imago mundi* had an enormous influence. It is possible, for instance, that the etymology deriving the name of Europe from King Europs in Louis de Langle's *Tractatus de figura mundi* (1456) came indirectly from Honorius.⁴⁹

Middle English Literature and Late Medieval Science (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2019), p. 17, p. 226 n. 39.

46 Cf. Liedeke Plate and Els Rose in 'Rewriting, A Literary Concept for the Study of Cultural Memory: Towards a Transhistorical Approach to Cultural Remembrance', *Neophilologus*, 97 (2013), 611–25; Stephen D. Nichols, 'Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture', *Speculum*, 65 (1990), 1–10 (p. 3).

47 For an overview of the circulation of knowledge in the sixteenth century, see Peter Burke, 'The Circulation of Knowledge', in *The Renaissance World*, ed. by J. J. Martin (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 191–207. The correlation between the movement of printers and the dissemination of *Imago mundi*-type texts in Europe would be a particularly interesting topic to explore further.

48 M. Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), p. 26.

49 Among de Langle's sources Colette Beaune notes Latini's *Trésor* (which uses the *Imago mundi* but does not contain the etymology), Vincent de Beauvais and Pierre d'Ailly, but not the *Imago mundi* itself; Beaune, 'La notion d'Europe dans les livres d'astrologie du XV^e siècle', in *La conscience européenne au XV^e et au XVI^e siècle*, Collection de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Jeunes Filles, 22 (Paris: ENSJF, 1982), pp. 1–7 (pp. 3–4).

This book may be more accurately entitled ‘Transforming Europes’, as its chief finding is the polyphony of voices within what might have been expected to be a uniform and static encyclopedic tradition. This multitude of voices provides a multiphasic representation of a geographical territory with shifting borders and shifting focus points. Combining these into a single term produces the textual equivalent of an out-of-phase image, which might be compared to stereoscopic layers viewed without 3D glasses. Coupled with the notion of fuzzy sets this results in a delightfully unfocused picture. Each rewriting of *Imago mundi* produced its own, slightly different Europe, and thus the broader *Imago mundi* tradition encompassed and transmitted to new readers a multitude of Europes.