

Globus Terræstris

Map Maker: Jost Amman

Date: 1564-78

Size: 29.5 x 20 cm

Locations: in *Cl. Ptolemaeus, Geographia, Libri Octo, Coloniae Agrippinae*, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London;

Vatican's Apostolic Library, Rome - Stamp. Palat. II 463; NMM G.201:1/9.; and Harvard University.

Description: A world map drawn on a polar hemispherical projection with the prime meridian through the Canary Islands. The map is decorated with ships and sea-creatures. Winds are depicted at the corners and the borders of the page are decorated with the portraits of six astronomers and scientific instruments.

This unusual world map has been located in three institutions: the Vatican's Apostolic Library, the National Maritime Museum, and Harvard University. No one, it seems, is certain as to its origin. Andresen, in the reference below, identifies the work as one of the prints of the prolific Swiss-born engraver Jost Amman. A companion celestial map is also known, dated 1564, when Amman was working from Nuremberg. However, the terrestrial map's general configuration and style is more consistent with a date earlier than 1564, and there are particular similarities with the gores engraved by Georg Hartmann and by Francois Demongenet (#387).

The central part of the print consists of two hemispheres projected from the north and south poles respectively. There is a blank dedicatory shield on the southern hemisphere but no author, date, or any kind of imprint. The form of the continents, lettering, and the figures and ships in the sea all resemble the second set of gores by Demongenet (#387). These gores bear the letters 'E V' (possibly referring to the Italian engraver Enea Vico) and he may also have been responsible for the *Globus Terrestris* map; alternatively Demongenet may have been the author of both.

The side panels flanking the two hemispheres are most interesting. It is within the intricate decoration of the right-hand panel that the monogram 'J A' indicating Jost Amman's authorship may just be discerned. The panels contain six circular head-and-shoulder portraits of medieval or classical cosmographers - Azophi Arabus, Hermetus, Hermanus Contractus, Aractus Cilix, Nicephorus, and Messahallus. This is an unusual choice of relatively obscure savants dating from Aratus of Cilix, an astronomical writer who flourished from about 270 B.C., to the 11th century German scholar and instrument-maker Hermanus the lame. Also within the borders are complex groups of cartographical and astronomical instruments - astrolabes, quadrants, graduated cylinders, compasses, etc. Perhaps the map was commissioned to accompany a technical treatise on cosmographical science; if so then such a work has not been identified. Nordenskiöld mentions a catalogue reference listing a world map by Demongenet: *Carte de deux hemispheres* ascribed to Venice, c.1541. This may possibly be the central portion of the piece decorated by Amman, or an earlier version of it.

References:

R. Alrnagia, *Monumenta Cartographica Vaticana*, The Vatican, 1948, vol. II, p. 83;

A. Andresen, *Der Deutsche Peintre-Graveurs ...*, Leipzig, 1864, nos. 214 & 215.

A.E. Nordenskiöld, *Facsimile Atlas*, p. 108.

*R. W. Shirley, *The Mapping of the World*, p. 129, #113, Plate 98.

*H. Wolff, *America, Early Maps of the New World*, P. 78, #96.





