



European towns in Braun & Hogenberg's town atlas

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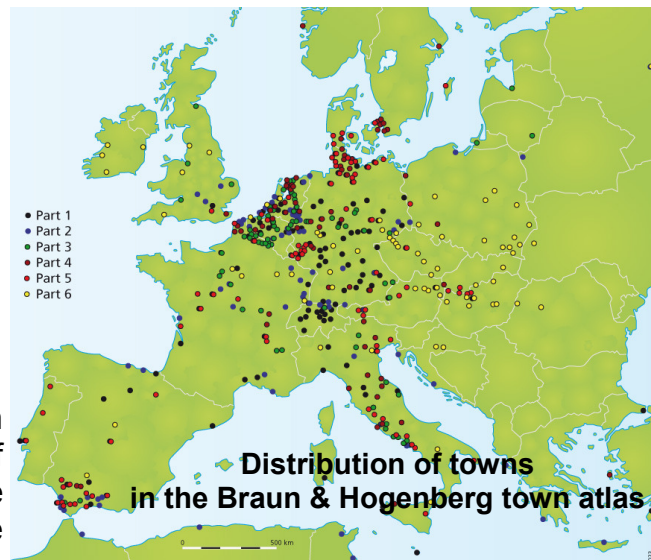
Abstract

The *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* or the 'Braun & Hogenberg', published in six volumes in Cologne between 1572 and 1617, is the most famous of the early town atlases. The *Civitates* was, like Ortelius's *Theatrum*, one of the best-selling works in the last quarter of the 16th century. Although it had no comparable precedent, it immediately met a great public demand, because social, political and economic life at that time was concentrated in cities. Apart from that, the pictorial style of the plans and views appealed very much to the uneducated public.

Each of the six volumes is its own entity, containing plans of towns of the whole of Europe (and sometimes also of towns outside Europe) in a strict geographical order:

- the British Isles,
- Spain and Portugal,
- France,
- the Low Countries,
- Germany,
- Denmark, Sweden and Norway,
- Hungary,
- Poland, Lithuania and Muscovy,
- Africa,
- East and West-Indies and
- Turkey.

When a more recent plan of a town was acquired, it was included in one of the later volumes without changing the contents of the earlier volume. In fact, the contents of a volume have never been changed at all.



The authors of the work are not mentioned as such, but in the dedication, the foreword and elsewhere three names appear: Georg Braun (Bruin), Frans Hogenberg and Simon van den Neuvel (Novellanus). The first mention of the work is made in a letter by Georg Braun to Abraham Ortelius of 31 October 1571. Here Braun refers to 'M. Francisci de Civitates liber', from which we might conclude that the initiative came from Frans Hogenberg (Keuning 1963, 41). The dedication of the first edition of 1572 is signed by Braun, Hogenberg and Novellanus. In later dedications Novellanus was omitted. In Braun's preface Novellanus and Hogenberg (in that order) are mentioned as authors. People involved in the production are:

- *Georg Braun or Bruin (1541-1622)*, canon of Cologne Cathedral, wrote the text accompanying the plans and views as is stated in the poem of Alexander Grapheus of Antwerp at the beginning of the first volume. Braun must have carried on an extensive correspondence with persons in various countries in order to procure new and more originals for his work. Particular mention should be made of Abraham Ortelius of Antwerp who supplied much material. All parts except the sixth have a preface by Georg Braun.



- *Frans Hogenberg* (died c. 1590), son of a Munich engraver, who came as a boy to Mechlin, where he and his brother, Remigius, learnt the craft of engraving. He was a friend of Mercator and Ortelius and engraved the majority of the plates for the latter's atlas. After the death of Frans Hogenberg, c. 1590, new plates for the city atlas were engraved by Abraham Hogenberg, who is assumed to be Frans's son.

- *Simon Novellanus (van den Heuvel or van den Neuvet)*, (died c. 1590), engraver, born at Mechlin, worked in Cologne.

- *Joris Hoefnagel*, the painter and draughtsman, who supplied a large number of views.

Other contributors included Pieter Breughel, Jacob van Deventer (many of the plans of the Low Countries), Hieronymous Schol (views of Stockholm and Bergen), Lucas van Valkenborch (Linz and Gmunden), Joost Murer (Zurich) and Diederich Bangs (Bamberg). Heinrich Rantzau, from Breitenburg in



Title page of part 1 of the *Civitates*, 1572.

Holstein, supplied drawings of the towns in Schleswig, Holstein and Denmark. Cornelius Caymox supplied information for the text of many German towns.

In this paper the choice of towns depicted and their distribution in Europe will be discussed. ◼



Brussels in *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (part 1), 1572

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