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Who Is Lying About Where "Russia" Lies? Some Notes on 16th-century Polish Ghostmapping of Muscovy[1]

Abstract

This paper focuses on one particular aspect of the way in which 16th-century Polish authors ghostmapped the European East: the semantics assumed by the choronym "Russia" in Renaissance cartography which reflected the long-lasting rivalry between Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy for the possession of the territories of the former Kievan Rus'. After a brief sketch of the theoretical and historical framework, I provide an overview of European cartographical texts, from Beneventano to Waldseemüller and Mercator, influenced by the Polish ghostmappers of Muscovy – Wapowski, Miechowita, and Strubicz – who tried to narrow the toponym "Russia" to the lands controlled by Poland and Lithuania.

Keywords

Renaissance cartography, ghostmapping, Muscovy, Maciej Miechowita, Bernard Wapowski

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One of the most famous maps in the history of cartography, and the earliest to use the term "America" referring to the New World, is *Universalis Cosmographia* (Waldseemüller 1507), where the representation of Eastern Europe owes everything to the one depicted by Ptolemy. As Katharina Piechocki aptly puts it, this map "features the portraits of both Vespucci and Ptolemy, juxtaposed as geographic authorities contemplating the shifting boundaries of the 'mundus novus' in the first case, and the immobilized borders of the *oikoumene* on the other" (Piechocki 2015: 85-86). The existence of these very borders, namely the imaginary-mythological Riphean and Hyperborean Mountains, was questioned by the Polish geographer Maciej Miechowita (ca. 1457-1523) in his seminal *Treatise on the two Sarmatias, Asian and European* (Miechowita 1517). At about the same time Bernard Wapowski (ca. 1475-1535), another Polish historian and cartographer, drafted the first post-Ptolemaic maps of Eastern Europe (Beneventano-Wapowski 1507, Wapowski 1526). The developments of geographical concepts put forward by Miechowita and Wapowski quickly became fundamental points of reference and sources of new knowledge for contemporary European cosmographers, historians, and cartographers. These two authors can certainly be considered as Muscovy's first influential ghostmappers (a term which I shall further explain the concept it denotes in the present paper). Sebastian Münster and Sigismund von Herberstein incorporated their innovations in *Cosmography* (1544) and the repeatedly reissued *Notes on Muscovite Affairs* (1549) respectively, and in doing so, they contributed to transmission and diffusion of new learning and understanding; these works were meant to establish a fundamental topical-descriptive and axiological canon of 16th and 17th-century European "Muscography".

In this brief overview, I shall focus on a specific aspect relating to the way 16th-century Polish authors described and ghostmapped the European East: the semantics and spatial meanings assumed by the toponym "Russia" in Renaissance cartography which vary according to who establishes what "Russia" is, where it is exactly located, and who rules it. Although limited in scope, this paper intends to elucidate the geopolitical perspective which provides the framework necessary to contextualise and understand maps as cultural products: cartographical images are powerful objects that construct the worldview, and the way they organise information illustrates a specific understanding and purpose which should be viewed as resulting from the complex interaction of cultural-political practices and ideological discourse. For the purpose of the present discussion, I shall focus on cartographical, geo-historiographical, and literary works and look at texts that were created in relation to the conflict between the Polish-Lithuanian State and Muscovy.

Let me first clarify the term "ghostmapping", by which here I mean the cartographical image-shaping of a specific territory which reflects an hidden, selective ideological bias and embodies the interests of a particular imagined

community – national or, *sensu lato,* political[2]. A ghostmapper is thus a cartographer or geographer who is most often the unnamed author, like a ghostwriter, of the primary material which will represent the main source upon which subsequent cartographers will draw for their own works, thereby reproducing not only the physical representation of a territory but also rhetorical features which exemplify the persuasive dynamics of a discourse of power: political borders, explanatory legends, the linguistic forms of toponyms, and their distribution on the map surface. A caveat is necessary here: I am not concerned with matters that commonly constitute object of investigation in the history of cartography, such as the deformations in the reproduction of geographical spaces or the "inaccuracies" and epistemological silences as a consequence of the state of knowledge of the time. I consider a map as a cultural text and, to use Wood's definition, as "a system of propositions, where a proposition is nothing more than a statement that affirms (or denies) the existence of something" (Wood 2010: 34). What is more is that, in the illusory quest for scientific objectivity and transparency, each cartographical text is telling a story which is essentially a rhetorical discourse of power and which, according to Foucault's understanding of *pouvoir-savoir* (power-knowledge), provides a description of the world "in terms of relations of power and of cultural practices, preferences and priorities" (Harley 2001: 35-36)[3]. The relevance of the toponyms on maps understood as onomaturgic acts has been strongly emphasised by Jacob: "To the acts of delimitation and the division of space are necessarily added naming, with its etiological, mythic, and ritual implications, and its political and juridical consequences […]. The toponym is thus a signature, a claim of precedence and of symbolic ownership. […] Names are tools of power and reflect a strategy of conquest, either colonial or intellectual and linguistic" (Jacob 2006: 203-207). The act of drawing a map or narrating and naming a territory is, in effect, a political act of appropriation: *cuius carta, eius terra*.

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[2] I have not come across the term "ghostmapping" in other historical analyses or studies dedicated to critical cartography. Here I use this term in the same very way, and with reference to the Polish ghostmapping of Muscovy in the 16th century, I did in in the aforementioned talk I presented at the 2016 ASEEES Annual Convention in Washington DC. Jakub Niedźwiedź has then employed the term with the same meaning in his works (2019a: 154 and 2019b: 132, subsection entitled *Polish* ghostmapping *of the North*). Interestingly, the term "ghostmapping" is an entry in Urban Dictionary, which provides the following definition: "Ghost-mapping means using GPS Cloak to keep your mobile phone's true location private without having to drop off your social network's shared map" (https://www.urbandictionary.com/define. php?term=Ghost-mapping [accessed: 23.06.2021]). According to my interpretation of the term, a "ghostmapper" is the invisible entity that presents and manipulates cartographic data while hiding behind a seemingly scientific and objective "shared map". As J.B. Harley has aptly stated, "Much of the power of the map, as a representation of social geography, is that it operates behind a mask of a seemingly neutral science. It hides and denies its social dimensions at the same time as it legitimates" (Harley 2001: 158).

[3] Cf. also: "Compilation, generalization, classification, formation into hierarchies, and standardization of geographic data, far from being mere neutral technical activities, involve power-knowledge relations at work" (Harley 2001: 112); The map is "a social tool, a tool of power that helps to impose a vision of the world upon a society at a given time and in a given place, embedding values, ideology, and subliminal meanings into what seems to be an objective statement on the real world" (Jacob 2006: XV).

At the beginning of the 16th century the Jagiellonians, who ruled over Poland-Lithuania, Bohemia, and Hungary, faced the challenge posed by a powerful coalition between Emperor Maximilian I and the Muscovite ruler Vasilij III Ivanovič. In the autumn of 1512, the Muscovite army invaded the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and gained a series of victories: on 31 July 1514, they captured the strategically positioned key fortress-city of Smolensk which, after several months of siege, eventually surrendered. On 8 September 1514, at the Battle of Orsha the Lithuanian-Polish army triumphed over the Muscovite forces. Such a local border conflict was the manifestation of a long-lasting and hegemonic rivalry between Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy for the possession of the territories of the former Kievan Rus'. During more than hundred years of conquests and annexations, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, by taking advantage of the worsening condition of Kievan Rus' after the Mongolian invasion in the mid-13th century, expanded extensively to become a large state including the territories between the Baltic and the Black Sea. Most of the inhabitants of this state, since 1385 confederated with the Kingdom of Poland, were Orthodox Ruthenians; the Lithuanian dukes considered themselves to be the lawful heirs to the rulers of Kievan Rus'.

A new player, however, entered the above elucidated political scene. Toward the mid-15th century, the dukes of Muscovy, after they had freed their country from Tatar domination, began their efforts to unite and restore under their rule the entire legacy of Kievan Rus' in order to "gather the 'Russian' lands", claiming themselves as the universal and legitimate successors of the Roman emperors and Moscow as the centre of Orthodox Christianity following the fall of Constantinople. The title of Tsar of All the Russias, used by the rulers of Muscovy beginning with Ivan the Terrible (1547), was not recognised by the Polish-Lithuanian political leaders, according to whom a tsar was only the grand duke of Muscovy[4].

It was after the Battle of Orsha that the Muscovite state became an object of intense and thorough mapping, for the first time and in the broadest meaning of the word, by Polish authors. As Alexandrowicz pertinently remarks, "Western European interest in mapping vast areas of Muscovite Rus' had to be based on the Lithuanian and Polish intermediation to gather geographical data, and even to develop new maps from scratch" (Alexandrowicz 2012: 49)[5]. This work of ghostmapping had a twofold aim: 1) to establish the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's place on the geographical and historical-cultural map of Europe, and 2) to push Muscovy eastward, beyond its boundaries, towards Asia. During the time coinciding with the intellectual activity carried out by Miechowita and Wapowski, a Polish-Lithuanian narrative about Muscovy as a half-Asian "rogue state", a country of natural-born slaves ruled by bloodthirsty despots, began to shape and influence the Western-European image of the Muscovite state. There was much more at stake than a simple, denigratory account: the hegemony over "Russia".

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[4] Among the many studies on this subject, see Pelensky 1977 and Grala 2017 (who provides an updated bibliography on the current state of studies).

[5] Unlike otherwise stated, translations from Polish and Latin are mine own (GF).

In order to understand this crucial point, a question to be asked is: what was "Russia" in the European cartographical imagery of the time? At the beginning of the early modern era, in mid-15th century the representations of north-eastern Europe were still based on the geographic notions found in the medieval *mappaemundi*. But after 1409 a significant shift occurred: the depictions of north-eastern Europe started drawing upon Ptolemy's *Geography*, translated into Latin by Jacopo d'Angelo, and additional information and details mainly deriving from portolan charts and recent travel accounts[6]. The famous *Mappamondo* produced by Fra Mauro (1459), a Camaldulian monk in Venice, is a seminal document. Notably, this south-oriented map provides the very first cartographical representation of the three "Russias", that is to say the White, the Black, and the Red (fig. 1)[7].

Fig. 1. Fra Mauro 1450, a fragment depicting the three "Russias".

Whereas the "Lithuanian Red Russia" (*Rossia Rossa Lituana*) is situated on the right bank of the Dnieper river and is a part of "Sarmatia or Russia in Europe" (*Sarmatia, over Rossia in Europa*), and the Black Russia (*Rossia Negra*) occupies the right bank of the Oka river, it is the location of White Russia (*Rossia Biancha*) to be most interesting for the sake of my argument. The latter is situated between the course of the Volga and the White Lake (Beloe Ozero), covering the large territories of the Novgorod Republic, at the time still independent from Muscovy. It is noteworthy that Fra Mauro uses the choronyms "Russia" and "Sarmatia" interchangeably; the corresponding legend specifies: "That vast province called Russia or Sarmatia borders on the east with the White Sea [Lake Beloye], on the west with the German Sea

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[6] The early Renaissance rediscovery of Ptolemy is extensively discussed in Dalché 2007.

[7] On Fra Mauro's *Mappamondo,* see Falchetta 2006, 2016; the representation of Rus' and Muscovy on this work is investigated in Bagrow 1975: 30-33, Łatyszonek 2006: 61-62, and Alexandrowicz 2012: 27-28.

[Baltic], on the south with Saray and with Cumania [Tatar khanates], and on the north with Perm"[8]. The semantic history of the "tricolour" toponymy of "Russia" has been a subject to which some scholars, particularly Russian and Belarusian historians, have paid special attention. Whereas on the one hand the identification of "Red Russia" (*Russia Rubra*) with the historical Kingdom of Galician-Volhynian Rus', which was in 1387 finally annexed to the Polish Crown, has been straightforward, on the other hand the identification of White Russia has proven to be challenging to resolve and an object of dispute as to whether the historical *Russia Alba* corresponds to present-day Belarus or an area of Muscovy, if not altogether[9]. I shall avoid going the details of this ongoing controversy concerning the origin of this threefold toponymy[10] and limit myself to recall Łatyszonek's observation:

> The name "White Russia" was used in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in reference to the north-eastern provinces of Russia with local capitals in Pskov, Novgorod and Polotsk. [...] The attribution of the name *Russia Alba* to Muscovy (which became common in the European tradition) really did take place during the reign of Ivan III. Such transfer of name was noticed only by foreigners [...] and must have been the consequence of an event which took place in the years 1471-1478, the incorporation into the Grand Duchy of Moscow of the Republic of Novgorod, the only part of today's Russia which had until that time close trade and cultural ties with the west and the north of the European continent. This is why "White Russia", previously well known to the Europeans, became synonymous with little known Muscovy (Łatyszonek 2004: 16, 19).

At the beginning of the 16th century, Polish authors tended to identify "White Russia" with Muscovy[11]. In *Introduction to Ptolemy's Cosmography,* Jan of Stobnica claims that the third part of "Russia", besides those belonging to the Polish-Lithuanian state, is

> *Alba Russia*, which extends on the north widely as far as Livonia, and on the east as far as the Tanais river, [...] on whose shores live Muscovites who, [despite] having a common language and religion

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[8] "Questa grandissima proui(n)cia dita rossia oue(r) | sarmatia confina da leuante cu(m) el mar biancho | da ponente cu(m) el mar d'alemagna. da ostro cu(m) | saray e cu(m) la chumania. e da tra|montana cu(m) p(er)mia" (transcr. in Falchetta 2016: 238).

[9] A most comprehensive review of studies and theories on this subject is by Soloviev 1956; monographs which contain an exhaustive treatment of the topic are by Bely 2000 and Łatyszonek 2004, 2006.

[10] One of the more interesting hypotheses concerns the Tatar: the three colours associated with the toponymy of Rus' corresponds to the geographical definitions of the parts of the world in the Turkic languages, according to which white indicates the Western world, red the Southern world, and black the Northern world (see Łatyszonek 2006: 18-19).

[11] Variations in the denotation of the expression "White Russia" among Polish authors of the 14th-17th centuries are discussed by Łatyszonek 2006: 71-100.

with other Ruthenians, [...] differ from them both in their name and political status. For while all other Ruthenians obey to the Polish king, the Muscovites have their own prince[12].

Similarly, the grand chancellor of the Polish Crown Jan Łaski argued that "the White Ruthenians, formerly known as Colchians, and today called Muscovites, have their own sovereign [...] who bears the title of Grand Duke and is a Polish king's neighbour, bordering with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania", whereas the Red Ruthenians "are faithful king's subjects, and their lands lie within the borders of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania"[13].

16th-century European cartography inherited this twofold, as it excluded "Black Russia", semantic peculiarity associated with "Russia" from Polish cartographers, and more precisely from one in particular. Wapowski, who was a friend of Miechowita and Copernicus' former University fellow student, obtained his doctorate in Bologna and spent ten years in Rome at the court of the Popes Julius II and Leo X[14]. Together with the Italian philosopher and geographer Marco Beneventano, Wapowski prepared the *Modern map of Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Germany, Russia and Lithuania,* which was included in the Roman edition of Ptolemy (Beneventano–Wapowski 1507)[15]. Wapowski placed his personal imprint on the map, as he marked, just like Wikimapia users would do today, his modest rural estates in Radochońce and Wapowce (fig. 2a); these toponyms also appear on later maps based on Beneventano-Wapowski, including the *Modern map of Sarmatia* (Waldseemüller 1513, fig. 3a). Most importantly, in Beneventano-Wapowski "White Russia", located on the right bank of the Dnieper river, is identified with Muscovy (*Russia Alba sive Moskovia* – see fig. 2b); the Duchy of Muscovy (*Ducatus Mosckovie*) is in the north of Moscow and, in the south, the Polish Red Rus' (*Russia*) is marked. These three names appear also in the *Modern map of Sarmatia* by Waldseemüller (fig. 3b)[16], in his well-known *Marine Navigation Chart* (Waldseemüller 1516, inscriptions: *Russia et Novogardie Ducatus*; *Rubea Russia*; *Hic dominator Magnus princeps et imperator Russie et Moscovie, Podolie ac Plescovie rex*), and in charts by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore (1530, fig. 4) and Antonio Salamanca (1548, fig. 5).

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[12] "Alba Russia vocatur, extenditur late in septemtrionem usque ad Livones et in orientem usque ad Tanaim fluvium, [...] iuxta cuius ripas habitant M<o>skovitae, qui licet Rutenis caeteris lingua et secta simile omnino sint [...], tamen ut nomine ita imperio ab aliis separati sunt, cum enim omnes alii Ruteni imperio regis Poloniae pareant, Moskovitae proprium ducem habent" (Stobniczka 1512: 20 r.).

[13] "Rutheni Albi quondam Colchitae dicti, modo vero Moscovitae, habent proprium dominum [...], qui titulatur Magnus Dux, vicinus in terra regi Poloniae in Magno Ducatu Lithuaniae [...]. Rutheni Rubei [...] sunt subditi fideles Regis, in corporeque Regni Poloniae et Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae" (Łaski 1841: 123-124).

[14] For biographical details on Wapowski, see Bzinkowska 1994: 35-66.

[15] This map, besides the classic work carried out by Birkenmajer (1901), has been studied, among others, by Bagrow 1975: 44, Buczek 1982: 30-31, Bzinkowska 1994: 69-76, Rutkowski 2006, Alexandrowicz 2012: 31-33 and Alexandrowicz *et al*. 2017: 56-58.

[16] See Bagrow 1975: 44-48 and Alexandrowicz *et al*. 2017: 56-58.

Fig. 2 a–b. fragments of the 1507 Beneventano–Wapowski map.

Fig. 3 a–b. fragments of the 1513 Waldseemüller's map of Sarmatia.

Fig. 4. fragment of the 1530 Vavassore's map.

Fig. 5. fragment of the 1548 Salamanca's map.

It is noteworthy that all these maps, those published after Miechowita's *Treatise* as well, still include the Riphean Mountains, which the latter maintained were non-existent. Miechowita, relying on the information he obtained from Muscovite war prisoners who had been captivated after the Battle of Orsha, argued for the fictitious character of the mountain barriers in north-eastern Europe and the plain origin of the rivers Dnieper, Don, and Volga:

> We know for certain and have seen that the three mentioned rivers […] originate in and flow from Muscovy. […] Thus, the Hyperborean, Riphean, and Alan mountains do not exist, and the above-mentioned rivers originate and have their sources on flat ground (transl. in Piechocki 2019: 83).

Miechowita's *Treatise on the two Sarmatias, Asian and European* is, as Piechocki puts it, a "prose cartography devoid of physical maps", which soon "became a template for mapmakers, historians, and travel writers" (Piechocki 2019: 69-70)[17]. Miechowita was resolved to defend the thesis put forward by his predecessor, the 15th-century historian Jan Długosz, according to whom Poles and Lithuanians, that is to say Sarmatians, were the descendants of Javan, one

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[17] Several studies have been published on Miechowita's *Tractatus,* such as Buczek 1960, Ulewicz 2006²: 63-75, Piechocki 2015, 2019.

of Noah's grandsons. This is why, in his *Treatise*, Miechowita focused particularly on demonstrating the autochthonism of the inhabitants of Sarmatia and making a distinction between Asian Sarmatia, which he identified with Scythia, and European Sarmatia[18]. Ptolemy's demarcation line, the river Don (the ancient Tanais), remains as such. In his text, however, Miechowita drew a distinctly conjectural political-cultural map entirely based on his own hopeful vision[19]: the map presents the lands of *Russia* that belonged to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as if they outstretched the 60th meridian east of Ptolemy's prime meridian, which runs through the Canary Islands (*Insulae Fortunatae*). A thus determined 60th meridian passes, strongly in contrast to the geopolitical scenario in which Miechowita lived, through the river Don and extends as far as to the Sea of Azov (cf. Buczek 1960: 115-116), meaning that the Polish-Lithuanian oecumene would reach the eastern boundary of European Sarmatia. An important political implication of Miechowita's geographical choice is the fact that now both Sarmatias include the historical *Russia*, the territory of the former Kievan Rus', whose legitimate successor was, for the Lithuanians and Poles, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Miechowita used the choronym *Russia* solely to denote the Red Rus' (*Russia Rubra*, with Leopolis-Lviv as capital) and the Ruthenian lands within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, among which he also counts Velikiy Novgorod, Smolensk, and Pskov with their territories – a strategy which, as already mentioned above, was extremely significant from a Polish-Lithuanian perspective[20]. According to the Polish geographer, "Russia" coincides with ancient Roxolania: "Its eastern border stretches to the Tanais river and the Maeotian Swamp [Sea of Azov] that separate Asia from Europe. [...] On the south Russia is bounded by the Sarmatian Mountains [Carpathians] and by the river Tyras, which the inhabitants call Dniester, on the east by the Tanais [...], on the north by Lithuania, and on the west by Poland"[21]. A separate chapter of the *Treatise* is devoted to Muscovy (*Moskovia*), "a very long and wide land in which the Ruthenian or Slavonic language is spoken everywhere"[22]. Muscovy was naturally outside the Sarmatian-European oecumene, which was under the Jagiellonians' dominion.

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[18] Cf.: "The Ancients distinguished between two Sarmatias, one in Europe, the other in Asia, which bordered on and were contiguous to one another. In European [Sarmatia] are the regions of the Russians or Ruthenians, Lithuanians, and Muscovites and those adjacent to them. They are enclosed in the west by the Vistula river and in the east by the Tanais". (transl. in Piechocki 2019: 89)

[19] As Piechocki aptly puts it, "Miechowita mobilized a Ptolemaic nomenclature – European and Asian Sarmatia – to launch a reflection upon possibilities to distinguish the borderlands spanning two continents from one another" (Piechocki 2019: 72). Ulewicz 2006² remains the most complete historical analysis of the question of sarmatism and Sarmatia in early modern Polish culture.

[20] See Miechowita 1517: f2 v.– g1 r. (*De amplitudine et contentis Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae*).

[21] "Russia olim Roxolania dicta. Latus eius orientale adiacet flumini Tanai et paludibus Maeotidis secernentibus Asiam ab Europa. [...] Clauditur autem Russia a meridie Sarmaticis Montibus et flumine Tyras, quem incolae Nyestr appellant, ab oriente finitur Tanai [...], a septentrione Lithuania, ab occasu vero Polonia" (Miechowita 1517: e2 r. – e2 v.).

[22] "Moskovia est regio longissima latissimaque, [...] et sermo per totum est Rutenicus seu Slavonicus" (Miechowita 1517: g1 r.).

In the dedicatory letter, Miechowita elucidates the breadth of the political goal pursued by his work:

> Just as the Southern Hemisphere with peoples adjacent to the ocean as far as India was discovered by the Portuguese king, so the Northern Hemisphere with its peoples [living] closely to the northern ocean and oriented toward the east, discovered through the army and warfare of the Polish king, should be opened up and become known to the world (transl. in Piechocki 2019: 97).

It seems that the geographer planned to design a new, exploratory, and – *per analogiam* – colonial division of the oecumene, like the one established in 1494 by the rulers of the Kingdoms of Spain and Portugal[23]. Miechowita conceptualised European Sarmatia and the adjacent "Scythia" under the dominion of the Jagiellonians.

The transformative effect and influential role played by the *Treatise* in shaping the imagery of Eastern Europe was enormous. In the field of cartography, Miechowita's original conclusions induced Wapowski to create ground-breaking maps of the two Sarmatias. He had already worked on earlier manuscript versions of his maps in Rome; in 1526 and 1528, these were engraved and printed by Florian Ungler in Cracow[24]. Unfortunately, none of the three maps by Wapowski representing North Sarmatia, South Sarmatia, and Poland has survived to the present day: most of their copies were destroyed, being burned down in 1528 along with the Ungler publishing house; some fragments of the maps of South Sarmatia and Poland were discovered in 1932 but also consumed by fire, after the fall of the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. The choronyms of Muscovy and the Ruthenian lands, which must have certainly been indicated on the lost map of North Sarmatia, can be inferred from its cartographical offspring, such as the *Carta Marina* by Olaus Magnus (1539) and the *New map of Poland and Hungary* by Sebastian Münster (1540). On the former's map, the choronym *Russia Alba* appears between the Ilmen and Peipus lakes and, further north, a portion of Muscovy (*Moscovie pars*) was marked by Magnus, who situated the "Royal Black Russia" (*Russia Regalis Nigra*) east of Livonia. Münster conceives *Moscovia* as beginning on the right bank of the river Desna, whereas its left bank is bounded by *Russia Alba*, and *Russia* is identified with Polish Red Rus'.

Today, we know only the eastern half of Wapowski's *South Sarmatia* map, thanks to a reproduction made before the Second World War (Wapowski 1526, fig. 6a). *Moscovia*, like on Münster's map, extends on the left bank of the upper Dnieper, north of the river Desna, close to the border fortress of Starodub.

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[23] As Piechocki remarks, "At the same time when the Spanish emperor Charles V invented his device 'Plus Ultra' (1516) with the aim of promoting Spanish expansion beyond the Pillars of Hercules, Miechowita […] establishes a symmetry between western and eastern attempts at colonizing new lands by comparing Sigismund I to the Portuguese king Manuel I" (Piechocki 2019: 96).

[24] On Wapowski's maps, see, for instance, Chowaniec 1955, Bagrow 1975: 72-74, Buczek 1982: 32-40, Bzinkowska 1994: 67-91, Török 2007: 1816-1820, Alexandrowicz 2012: 35-69, and Alexandrowicz *et al.* 2017: 63-72.

Wapowski provides three historical legends which are *loci memoriae* ("memory places"), commonly found in early modern maps[25], and here concern battles which took place in defence of the Polish-Lithuanian *antemurale,* that is, the bulwark of Christian Europe. In chronological order, the three *loci memoriae* indicate: the battles fought by Boleslaus I the Brave and Boleslaus II the Bold and the later battles on the Lower Dnieper fought by the Grand Duke of Lithuania Vytautas with Tatars-Scythians (fig. 6b); the death of Ladislas III, King of Poland and Hungary, in the 1444 Battle of Varna, which ended the last European crusade (fig. 6c); and, finally, the Battle of Orsha, about which the inscription says: "Here, in 1514, King Sigismund of Poland defeated 80.000 Muscovites in a great battle" (fig. 6d).

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[25] Several scholars have emphasised their important function; Jacob, for instance, states that: "The map is an archiving device, or, more precisely, a mnemotechnical mechanism that allows the stages of sacred or profane history to be charted […]. Legends attest to the mnemotechnical vocation of maps, to their capacity to generate 'memory-places', encoding entire segments of collective knowledge" (Jacob 2006: 178, 362). On memory places in Polish Renaissance cartography, see Łopatecki 2018: 14-16.
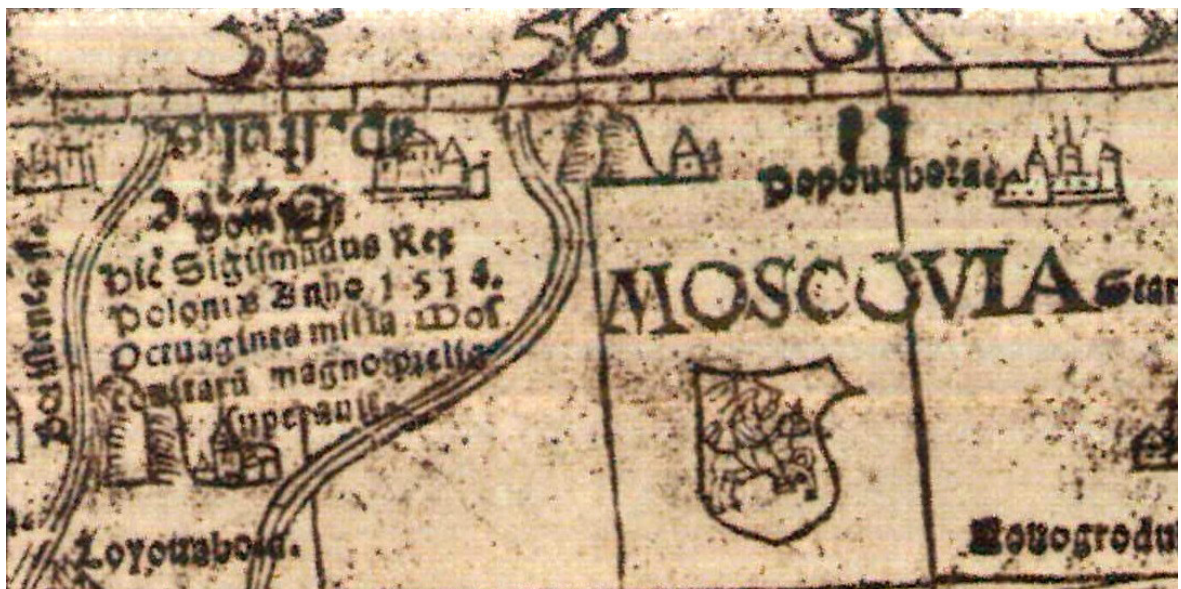
Fig. 6 a–d. the surviving reproduction of the lost 1526 Wapowski's map of South Sarmatia.

Following the Battle of Orsha, Wapowski joined the anti-Muscovite propaganda that aimed at persuading the Roman curia of the Polish-Lithuanian well-founded stance in the conflict with Muscovy. Under the request of the primate of Poland and the royal chancery, in 1515 he edited a Latin volume of panegyrics in Rome entitled *Poems on the memorable defeat, in the battle at Alexander's Altars, of the schismatic Muscovites at the hands of* [...] *Sigismund, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Lord and Heir of Russia, Prussia and European Sarmatia*, defined by Piechocki (2019: 93) "a cartographically inflected celebration of Sigismund I". Wapowski (2019) inserted into the volume his *Panegyris*, comprising 228 verses. This text is a perfect addendum to both his own maps of Sarmatia and Miechowita's *Treatise*. After expressing his gratitude and appreciation to King Sigismund for the victory over the "Muscovite tyrant", who unreasonably and reprehensibly intended to conquer the whole European continent from the Vistula river to Rome and Spain, Wapowski threatens the defeated enemy:

> The king will soon tear off the Don and the altars of the great Cesar out of your hands, he will conquer the Hyperborean Mountains and take back possession of the ancient homeland, the first seat of his ancestors, and the Hyperborean countries will welcome the language spoken by the Poles. Neither the Volga river, nor the Caspian Sea, nor anything which you [now] possess in the coast of the northern Ocean will remain in your hands; neither the cool waters of the Sea of Azov nor the Sarmatian Sea coast nor any other place will be left to you! (orig. text in Głombiowska 2019: 89)

It is no relevant whether, prior to the publication of Miechowita's *Treatise*, Wapowski had been aware that the Hyperborean Mountains did not exist; what I should like here to emphasise is that in his panegyric he drew an old-fashioned map of the conquest of Muscovy: a Ptolemaic map that illustrates the victories of the Polish king Sigismund, the new Caesar, attributing them prestige akin to the military victories of the Roman army over the barbarian Scythians. Having in this way addressed his sovereign lord, the king, he drew another map depicting the future "end of history" of European Sarmatia, which will extend on a North-South axis and gather the riches of the East and the West, that is, the New World:

> Then your kingdoms will terminate in the safe boundaries between the Baltic Sea and the Cimmerian Bosphorus; the trade routes of the entire world will open before you and bring you abundant riches across lands and seas. One of your fleets will sail on the Black Sea, another along the coasts of the Sarmatian Sea; another, a great one, will cover the western routes, the other one will sail east towards Assyria. [...] You will not envy those whose fleet alarm the Indians, or those who traverse the Arabian Sea on ships arriving from the West: Sigismund will become the most powerful king in the world, unlike anyone who has so far walked the earth. And then nations will gain eternal peace, and Sarmatia will gather countless wealth (orig. text in Głombiowska 2019: 92-93)

The Battle of Orsha was marked for a long time on the maps drawn by European cartographers, and that was due to the major achievements of Lithuanian cartography: Anton Wied's wall map of Muscovy (Wied 1555), and the so-called *Radziwiłł Map* of Lithuania engraved in 1613 by Gerritsz (Makowski-Strubicz 1613). Wied's map is the first and the only example in the 16th century of a multilingual cartographical discourse including toponyms written in a Cyrillic alphabet and a legend in Old-Belarusian language[26]. It could be argued that Wied's map is a sort of manifesto of the Lithuanian-Ruthenian cultural identity translated into a universal cartographical code accessible to learned Europeans, a declaration taking a clear stance in the negotiations for an hegemonic position over Ruthenian lands[27]. The map has no title, and the only choronym absent in the proper cartographical representation is *Moscovia* (fig. 7a; I have underlined the borders of Muscovy, which on the map are engraved with a line of dots). The author addresses twice the readers, once in Latin and once in the Ruthenian language. In the Latin *Candido lectori*, Wied includes a short geographical-historical treatise about a land named "Muscovy or else White Russia" (*Moscovia quae et Alba Russia*). The geographical discourse, which begins by locating *Moscovia* within a space situated by Ptolemy between the two Sarmatias (*non contenta Europeae Sarmatiae parte, sed et magnam Asiaticae supergressa*), draws on two unnamed ghostmappers – Miechowita and Wapowski. The second apostrophe, *Do čtitel'a* ("To the reader", fig. 7b), is part of the most innovative features of Wied's map: the duality of its linguistic code. Historians of cartography define the language of this preface as "Old Russian" or "Old-Polonized Russian" (sic!)[28], yet the language has long ago been identified by a Polish scholar as a variant of Old-Belarusian: the language of the chancery of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (see Zwoliński 1968). Before instructing the reader on how to use the map, Wied approaches the Ruthenian audience, "Until now, the lands of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy have not been described in the [Ruthenian] language, hence […] I have here included some designations in Ruthenian, so that they can be understood by Ruthenians"[29]. The map comprises one hundred and thirty-six

[26] Wied's map, the main subject of the research grant under which the present article has been written, is preserved in a unique copy; it has been commented by Michow (Michow 1884: 12–20 and 1906: 49–61) for the first time. The map has been discussed by several scholars, including Bagrow 1962: 43–45 and 1975: 64–70, Licini 1988: 80–89, Alexandrowicz 2012: 53–56, and Schilder 2013: 151–156. Interestingly, Wied's map is not covered in the chapter devoted to Renaissance cartography in East-Central Europe in *History of Cartography* (Török 2007), while in the chapter on Russian cartography it is only briefly mentioned (Goldenberg 2007: 1854).

[27] I delved deeper into this issue in a talk at the 64th Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America (New Orleans, 22 March 2018), entitled *Anton Wied's Map of Muscovy: Negotiating Hegemony on Russian Lands in the Polish-Lithuanian Cartography* (a paper based on this talk is in preparation).

[28] See Bagrow 1975: 66: "old Polonized Russian", "the engraving is of high artistic value, and represents the first map to be printed in the Russian language"; Schilder 2013: 154: "The toponyms are given both in Russian and in Latin"; Goldenberg 2007: 1854: "his map of 1542, with names in both Latin and Russian".

[29] I would characterise the Russocentric translation given in Schilder 2013: 154 as peculiar: "Until now the land of the Principality of Moscow was unknown, so I have therefore added to the designations an explanation for the Russians in the Russian language".

toponyms in two alphabets, Latin and Cyrillic. The names given in Latin present heterogeneous characteristics: they are often either German-Latin or German-Polish hybrids, or also appear as erroneous and distorted forms, while the Ruthenian names are devoid of errors, written in a neat Cyrillic cursive, known as the chancery *skoropis'*. Among the historical, ethnographical, and natural curiosities described in this map, borrowed from Miechowita's *Treatise* and Wapowski's maps, there is also the Battle of Orsha (fig. 7c).
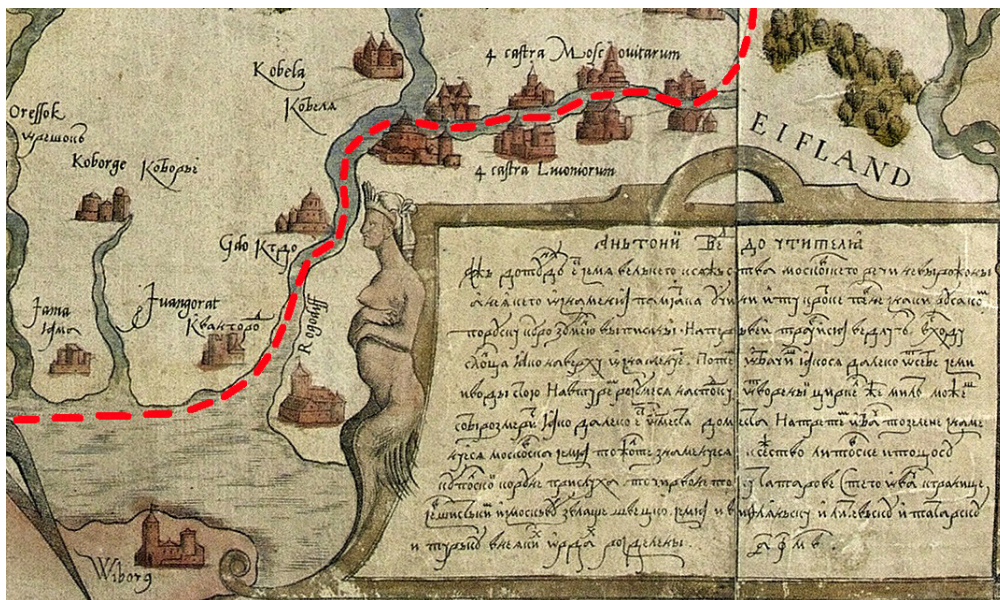
Fig. 7 a–c. overview and fragments of the 1542–1555 Wied's map of Muscovy.
Photo credits for 7 c: J. Niedźwiedź.

The *Radziwiłł Map*, reproduced throughout the 17th century in Willem Blaeu's atlases, is another illustration representative of the Polish-Lithuanian attitude to Muscovy[30]. As in *Description of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Livonia and Muscovy* by Maciej Strubicz (1589)[31], in the *Radziwiłł Map* the Muscovite Russia is also named *Moscovia*, and more precisely the "borderlands of the Grand Duke of Muscovy" (fig. 8a). Notably, here the name "Russia" is exclusively used to indicate Red Rus' with Lviv (fig. 8b), and the border between Lithuania and Muscovy is marked very clearly. The most significant feature is, to my mind, the presence of a large number of memory places positioned along the borderland, all of which refer to wars with Muscovy. There is a reference to the Battle of Orsha: "Here, under the reign of Sigismund I, in 1514 Duke Konstantin Ostrogski defeated a Muscovite army of 40.000 men" (fig. 8c), which is endowed with details about the bridge over the border, being demolished and then repaired by both parties in the conflict. The reader is then informed about the loss and recapture of Polotsk in 1579: "Polotsk was

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[30] See Buczek 1982: 58-63, Alexandrowicz 2012: 71-122, Schilder 2013: 195-218. This wall map, commissioned and sponsored by the prince Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł "Sierotka", was most likely prepared by the most eminent late 16th-century Polish cartographer, Maciej Strubicz (ca. 1530-1604), and sketched by Tomasz Makowski; it must have been ready as early as 1599, and sometime before 1607 was published for the first time. A stand-alone and the oldest surviving edition was published in 1613 with four copperplates by Willem Janszoon Blaeu's printing house in Amsterdam (Makowski-Strubicz 1613). In this study, I have relied on the second known edition, Makowski-Strubicz 1631.

[31] Strubicz's seminal map is investigated in Buczek 1982: 53-57 and Alexandrowicz 2012: 62-64.

appropriated by Muscovy in 1563 during the reign of King Sigismund August, and was [then] regained by King Stephen"; on the capture of Ula fortress, one finds: "In 1564, during the reign of King Sigismund August, Mikołaj Radziwiłł, Duke of Dubinki and Birże, defeated an army of 30.000 Muscovites led by Shuisky at the Ula fortress" (fig. 8d). The author also refers to the battles against the Muscovite raids fought between the rivers Dnieper and Daugava and the fact that "Vitebsk is the safest fortress against incursions by the Muscovites in all Lithuania" (fig. 8e).
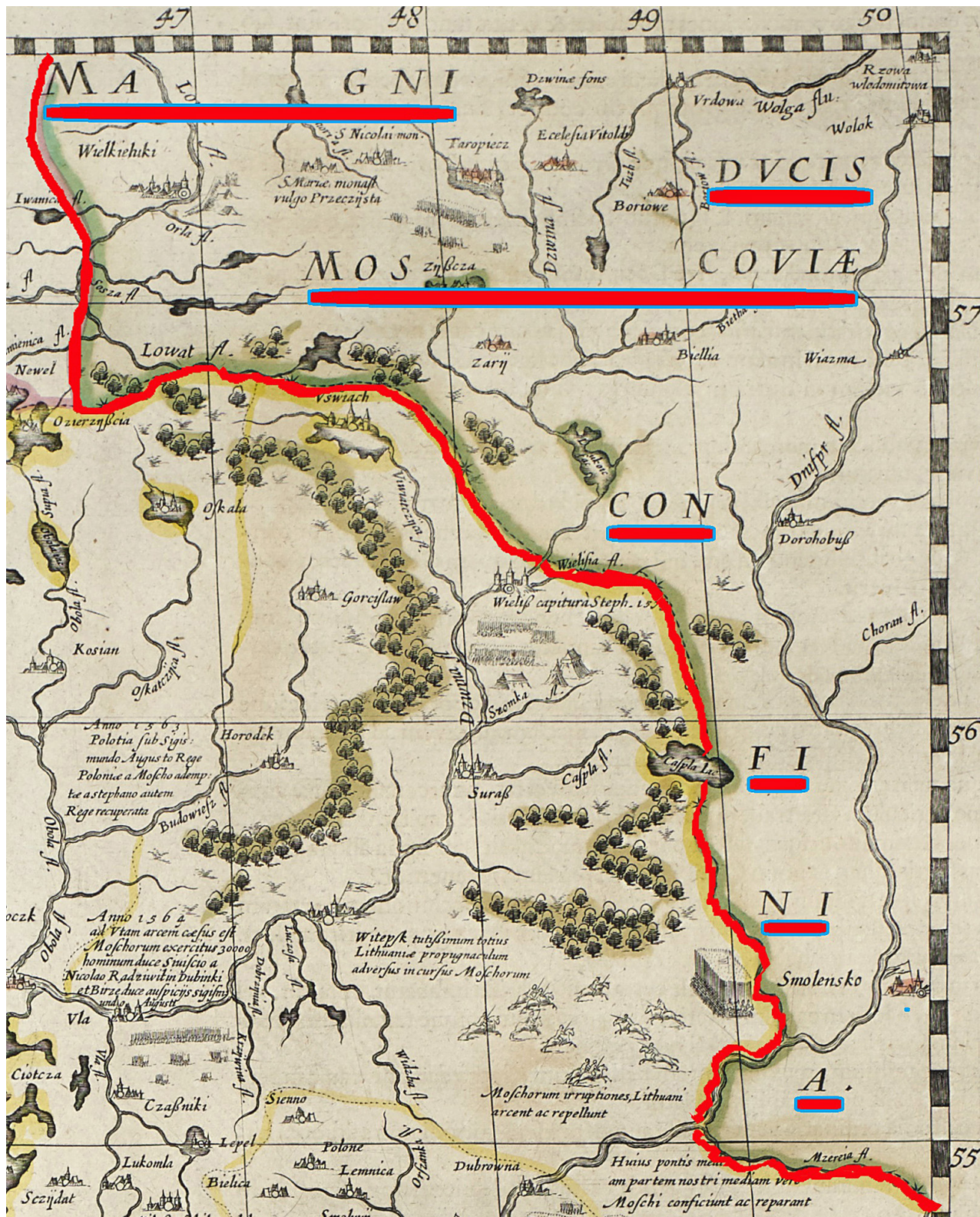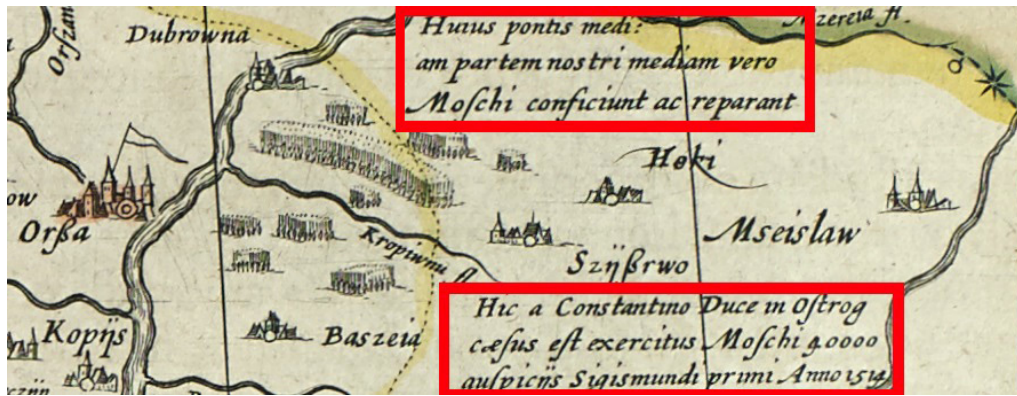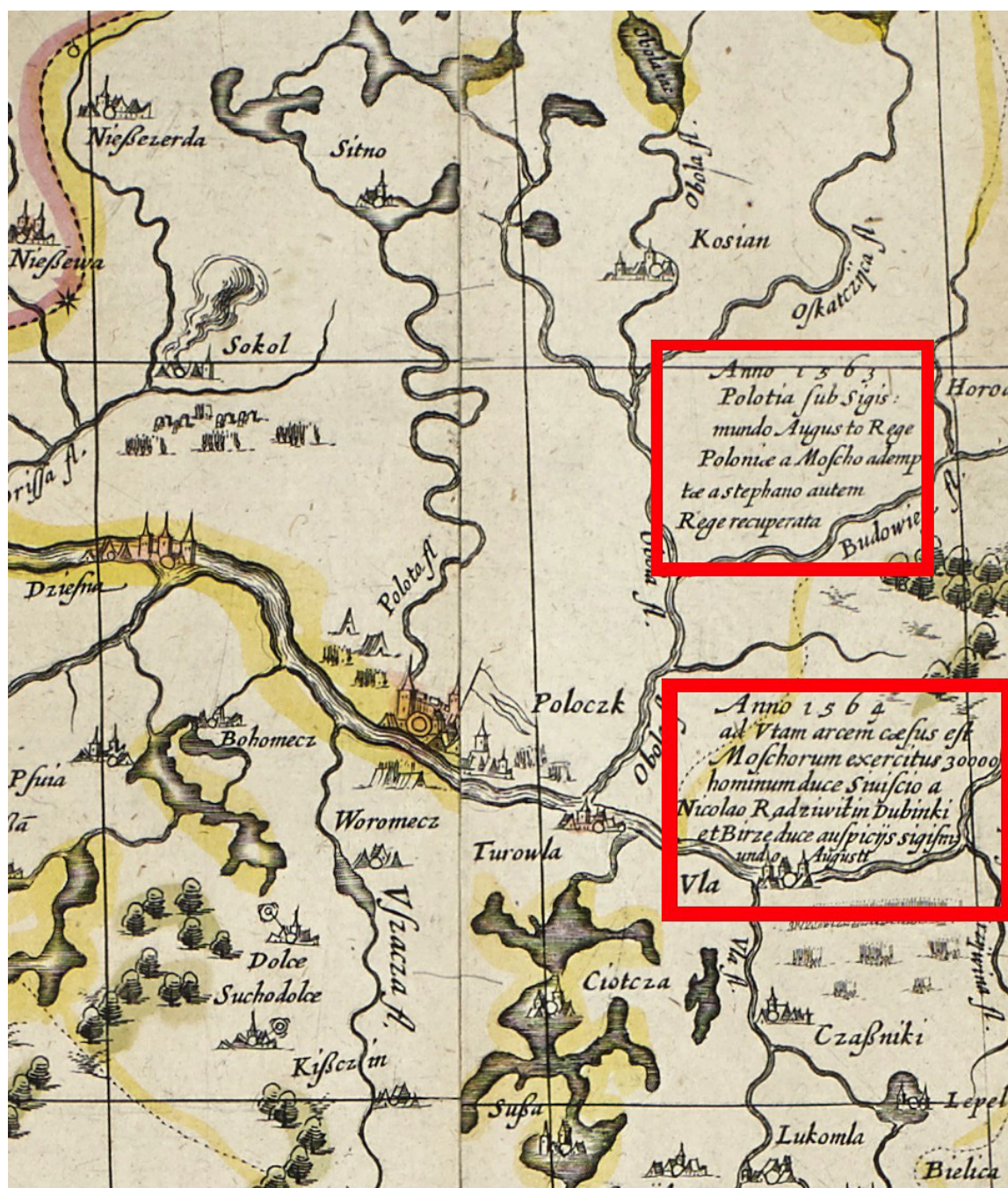
Fig. 8 a–e. "Russia" and "Moscovia" on Radziwiłł Map (Makowski–Strubicz 1631)..

The *Radziwiłł Map* emerged as the last testifying the conflict, in a cartographical "game of thrones", between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy — a highly disputed game revolving around claiming the ownership and property right over the choronym "Russia". In 1562, the English sailor Anthony Jenkinson published a wall map entitled *New and Absolute Description of Russia, Muscovy and Tartary* (Jenkinson 1562)[32]. It must be borne in mind that for English sailors and merchants, the terms *Moscovia* and *Russia* were synonymous. The English explorer and navigator Richard Chancellor

[32] On Jenkinson 1562 see, for instance, Bagrow 1975: 98-102. A detailed description of the unique copy of the 1562 London edition, discovered in Wrocław in 1987, is found in Szykuła 2008 and 2012.

who, representing the Company of Merchant Adventurers (from 1555 on known as "Russia Company") which he himself contributed to establish, dropped anchor at the mouth of the river Dvina in 1553 to initiate the trade relations with Muscovy, wrote in his travel account: "Of Muscovy, which is also called Russia. Muscovy, which hath the name also of Russia the White, is a very large and spacious country" (Berry-Crummey 1968: 21). In Jenkinson's map, *Moskovia* refers to the Duchy of Muscovy and Moscow as they were: "Russia" is the name of the entire state of the tsar, ranging from the White Sea to the borders with Livonia and Lithuania. This map became highly influential; suffice it to say that it was chosen by Abraham Ortelius to represent Muscovy in his *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Jenkinson-Ortelius 1570), which is commonly considered to be the first modern atlas of the world. The description of "Russia" found in the *verso* of the map must have appalled and outraged Polish and Lithuanian readers: "RUSSIA, or rather THE EMPIRE OF THE GRAND DUKE OF MOSCOVIA. This map does not comprise all of Russia, for here are lacking Polonia and Lithuania, which are also contained under the name of Russia" (transl. in Broecke 2009: 91-92)[33].

The choronym "Russia" has been inconsistently employed by Gerhard Mercator. On his map *New and More Complete Representation of the Terrestrial Globe Properly Adapted for Use in Navigation* (Mercator 1569), one finds only the name of *Moscovia*, designating the territories of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy. A most interesting case concerns the maps of Lithuania and Muscovy from Mercator's monumental work published posthumously in 1595, *Atlas or Meditations of a Cosmographer on the Creation of the World and on the Form of Created Matter*. The map of Lithuania (Mercator 1595a) was based on the chart of Poland by Wacław Grodecki (1562 and 1570), the map of European Sarmatia by Andrzej Pograbka (1570), the aforementioned map of Lithuania and Livonia by Strubicz (1589), and the map *Description of the Principality of Polotsk* by Stanisław Pachołowiecki (1580)[34]. This is exactly why the map of Lithuania by Mercator represents the Polish-Lithuanian reason of state: the tsarist dominion is named *Moscovia* (fig. 9a), while *Russia* stands exclusively for Polish Red Rus' (fig. 9b). In addition, Mercator distinguished, as Pachołowiecki did, the no longer existent Principality of Polotsk, restored by Ivan the Terrible only nominally and then used for propaganda purposes by the Polish king Stephen Báthory in the 1579-1582 Polish-Lithuanian-Muscovite war[35].

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[33] "RUSSIA, aut potius MAGNI DUCIS MOSCOVIAE IMPERIUM. Haec tabula non continet totam Russiam, nam deest Polonia et Lithuania, quae sub Russiae nomine etiam comprehenduntur" (Jenkinson-Ortelius 1570: V.).

[34] See Buczek 1982: 47-48 and Alexandrowicz 2012: 64-66.

[35] Pachołowiecki's *Descriptio Ducatus Polocensis*, as well as his entire 1580 *Atlas of the Principality of Polotsk*, have been thoroughly studied by Niedźwiedź, Franczak, and Łopatecki, whose contributions have appeared in the monographic issues of the journal "Terminus": 19 (2017), 1 (42), 3 (44), and 4 (45). The propaganda aspects of this cartographical undertaking are discussed by Niedźwiedź 2017a, 2017b and Franczak 2021. On the influence of the map of the Principality of Polotsk on European cartography based on toponymic material, see Franczak 2017.
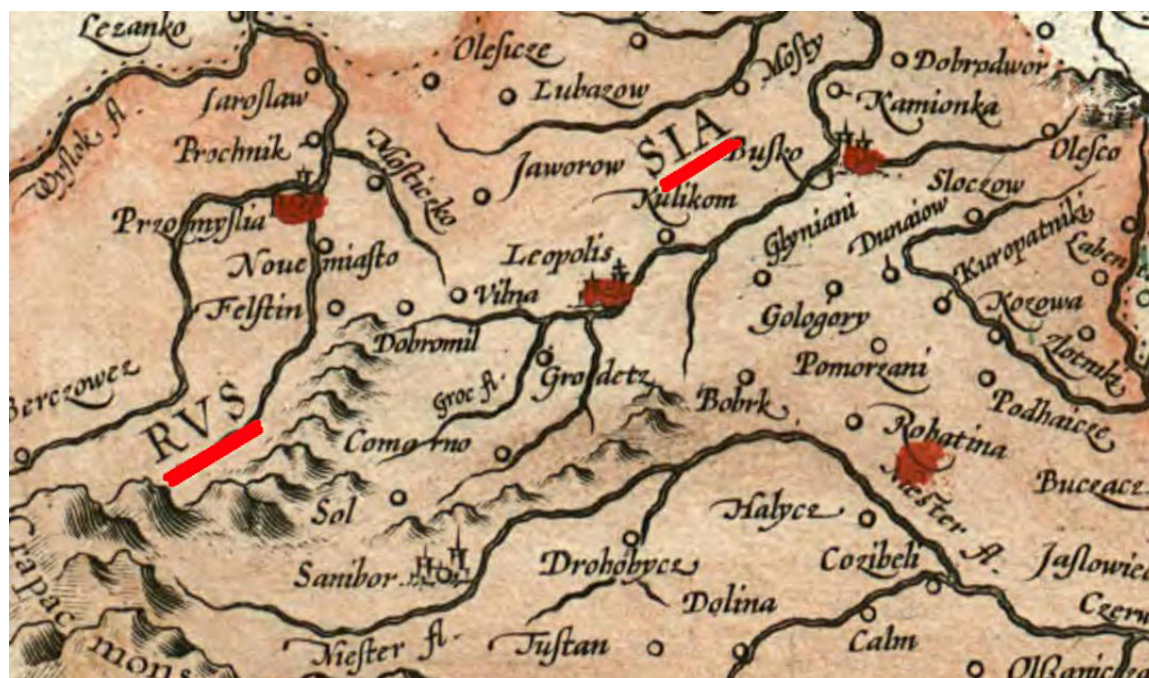
Fig. 9 a–b. "Moscovia" and "Russia" on Mercator's map, 1595 a.

The map of Muscovy published in Mercator's atlas (Mercator 1595b, fig. 10a) ends the dispute over the name "Russia" in favour of Moscow; according to Bagrow, "Mercator's work, insofar as it referred to Russia, was crowned by a special map – the first one to be designated as a map of Russia" (Bagrow 1975: 110). The map's title is *Russia with Surrounding Lands*; the term *Russia* denotes the entire tsarist state and includes *Moscovia*, which covers the area between Velikiy Novgorod, Moscow, and Tver' (fig. 10b), although the disputed choronym still appears also to designate Red Rus' (fig. 10c). In the lower right corner of the map, one finds an additional detailed inset map of central Muscovy: its title is *Part of Russia enlarged*[36]. The text on the verso of the map leaves no doubt. It begins with: "The lands of Russia, that is Muscovy, are very vast" (*RUSSIAE seu MOSCOVIAE regiones amplissimae sunt*). The cartographical game was over. The *Map of Russia* (Gerritsz 1614), dedicated to Mikhail Fyodorovich Romanov, tsar of all the Russias, was the definitive map of "Russia". "Russia" became Russia, the ultimate hegemon in Eastern Europe.

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[36] Niedźwiedź (2019a) has demonstrated that *Russiae pars amplificata* is actually a map, based on Polish-Lithuanian texts and a map drawn by Maciej Strubicz, of a daring sabotage raid of Lithuanian troops led by Krzysztof Mikołaj Radziwiłł into Muscovite lands in 1581.
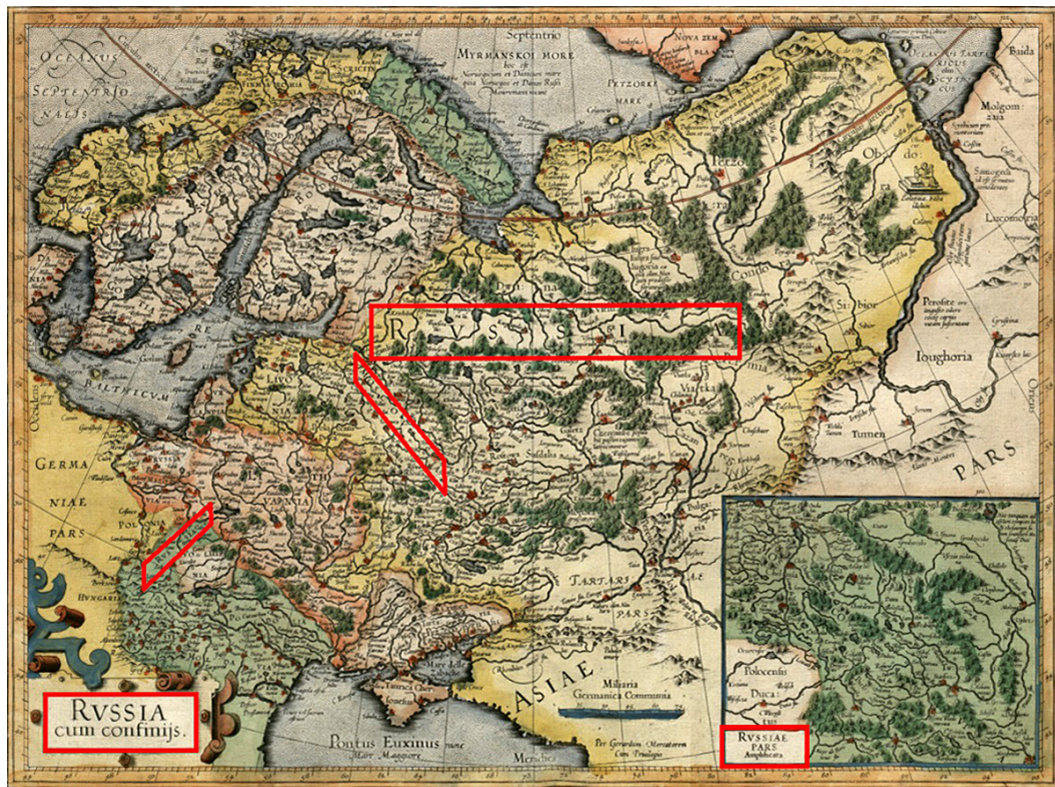
Fig. 10 a–c. the two "Russias" on Mercator's map 1595 b.

The opening lines to this paper quote a passage from Adam Mickiewicz's *The Road to Russia* (Mickiewicz 1935: 482), which seems to be the author's bitter retort to the poetic map of Russia sketched by his former friend, Alexander Pushkin:

> Or, from Perm to Tauris,
> From the cold rocks of Finland to the flaming Colchis,
> From the stunned Kremlin
> To the walls of stagnant China,
> Flashing its steel bristles,
> Will not the Russian land rise? (Volkov 1996: 101)

Under the pen of Mickiewicz – a representative of a colonized country – Russia, which in the meantime had drawn its own imperial map of conquest and engulfed its western and southern neighbours, turned back into what was at the very beginning of the cartographical dispute here discussed: a page ready to be filled with words, a blank page and a not-yet-drawn map – A Map To Not Indicate Russia[37].

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[37] I allude to a linotype on paper created by the collective Art & Language (Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin), entitled *Map To Not Indicate* (1967) and held by Tate Modern Gallery of London (ref. n. P01357). The work shows the island-like states of Iowa and Kentucky on white background, and its long title comprises 57 toponyms, from Canada to Straits of Florida, of the geographical areas NOT depicted on this sort of anti-map. See: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/art-language-map-to-not-indicate-p01357 [accessed: 17.02.21].

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