

TITLE: *World Map of al-Wardi*

DATE: 933/1583

AUTHOR: *Ibn al-Wardi*

DESCRIPTION: The first of these maps is contained in a genealogical scroll titled *Zübdetü't-tevarih* [Cream of Histories] by Seyyid Loqman ibn Hüseyin ibn el-'Asuri el-Urmevi. The scroll was started during the reign of Süleyman I (1520-66) and was taken over by Loqman in 1569 when he officially became the court historiographer. The map is in the first part of the roll (64.7 x 41.3 cm); the author who started the roll is not known. The work is also called the *Silsilename* [Book of Genealogy], and there are at least three manuscripts produced between 1583 and 1588. On this particular map, unlike the other world maps attributed to al-Wardi, the northern and southern extremities of the *oikumene* [known world] are flatten out, the countries show boundary lines, and the Nile River are very detailed. It is curious, judging by the date of production that the *oikumene* is still medieval in construct. While obviously these maps were produced after the European "early medieval" period, they still reflect the medieval world view of the Arab cartographers.

The work is written in Turkish with large *naskhi* script in black ink on 90 leaves of delicate finished (*aharlı*) paper. Within are 55 miniatures depicting subjects in the text, some of them one to a page and some two. On pages 1b-2a two round medallions carry an inscription stating the work's subject and saying that it was prepared for the Treasury of Sultan Murad III (r. AH 982-1003 / AD 1574-95). The work, which was written by the court panegyrist (*Şehnameci*) Sayyid Loqman Aşuri, consists of two main sections. The first begins with the universe and the signs of the zodiac and continues with stories taken from the Torah, the New Testament, and the Qur'an which tell of the lives of prophets and those who rendered service to the faith. These are illustrated with paintings. The first part ends with genealogical trees of the Prophet Muhammad, the Four Orthodox Caliphs, and the sultans and high officials of Muslim dynasties such as the Umayyads, the 'Abbasids, the early Islamic period, the Ghaznawids, the Ilkhanids, the Seljuqs and the Timurids. The second part opens with Sultan Osman, the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, and goes up to Sultan Murad III, with 12 portraits of Ottoman sultans. It ends with descriptions of the political events of these sultans' reigns.

This work was made for the Treasury of Sultan Murad III, and the quality of its paintings, its binding and its calligraphy make it one of the greatest works of Ottoman art created for a sultan.

Abū Ḥafs Zayn al-Dīn 'Umar ibn al-Muzaffar Ibn al-Wardī (Arabic: مظفر ابن عمر (الوردی) ابن), known as Ibn al-Wardi, was an Arab historian AH 691 (1291/1292)-AH 749 (1348/1349). Ibn al-Wardi's book, *Kharîdat al-'Ajâ'ib wa farîdat al-gharâib* (Arabic: خريدة : (الغرائب وفريدة عجائب) [The Pearl of Wonders and the Uniqueness of Strange Things], was accompanied with a colored world map and a picture of Ka'bah. This work sums the geographical knowledge of the Arabic world of the time, referring to climate, terrain, fauna and flora, population, way of living, existing states and their governments in individual regions of the world. The author also speaks about Slavs and their lifestyle and mentions al-Mahdiyya as the residence of the Fatimid dynasty. Therefore, the book is older than the city of Kairo (founded in 969 C. E.). Al-Wardi makes reference in his work to the book by al-Mas'udi (#212).

A contemporary copy of an illustrated cosmography, and perhaps the earliest to survive of the great geographer Ibn al-Wardi (d. probably 1457 AD), includes a double-page color map of the world, an illustration of the *Ka'ba* [the holiest place in Islam, a

large cube-shaped building inside the al-Masjid al-Haram mosque in Mecca], as well as a diagram of the strategic game of chess, with an explanation of the chess pieces and their moves. In addition to a compendium of place names, seas and mountains, the author has also included a description of the flora and fauna of the places he describes. Throughout the work, the author refers to various historians and geographers, such as al-Mas'udi (d. circa 956 AD, #212), Ibn al-Adhim (d. 1262), and Ibn Hawqal (died end of the tenth century, #213). The original work is said to have been completed around the year 1419 AD, as stated on the earliest known copy which is dated 1479 AD (cited in R. Sellheim, *Arabische Handschriften: Materialien zur Arabischen Literaturgeschichte*, Wiesbaden, 1976-87, Vol. I, pp. 184), where the author is given as Abu Hafis 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn al-Wardi, and a manuscript from 1487 AD, where the author is given as Siraj al-Din Abu l-Hafis 'Umar Ibn Muzaffar Ibn Muhammad ibn 'Umar Ibn Abi l-Fawaris Ibn al-Wardi, who was active in Aleppo, and died circa 1457 AD. The paper of the present manuscript can be clearly located to Spain no later than the middle of the 15th century.

The work has also been attributed to an earlier author, Zayn al-Din Abu Hafis 'Umar Ibn al-Muzaffar Ibn al-Wardi, who died in 1348 AD, but according to the 1479 and 1487 copies of the *Kharidat*, this author would pre-date the original work. The type of paper used here, which is a style associated with 14th and 15th century Spain, and the style of calligraphy which points to a 14th century hand, suggest this copy was produced during the 14th or 15th century, and may thus indicate the earlier authorship.

Though the identity of the author is still uncertain, at the very least the physical evidence of our copy would indicate either that it is a very early edition of the later Ibn al-Wardi, perhaps copied within a few years of the original, or that it is an edition of the earlier author, completed within less than a century of his death.

Islamic sacred geography differs from the Ptolemaic tradition in that it does not employ cartographic grids, or longitude and latitude scales; as a rule, these used Mecca and the *Ka'ba* as the center of the world. The tradition is generally associated with 10th century scholars such as al-Balkhi, al-Istakhri, al-Muqaddasi, Ibn Hawqal, and the ninth century geographer Ibn Khurdadbeh (d. 912 AD) who devised the earliest known geographical work using the *Ka'ba* as the center of the world in his *Kitab al-Masalik wa'l-Mamalik*. These geographical works neglected to include coordinates or to employ mathematical geography in the maps, and bear great similarity to the simpler-produced maps of medieval Europe.

Between the 12th and 16th centuries, the study of Islamic geography often extended to include cosmology, cosmogony, astrology and similar subjects, rather than the production of purely geographical works that were characteristic of earlier periods. These cosmological works seem to have been produced for the average lay reader as organized compendia of world knowledge, rather than critical scientific works, and relied heavily on earlier sources. The text and map in the manuscript suggest a medieval precursor; old place names and archaic descriptions occur frequently. The map towards the beginning, seen on ff. 3v-4r, shows a circular world divided into Europe, Africa and Asia. Its sense of proportion is highly schematic, and the location of certain places is rather unusual, but *al-Andalus* [Spain], *Qustantaniyyah* [Constantinople] and the River Nile are all approximately where one might expect. The world is shown surrounded by water, with an outer boundary of mountains, seen here as the polychrome outer border. In addition to the extensive chapter on geography, the *Kharidat al-'Aja'ib* contains a chapter on the types of birds and other animals that exist in the places that the author

has described. The inclusion of a small section explaining the game of chess, including a detailed drawing, has not been recorded in other copies of Ibn al-Wardi's cosmography. The large circular diagram with the *Ka`ba* at its center, shown on f. 64r, shows the direction of prayer to *qiblah* [Mecca] from different countries, seen here in 35 sectors. The sectors are associated with the north, south, east and west walls of the *Ka`ba*. The region between North Africa and Syria is associated with the northwest wall of the *Ka`ba*, with a *qiblah* from east to south. The region between Iraq and Afghanistan is connected with the northeast wall of the *Ka`ba* and has a *qiblah* from south to west. India, Tibet and China are associated with the Black Stone in the eastern corner of the *Ka`ba*, with a *qiblah* pointing slightly northwest. A fourth region, the Yemen, the Hadramawt, Aden and Socotra are linked with the southern corner of the *Ka`ba*, with a *qiblah* pointing north.

A later ownership inscription on the inside of the back doublure is dated 1090/1679. Several inscriptions on the inside of the front doublure exist in a later maghribi hand; one of these refers to one unidentified individual by the name of Ibn al-Ma'mun. The final page bears a partial reference to the owner or scribe of the manuscript, whose name appears to be al-Qawariqi.

In addition to the two dated copies mentioned earlier, further copies of the *Kharidat al-`Aja'ib* include one in the Vatican Library dating to the 18th century, one of a similar date (1778 AD) in the National Library of the Czech Republic, as well as one in the Library of Congress, which is undated. There are also several examples in the Chester Beatty Library, dating from the 16th to the 18th centuries; and several examples are cited in C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. II, Leiden, 1938, pp. 162-163.

The following excerpts are taken out of a work older than 968 when Cairo became the capital. Others are his stories taken from Mas'udi (without mentioning his name) in which the Zenj warriors ride on cattle. His first chapter is almost entirely based on Yaqut's geography. As a result, those trying to date his work start from c. 900 to 1456. The later mentions 1789 or 1778... are the dates of the manuscripts found. One more date that is mentioned often 1349 in which Ibn al-Wardi died of plague. This, however, was another Ibn al-Wardi, but the complete name is in both cases the same. In recent works from about 2000 on the Ibn al-Wardi concerned is often called *pseudo Ibn al Wardi*.

Barbara; this land is situated on the sea shore; opposite Yemen, neighboring Nubie, it is densely populated, one can see there a mountain called Canouni, with seven peaks, stretching for 40 miles into the sea, on one of its peaks, there is a small town called Haouina. The people of Barbara eat frogs, and go to the sea to fish.

The land of the Zinji lies opposite to that of Sind; between the two intervenes the breadth of the Sea of Persia. The inhabitants are the blackest of the negro race. They worship idols, are brave, hardy and fight in battle riding oxen, as their country supplies neither horses, mules, nor camels. Massoudi says; I've seen their oxen kneel like camels, to be laden, and they travel fast with their burdens, Their inhabitations extend from the extremity of the gulph (Gardafui) to the low land of gold (Sofala 't il Dhab.) This country is extensive, and abounds in gold, grain, and the treasures of nature, and their towns are populous. Each town lying adjacent to a branch of a river. Snow is not know among them, nor rain, which is commonly the case with the greater part of the country of the blacks. They have no ships, but traders come in vessels from Uman, to buy their children, whom they sell in different countries.

The Zinji are extremely numerous, through deficient in the means of carrying on war. It is said that their king goes forth to battle with three thousand followers,

ridding on oxen. The Nile is divided above their country, at the mountain of Muksim. Most of the natives sharpen their teeth, and polish them to a point. They traffic in elephants' teeth, panthers skins and silk. They have islands in the sea, from which they collect cowries to adorn their persons, and they use them in traffic one with another, at an established rate. Adjoining to these lies the land of the Dum-adum. It is situated on the Nile, bordering on the Zinji. The inhabitants are infidels, and the tartars among the blacks, consisting of savage tribes of freebooters, who continually take captive and plunder every thing that falls in their way. In their country the river divides; one branch going towards Egypt, and the other to the country of the Zinji. Sofala 't il Dhab adjoins the eastern border of the Zinji. It is an extensive district, and mines of iron are found in it, which the people of the country work and sell to the traders from India, who give a high price for it, on account of it being harder and of better temper than that which they obtain in their own country, and they purify it and make it into steel, which admits to a durable edge. The natives themselves also make swords of it, and other offensive weapons. The most remarkable produce of this country is its quantity of native gold that is found, in pieces of two or three Meskalla weight; in spite of which, the natives generally adorn their persons with ornaments of brass. They are neighbors to the country of Ouacouac (Wak-Wak).

Yemen; this land is situated opposite the ones of Barbara and the Zindges, from which it is separated by the sea... ..

Aden, nice town, where the ships of India and China come, one finds there all the products of the eastern countries, brought there from different places, silk, arms, kaimoukt (kind of leader) , musk, aoud (aloes wood), several aromatics, ivory, ebony, clothes of grass, estimated higher is value then those of silk, lead, pearls, precious stones, the zoubad (civet) and amber. In the north there is a mountain who goes from one sea to the other, leaving two wholes through which the boats can pass, this town (Aden) is 4 days away from the Zendges.

Hind, this big country extending north to south, is partly situated opposite the African coast, there where the Zindges live; it is the country of Mehradge, the title of the king.. ..

Concerning the lands in the southern hemisphere; they start with the lands of the Sudan or the Blacks, which extends up to the extremity of the Mogreb or Africa, towards the big sea, there are many deserts there where there is nobody.

Nubia, stretches from Egypt up to these deserts.

Badgia, this is a small country between Habascha, Nubia, and the deserts.

Habascha; is along the sea of Kolzoum; stretching till the land of the Zindges and the deserts.

The Zindges; their country is the biggest of the countries the Blacks live in, at one side it touches Abyssinie.

The island of Camar or the island of the Moon, very long and very large, one says 4 months walking east to west; there is a town called Han, where the king resides. That island produces nardgil or coconuts, sugarcane, one makes there clothes of grass, as beautiful as from silk, one builds boats of 60 elbows long, that carry 200 men.

The islands in the sea of Zinges, or of Zanguebar.

There you do not see anymore the pole star, or the big bear, and the waves are big as mountains.

1. The island Mohtaraka.
2. The island of Dhoudha
3. The island of Mamoura, this is an archipelago.
4. The island of Sakfar.

He calls the area south of the sources of the Nile: Rub'a al-Kharab, one of the richest regions in the world.

He describes Zanzibar as peopled by idolaters who boasted no code of writing (meaning no revealed religion) but were accustomed to being harangued (meaning they get speeches) by leaders of society in the marked places.

He declares that all Zendjs are pagan, bad and cruel. He makes them the darkest of the Negroes.

One finds at Sofala a big amount of gold, in very pure nuggets and each nugget (tibra) can be 2 to 3 mithcals.

There are cannibals on the isle of Saksar in the sea of the Zanj. (Saksar comes from Persian Sag-Sar: dogheads). He places a mythical serpent in the sea of the Zanj. The Wakwak of the land of the Zendjs is big fertile and prospers. They do not know the cold or the rain .

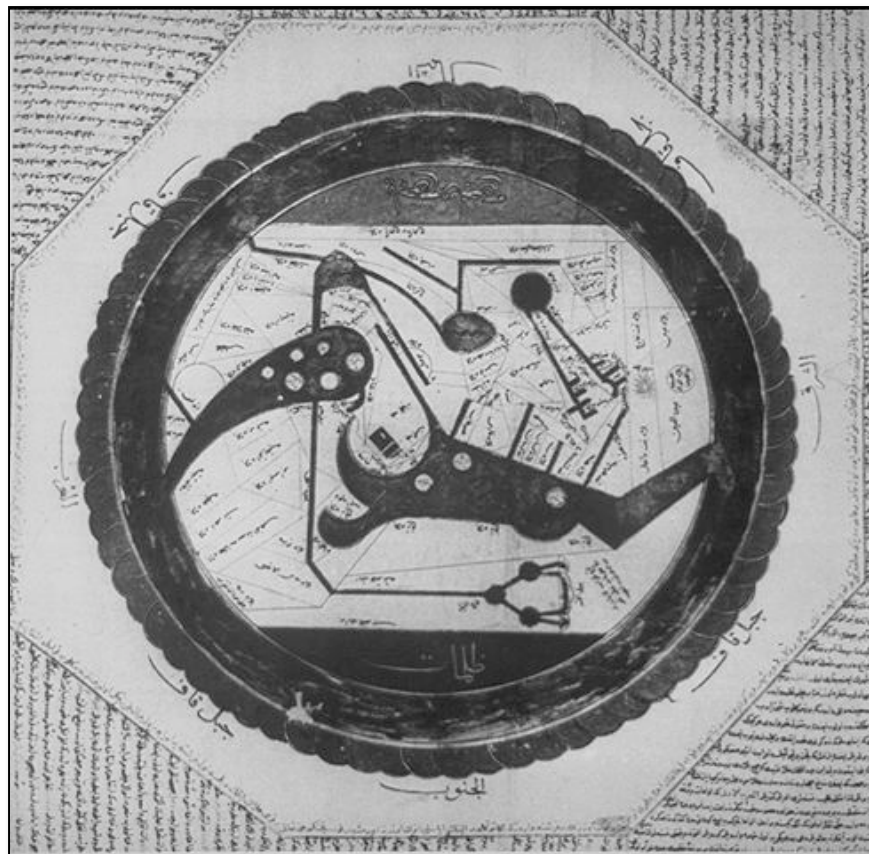
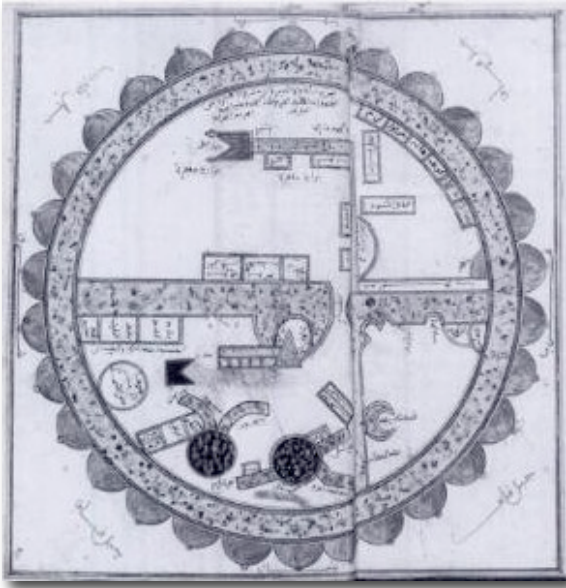
LOCATIONS: Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi Kütüphanesi, A.3599, Istanbul
British Library, MS. Or. 1525, fols. 8v-9r, London
Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

REFERENCE:

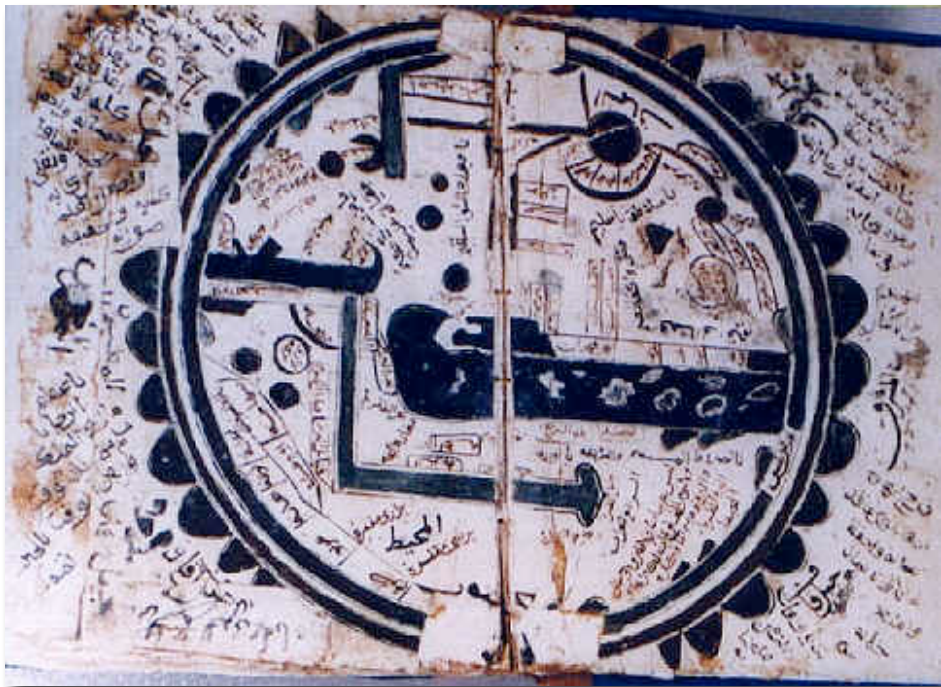
- *Harley, J. B., *The History of Cartography*, Volume Two, p. 220, Figure 11.14 and Plate 8
- *Lelewel, J. *Geographie de Moyen Age*
- *Miller, K., *Mappae arabicae*, Fig. 13, p.136
- *Virga, V., *Cartographia, Mapping Civilizations*, pp. 26-28, Plate 23.

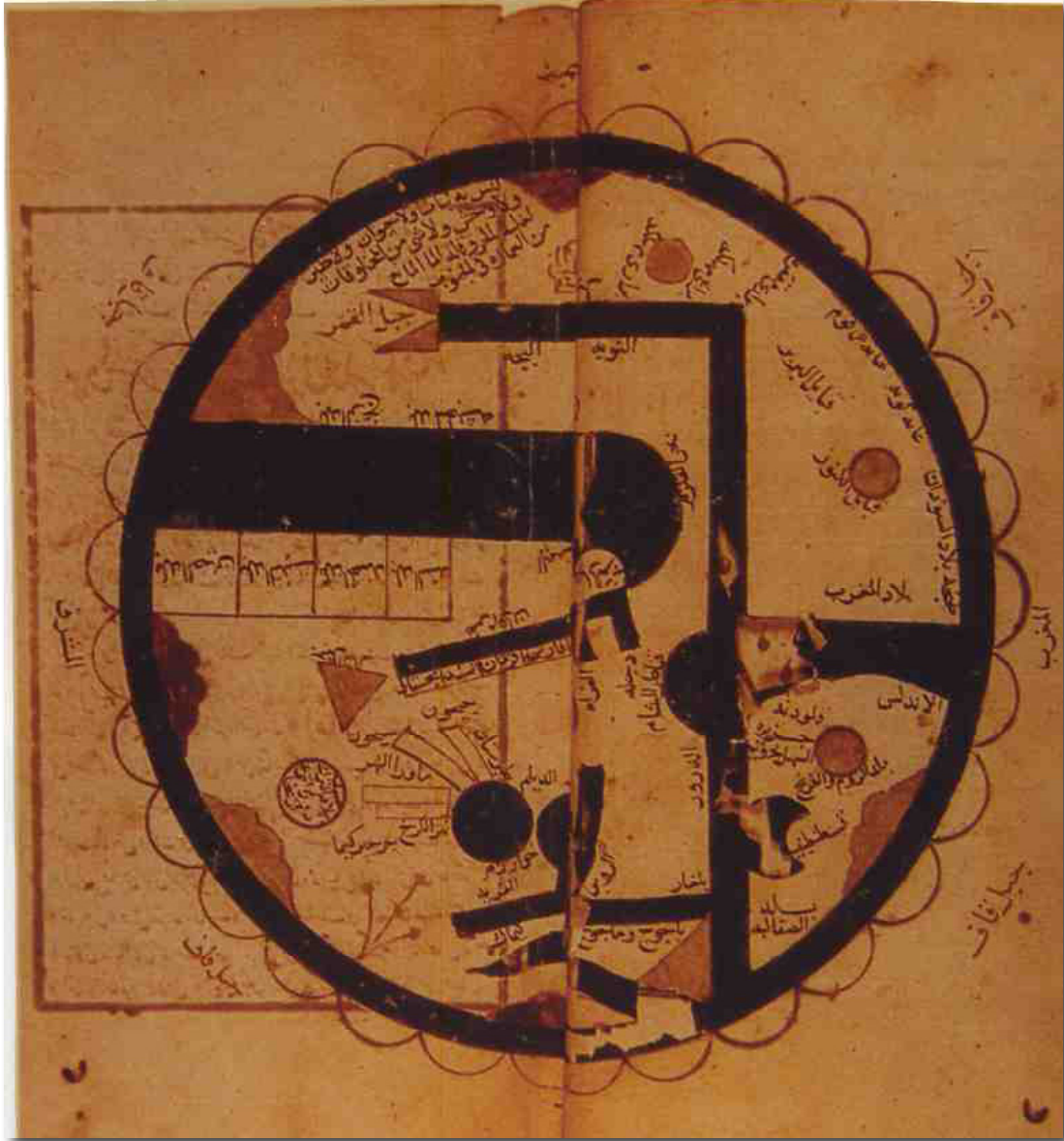


Czech National Library, MS XVIII G57, ff. 3v-4r, 1778, 18 x 13.5 cm

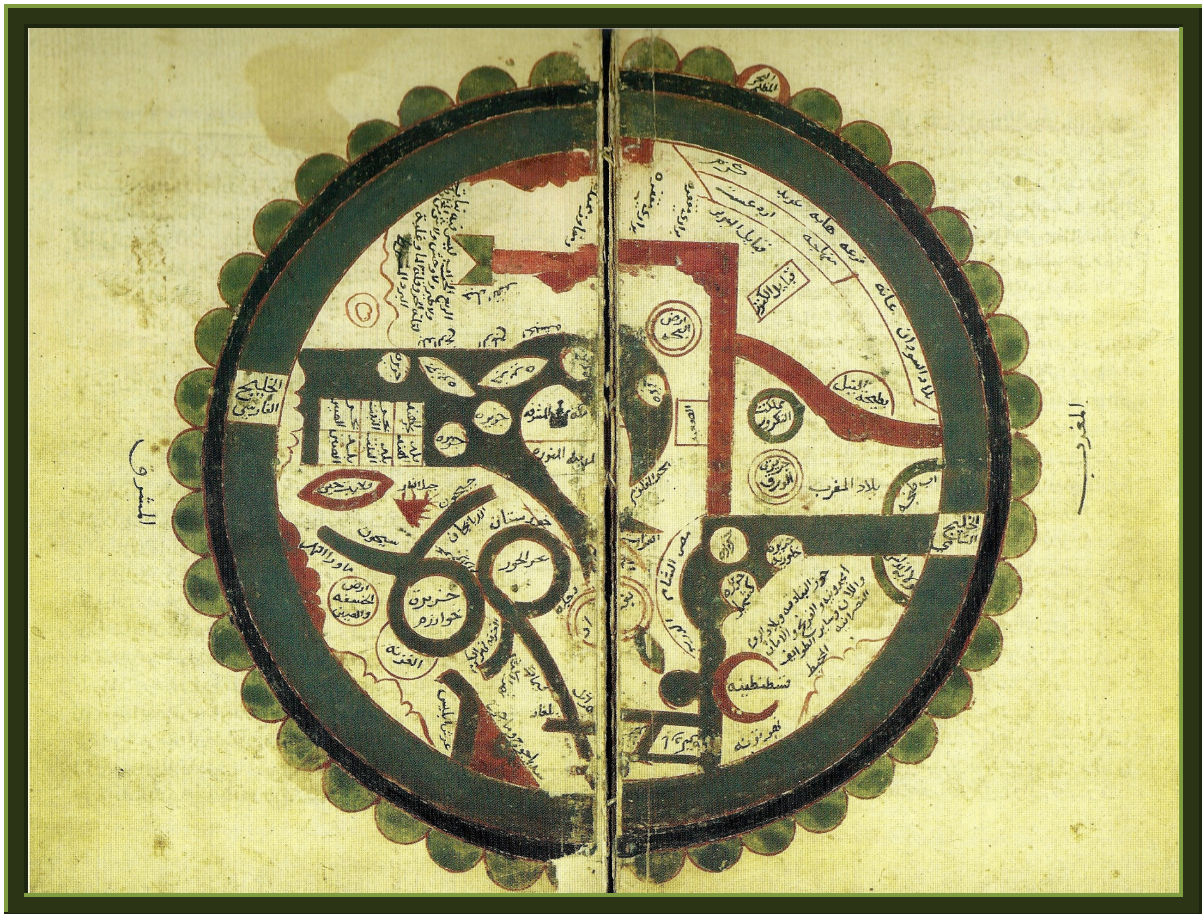


Ibn al-Wardi world map, 17th century copy
oriented with South at the top





*Ibn al-Wardi world map, 1001 A.D.
(16.5 cm diameter)
oriented with South at the top*



World map in a 1481 Turkish manuscript of al-Wardi's "Enumeration of Wonders"
 Oriented with the South at the top, it shows the known world as a sphere surrounded by the Encircling Sea, which is enclosed by mountains. Mecca, shown unusually in graphic form, the focal point of all spatial references, is near the center of the Arabian Peninsula, which is embraced by the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea in the shape of a crescent moon to signify the unity of the celestial and terrestrial worlds, a unity of conjoined sacredness. Turkish Constantinople is a red crescent "wall" or barrier against the "people of the cross". At the top, Africa is extended the length of the Indian Ocean, but unlike Ptolemy's map, here the continent does not enclose the ocean. The Nile, drawn in red, takes a right-angle turn, possibly reflecting the river's great bend.
 Library of Congress

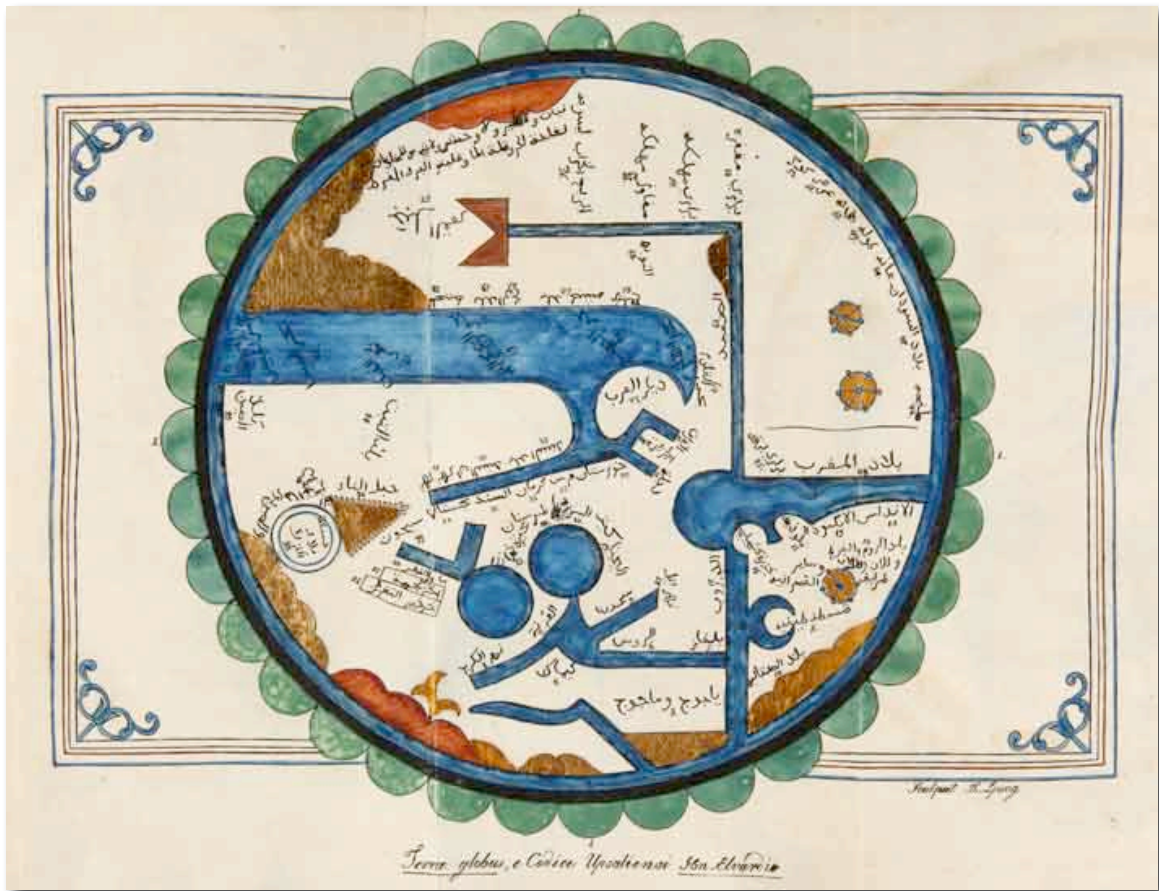


Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS E.D. Clarke Or. 14, f. 2v



London, British Library, MS Or. 4637, ff. 3v-4r





Ibn al-Wardi. *Fragmenta libri Margarita mirabilium*. Prooemium, caput secundum, tertium, quartum et quintem continens. E Codice Upsaliensi ed., lat. vertit, var. lect. e Cod. Suchteleniano ajecit C.J. Tornberg. Uppsala, 1835-39. 2 in 1 vol. W. fold. watercolored worldmap with gold.



'Umar Bin Al-Muzaffar Abu Al-Hafs Bin Al-Wardi (D. 1457 Ad?):
Kharidat Al-'Aja'ib Wa Faridat Al-Ghara'ib
Ottoman Provinces, 17th century

An important cosmography composed for the Mamluk na'ib of Aleppo Shahin, Arabic manuscript on paper, 178ff. plus 4 fly-leaves, each folio with 21ll. of black naskh, titles in red, catchwords, with map of the world centered on the Jezirah, diagram of the Ka'ba, 9½ x 6¾ in. (24.2 x 17 cm.)



