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Early Modern (Ir) Rationalization of the Other: World Maps and Anatomical Illustrations

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Abstract: The essay investigates how early modern maps of the New World both as a mode of representation (i.e., a view of the self) and as a scopic instrument (i.e., a view of the other) translated the European view of the other as monstrous and/or female body (the latter on the verge of *object*-ification), consonant with its representation in anatomical illustrations belonging to the early modern "culture of dissection." Both early modern maps and anatomical illustrations were predicated on the *disciplinary* zeal of modernity, which often successfully suppressed the workings of its rhetoric, and were the output of white men trying to conquer, know, tame and colonize a confected *other* construed in terms of (abject) bodiliness or irrationality.

Keywords: cultural studies, early modern period, world maps, anatomical illustrations, human body, female body, culture of dissection, scopic instrument**.**

Ötekinin İlk Modern (İr)Rasyonelleştirmesi: Dünya Haritaları ve Anatomik Resimler

Özet: Bu makale hem sunuş modu (kendisine bakış) hem de skopik araç (diğerlerine bakış) açısından Erken Dünya'nın ilk dönem modern haritalarının *diğerlerine* canavar ve/veya kadın vücuduna sahip şekilde bir bakış açısına sahip olan Avrupalı bakış açısını nasıl yorumladığı hakkındadır. Hem modern çağların ilk dönemindeki haritalar hem de anatomik resimler, retorik çalışmalarına sıklıkla başarılı şekilde baskın gelen modernlik kavramı açısından değerlendirilmiş ve bedensellik ya da oransızlık terimleriyle *öteki* kavramını keşfetmeye, bilmeye, eğitmeye ve sömürgeleştirmeye çalışan beyaz adamın çalışmalarının bir sonucu olarak incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: kulturel calismalar, erken modern dönem, Dünya haritaları, anatomik resimler, insan vücudu, kadın vücudu, diseksiyon kulturu, skopik araç.

Maps are powerful instruments in building up "geographical imaginations" (Massey 22): they have the power to inform the viewers, yet thereby they forge the people's outlook by naturalizing the current episteme. One should distinguish, of course, between primarily practical "way-finding" maps (e.g. itinerary maps, nautical charts, travel narratives, contemporary maps of underground systems) and the more "scientific" ones that serve the purpose of "conceptualizing space or figuring geographical knowledge": "the scale map and its spatiality serve as synecdoches for the cartography and the spatiality of

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the culture as a whole" (Padrón 42). This epistemological dimension is of paramount importance for understanding the world map: neither neutral nor entirely true, it is always technically inaccurate in some respect, while its very design, as Massey (6-51) cogently argues, covertly illustrates the rhetoric of power underlying mapping through the selections operated – partly naturalized by the *declared* purpose of the map.[1]

Relationally speaking, the world map as a mode of representation actually presents a view of the self, while as a scopic instrument it shows how the other is seen. This essay investigates how some early modern maps of the New World translate the European view of the other as monstrous and/or female body, the latter on the verge of *object*-ification, in imaging both their views of claims to (inhabited) places but also of space and their views of nature, consonant with the anatomical illustrations of the early modern "culture of dissection."[2]

Arguably, one of the roots of the two early modern media's endorsement of this view of otherness was the medieval construct of *Christianitas* as the body of Christ at once coherent and threatened with dismemberment. As I have tried to demonstrate in a recent article, underpinning both the medieval notion of Christendom and its cartographic encodation was the anxiety about body integrity,[3] translatable as the clash between claims to certain places and the identities of inhabitants and colonizers.

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[1] Hence, putting things on the map can be empowering and omitting them disempowering; how the very map is produced (e.g. the projection and centring chosen) and distributed attests this once more.

[2] Time doesn't allow me to consider the import of Renaissance perspectivism in generating a coldly geometrical and systematic sense of space in cartography. Nor can this investigation survey the political background, i.e., the emergence of nation states, and the interconnections that had obtained between state centralization, inter-national competition, and internal surveillance and social control by the late sixteenth century. Nonetheless, these were all highly influential factors in translating the idea of a disembodied and rational male-qua-normative eye into stereotypes of both looking and savage/female to-be-looked-at-ness.

[3] This is most conspicuous in the imaging of Christ on the *Ebstorf* map (*c*. 1235-45, probably authored by Gervasius of Tilbury): the map represents the world literally as the *Corpus Christi* in its salvific sacrifice on an implicit cross. As I argue in "European Maps of the Mind: Medieval and Modern Cartography Between the Mythical and the Rational" (forthcoming), Christ's hands appear to emerge onto the map from behind, thus legitimizing the view of his redemptive embrace of the world (confirmed by his pierced right hand); his feet, however, appear rather as loose limbs severed from the body and then stuck onto the map, while his head is actually a Veronica. Although the map was housed in the Benedictine nunnery of Ebstorf, hence it was beyond the ordinary circulation of cultural energies, to paraphrase Greenblatt, it did pertain to the medieval world view that invented the western European identity in terms of an ideally unitary construct of Christendom. *Christianitas* as an ecumenical *Corpus Christi* legitimized fictions of organic holism while playing down anxieties about the fragility of its ethos's grip on the Christians and especially about the fragility of the Christian identity and body, always threatened by the presence of the non-Christian other.

While later world maps in the medieval tradition, from Abraham Cresques' *Catalan Atlas* (1375) to Fra Mauro's world map (1457-9), no longer embraced the theocratic tradition and moreover grafted the navigational portolan chart style onto the religiously informed *mappa mundi*, thus advancing progressively more abstract notions of space, the medieval "ethnographic" tradition would extend far into the modern age of "discovery" and "objective scientific outlook."

Sebastian Münster's (1489-1552) *Map of the New World* is a case in point: the most widely circulated New World map of its time, it was originally published in 1540 in his Basle edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia* as *Novae Insulae, XVII Nova Tabula* and republished at Basle in his 1544 *Cosmographia universalis*. The map presents a view of North America before the Spanish explorations to the interior of the continent, hence its relatively blank depiction but for a few scattered woods. Münster subscribes to the conventional European view of the South American "other" (popularized in Europe in the aftermath of Columbus' 1492 voyage): gigantic in Patagonia[4] and cannibal in Brazil (where human limbs hang on a bush or pyre inscribed *canibali*).[5] In the 1550 German edition of the *Cosmographia,* Münster appended sections on religion, cultures, costumes and customs, where the "anomalous" other has again pride of place: a cannibal couple (f. 1349) finish off butchering a man; the cannibal Tartar (f. 1308) roasts a human carcass on the spit; more overtly fearsome to the author's contemporaries, the inhabitants of Calicut (an Indian trading port with the Portuguese, 1513-25), have impaled four Portuguese on cross-joined staves mounted on top of a pole (f. 1342) – a gruesome spectacle of public punishment which may invoke an Indian revenge in true European style.

Such cartographic encodation of the subliminal European anxieties about the body and its integrity-qua-identity can also be discerned on Diego Gutiérrez's 1562 *Map of America as the Fourth Part of the World*.[6] Based on Spanish and Portuguese navigations, the largest engraved map of America for a century depicts the eastern North American coast, Central and South America and the westernmost coasts of Europe and Africa. Gutiérrez's was not intended to be a

[4] On encountering the Tehuelche, the earliest inhabitants of Patagonia, in 1520, Magellan called them *pata* (Spanish, "paw"/"foot") because of the large size of their feet, a term that was eventually applied to the entire region.

[5] The coastal areas of eastern South America and interior of the Amazon basin were inhabited by Tupí-speaking groups, some of whom practised *ritual* cannibalism.

[6] The full title is *Americae sive quartae orbis partis nova et exactissima descriptio. (Auctore Diego Gutiero Philippi Regis Hisp. etc. Cosmographo. Hiero Cock Excude. 1562*. Diego Gutiérrez was a Spanish cartographer from the respected *Casa de la Contratación (the inscription translates as "*Diego Gutiérrez, cosmographer at the time of the reign of Philip II of Spain"*);* Hieronymus Cock from Antwerp was one of the most important engravers and printmakers in sixteenth-century Europe. Only two known copies of this printed map are extant, one located in the Library of Congress and the other in the British Library.

scientifically or navigationally exacting document, but a ceremonial–diplomatic map (Hébert):[7] the Spanish, French and Portuguese coats of arms (*Figs. 1-2*) proclaim possession, while the Poseidon-driven chariot of (presumably) the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V (Charles I of Spain), as the reborn Caesar crosses the Atlantic to lay claim to America (*Fig. 3*).

Fig. ***Gutiérrez,*** *the Spanish and French coats of arms*

Fig. Gutiérrez, the Portuguese coat of arms

[7] The map may have been produced, at the request of official Spain, through Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (the patron of much of Cock's printing in Antwerp), the Spanish negotiator of the 1559 Treaty of Cateau Cambrésis. (This double treaty between France and Spain, and respectively between France and England, brought to a close nearly thirty years of constant warfare in western Europe.) The recognition of Philip II on the map indicated that the map itself probably was prepared after 1556, when Charles V abdicated the throne in favour of Philip II.

Fig. Gutiérrez, the Atlantic: the chariot of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V

Less allegorically, Spain proclaims to the nations of Western Europe its American territory, outlining its sphere of control with a very broad, clearly drawn line for the Tropic of Cancer.[8]

Gutiérrez's map invites scrutinizing the European asseveration of power – political, maritime and scientific – and cartographic (stereotyped) images of self and other. The amazing representation of an uninhabited North America[9] translates the myth of the "empty frontier" underpinning the ideology of conquest (Harley, qtd. in Massey 29) and is matched, albeit inversely, by that of a

[8] The history of the Spanish–Portuguese conflict for dominion in the New World, precariously settled by the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), may account for various details on the map, although the hypothetical vertical line of demarcation (in the Atlantic Ocean) between their respective possessions in America is strangely absent. It is instructive to notice not only the battle at sea between European ships (Spanish and Portuguese?) in the southern Atlantic, right above the coat of arms of Portugal, but also the asymmetrical positioning and rendition of the three coats of arms. Held at the top left of the map by *putti* and a winged Victory, sanctioned as it were, are those of Spain and France (acknowledging the marriage of Elizabeth of Valois, daughter of Henry II, King of France, to Philip II in the summer of 1559); Portugal's coat of arms, however, is not only "demoted" to the lower margin, but also held by a hirsute, "savage," menacing-looking old man riding a sea monster and accompanied by his young replica "trumpeting" the Portuguese claims to territory.

[9] The French, Spanish, Portuguese and English arrived in North America after 1500, sporadically and without at first attempting to settle; they did not confront an untamed wilderness, but people who often lived in villages and towns, and on whom the Europeans depended almost entirely for food and guides, sometimes under duress. For a balanced survey with illustrations see the web site of the exhibition *1492: An Ongoing Voyage*.

South America of giant Patagonians and cannibal Brazilians ready to roast Europeans on the spit (*Fig. 4*). The latter image abides by the "technology of monsterization" at work in the colonialist encounter: Cohen (34) argues that this aids the new settlers as self-styled heroes to displace an anterior culture by construing the indigenous inhabitants as archaic forces em*body*ing resistance to the origin of (a new) culture.

Fig. ***Gutiérrez, cannibal Brazilians***

Fig. Gutiérrez, the Pacific monsters and sirens

[10] Could it be that the cannibal repute of the Brazilian tribes was *also* a polemical hint on this official Spanish map to the Portuguese dominion of Brazil in the wake of the Treaty of Tordesillas?

Gutiérrez's America is surrounded by an oceanic expanse teeming with monstrous sea creatures (giant hybrid whales of Leviathanic stock and huge popularity with cartographers, e.g. Ortelius) attacking the European ships, and south Pacific sirens luring the sailors to their death by water (*Figs. 3, 5*). The classical warning *hic sunt leones* would now translate cartographically as *hic sunt dracones, monstri et sirenae*. That sea monsters patrol off the coasts of the New World and attack ships would seem a "natural" way (pertaining to the collective imagination) of embodying the perils of any voyage: the maw threatening to engulf a ship is a metaphor for the very ocean where the ship may sink. Then what about the peaceful sirens combing their hair to better exert their feminine lures on the male crews? The female–fish hybrid had lingered in the European collective imagination ever since the *Liber monstrorum*'s (*c*. 650-750) reinterpretation of the ancient siren as half-woman and half-fish (or sea serpent) embodying female lust. Furthermore, the sexual enticing by the siren is, deliberately or not, duplicated in the very gigantic dimensions of the attacking sea monsters with their usually open maws: the interchangeability of mouth and vagina in medieval (*c*. 1100) and post-medieval texts, viz. the topos of *vagina dentata*, was based on the medieval etymologists' connection of *gula* (throat, glutton, mouth) with *Golias* (Latin for Goliath) and translated as the devil's anthropophagous mouth in iconography (as late as Hieronymus Bosch's Hell wing of *The Garden of Earthly Delices*, *c*. 1505). Gutiérrez's juxtaposition of the monstrous hybrid body-qua-maw and the hybrid female body might have invoked, subliminally at least, a "monsterization" *and* feminization of the ocean itself. The giant Patagonians and cannibal Brazilians as the New-World-monstrous-races signpost the distant land not only as uninhabitable, hence a territory in need of domestication/civilization by the Europeans, but also as the terrestrial counterpart of a monsterized-*cum*-feminized oceanic maw. While Gutiérrez's map actually predates the Cartesian age of the "masculinization of thought" (Bordo 640), it does, however, respond to the ancient and medieval European anxieties about corporeality as the realm of the irrational and uncontrollable, imaged cartographically in monstrous terms. Moreover, the Brazilian cannibals are monsterized and feminized also due to the traditional association of food and food processing with the sphere of woman, as if they were only a projection of the male anxiety of being sexually engulfed by the

[11] Jerome and other early Church Fathers popularized the idea of the siren as courtesan, the embodiment of female lust and deceptive lure to the righteous Christian's soul; in the late eleventh- and twelfth-century monastic writings, the siren was glossed and demonized as the symbol of monastic vices – at a time of its recurrence on capitals in the cloisters.

female.[12]

Abraham Ortelius' *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Antwerp, 1570), using the Mercator projection, also deploys the “technology of monsterization.” Thus, although Ortelius' map of Russia and Tartaria, for instance, focuses on “natural” features and settlements, the “exotic” other (to the European beholder) has been retained, e.g. turbaned Muslims with camels and tents, or a prophet in a tree “saddle” preaching to a group of worshippers (yet on the trees behind him hang men, probably themselves the other to the other pictured on this map, itself a copy of a 1562 map published in London). Furthermore, Ortelius' seas are populated by mythological figures, e.g. Europa ravished by the bull (a “statue” whose pedestal gives the map title), Poseidon with a Nereid in the Tyrrhenian Sea, and the Atlantic “Orpheus” whose torso is indistinguishable from the monstrous body it rides or possibly finishes off as a sea centaur. It gradually appears that the atlas maps abide by the trope of the male European body/identity under attack: the Pacific threatens huge whales' attacks on ships north of the Tropic of Cancer and the sirens' to the south (*Fig. 6*). Gutiérrez's north Atlantic monsters here have moved more to the south or even to the Indian Ocean, while a Pacific dragon has relocated in the Mediterranean north of “Barbaria” (Africa).

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[12] Montrose (1991) argues convincingly that the sixteenth-century protocolonialist discourse of discovery was predicated on the dual move of gendering the New World as feminine and sexualizing its exploration, conquest and settlement. This latter aspect is coterminous with de Certeau's notion that sixteenth-century historiography renders the body of the other a writing surface on which the conqueror traces his (*sic*!) own history, hence the body as blazon. Montrose's analysis of Walter Ralegh's *Discoverie of…Guiana* (1596) reveals, at a high level of abstraction, the substitution of its inhabitants (construed as *masculine* societies) with a feminine gendered land sexed as a virgin. But for the last detail, the metaphor recurs in various other sixteenth- and seventeen-century European travel accounts of America and Africa: Morgan (1997) amply documents the engendering of a certain horizon of expectations (roughly, the other is monstrous, savage and subhuman, hence the civilizing role of European colonists and of slave trade) focusing on social–sexual deviance (or irrationality) via the female body. What both Montrose and Morgan fail to address is precisely why the female body presented itself as a more apt metaphor for articulating such concerns: I suspect that the beauty-cum-beastliness in European constructs of the woman of America and Africa was firmly rooted in the European collective imagination of woman as other (itself a Christian revaluation of ancient misogyny), yet given a new flavour by Cartesian and mechanistic philosophy (in its turn undergirded by the Renaissance geometrical perspectivism also manifest in the cartographic revolution).

But for a few geographical features, Gerardus Mercator's 1569 world map (using his famous cylindrical projection) features huge landmasses of empty territory (North America as much as Europe are thus subjected to the logic of geometrical space), and thereby ostensibly upholds a scientifically detached view of the world. Nonetheless, the dangers of far-off places are still present: the giant Patagonians, the cannibal butchering his human victim, the cannibals' spit, the “limb” tree are all put on the world map, as are the giant sea creatures in the Atlantic and Pacific.

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Fig. Ortelius, the Pacific monsters and sirens

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century maps too deploy an "ethnographic" framing technique, only this time implicating the Europeans' civilizing role. Willem Janszoon Blaeu's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum sive Atlas novus* (1645-50) uses cartouches to depict in the upper horizontal border the major towns and harbours and in the side borders inhabitants in typical postures or rather imagological stereotypes. August Gottlieb Boehme's *Americae mappa generalis* (1746) testifies to a discursive practice adept at successful domestication of the other: the title and caption are framed by a picture of domesticated natives who peacefully pursue their lives or rather pose for the engraver. This inset is all that's left of an erstwhile densely populated world, with oceans swarming with ships, monsters and sirens, and a *terra firma* replete with natural features, inhabitants and fauna.

Only a cursory glance at maps commissioned or approved by the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris may help us see the various mythologizing paths that encode modern European cartography's allegiance to scientificity under the twofold bond of monarchic and academic power. In 1613 Pierre de Vaulx's *Map of the Atlantic* could still deploy the *hic sunt leones* trope: the map retains, though in a rather ludic vein, the sirens (relocating them in the Atlantic, south of the Tropic of Cancer, *Fig. 7*), but elides the explicit depiction of navigational hazards embodied by sea monsters. On this map, South America (*Fig. 8*) too retains

elements familiar from earlier maps, e.g. Brazil's *les cannibales*, though other scenes come to complete the picture: an earthly paradise with an Adamic couple south of the Tropic of Capricorn, hammocks and love-making under the trees, or naked men dancing around a tree. Nonetheless, what strikes from the outset is not the sheer human presence (viz. the natives'), as the prominence of coats of arms and legends proclaiming European dominion and quasi-domestication of South America: “La France antartique” (*sic*) overlaps with “Le Bresil,” while “Noeufues Espaignes” (with its coat of arms) spreads to the north of the Amazon.

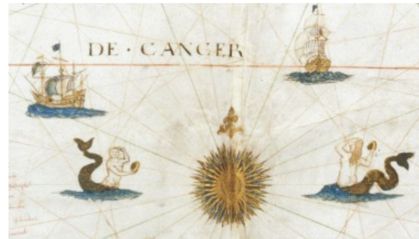

Fig. De Vaulx, the Atlantic sirens

Fig. De Vaulx, South America

This latter aspect also underpins Guillaume Delisle's *Map of South Africa* (1708) which plots the continent's distinctive kingdoms as dominions of the European ones. François Le Vaillant's *Map of South Africa* (1790), with marginal and inland insets showing various inhabitants and fauna, could be construed as having accomplished the “civilizing” aim of the male cartographer and his male

and royal commissioner: the indigenous peoples are shown posing gracefully in front of their tents (the Caffres) or carrying out their domestic chores (the Houswann), while the map title fills an otherwise empty "Pays Inconnu," thus endorsing the myth of the empty frontier.

Cartographic translations of anxieties about the body and of political claims to far-off places and "nature's bounty" should be understood in light of the early modern shifts in mentality. The organicist tenor underlying the medieval discourse of analogy (the great chain of being) was progressively undermined by the momentum the *notion* of discovery was gaining, and dealt its fatal blow to by the Cartesian masculinization of epistemology. According to Susan Bordo, the former female, living nature ("she") was *object*-ified ("it") in order to become the subject of scientific disciplines; the antidote to this "cultural 'separation anxiety'" (Bordo 649) could be provided solely by man's (*sic*) act of self-empowerment, who thus naturalized his claims to the conquest and mastery of nature, manifest both in geographical "discovery" and "lucid" scientific study, especially anatomical.

By the same token, confidence in the ultimate unity of religious and social systems modelled on the human body was shattered: Hillman and Mazzio (xiii-xiv) identify in the "trope of synecdoche" of early modern culture the lingering belief in the possibility of recuperating the part into whole even as the age promoted a new "aesthetic of the part" that obviated reintegration. The late sixteenth-century "pervasive sense of fragmentation" was fuelled by more atomistic and individualistic impulses, e.g. socio-politic and economic changes, religious schisms, Copernicus' debunking of the micro-/macrocosm analogy, or the rise of the "culture of dissection."

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century anatomy books pursued "a *mechanics* of agency relations" which purportedly explained intention and action as bodily functions: the body appeared as "a locus of self and agency, not merely the instrument of a non-corporeal essence" (Rowe 287). This rhetoric successfully mystifies the mechanics of the culture of dissection: cadavers and skeletons pose as often live (painterly) models and sometimes invite the anatomical gaze or obligingly help the anatomist carry out his (*sic*) work of exploration and revelation, as Juan Valverde de Amusco's (*c*. 1525-*c*. 1588) new Marsyas does.

No novelty in the Renaissance, dissection now started, however, to *inform* anatomical illustrations – with Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) at the forefront: his illustrations in *De humane corporis fabrica* (1543, contemporary with

[14] *Anatomia del corpo humano*, Rome, 1559, p. 64, illustrator Gasparo Becerra.

Copernicus' heliocentric theory) set a new standard for accuracy, while also drawing on a variety of contemporary genres of visual representation (naturalism, classicism, metaphor, landscape, death imagery and monstrosity).[15] Moreover, the anatomical illustration of 1500-1750 coincided with a new obsession with self-fashioning and individuality *performed* in the public sphere, which anatomical books dramatized, travestied, beautified and moralized.

Title pages and frontispieces of anatomy books "functioned as a visual synopsis of the science and art of anatomy, a place where artists could playfully represent the poetics of dissection" (*Dream Anatomy*). Vesalius' frontispiece (*Fig. 11*) sets the tenor: his *demonstratio* before an audience of fellow anatomists and (behind a rail) townspeople plays up the self-assured anatomist's teacherly pose to and confrontation of the viewer. The figures in the *anatomical theatre* embody the observer position: leaning out of the gallery or perched on architectural "pedestals" at ground level, they stare with interest at the dissection (of a woman) as the latest amusement and curiosity of the age.[16]

Charles Estienne's (1504-*c.* 1564) *De dissectione partium corporis* (1545) dramatizes the interplay of powerful gaze and disempowered eyes and thereby incorporates and regulates the observer position. The monumentally voyeuristic mise-en-scène of plate 275 illustrating the uterus (*Fig. 9*) is ostensibly in keeping with the notion of anatomical *theatre* launched by Vesalius' frontispiece (*Fig. 11*), yet in thematizing hierarchy (based on learning and prestige) it parallels the judicial "theatre" (cf. Egmond 92-128). A bespectacled elderly anatomist in the balcony of a house (duplicated in the corbel), gazes – *from a distance* and *above* – onto a female model seated on a sky-scraping throne,[17] her robe/veil pulled to the back. She props her right foot up on a stone carved legend (whose top shape echoes her genitalia); the "flap" of her belly has been rolled down, displaying the foetus. The semblance of pupils in the two males' eyes renders them alive; her blank eyeballs prevent her head from confronting the male voyeurs, though her mouth might be about to utter something or to scream – yet the woman has been

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[15] Vesalius' illustrations are attributed to Stephen van Calcar and the Workshop of Titian.

[16] As Florike Egmond aptly remarks, the public dissection could hardly have afforded the public – or the medical students, at that – a real opportunity for learning, given the sheer distance separating the cadaver and the spectators; provisions were actually made for the medical students to attend private autopsies performed in a much smaller room. What the anatomical theatre did provide, however, was a scholarly display of knowledge by the professor, hence prestige enhancement for him and his profession (despite his literally keeping his hands clean, for the "dirty work" was usually carried out by his assistants), and an opportunity for carnivalesque entertainment for the "lay" audience.

[17] Some of his illustrations were taken from non-anatomical books to cut costs: Estienne replaced the middle of the woodblock with an insert that depicted the body's interior, which may explain in part the inappropriately elegant settings.

muted by the very representational medium. Even more compellingly judicial, though by totally disempowering the eyes of the anatomical model through the sheer positioning of his head, appears *plate 242,* which presents a cross-section of the brain (*Fig. 10*): the elderly anatomist and his young pupil observe from atop a fanciful parapet (viz. again *from a distance* and *above*) the dissected brain of a man with his upper torso bent over the dissection table as if in the stocks, fainted, sleepy or dead. His right hand holds the caption-frame-*cum*-death-sentence-tablet, which uncannily recalls his likely station in life: a convicted criminal. The voyeuristic mise-en-scène of both plates implicates that the anatomist's gaze is there also to shade light on the "curiosity" of both female generativity and male-qua-human criminality, as other plates' poses endorse only too easily with either intimations of sexual promiscuity in the Venus/courtesan posture of the female model, presumably a prostitute (plates 267, 271, 279, 281, 285), or judicial settings for the male model, which strike a penological note (plates 236, 237, 239, 241).

Fig. ***Estienne, plate 275***

Fig. Estienne, plate 242

Fig. ***Vesalius, detail of the frontispiece***

Fig. Casserio, 1656 frontispiece

The Vesalian rhetoric of anatomical discipline-*cum*-mastery underlies Giulio Casserio's (*c*. 1552-1616) posthumous German edition, *Anatomische Tafeln (*1656*): memento mori* elements (the skeleton), medical self-assurance (the five anatomists seated around the dissecting table as if for an academic debate yet posing for the viewer) and the penchant for discovery (the America-centred globe), co-occur on the frontispiece *(Fig. 12*) to make academically palatable the rhetoric of mastery. Such rhetoric suppresses its lethal[18] effects on those held legally impotent, e.g. women (the cadaver with veiled face in a Venus posture), the poor, the "savage" of America or Africa. The *New World* in the guise of a veiled *young woman* laid bare for *exploratory dissection* (of the lower torso) translates a view of the *other* as essentially *body*. It moreover accounts for the unprecedented status anatomy gained in early modernity: a powerful metaphor for research and discovery in general, anatomy's proclivity for "uncovering the hidden, inner truths" unwittingly epitomized the "violent and extreme" underside of modern *curiosity* (Egmond and Zwijnenberg 5).[19]

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[18]The *globe* atop of the shelves displaying *dissection* instruments is echoed by the tilted round head of the *écorché* and the skull of the *skeleton*.

[19]Anatomists of the late 1600s also expressed the power of their exploratory discipline in a new anatomical art-form: the specimen. They began to collect bodies and body parts; these wet or dry "natural" (sometimes also "artificial") preparations were coloured, costumed and arranged in glass cases or free-standing displays which, like the "repository of curiosities" of Frederik Ruysch (1638-1731), the first great exponent of the anatomical specimen, attracted visitors from all over Europe. As Amsterdam's chief instructor of midwives and legal doctor to the court, Ruysch had access to the bodies of stillborns and dead infants: he used them to create multi-specimen scenes, thus "claim[ing] an extraordinary privilege: the right to collect and exhibit human material without the consent of the anatomized" (*Dream Anatomy*). In doing so, he moreover obviated the mother and played the surrogate father/creator.

Between 1680 and 1800 anatomists (like cartographers) began "purging" imaginative elements from scientific illustration, which resulted in two styles of anatomical realism. One aimed to show the reality of dissection, the cutting open of a particular body with all the implements and setting of dissection. Govard Bidloo's (1649-1713) *Anatomia humani corporis* (Amsterdam, 1685) is a case in point: it may well have been, according to Elkins (137), an offshoot of Dutch realism in painting, especially considering the illustrator he commissioned;[20]

however, in producing images that highlighted the ugliness of anatomical mutilation, the "anatomist claimed the power to appropriate, and cut into, dead human beings" with a "masterful clinical detachment, a privileged indifference to the horrors of the anatomy room" (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/dreamanatomy>). The other style aimed at the sublime, displaying cleaned-up, idealized bodies and body-parts ostensibly unrelated to dissection, e.g. Jacques Fabien Gautier D'Agoty's (1717-1785) *Anatomie des parties de la génération de l'homme et de la femme* (Paris, 1773), with its coloured mezzotints and French portraiture pose of the écorchés.

How does the early modern culture of dissection relate to its contemporary cartographic monsterization-*cum*-feminization of the other and of nature? The re-conceptualization of the earth as no longer *Mutter Erde* in Christian guise but a mere globe to be subjected by the *mostly male* Heads of State or a planet always already visible to the *always male* scientific gaze is paralleled by trends in dissection "portraiture." Furthermore, like the peoples of America or Africa, the subject of dissection was often the *abject* social subject (convicts, prostitutes, the poor): for centuries after Vesalius' time the only legal source of bodies was the gallows, hence only grave-robbery could fully meet the anatomists' needs. In an age when dissection was generally considered a wonder and attended with curiosity, it nevertheless carried a social stigma that touched especially the deceased:[21] erasing his/her identity as a Christian merged with the abjection attached to the person.

[20] The Dutch painter Gérard de Lairesse (1640-1711), whose anatomical illustrations show affinities to their contemporary *trompe l'oeil* and still-lifes, was the mentor of artist Jan de Wandelaer (1690-1759), the illustrator of Bernhard Siegfried Albinus' (1697-1770) *Tabulae Sceleti e Musculorum Corporis Humani*, London, 1749.

[21] Cf. the pose of some of the écorchés in Casserio's *Tabulae anatomicae, 1627*.

In Giulio Casserio's *De formato foetu liber singularis* (Frankfurt, 1631), table 4 (by Titian's student Odoardo Fialetti, *Fig. 13*) translates an overtly floral/idyllic view of female generativity: posing, head tilted and eyes averted modestly, the young woman *covers* her sex with a flower and holds a flower or fruit in her left hand, while *displaying* her foetus amidst tissue layers spreading out like petals in a literalization of the "fruit-of-her-womb" metaphor. Her open right palm invites examination of the mystery of life – or death, for, aestheticization apart, this represents the *dissection of a cadaver*.

Fig. Casserio, table 4

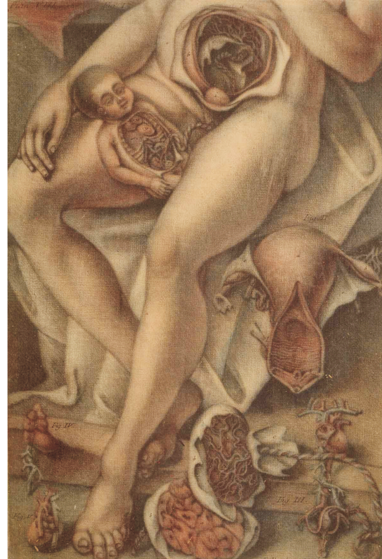

Fig. D'Agoty, mother and foetus

More obviously partaking of the culture of dissection, a coloured mezzotint in D'Agoty's *Anatomie des parties de la génération de l'homme et de la femme* (1773) spells out the rhetoric of male control and masterful fragmentation of the female body (*Fig. 14*):[23] a foetus has been ripped off from an open womb and replicates the maternal tear in its own dissected body; the umbilical cord still connects the two, as does the foetus' position on its mother's lap, grim mise-en-scène of a tender mother–child relation. At the mother's legs lie bits and pieces that were once part of organic wholes: broken skulls with half brains, bony pieces and prosthetic paraphernalia.

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[22] The plates for Casserio's *theatrum anatomicum* were printed after his death in works attributed to him and his pupil Adriaan van Spiegel.

[23] This rhetoric is all the more potent as D'Agoty was solely in charge of the painting and printing of this *Anatomy*.

Such representations of pregnant bodies comply with the scopic imperatives of (the) anatomic discipline; their monstrosity only emerges when considering the interplay between the essentialist notion of womanhood-as-compulsive-maternity and graceful or obliging postures in the context of dissection, i.e., in view of what has happened to the female “models” of often low social standing. Besides, the interest in revealing the mystery of generativity (which poses woman's as biologically deviant from man's *normative* body) is coterminous with the interest in successfully domesticating the hardly known inner processes (implicitly coded female) that defy male rational control: another *terra incognita* is now *terra inhabitatam*.

The gradually more “scientifically rigorous” view of the human body in general and the potentially pregnant female body in particular parallels the cartographic abstract representation of space as a grid of parallels and meridians: both are predicated on the *disciplinary* (in Foucauldian terms) zeal of modernity, which often successfully suppresses the workings of its rhetoric. The always male and privileged (European) vantage point of early modern maps of the New World contributed a form of distortion at once mental and cartographic; in the “process of civilization” it ghettoized and abjected the other as grossly bodily, irrational and monstrous, hence subhuman. So did the always male and privileged (“sovereign”) anatomical gaze in its avowed capacity to assert a difference between the dissected body's materiality and the disembodied, abstract gaze that translates it into knowledge.

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