



Silent world map (1265)

Oxford, Ms. Bodl. Douce 319, fol. 8r, Bodlain Library, University of Oxford.

Like Arabic maps (e.g. Idrīsī) the world map is oriented towards the South. The circumnavigability of Africa and the open Indian Ocean (in Arabic tradition contrary to the later Ptolemaic world maps) are clearly visible. Cartographical knowledge which has gone lost a century later in Constantinople. It clearly resembles, in outline, the famous Fra Mauro planisphere of 1459 (#249). Compared to the mythological T-O Maps, e.g. the 13th centuries Hereford and Ebstorf Maps (#224 and #226), the Silent world map in Li Livres dou Trésor is an encyclopedia finalized between 1260 and 1265 by Brunetto Latini (1220-1294), a teacher and friend of Dante, shows a more rational world view. A world map in Arabic tradition is orientated towards the South. Latini was several times at the court of Alfons the X (the Wise), striving for making Arabic knowledge accessible for Latin scholarly, might have brought Latini into contact with an Arabic map