

# The Origin of the Term 'Atlas'

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**Abstract:** In this paper the origin of the term 'atlas', as a bound collection of maps, is considered. It is usually thought to derive from the name of the Titan, Atlas, who was punished by being forced to bear the entire celestial sphere or universe on his shoulders. However, on the basis of research into and translation of the original Preface of Mercator's *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figurae*, it has been determined that Mercator did not refer to this legend, but named his atlas for the completely different characteristics, such as wisdom, erudition and humanity, of another Atlas.

**Key words:** Atlas, atlas, Mercator

in 1542. Rotz transformed a large world chart into a book containing "all hydrography of marine science", explaining that such a book was easier to read and handle. An important centre for the production of marine world atlases was Battista Agnese's workshop in Venice, between 1536 and 1564.

Since 1477, Ptolemy's *Geography* and its later editions, published by Sebastian Münster from 1540 onwards, together with Münster's popular *Cosmography*, published in Basle between 1544 and 1628, have undoubtedly served as model world atlases and inspired publishers to produce new atlases. It was Italian map dealers who produced the prototype of the contemporary atlas. The earliest appeared in 1568 or 1569, and its concept probably originated in Venice. Antonio Lafreri from Rome was the leading map practitioner of the time, which is why A. E. Nordenskiöld suggested that such atlases be referred to as "Lafreri atlases". The alternative term is IATO (Italian atlases assembled to order). Some collections have title pages produced between 1570 and 1572 bearing these words: *Geografia: Tavole moderne di Geografia de la maggior parte del mondo di diversi autori raccolte et messe secondo l'ordine di Tolomeo ... stampate in rame ... in Roma*. The title page usually depicts Atlas bearing the globe of the Earth (not the celestial sphere) on his shoulders. Thus Lafreri was the first to link Atlas the Titan to a set of maps, although he did not call his map collection an "atlas".

Abraham Ortelius of Antwerp was the first to compile and publish a modern atlas in the form of a systematic, bound collection of maps of various parts of the world in a consistent format, based on principles he established as editor. His *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, 1570), was an immediate success and was published in many editions. Ortelius was actually a cartographer editor who used maps by other authors. He listed their names in his *Catalogus auctorum*. It is worth mentioning that Ortelius's *Theatrum* was accompanied by a large world city atlas entitled *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, by Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg, produced in six volumes in Cologne between 1572 and 1618.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Definition

An atlas is a collection of maps, usually bound together. It can also be in multimedia form.

### 1.2. Historical overview of atlases before Mercator

In the late Middle Ages, cartographers often compiled groups of maps or portolans of the known world in the form of codices or bound books. Some of the oldest examples are the *Atlas of Islam*, from the 10th century, and, in European cartography, the atlas by Pietro Vesconte, from 1313.

As a map and book combined, the atlas or map book is relatively modern in the history of cartography, if one considers editions of Ptolemy's *Geography* (printed with maps since 1477) in illustrated book form. The oldest atlases date back to the 15th century and consist of coastal area maps. During the 1530's and 1540's, some hydrographers and cosmographers of Dieppe produced manuscript maritime world atlases, as gifts for royalty or the nobility. It is believed Jean Rotz was the first, with his *Boke of Idrography*, presented to Henry VIII of England

# O porijeklu naziva atlas

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**Sažetak:** Razmatra se porijeklo naziva atlas za (uvezane) zbirku karata. Obično se smatra da je naziv atlas za zbirku karata nastao od imena titana Atlasa koji je po kazni bio prisiljen nositi cijelu nebesku kuglu ili cijeli svemir na svojim ramenima. Međutim, na temelju provedenih istraživanja i prijevoda izvornog Predgovora Mercatorova Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura utvrđeno je da Mercator uopće ne spominje tu legendu, nego da je dao ime svom atlasu na temelju karakteristika jednog drugog Atlasa, a to su ponajprije mudrost, obrazovanost i čovječnost.

**Ključne riječi:** Atlas, atlas, Mercator

## 1. Uvod

### 1.1 Definicija

Atlas je zbirka karata koje su obično zajedno uvezane. Može biti i u multimedijском obliku.

### 1.2. Povijesni prikaz atlasa do Mercatora

U kasnom srednjem vijeku grupe karata ili portulana poznatoga svijeta njihovi autori su često stavljali zajedno u obliku kodeksa ili uvezane knjige. Među najstarijim primjercima su tzv. *Atlas Islama* koji datira iz 10. stoljeća, a u europskoj kartografiji atlas Pietra Vescontea iz 1313.

Kao kombinacija karte i knjige, atlas ili knjiga karata je relativno moderna u povijesti kartografije, ako se izdavanja Ptolemejeve Geografije (tiskana s kartama od 1477) smatraju ilustriranim knjigama. Najstariji atlas potječu iz 15. st. i sastoje se od karata otočnih područja. Godina 1530-ih i 1540-ih neki od Dieppeovih hidrografa i kozmografa izrađuju rukopisne pomorske atlase svijeta da bi ih se prezentiralo kraljevskim ili gospodskim osobama. Smatra se da je Jean Rotz prvi od njih sa svojom *Boke of Idrography* što je prikazana Henriku VIII. od Engleske 1542. godine. U njoj je transformirao veliku pomorsku kartu

svijeta u knjigu koja sadrži "svu hidrografiju pomorske znanosti", objašnjavajući da se s takvom knjigom može lakše i pogodnije rukovati. U Italiji je jedano važno središte za proizvodnju pomorskih atlasa svijeta bilo u radionici Battiste Agnesea u Veneciji, od 1536. do 1564.

Od 1477. Ptolemejeva *Geografija* i njezina kasnija izdanja što ih je objavljivao Sebastian Münster od 1540, zajedno s popularnom Münsterovom *Cosmographijom*, objavljivanom u Baselu od 1544. do 1628, nedvojbeno je služila kao atlas svijeta i inspirirala izdavače s idejom o izradi novih atlasa. Talijanski prodavači karata stvorili su prototip suvremenog atlasa. Najraniji se pojavljuje 1568-69, a koncept vjerojatno potječe iz Venecije. Antonio Lafreri iz Rima bio je vodeći kartograf praktičar toga doba, pa je zbog toga A. E. Nordenskiöld predložio za takve atlase naziv "Lafrerijev atlas". Alternativni im je naziv IATO (Talijanski atlasi skupljeni i poredani, Italian atlases assembled to order). Neke od tih zbirki imaju naslovnice izrađene između 1570. i 1572. s otisnutim riječima *Geografia: Tavole moderne di Geografia de la maggior parte del mondo di diversi autori raccolte et messe secondo l'ordine di Tolomeo ... stampate in rame ... in Roma*. Dizajnirana naslovnica uobičajeno prikazuje sliku Atlasa koji drži zemaljski globus (ne nebesku sferu) na svojim ramenima. Dakle, Lafreri je bio prvi koji je na izvjestan način pridružio titana Atlasa skupu karata, premda svoju zbirku karata nije nazvao "atlasom".

Abraham Ortelius iz Antwerpena bio je prvi koji je složio i objavio moderni atlas u obliku sustavne, uvezane zbirke karata različitih dijelova svijeta u konzistentnom formatu, složenom na principima koje je sam zadao kao urednik. Njegov *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antwerpen, 1570, bio je neposredan uspjeh, a objavljen je u mnogo izdanja. Ortelius je zapravo bio kartograf urednik koji je upotrijebio karte drugih autora. Njihova imena popisao je u svojem *Catalogus auctorum*. Spomenimo da su kao pratnju Orteliusovu *Theatrumu*, Georg Braun i Frans Hogenberg objavili svoj veliki atlas gradova svijeta, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, koji je izrađen u šest knjiga u Kölnu u razdoblju 1572-1618.



44

Fig. 1. Farnese Atlas at the National Archaeological Museum in Naples, Italy

Sl. 1. Farneseov Atlas iz Nacionalnog arheološkog muzeja u Napulju

Author: Gabriel Seah

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas\\_\(Farnese\\_Globe\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas_(Farnese_Globe).jpg)

Gerard Mercator of Louvain and later Duisburg, who was described as “the Ptolemy of our day” by his friend Ortelius, made a new contribution to atlas drafting and publishing. The innovation was in new maps manually produced by their editor. His atlas was published in parts from 1585 onwards. Mercator’s son, Rumold, published the atlas as a bound book a year after his father had died. It bears the title chosen by Mercator the elder, *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* (Atlas, or cosmographical reflections concerning the structure of the universe and the nature of the universe as created). The term ‘atlas’ has become generally accepted since then (Wallis, Robinson, 1987).

### 1.3. Two Atlases

Cartographers were inspired by two mythological persons bearing the same name – Atlas. The first was the son of Titan Iapetus and Clymene and brother to Prometheus (URL1).

In works of art, this Atlas bears the celestial sphere or the globe of the Earth on his shoulders. The most famous example is the statue of Atlas by Farnese, kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples (Fig. 1). Farnese’s Atlas is a Roman marble copy from the 2nd century of the Hellenistic statue of Atlas kneeling, bearing a heavy sphere on his shoulders. It is the oldest known

statue of Atlas. It is also important to mention that the sphere on Atlas’s shoulders is the oldest known representation of the celestial sphere. More information about the statue can be found by going to URL2.

As works of art in the form of sculptures, Atlases can be seen in public places all over the world (e.g. at the Rockefeller Centre in New York, in Hadda in Afghanistan (Fig. 2), in Melbourne, Australia (Fig. 3), in Praza do Toural in Santiago de Compostela (Fig. 4), in Vienna, Amsterdam and elsewhere.

However, Keuning (1947) noted that Mercator did not name his map collection *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* after the Atlas who bore the entire celestial sphere or universe on his shoulders, but after the “mythical King of Libya, a wise philosopher, mathematician and astronomer, who supposedly made the first celestial globe”. The same statement can be found on the web pages of Mapforum (URL1), including the information that a figure of this Atlas can be found on the title page of Mercator’s atlas (Fig. 6). Keuning supports his statement by referring to the Preface Mercator himself wrote for his atlas.

Intrigued by Keuning’s explanation of the origin of the term ‘atlas’, we sought Mercator’s original text of the preface to his *Atlas sive*. This was possible because the atlas is on a CD in the library of the Chair of Geoinformation and the Chair of Cartography at the Faculty of Geodesy of the University of Zagreb.

Actually, it is a two CD release, published by Octavo, ISBN 1-891788-26-4. This digital edition enables one to access each page of the atlas using Adobe Acrobat Reader. There is also an English translation of all the texts. Images and maps can be zoomed. The whole atlas or individual pages can be printed out in black-and-white or colour. This paper contains a reproduction of the title page of Mercator’s *Atlas sive* taken from this edition (Fig. 5).

The following can be read on the Internet pages of Octavo (URL1): “Gerardus Mercator’s *Atlas* is the greatest work of a man who revolutionized cartography. *Mercator’s Projection*, a new and vastly more precise method of mapping, has immortalized the Flemish geographer and instrument maker. His other great innovations involved simple terminology: the word *Atlas*, after the Titan who held up the universe, here first applied to a collection of world maps (and one of the very few examples of Renaissance allegory to survive in our modern vocabulary), and the application of the name *America* (1538) for the entire New World – Waldseemüller before him (1501) had restricted the term to that portion (South America) actually visited by Amerigo Vespucci. The first two parts of the *Atlas* were published in 1585 and 1589: they covered France, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and the Balkans. The third and final part was left unfinished on Mercator’s death; his son completed the work. This Octavo Edition reproduces the first collected edition, from a beautifully hand-coloured copy, bound in contemporary calf, and features the first publication of a complete English translation of the text.” The text cited contains a couple of errors. Firstly, it states that Mercator named his atlas after Atlas the Titan bearing the universe. The best contra-argument to this statement is the original of Mercator’s *Atlas*, which is also discussed in this paper. Secondly, some dates are incorrect.



Gerard Mercator iz Louvaina, kasnije Duisburg, kojeg je njegov prijatelj Ortelius opisao kao "Ptolemeja naših dana", dao je novi doprinos pri pripremanju i objavljivanju atlasa. Njegova inovacija sastojala se u novim karata što ih je urednik izradio vlastitim rukama. Djelo je izdavano u dijelovima od 1585. godine. Mercatorov sin Rumold objavio je atlas kao uvezanu zbirku godinu dana nakon očeve smrti. Djelo nosi naslov što ga je izabrao stariji Mercator, tj. *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* (Atlas, ili kozmografska razmišljanja o strukturi i prirodi svijeta - Atlas, or cosmographical reflections concerning the structure of the universe and the nature of the universe as created). Od tada je termin "atlas" općenito prihvaćen (Wallis, Robinson, 1987).

### 1.3. Dva Atlasa

Kartografi su bili inspirirani dvama mitološkim bićima istoga imena Atlas. Prvi je bio sin titana Japeta i Klimene, Prometejev brat (URL1).

U umjetničkim djelima taj Atlas na svojim ramenima nosi nebesku sferu ili zemaljski globus. Najpoznatiji primjer je Farneseov kip Atlasa koji se čuva u napuljskom Nacionalnom arheološkom muzeju (slika 1). Farneseov Atlas je rimska mramorna kopija iz 2. st. helenističkog kipa Atlasa koji klečeći na svojim ramenima drži tešku kuglu. To je najstariji poznati kip Atlasa. Također je važno spomenuti, da je ta kugla na Atlasovim ramenima najstariji poznati prikaz nebeske sfere. Više podataka o tom kipu može se naći na URL2.

Atlas kao umjetničko djelo u obliku skulpture može vidjeti i na javnim mjestima diljem svijeta (npr. u Rockefellerovu centru u New Yorku, u Haddi u Afganistanu (slika 2), u Melbourneu u Australiji (slika 3), na Praga do Toural u Santiago de Composteli (slika 4), u Beču, u Amsterdamu i drugdje.

Međutim, Keuning (1947) je primijetio da Mercator nije dao ime svojoj zbirci karata *Atlas sive Cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica Mvndi et fabricati figvra* prema Atlasu koji na svojim ramenima drži zemaljski globus ili nebesku sferu, nego prema "mitskom kralju Libije, mudrom filozofu, matematičaru i astronomu, za kojeg se smatra da je izradio prvi globus neba." Ista tvrdnja može se naći i na web-stranicama Mapforuma (URL1), uz dodatak da se prikaz tog Atlasa nalazi na naslovnici Mercatorova atlasa (slika 5). Keuning svoju tvrdnju obrazlaže pozivanjem na Predgovor što ga je sam Mercator napisao za svoj atlas.

Potaknuti Keuningovim objašnjenjem porijekla naziva atlas, potražili smo izvorni Mercatorov tekst predgovora njegovu *Atlasu sive ...*. To je bilo moguće jer u knjižnici Katedre za geoinformacije i Katedre za kartografiju Geodetskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu imamo taj atlas na CD-u.

Zapravo radi se o izdanju na 2 CD-a tvrtke Octavo, ISBN 1-891788-26-4. To digitalno izdanje omogućava prikazivanje svake stranice atlasa s pomoću programa Adobe Acrobat Reader. Osim toga tu je i prijevod cjelokupnog teksta na engleski. Slike i karte se mogu zumirati. Čitav atlas ili pojedine stranice mogu se otisnuti na papir, u crno-bijeloj verziji ili u boji. Iz navedenog izdanja reproduciramo u ovome radu naslovnici Mercatorova *Atlasu sive ...* (slika 6).



Fig. 2. Atlas on the roof of the Royal Palace in Amsterdam

Sl. 2. Atlas na krovu kraljevske palače u Amsterdamu

Na internetskim stranicama Octava (URL1) može se pročitati: "Atlas Gerarda Mercatora je najveće djelo čovjeka koji je revolucionizirao kartografiju. Mercatorova projekcija, nova i kolosalno precizna metoda kartiranja, učinili su besmrtnim flamanskoga geografa i izrađivača instrumenata. Njegove druge inovacije su terminološkog karaktera: riječ *Atlas*, po titanu koji drži svemir, ovdje je po prvi put primijenjena na zbirku karata svijeta, (i to je jedan od samo nekoliko primjera renesansne alegorije koji je preživio u našem suvremenom rječniku), i primjena imena *America* (1538) za cijeli Novi Svijet – prije njega je Waldseemüller (1501) ograničio taj pojam na onaj dio (Južna Amerika) koji je stvarno posjetio Amerigo Vespucci. Prva dva dijela *Atlasu* objavljena su 1585. i 1589: prikazuju područja Francuske, Nizozemske, Njemačke, Italije i Balkana. Treći i posljednji dio ostao je nedovršen u trenutku Mercatorove smrti; posao je dovršio njegov sin. Octavo izdanje reproducira prvo izdanje, prekrasan rukom obojan primjerak, uvezan u teleću kožu, i to je prva publikacija cjelokupnog prijevoda teksta na engleski jezik." U tekstu koji je citiran ima nekoliko pogrešaka. Prvo, navodi se da je Mercator dao naziv svom atlasu prema titanu Atlasu koji drži svemir. Da tome nije tako, najbolje svjedoči izvornik Mercatorova *Atlasu*, a o tome pišemo i u ovome radu. Drugo su pogrešno navedene neke godine.

Atlas na CD-u sadrži predgovor u izvorniku, na latinskom jeziku (*Praefatio in Atlantem*) i u prijevodu na engleski (*Preface to the atlas*). Za potrebe ovog rada učinjen je prijevod Mercatorova predgovora s izvornika na



46

Fig. 3. (left) Atlas supports the terrestrial globe on a building in Collins Street, Melbourne, Australia

Sl. 3. (lijevo) Atlas pridržava zemaljski globus na zgradi u Collinsovoj ulici, Melbourne, Australija

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas\\_sculpture\\_on\\_collins\\_street\\_melbourne.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas_sculpture_on_collins_street_melbourne.jpg)

Fig. 4. (right) Sculpture of Atlas, Praza do Toural, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Sl. 4. (desno) Kip Atlasa, Praza do Toural, Santiago de Compostela, Španjolska

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[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas\\_Santiago\\_Toural\\_GFDL.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Atlas_Santiago_Toural_GFDL.jpg)

The CD Atlas contains the original preface in Latin (*Praefatio in Atlantem*) and translated into English (*Preface to the Atlas*). For the purpose of this paper, Mercator's original preface was translated into Croatian and again into English. This was because we noticed that the English translation of the preface published on the aforementioned CD was not good enough.

## 2. Translation of Mercator's Preface and Atlas's Family Tree

Here follows the translation of the preface and Atlas's family tree from the Latin original of Mercator's *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mvndi et fabricati figvra*.

"Atlas, King of Mauritania, himself of royal descent, had a father named Terrenus (Terrestrial, Native), i.e. born there, as witnessed by Eusebius according to the oldest historians, who was called Caelus (Celestial, Heavenly), and mother Titea, called Terra (Earth). His grandfather on his father and mother's side was Helios (Elium) or Sol (the Sun), King of Phoenicia, who lived in Byblos with his wife, Beruth. Both were very proficient in astronomy and the natural sciences. Their erudition earned them the worthy names of Sol and Caelus.

Atlas, as noted by ancient writers, (Diodorus, Book 4, Chapter 5) was also a very proficient astrologer and was the first among men to discuss the sphere. He had numerous brothers – as many as 45 – who Caelus fathered on various women. Titea, a very reasonable woman, who did many good deeds for many, gave birth to 17 of them, and they were called Titans, after their mother.

He also had sisters, notably Basilia, who raised all her brothers out of love for her mother and was thus called, as they say, the Great Mother, and Rhea, who was named Pandora.

When Caelus passed away, Basilia, as the oldest sister and more virtuous than the others, inherited the kingdom with the agreement of her brothers and the people. Since she had not yet married, she was a virgin.

Afterwards, wishing to leave an heir to the kingdom, she married her brother Hyperion and had two children with him, named Sol (the Sun) and Luna (the Moon). The brothers of Hyperion, questioning their prudence and fearing his children would enjoy royal rule, beheaded Hyperion and drowned Sol – who was still a child – in the River Eridanus.

Then Caelus's sons, notably Atlas and Saturnus, divided their father's kingdom amongst themselves. Atlas's regions stretched along the Ocean and Libya all the way





Gerardus Mercator *Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes de Fabrica Mundi et Fabricati Figura* Duisburg, 1595 Octavo VIEW 5 of 284  
THE LESING J. ROSENWALD COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Fig. 5. Title-page of the Mercator's Atlas sive ... (Octavo edition on 2 CD's, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)  
Sl. 5. Naslovnica Mercatorova Atlasa sive ... (izdanje tvrtke Octavo na 2 CD-a, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)

hrvatski jezik, ali i na engleski jezik. Naime, uočeno je da je engleski prijevod predgovora koji je objavljen na spome-nutom CD-u previše slobodan.

Prije prijevoda predgovora koji slijedi u sljedećem poglavlju, napomenimo da postoji jedan jezični problem. Radi se o prijevodu imena Atlas s latinskog jezika. Ako bismo poštovali sustav, tada bi to bilo Atlant, prema genitivu Atlantis. Međutim, budući da je općenito prihvaćeno ime Atlas, odnosno naziv atlas, to ćemo u prijevodu ostaviti ime Atlas (prema nominativu).

## 2. Prijevod Mercatorova predgovora i Atlasova rodoslovlja

Slijedi prijevod predgovora i Atlasova rodoslovlja s latinskog izvornika Mercatorova *Atlas sive Cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica Mvndi et fabricati figvra*.

Atlas, kralj Mauritanije, i sam kraljevskoga podrijetla, imao je oca po imenu Terrenus (Zemaljski), tj. rođenoga tamo, kako svjedoči Euzebije prema najstarijim povjesničarima, koji je bio nazvan Caelus (Celestin, Nebesni), i majku Titeu, zvanu Terra (Zemlja). Djed po ocu i po majci bio mu je Helije ili Sol (Sunce), kralj fenički, koji je sa ženom Beruth živio u Byblosu. Obojica su veoma dobro poznavali astronomiju i prirodne znanosti. Zbog svoje su obrazovanosti dobili dostojna imena Sunca i Neba.

Atlas je također, kako navode stari pisci, (Diodor knjiga 4. poglavlje 5) bio veoma stručan astrolog i prvi je

među ljudima raspravljao o sferi. Imao je mnogo braće – čak 45 – koje je Caelus rodio s različitim ženama. Titea, veoma razborita žena, koja je ljudima učinila mnogo dobra, rodila ih je 17, te su zajedničkim imenom po majci nazvani Titanima.

Imao je i sestre, među njima su se isticale: Basilijsa, koja je svu svoju braću odgojila zbog nedostatka ljubavi njihove majke i zbog toga je bila, kako kažu, nazvana Velikom Majkom, te Rea koju su nazvali Pandorom.

Kad je Caelus skončao, Basilijsa je kao najstarija po godinama i vrlinom izuzetnija od drugih, stekla kraljevstvo na osnovi opće suglasnosti braće i naroda. Budući da se još nije udala, bila je djevica.

Kasnije, u želji da kraljevstvu ostavi nasljednika, udala se za brata Hiperiona i s njime rodila dvoje djece po imenu Sol (Sunce) i Luna (Mjesec). Braća Hiperionova, čudeći se njihovoj razboritosti i u strahu da njegovoj djeci ne pripadne kraljevska vlast, Hiperionu odsjekoše glavu, a Sunce – tada još dijete – utopiše u rijeci Eridanu.

Tada su Caelusovi sinovi, među kojima su bili ugledniji Atlas i Saturn, podijelili očevo kraljevstvo među sobom. Atlasovi su se krajevi protezali uz Ocean i Libiju sve do Gibraltarskog tjesnaca, gdje je brdo nazvano Atlas, a stanovnici u Mauretaciji nazvani Atlančanima.

Saturnu su pripale Sicilija i Libija. On je kasnije postao omražen među svojim zbog tiranskog postupka prema ocu Caelusu, te je pobjegao u Italiju i tamo ga je Janus učinio sudionikom u kraljevanju.

to the Straits of Gibraltar, where there is a mount named Atlas, and the inhabitants of Mauritania, named Atlantes.

Saturn gained Sicily and Libya. He later became hated among his people due to the tyrannical deeds he carried out against his father Caelus, so he fled to Italy, where Janus made him a co-ruler.

Since Diodorus states that the Atlantes were first ruled by Caelus, who inspired the people scattered throughout the fields, to gather and establish cities, it is certain they were the oldest kings. Atlas, son of Atlas, drove out his brother Hesperus and became the King of Iberia, which was later named Hispania (Spain) after the flood in 738. Hesperus fled to Etruria, where he became the tutor of Janus. Atlas's grandfather Helios (Elius) ruled in Phoenicia from the flood in 662.

Diodorus confirms these kings were extraordinarily wise by nature and by reflection. At the same time, they practised humanity and piety, so Diodorus can rightly say Atlas's descendants deserve to be praised more than other people, for their piety and humane treatment of newcomers, at the time of the 22nd or 23rd generation, when much of the continent was still uninhabited.

48 Atlas had several sons, but gave the name Hesperus to the one distinguished by piety, fairness and his humane treatment of subordinates. When Hesperus climbed to the top of Mount Atlas to observe star trajectories, he was suddenly lifted up by the wind and was never seen again.

So states Diodorus, but I found him, as I already said, as a king in Iberia, where he was blown by favourable winds. There he lived reasonably and piously, and was made Janus' guardian due to his exceptional knowledge and prudence, when he fled to Etruria to escape his broth-

er. After Hesperus died, these roles were taken by his brother Atlas.

My intention is to imitate, as far as my abilities and strengths allow me, this Atlas who excelled in erudition, humanity and knowledge. I intend to study cosmography as from the elevated mirrors of the soul, so I may perhaps search out some truth in things still undiscovered, which you might bring to your studies of wisdom.

And as the universe contains the number, species, order, harmony, characteristics and outcome of all things, so will I, beginning from the genesis, as required by methodical understanding, recount all its parts according to the order of genesis and observe their physical characteristics, to indicate the causes of things, of which knowledge is composed, wisdom, which directs everything to good ends, is composed of knowledge, and prudence, which lays down an easy path for those ends, is composed of wisdom. This is going to be my goal in everything. Furthermore, I am going to deal with celestial phenomena in order, followed by astromantics, which are related to prognosis according to the stars, then elements and geographical terms. Thus, I am going to represent the whole world as if in a mirror, as principles for discovering the cause of things and for obtaining knowledge and wisdom. And this may lead the reader to deeper research.

**Atlas's Family Tree**

From Eusebius' work *De euangelica praeparatione*, Book I, Chapter 7, which he annotated according to Sanchuniathon, author of the history of Phoenicia. Philo from Byblos translated Sanchuniathon's work word for word. The family tree is partly from the work by Diodorus from Sicily.



**Atlas's Family Tree**



## P R A E F A T I O

in  
Atlantem.

**A**tlas rex Mauritanie & regio stemmate natus, patrem habuit Terrenum sive indigenam, iuxta Eusebii ex antiquissimis historicis testimonium, qui fuit Caelus cognominatus, & matrem Titeam, cognomine Terram, avum paternum simulq; maternum Elium sive Solem regem Phœnicia, qui cum uxore Beruth in Biblio habitabat ambos insigniter in Astronomia & naturalibus disciplinis versatos, ita ut eruditionis gratia Solis & Cæli nominibus digni haberentur. Et quidem Atlas, ut citant veteres, Diodorus lib. 4. cap. 5. astrologus fuit peritissimus, deq; sphaera primus inter homines disputavit. Fratres habuit multos, quos Caelus ex diversis vxoribus genuit vsq; ad 45. quorum 17. ex Titea prudentissima, & hominibus multum benefica semina habuit, quos communi nomine à matre Titanes appellauit, Sorores quoq; habuit, inter quas præcipua fuerunt Basilia, quæ fratres omnes suos in gratiam matris educauit, proptereaq; magnam auit matrem appellatam, & Rhea quam Pandoran dixerunt. Basilia autem cum Cælo obisset, ut prior annis, prudentiaq; & virtute reliquis præstantior, communi fratrum & populorū consensu regnum nacta est adhuc virgo, cum nulli antea nupsisset. Postmodum cupiens regni heredem relinquere, fratri Hyperioni nupsit, ex quo duos peperit liberos, Solem & Lunam, quorum prudentiam administrati Hyperionis fratres, ne ipsius posteris regnum confirmaretur, ipsum obruncârunt, & Solem adhuc puerum in flumine Eridano suffocârunt. Titan Cæli filij, quorum nobiliores Atlas & Saturnus erant, inter se partiti sunt regna patris, Atlantida loca iuxta Oceanum, & Lybiam vsq; & fretum Gaditanum contigerunt, ubi mons Atlas & gentes Atlantides tum pietatis, tum erga aduenas humanitatis præ ceteris gentibus laudem tulisse, quando vix 22. aut 23. generatione completa, multa continentis partes hominibus adhuc vacuæ erant. Habuit Atlas plures filios, sed vnum pietate ac in subditos iustitia humanitateq; insignem, quem Hesperum appellauit, qui cum in Atlantis cacumen ad scrutandos astrorum cursus ascendisset, subito à ventis correptus, nequaquam amplius visus est. Sic Diodorus; sed ego ut dixi regem in Iberia fuisse inuenio, adeoq; ventis secundis in eam trahicisse, ubi ita prudenter & pie vixit, ut cum à fratre in Etruriam fugisset, ob insignem sapientiam & prudentiam, in Lani tutorem & regni administratorem sit constitutus, quæ munia frater eius Atlas post Hesperii mortem suscepit. Hunc Atlantem tam insignem eruditione, humanitate ac sapientia virum mihi imitandum proposui, quo ad ingenium & vires suppetunt, Cosmographiam vestigiis ex alta animi specula contemplaturus, si forte aliquid veritatis in rebus nondum percoguitis rimari possim, quod ad sapientie studia conferas. Et ut Cosmos omnium rerum numerum, species, ordinem, harmoniam, proportionem, virtutes & effectus contineat, ita à creatione incipiens, partes eius omnes, quatenus methodica ratio postulat, iuxta creationis ordinem enumerabo, & physice contemplabor, quod cause rerum innotescant, ex quibus scientia constat, ex scientia, sapientia, quæ ad bonos omnia fines dirigit, ex sapientia providentia quæ finibus facilem viam præstruit: hic erit mihi scopus omnium, dein de suo ordine tractabo celestia, mox astronomicam, quæ ad diuinationes ex astris pertinent, quarto elementaria, deniq; geographicam, sic totum mundum tanquam in speculo proponam, ut ad inueniendas rerum causas sapientiam & prudentiam assequendam, sint aliqua rudimenta, & lectorem ad altiores speculationes ducere possint.

a i

Fig. 6. Mercator's Preface from his Atlas sive ... (Octavo edition on 2 CD's, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)  
Sl. 6. Mercatorov Predovor iz Atlasa sive ... (izdanje tvrtke Octavo na 2 CD-a, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)



50

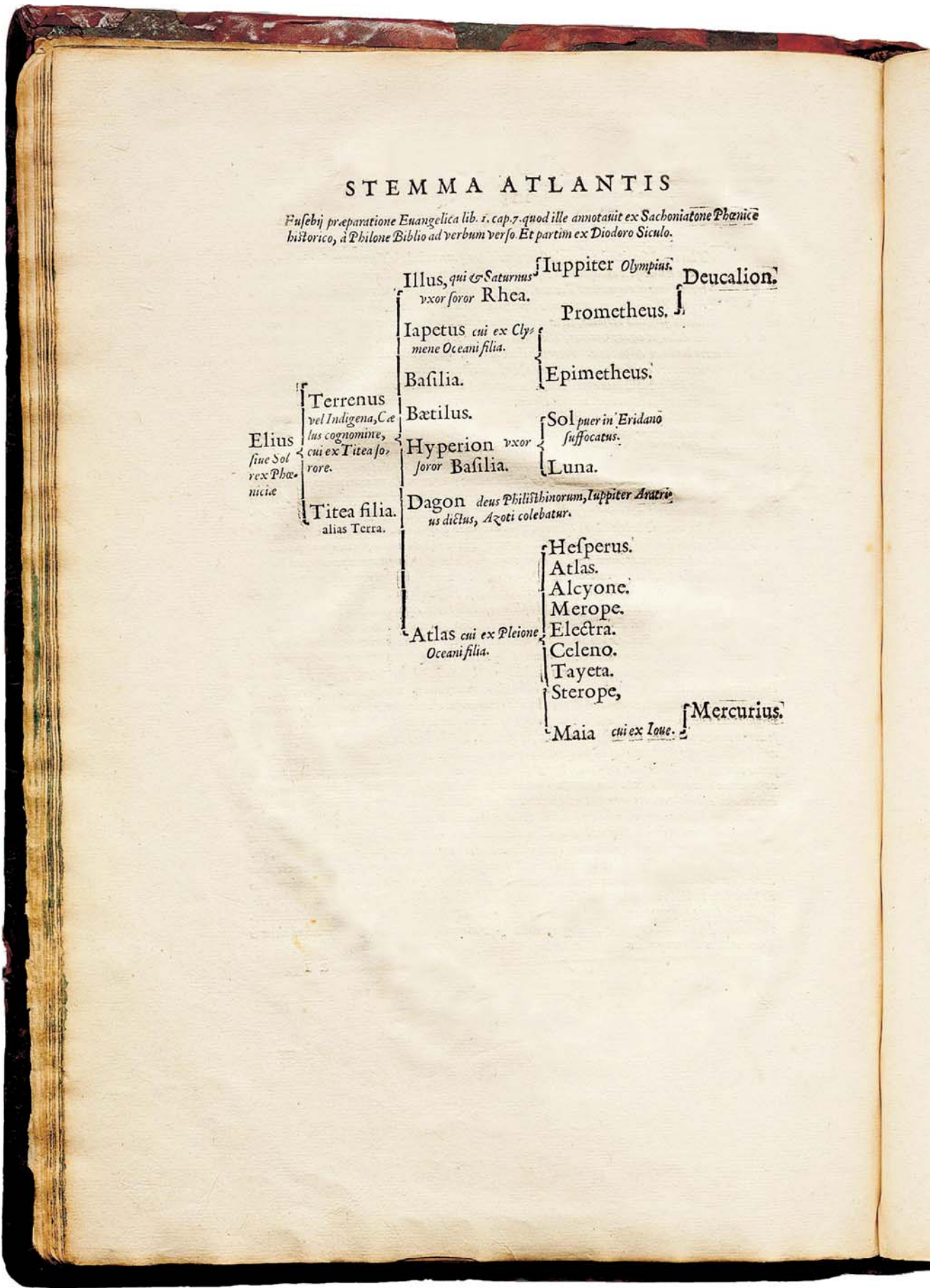


Fig. 7. Atlas's family tree from Mercator's Atlas sive ... (Octavo edition on 2 CD's, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)

Sl. 7. Atlasovo rodoslovlje iz Mecatorova Atlasa sive ... (izdanje tvrtke Octavo na 2 CD-a, ISBN 1-891788-26-4)

Budući da Diodor navodi da je kod Atlančana prvo vladao Caelus i da je potakao ljude, koji su prije bili raspršeni po poljima, da se skupe i osnuju gradove, sigurno je da su to bili najstariji kraljevi. Atlas, sin Atlasov, otjerao je brata Hespera i postao kralj Iberije, koja je kasnije nazvana Hispanijom (Španjolskom) godine 738. poslije općeg potopa. Hesper je pobjegao u Etruriju i tamo postao Janusovim skrbnikom. Atlasov djed Helije vladao je u Fenikiji od potopa godine 662.

Diodor potvrđuje da su ti kraljevi stekli osobitu mudrost po prirodni stvari i razmišljanjem. Ujedno su se privikli na čovječnost i pobožnost, tako da Diodor s pravom može reći da su Atlasovi potomci zaslužili da ih se hvali više od ostalih naroda, kako zbog pobožnosti tako i zbog ljudskog postupka prema došljacima u doba kada je tek 22. ili 23. generacija zaživjela i mnogi dijelovi kontinenta bili još nenastanjeni.

Atlas je imao više sinova, ali je jednoga, koji se isticao pobožnošću, pravednošću i čovječnošću prema podanicima, nazvao Hesper. Kad se Hesper popeo na vrh Atlasa da promatra putanje zvijezda, iznenada ga je ponio vjetar i više nikada nije bio viđen.

Tako kaže Diodor, ali ja sam ga pronašao, kako sam već rekao, kao kralja u Iberiji, kamo su ga prebacili povoljni vjetrovi. Tamo je tako razborito i pobožno živio, da je bio zbog izuzetna znanja i razboritosti postavljen za Janusova staratelja i upravitelja kraljevstva, kad je od brata pobjegao u Etruriju. Poslije Hesperove smrti te je službe preuzeo njegov brat Atlas.

Moja je namjera oponašati, koliko mi sposobnosti i snage dopuštaju, tog Atlasa koji se toliko isticao obrazovanošću, ljudskošću i znanjem. Kanim proučavati koz-

mografiju kao iz visokih ogledala duše, da bih možda mogao istražiti neku istinu u stvarima još neotkrivenim. Ti bi to mogao dodati svojem bavljenju znanosti.

I kao što svemir sadrži broj, vrstu, poredak, suglasje, razmjernost, osobitosti i ishode svega, tako ću, počevši od stvaranja, kako zahtijeva metodičko razumijevanje, sve njegove dijelove nabrojati prema redu stvaranja i promatrati njihova fizikalna svojstva, da bi se ukazalo na uzroke stvari, od kojih se sastoji znanje, od znanja se pak sastoji mudrost koja sve usmjerava ka dobrim ciljevima, a od mudrosti providnost koja do ciljeva lagani put stere. To će mi biti cilj svega. Obradit ću nadalje redom nebeske pojave, zatim astromantičke, koje se tiču proricanja prema zvijezdama, kao četvrto elemente, zatim geografske pojmove. Tako ću cijeli svijet prikazati kao u ogledalu, da budu neka počela za otkrivanje uzroka stvari i za sticanje znanja i mudrosti. A to bi moglo povesti čitaoca ka dubljim istraživanjima.

### Atlasovo rodoslovlje

iz Eusebijeva djela *De euangelica praeparatione*, knjiga I., poglavlje 7., koje je on pribilježio prema Sanhuniatonu, autoru povijesti Fenikije. Filon iz Byblosa Sanhuniatonovo je djelo doslovce preveo. A dijelom je rodoslovlje i iz djela Diodora sa Sicilije.

### 3. Rasprava

Smisao ovoga rada nije u utvrđivanju različitih interpretacija ili tumačenja grčke mitologije, niti u traženju "pravog" mita o Atlasu, nego u razjašnjavanju porijekla naziva atlas prema izvorniku - Mercatorovu predgovoru zbirci karata koja po prvi put u povijesti nosi ime "atlas".





### 3. Discussion

The purpose of this paper is not to determine different interpretations of Greek mythology, nor to track down the "real" myth about Atlas, but to clarify the origin of the term 'atlas' according to the original – Mercator's preface to the first map collection to bear the name 'atlas'.

1. In the Preface (*Praefatio in Atlantem*) to his atlas, Mercator does not mention the war Atlas and the other Titans unsuccessfully waged against Zeus and the other Olympian gods. Likewise, he does not mention the punishment imposed upon Atlas by Zeus, who forced him to bear the heavens on his shoulders forever.

2. Keuning rightly points out that Mercator did not derive the term 'atlas' for a map collection from the famous Titan who was punished by perpetually bearing the heavens on his shoulders. However, it is not clear where Keuning found the statement that Mercator's Atlas was the "mythical King of Libya, a wise philosopher, mathematician and astronomer, credited with producing the first celestial globe." Mercator's Preface to the *Atlas sive* tells a somewhat different story.

3. To Mercator, Atlas was a descendant of people who knew much about astronomy and the natural sciences, a person of royal descent and a king of Mauritania. He was a very proficient astrologer and the first person to discuss the sphere. He ruled the African region along the coast, from Libya, past the Straits of Gibraltar, to Mauritania. Mount Atlas was named after him, as were the Atlantes, the inhabitants of Mauritania. Furthermore, Mercator considered Atlas wise, humane and pious, excelling in erudition, humanity and knowledge. This Atlas was the model for Mercator.

### 4. Notes

Nowadays, many things bear the name Atlas and are related directly or indirectly to the Atlas of Greek mythology. But there is more than one person in Greek mythology named Atlas (URL4). He is mentioned as a Titan who bore the celestial sphere on his shoulders, and as a

giant who was turned into stone near Athens, thereby forming the Atlas Mountains. Furthermore, Atlas was the legendary king of Mauritania and an expert astronomer. He was also Poseidon's mortal son and the first king of Atlantis. However, various interpretations of Greek mythology are not the subject of this paper.

In addition to the term 'atlas' in cartography, which is the subject of this paper, the word 'atlas' or 'Atlas' is found in many other places. In astronomy, 'Atlas' is the name of Saturn's moon, the name of a Moon crater and the name of a star. 'Atlas' can be found in biology, physics, mathematics, space techniques, computer science, geography, the military industry, literature, journalism, comics, sport, etc. Many company names contain the word 'Atlas', and some famous people's first or last name is 'Atlas' (URL4).

### 5. Conclusions

In this paper, the authors have not discussed the various interpretations of Greek mythology related to the name Atlas, but clarified the origin of the term 'atlas' according to the original - Mercator's preface to the first map collection to bear the name 'atlas'. It is usually believed that the term 'atlas' for a map collection was taken from the name of Atlas the Titan, who can often be seen in sculpture, and who is represented on some atlas title pages, in cartouches of old maps and elsewhere, bearing the globe of the Earth or the celestial sphere on his shoulders as a punishment. On the basis of the research conducted and the translation of the Preface to Mercator's *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mvndi et fabricati figvra*, it was determined that there was no mention of punishment or of the burden on Atlas's shoulders. Mercator named his atlas primarily due to another Atlas's wisdom, erudition and humanity.

### Acknowledgment

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52



Fig. 8. Atlas on the roof of the National Library in Vienna

Sl. 8. Atlas na krovu Nacionalne knjižnice u Beču

1. U Predgovoru (*Praefatio in Atlantem*) svojeg atlasa Mercator ne spominje borbu koju su Atlas i drugi titani bez uspjeha vodili protiv Zeusa i drugih olimpskih bogova. Također, ne spominje kaznu kojom je Zeus kaznio Atlasa prisilivši ga da na svojim ramenima zauvijek nosi nebo.

2. Keuning je u pravu kad ističe da Mercator nije izveo ime atlas za zbirku karata prema poznatom titanu koji je kažnjen doživotnim nošenjem neba na svojim ramenima. Međutim, nije jasno odakle je Keuning preuzeo tvrdnju da je Mercatorov Atlas "mitski kralj Libije, mudar filozof, matematičar i astronom za kojeg se kaže da je izradio prvi globus neba." Mercator u svojem Predgovoru *Atlasu sive* ... piše ipak malo drukčije.

3. Za Mercatora Atlas je potomak osoba koje su dobro poznavale astronomiju i prirodne znanosti, kraljevskog je podrijetla i kralj Mauritanije. Bio je vrlo stručan astrolog i prva osoba koja je raspravljala o sferi. Vladao je afričkim područjem uz more, od Libije preko Gibraltarskog tjesnaca do Mauritanije. Po njemu je nazvano gorje Atlas, a stanovnici Mauritanije Atlančani. Nadalje, za Mercatora je Atlas mudar, čovječan i pobožan, ističe se obrazovanost, ljudskošću i znanjem. Za Mercatora je uzor upravo takav Atlas.

#### 4. Napomene

Mnogo toga u današnje doba nosi ime Atlas i stoji u izravnoj ili neizravnoj vezi s Atlasom iz grčke mitologije. Istaknimo da čak ni u grčkoj mitologiji ime Atlas nije pridruženo samo jednoj osobi (URL4). Spominje se kao titan koji na svojim ramenima nosi nebesku sferu, zatim kao div kojeg je Atena pretvorila u stijenu, pa njegovo tijelo čini Atlasno gorje. Nadalje, Atlas je legendarni kralj Mauritanije i vrstan astronom. Atlas je također smrtni Posejdonov sin i prvi kralj Atlantisa. U svakom slučaju,

različite interpretacije grčke mitologije nisu bile predmet ovoga rada.

Osim atlasa u kartografiji o kojem je bilo riječi u ovome radu, atlas ili Atlas se susreće i na mnogim drugim mjestima. U astronomiji Atlas je ime Saturnova mjeseca, ime kratera na Mjesecu i ime jedne zvijezde. Atlas se višestruko susreće u biologiji, fizici, matematici, svemirskoj tehnici, računarstvu, geografiji, vojnoj industriji, književnosti, tisku, stripovima, sportu i dr. Veći broj tvrtki sadrži u svojem imenu ime Atlas, a neke poznate osobe nose ime ili prezime Atlas (URL4).

#### 5. Zaključak

U ovome radu nisu utvrđivane različite interpretacije ili tumačenja grčke mitologije vezane uz ime Atlas, nego je razjašnjeno porijeklo naziva atlas prema izvorniku - Mercatorovu predgovoru zbirci karata koja po prvi put u povijesti nosi ime "atlas". Obično se smatra da je naziv atlas za zbirku karata nastao prema imenu titana Atlasa koji se često može vidjeti u obliku skulptura, na naslovnica nekima atlasa, u kartušama pojedinih starih karata i drugdje kako za kaznu na svojim ramenima nosi zemaljski globus ili nebesku sferu. Na temelju provedenih istraživanja i prijevoda Predgovora Mercatorova *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* utvrđeno je da to nije točno, tj. da Mercator uopće ne spominje kaznu ni teret na Atlasovim ramenima, već da je dao ime svom atlasu prvenstveno na temelju mudrosti, obrazovanosti i čovječnosti jednog drugog Atlasa.

#### Zahvala

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URL4: Atlas disambiguation

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