

**TITLE:** *Walsperger's World Map*

**DATE:** 1448

**AUTHOR:** *Andreas Walsperger*

**DESCRIPTION:** A Benedictine monk named Andreas Walsperger from Salzburg created this world map in 1448 at Constance. It conforms to the traditional type of world representation during the European Middle Ages and this representation of the known world accords with the contemporary monkish cartographic world view. The chart with a diameter of 57.5 cm is surrounded by circles representing the heavenly spheres and the "heaven of crystal" on a sheet of parchment measuring approximately 58.7 x 75 cm. The outer circle catalogues the heavenly hosts. Around *Alpha* and *Omega* they form a group (*Seraphim*, *Cherubim*, *Throne* and *Dominationes*), the very first beginnings (*Principatus*), the archangel and angel. Written between the circles are the signs of the zodiac and the names of the winds.

The orientation of the *mappamundi* towards the South is perhaps the first aspect that surprises and intrigues the modern spectator who is used to North-oriented maps, and who is therefore disoriented by the effort required to identify landmasses which not only have 500-year-old outlines, but which are also turned "upside down," thus losing their familiar shapes. Most of the diagrammatic manuscript *mappaemundi* of the period 1150-1500 are oriented to the East. The center of the world map is not in Jerusalem; it is located at a point in the interior of Asia Minor. The seas are painted green; the continental waters are blue and the Red Sea in the corresponding color. The small circles indicating the cities are black unless the city is Christian, where they are designated in red. Certain large cities are clearly visible, with their walls and towers. The names of localities and legends are in red or black. To the west on the edge, the *Terrestrial Paradise*, very vast, is surrounded by a wall of towers.

But among the maps contemporary with that of Andreas Walsperger is the 1459 world map of Fra Mauro (#249), the so-called *Borgia* world map (#237) of the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the *Zeitz mappaemundi* (#251) of the last quarter of that century are all oriented to the South. In addition, almost all of the Islamic world maps of this period were also South-oriented. Thus it is not surprising that, around the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, a *mappamundi* was oriented to the South. Andreas Walsperger, in fact, did not even think it necessary to address the issue, probably considering it congruent with the wider culture of his readers and patrons. Some explanations also include the influence of the contemporary Islamic cartography, the cosmographical concepts of Aristotle, and, of course, the maritime commercial focus of Walsperger's time of the Indian Ocean and thus towards the South.

Andreas Walsperger's intricate late medieval world map, on a single sheet of parchment, is a fascinating synthesis of traditions both old and new. For this reason it has been called a "transitional" map. While it has the detail of other medieval *mappaemundi*, some of its elements are unique and contemporary, suggesting knowledge of recent voyages of discovery. The names of mountains and rivers are rare. On the other hand, a rich nomenclature of cities and countries. There are also many legends, some of classical and ancient origins, but most of medieval origin (fabulous beings, monsters) and many relating to contemporary facts. From the *Terrestrial Paradise* emerge the four biblical rivers.

A Benedictine monk about whom little is known, Walsperger completed the map in the German town of Konstanz in 1448. Born in Radkersburg, Styria, around 1415, he is believed to have belonged to the monastery of St Peter in Salzburg between 1434 and 1442. This is the only map attributed to him that has survived.

On this map the Mediterranean and the Baltic are disproportionately large, and the mass of land between them has been contracted. There are many medieval mythical conceptions, and items showing, according to Konrad Miller, possible influence by Adam of Bremen. Thus in

northern Asia we have *cenocephali* and *cannibals*. (Andropopbagi), bearded women, *Gog*, *Magog*, etc. In Norway we read, "Here demons often show themselves in human shape and render service to men, and they are called trolls," Claudius Clavus also speaks of trolls in Norway. In the northern ocean to the northwest of Norway is written, "In this great sea there is no sailing on account of magnets." This is evidently the widely distributed mediaeval myth of the magnet-rock, which attracted all ships with iron in them; in Germany it occurs in the legend of Duke Ernst's wonderings in the Liver Sea, and it is doubtless derived from the *Arabian Nights*. On the mainland, to the northeast of Norway, we read that "here under the North Pole the land is uninhabitable on account of the excessive cold which produces a condition of continual frost..." In the extreme north of the ocean, near the Pole, is written, "Hell is in the heart or belly of the earth, according to the opinion of the learned."

*Palus meotidis* [the Sea of Azov] is marked as a lake due east of the Baltic. Along the north coast of Europe (and Norway) is indicated a ridge of mountains, somewhat similar to that in the Sanudo-Vesconte maps of the world (#228). The delineation of Denmark (*dacia*, with *koppenhan* and *londoma*, i.e., Lund), the straight south coast of the Baltic, and a long-shaped island called *Suecia* (with *stocholm* and *ipsala*) on the north, remind us a good deal of Idrisi's map (#219) and also somewhat of the *Cottoniana mappamundi* (#210). To the north of the island of *Suecia* "the very great kingdom of Norway" (*Norwegie*) projects to the west as a long peninsula bounding the Baltic, with *brondolch* (Bornholm?) and *nydrosia metropolis* [the capital Nidaros] as towns on its south coast, and with the land *yslandia* [Iceland] and the town of *pergen* [Bergen] on its extreme promontory.

A neatly written six-line paragraph at the map's foot records where and when he completed the map, and gives a clear idea of his sources and aims. Walsperger places Ptolemy, rediscovered in Europe a century and a half earlier, first among his influences: "This *mappamundi* or geometrical description of the globe is made from the cosmography of Ptolemy proportionally according to longitude, latitude, and the divisions of climate." Curiously, no lines of latitude or longitude appear on the map. Walsperger also claims to have used a sea chart, which accounts for the more accurate mapping of the Mediterranean. Arab geographical conventions appear in the seven climates of Arab cosmography.

Asia's southern coast is clearly mapped, with a number of important inclusions, indicating knowledge of recent southern discoveries and speculation. The Arabian peninsula and India can be identified, and a small square peninsula bears the name *Aurea Kersonesis* [the Malayan peninsula]. In what is labeled the Indian Ocean are islands named *lava insula* [Java] and *Tapbana* [Taprobana]. This ocean leads to an eastern sea. Despite the map's date, a huge peninsula protrudes very far to the south, appearing to show South America.

South is at the top of the map and northwest Asia Minor is at the exact center. *Paradise* is to be found in the east, in non-Christian Asia, shown as a fortress enclosed by high walls and towers, from which the four biblical rivers flow. Mountains and Christian and Islamic fortresses give texture to the landscape. Classical and, in particular, medieval folklore dominates the legends found on the map. A giant cannibal at the map's northeast is the only figure illustrated.

Walsperger evokes a fearsome South Pole. Annotations at the top of the map tell us: "Here the land is uninhabitable. And around this pole are found the most marvelous monsters not only among animals but even among men." Surrounding annotations name 'monsters' living in the lands of this inhospitable region. These include fantastical creatures that would have been familiar to readers of medieval and early modern books, such as the Nuremberg Chronicle: creatures with one eye, others with one foot, those with faces in their chest, more with foxtails, others with big lips and those with big feet. Likewise, the North Pole is inhospitable. In surrounding lands are demons who appear as trolls.

Despite this syncretic approach, however, the map is ultimately a Christian one. It is enclosed by nine circles representing the celestial spheres. The outer circle names the angelic hierarchy of Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels, and 'Alpha et O.' (Alpha and Omega) refers to Christ. The inner circles refer to zodiacal signs and wind directions. Christian towns and countries are marked with red circles and names, while non-Christian towns and lands are identified with black. The Red Sea, as was usual, is colored red. Right, on the edge, climates are indicated.

The earth is surrounded by an ocean except at the far South, at the top of the map, where Africa stretches to the edge of the circle. The inscription says: "*Here is the South Pole (Antarctic) which is uninhabitable*". Also described as uninhabitable is the sea-surrounded North Pole. To the East, left on the chart, where the earthly *Paradise* is established as a city with towers and walls, are the sources, going from left to right, of the rivers of *Paradise*: *Pison*, *Tigris*, *Euphrates* and *Gichon*. Below the European cities can be seen *Landonia* and *Koppenhan*. Sweden is an island with the towns *Stockholm* and *Upsalia*; and in Russia there is *Norgadia* [Novgorod]. In the Atlantic there are the British Isles and, wrongly placed far too North, *Canaria*. In the far South there is an *Insula Iovis* or *Terralama*, "*on which nobody dies*". Africa and Asia are so close that they are separated only by a forked strait. Above *Jerusalem*, which in accordance with the traditional manner is placed at the center of the world sphere, the Red Sea is depicted. There are also *Alkarren* [Cairo], *Rome*, *Palermo* and *Mecca*.

The map mentions curiosities allegedly only occurring in Africa: Amazons, Pygmies, one-footed beings, long-eared beings and humans with tails. Among the rivers, the Nile is noteworthy as its source is in the *Mountains of the Moon*.

Descriptions of the representational method, indications in the measurement banner beneath the chart picture and the signatures prove that his map was one of the last products of European monkish cartography. This late medieval *mappamundi*, represents a transitional type of cartography that was beginning to unfold in Western Europe before the Renaissance. These maps are either circular or rectangular and reflect the influence of Claudius Ptolemy's *Geography* (i.e., the closed Indian Ocean, a Mediterranean Sea twenty degrees too long, the *Mountains of the Moon*, etc., #119, Book I), which appeared after the introduction and translation of this work to Western Europe in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Some belong to a subgroup of maps called the *Vienna- Klosterneuburg map corpus*, the world maps, according to Dana Bennett Durand, which were compiled with the help of coordinates. After its translation into Latin by Jacobus Angelus about 1406-7, the popularity of Ptolemy's *Geographia* increased steadily throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as reflected in the frequency of printed editions from 1475 onward. One of the earliest world maps showing such influence by displaying, for example, the closed Indian Ocean of Ptolemy, is the 1414 *Pirrus de Noha* map (#239) accompanying a manuscript of Pomponius Mela.

On his map Walsperger explicitly cites the *Geographia* in his representation of the southernmost part of the earth, noting Ptolemy's estimate of the extent of habitable land. Walsperger, however, extends the land beyond this inscription to the frame of the map. The historian Alfred Hiatt observes that although the southern *plaga* is thus incomplete, Walsperger locates the Antarctic pole there, recording that "*there land is uninhabitable. And around this pole are most marvelous monsters not only beasts but even men*". The Arctic pole is similarly described as uninhabitable, because of the cold that causes "*perpetual congelations*". The extension of the southernmost part of the earth to the Antarctic pole makes the standard association of the southern Africa with extreme heat difficult to maintain. Nevertheless, Walsperger perpetuated the traditional associations of southern Africa with monstrous races, expressly noting the presence of "*extremely fast monopods*" near to the south polar region. There is a kind of mingling,

then, between the tradition of the location of monstrous races in southernmost Africa on *mappaemundi* (such as the *Hereford* and *Ebstorf* world maps, see monographs #224 and #226). Ptolemy's description of Africa, bounded to the south by *terra incognita*, and the frigid Antarctic region represented on zonal maps. The proximity of southern Africa to the southern polar region on Walsperger's map provides a visual counterpart to the statement of Nicholas V's pontificate: Eugenius IV's papal *Bull of 1436, Romanus pontifex*, that the Portuguese had searched the sea and maritime provinces in their fast boats "towards the southern parts and the Antarctic pole". Both texts dispense with the representation of the southern hemisphere as irrevocably separated from the north by an intervening and impenetrable zone. On the contrary, northern and southern hemispheres are represented as contiguous, and the implication follows that both poles are within European reach.

Walsperger's map and Nicholas' *Bull* also share an interest in the spread of Christianity throughout the known world. The sense of a territorializing Christianity that runs through Nicholas' *Bull*, the tension it expresses between the advance of Islam and the contrary penetration of Christianity into regions unknown, is echoed in possibly the most remarkable feature of Walsperger's map. For Walsperger colored the circles that represent cities on his map according to their religion: red for Christian cities, black for non-Christian. This action may help to explain the map's exclusion of an unknown, and unknowable, antipodal continent. The spread of the world from one pole to the other, without the barrier of an excessively hot equatorial zone, is consistent with Walsperger's aim to map the geographic extent of the faith, showing either anxiety at Christianity's contraction, or possibilities for its expansion - or both.

To understand the Ptolemaic influence, it is necessary first to be aware of a school of science under the leadership of the mathematician and astronomer Johannes de Gmunden at the University of Vienna and the prelate Georg Mustinger at the Augustinian monastery of Klosterneuburg, now in suburban Vienna. The school flourished from the early 1420s until 1442, when both scholars died. Its contributions to cartography were but a fraction of its legacy of scientific manuscripts, including astronomical treatises, star catalogs, and tables of planetary motions, eclipses, and conjunctions, as well as general works on mathematics, including trigonometry. Most of these were recopied versions of earlier medieval works, but nevertheless Klosterneuburg constituted a seed-bed of scientific innovation. In particular, the maps and coordinate tables associated with this school help to fill in a period of relative cartographic obscurity between the Claudius Clavus map of about 1425 and the *tabulae modernae* of the later Ptolemaic manuscripts about 1450. Between 1425 and 1430, Mustinger and his collaborators were working on a map genre that assimilated the Jerusalem-centered medieval world map with elements from Ptolemy and the *portolan* [nautical] charts, which when reconstructed are similar in their general geographical configuration to the circular *Vesconte-Sanudo* maps (#228).

A refinement of the *Walsperger* map is the convention of placing a red dot by each city controlled by Christians; pagan-ruled sites received a black dot. Eastern Asia contains, interestingly enough, all red dots except for *Zandala*, the fake paradise. Red dots predominate in Europe up to the river Don but occasionally appear elsewhere. There is one lone red dot on the West African coast, but there is no place-name given - could this be a relic of the Portuguese voyages? Or of the legendary Christian ruler *Prester John*? Another red dot is found on *Taprobana* and the island where Saint Thomas is thought to be buried, and another marks the stone tower on the narrow land bridge to East Asia. Reality is recognized in the Holy Land, where all dots are black, and Russian orthodoxy is apparently considered beyond the pale, as all places in Russia are also marked with black. This feature is reminiscent of the sea charts, which found it useful to put religiously keyed symbols or flags on the various ports. It was better for sailors not to meet with any surprises.

Although only coordinate tables survive for the earliest versions of these circular world maps of the *Vienna-Klosterneuburg* school, Durand reconstructed maps from the tables, most of which are to be found in a 522-page codex in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. There are, however, two surviving original maps that Durand believes are based on this genre: this one and the *Zeitz* map of about 1470 (#251).

This evidence suggests that 15<sup>th</sup> century cartographers were clearly impressed with the Ptolemaic model and took pains to demonstrate that, although they did not agree with all of Ptolemy's information or method of using coordinates, the tradition was to be revered. Fra Mauro felt it necessary to apologize for not following the parallels, meridians, and degrees of the *Geography* on his world map of 1459 (#249), because he found them too confining to show discoveries (presumably in Asia) unknown to Ptolemy. Andreas Walsperger, in this *mappamundi* of 1448, stated "*In this figure is contained a mappa mundi or geometrical description of the world, made from the cosmography of Ptolemy proportionally according to longitude, latitude, and the divisions of climate, and with the true and complete chart for the navigation of the seas*". While this map does mark an advance on other examples of monastic cartography, according to map historians Leo Bagrow and G.R. Crone it fails to reach the standard to which the public of the time was already accustomed. It had not yet freed itself from the fabulous appurtenances and the ancient monastic pattern. Thus Walsperger has nothing to do with the more 'modern' practice as expressed in the *portolan* charts and continues to show the Caspian Sea as a branch of the ocean. This attempted fusion of classical and ecclesiastical ideas produces interesting results. Consider Africa, for example, the western littoral starts off with a plainly Ptolemaic trend past *Hesperidum* as far as *primum clyma Meroys* (one of Ptolemy's seven *Climata*). Here it turns east, past the country of the *Egibani*, who boast the form of goats, and that of the *Sciapodæ*, conspicuous for the size of their feet. These are the Plinian in parentage. At this point the coast turns southwards again to the edge of the map, near which we read the most un-Ptolemaic observation that *Around this pole there are most wonderful creatures, not only beasts, but men* indicating that he has exiled the monstrous races found in Africa on earlier maps to Antarctica (or actually present-day South America?, see below). The eastern prolongation of the continent, extending as far as *Java Insula*, and separated from Asia only by a narrow strait, once again brings us back to the true Ptolemaic tradition of an enclosed Indian Ocean, as does the placement of the Nile River in the heart of Africa.

In 1490 Henricus Martellus Germanus (#256) developed the second Ptolemaic projection for his world maps and fitted the new discoveries into it, as did the globe of Martin Behaim (#258).

It has become clear to some cartographic scholars that South America was represented as a huge peninsula of southeastern Asia on many world maps of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, from the Zorzi sketches of 1506 to the Livio Sanuto map of 1574. Some have called this peninsula *The Dragon's* or *Tiger's Tail*, probably in relation to the Chinese Dragon. Of the representations, the best known are the double cordiform map by Orontius Finaeus (1531), Schöner's globe (1533), Vopelius' globe (1542) and the world maps by Giacomo Gastaldi 1562 and by Francesco Basso 1571 (see *Book IV* of these monographs). On all of them, the positioning of names such as *America*, *Brasil*, *Peru*, *Castilla del Oro* or *Tierra de Papagallos* is evidence that this Asiatic peninsula is South America, beyond any possibility of doubt. The cartography of such maps is very poor: for instance, on the maps of Hieronymo Girava 1556, Johann Honter 1561, Giacomo Gastaldi 1562 and Francesco Basso 1571, the *Rio Amazonas* has its source in Patagonia and flows from south to north.

It is not so well known that this very same peninsula existed already under the name of *India Meridionalis* on earlier maps, drawn before the arrival in the western hemisphere of

Christopher Columbus. This is the *India* which Columbus was looking for, because it was marked in the right place on his maps. Examples of such maps are those made in Florence and Rome in 1489 by Henricus Martellus (#256). The best preserved copy is in the British Library and there is also a poorer copy in the University of Leiden. Martin of Bohemia [Behaim] (#258) made his globe on the same pattern, but he added much erroneous information. These maps and the first mentioned group of cartographic documents differ only in two respects:

1. In the post-Columbian series, the isthmus of Panama is represented with its true width, because it had been heard of by Columbus and other explorers from the aborigines; in the pre-Columbian series, the union of the peninsula with Asia is much broader, because nobody had exact information about it.
2. The pre-Magellanic maps have South America extending only to some degrees South; on post-Magellanic maps the land extends to 53 degrees South.

The common element of both series is the general form of the sub-continent.

However, the *Martellus* maps show a very good representation of the South American hydrographic system, including all the great rivers in the sub-continent. On these pre-Columbian maps, the drainage net is much better drawn than on any other representation made before 1850. In a former publication, Paul Gallez identified on those maps the Magdalena River in Columbia; the Orinoco-Meta in Venezuela; the Amazon, the Tocantins and San Francisco Rivers in Brazil; the Parana and the Paraguay; the Colorado, Negro and Chubut in Patagonia (the Chubut is omitted on the Leiden copy); and even the Rio Grande river in Tierra del Fuego.

A deeper study of the same maps has made possible the identification of several capes on the Atlantic coast, the swamps of the Rio Negro in Brazil, and Lake Titicaca. So Gallez believes that the deep and sound European knowledge of South America before its exploration by Columbus and his Spanish and Portuguese challengers has been firmly established. Therefore he has established the criterion for identifying the *Dragon's* or *Tiger's Tail*.

There is no record of any voyage made by Europeans to South America before Columbus. Proto-historians tell of many possible but not proven voyages by Portuguese navigators towards America; but most of these voyages, told in detail by James Cortesão, went from the Azores westward; the land they thought they had seen could be the Antilles or even the Central American mainland. There is no record extant of anyone reporting that they had seen any land or island south of the equator, nor did anybody pretend to have explored the inner part of a trans-Atlantic continent and to have mapped its rivers.

There was thus no known pre-Columbian historical exploration of South America by the European nations. But the detail of its hydrographic features mapped by Martellus in 1489 (#256) is a fact, even if this fact remains historically unexplained. We may thus believe that this knowledge already existed before Martellus, and we should look at older maps in search of the sources which he could have had at his disposal.

The earlier maps extant include the so-called *mappaemundi* drawn by medieval churchmen in Western Christendom. Very few historians of cartography have paid attention to the delineation of areas other than of Europe and Africa; and none of them has commented about the existence of the *Dragon's Tail*, and those who have seen it, have dismissed it as 'a nonexistent peninsula' due to the 'fancy' of the mapmaker. Gallez believes that the non-recognition of the sphericity of the earth on these *mappaemundi* was a definitive hindrance, because in such a flat and circular world, there seems to be no place for a large and protruding peninsula like the *Dragon's Tail*.

In order to detect this peninsula on pre-Martellus maps, we needed an identifying criterion. Gallez found that the southeastern Asiatic sequence should be taken as that criterion. On most maps made between Martellus in 1489 and Sebastian Munster in 1532, we find in the same order from West to East:

- (a) *India intra Gangem* = *India Cisgangeoca* = Hindustan.
- (b) *Sinus Cangeocus* = *Gaggetikos Kolpos* = Bay of Bengal.
- (c) *Aureus Chersonesus* = *Chryse Chersonesos* = *Golden Peninsula* = Peninsula of Malacca.
- (d) *Sinus Magnus* = *Megas Kolpos* = Pacific Ocean.
- (e) *India Meridionalis* = *Dragon's Tail* = South America.

If we find the same sequence on earlier maps, we will admit that, by comparison with the Martellus map, the elements of the sequence are identifying themselves reciprocally, i.e., that each peninsula or bay is identified by its relative position in the sequence. In this way we have identified the *Dragon's Tail* on three maps drawn between 1440 and 1470.

The above mentioned sequence identifies the *Dragon's Tail* on the Walsperger map, made in Constance in 1448. About the author, we know only what is written on the map:

*Facta est hec mappa per manus fratris Andree Walsperger ordinis  
Sancti Benedicti de Salisburga Anno Domini 1448 in Constantia.*

[This map was made by the hand of his brother Andrew Walsperger  
Constancy of Salzburg in the year of Our Lord 1448 of St. Benedict]

The Walsperger map has been reproduced and commented on by several historians of cartography, particularly Roberto Almagia and Dana Benet Durand. It was discovered in the Vatican Library in 1891 by Konrad Kretschmer, who immediately published a rather long study about it and reproduced the map in his atlas about the discovery of America. Although he had his mind turned on the new continent, Kretschmer did not see South America on Walsperger's map as Gallez does. It is a very well preserved, beautifully colored map, 42.5 cm in diameter. It is bound together with the *Codex Palatinus Latinus 1362B*, a series of nautical charts which seem to have no relation to the world map.

The southern coast of Asia is easy to identify. First there is the Arabian peninsula and India. Then there is a small, almost square peninsula which bears the name *Aurea Kersonesis*, leaving no doubt about its identification. Then there is a bay with the same position, form and extension, as the *Sinus Magnus* on the Martellus map and on Behaim's globe, which has been identified as the *Sinus Magnus*. Finally there is a huge peninsula protruding very far to the south which, by its position, form and extension, is the *India Meridionalis*, i.e., Gallez's South America (?).

The following is a theory expressed by Paul Gallez regarding the depiction of South America prior to Columbus' voyages. The east coast of South America (?) is a part of the circular limit of the world disc. On its northern sector, i.e. in the Far East of the map, *Paradise* is represented as a medieval castle with six towers. This is the place where Venezuela is situated. When Columbus arrived there in his third trip, he saw the mouth of the Orinoco. No wonder that, having regard to his maps, he concluded that this river flowed from *Paradise*.



In the southernmost part of South America (?), there are the words, next to a strait: *Hic sunt gigantes pugnantes cum draconibus* [Here live some giants who fight against the dragons]. This southernmost part of the American mainland is Patagonia. The giants are, of course, the *Tewelche*, the well-known Patagonian giants. Considering that in 1489 Martellus knew about the inner courses of many South American rivers, we have no reason to doubt that, forty years earlier, Walsperger knew of the Patagonians.

Traditionally, the so-called *Legend of the Patagonian Giants* is attributed to Antonio Pigafetta, the chronicler of Magellan's voyage. As cultured persons, both Pigafetta and Magellan would have seen such maps as Walsperger's or others of the same family, and they would surely have taken aboard some copies of them. They thus knew that, following their maps, they would have to sail to the south along the coast of the *Dragon's Tail* until they reached the *Land of Giants*, and that at the end of that land, they would find a passage to the West, to the *Sinus Magnus*, and thus a way to the Moluccas. The meeting with the *Tewelche* in Saint Julian was the full confirmation, for Magellan and Pigafetta, of what they already knew from their maps.

The map called *Nova Cosmographia per totum arculum* dated 1440, (#247) by Durand, and the anonymous *Zeitz* map dated 1470 by the same author (#251), belong to the same "family" as the Walsperger map. They mention respectively: *dy Risen vechten und streiten wider dy lint wurm* and *Homines gigantes pugnant cum draconibus*. Both maps confirm the fact that Walsperger's mention of giants in Patagonia was not a fancy of the cartographer: it was part of the geographical lore of the time. Destombes transcribes a caption in the far northeast: "*Waldachat, the capital of Cathay, where the Great Khan resides, Cannibals eat human flesh [figure of a cannibal]; Gog and Magog, land of the Red Jews enclosed by the Caspian Mountains*". Walsperger's map testifies generally to an enduring belief in fables and monsters: "*And around this pole [the Antarctic one] are most amazing monsters not only of the animal variety but even among humans*".

As for the rest of the world, this map is thoroughly medieval in sentiment. Fancy runs riot and facts are badly distorted. Two Nilian lakes, *Lacus Meroys* and *Lacus Affrorum*, are given the dimensions of *Iberia*. The rivers, four in number, flowing northward from the Atlas Mountains are each longer than the Elbe and Oder. The stock-in-trade of the theologian (Walsperger was a Benedictine monk who came from Salzburg) is capitalized to furnish the author with a *Terrestrial Paradise* and its usual perquisites. Jerusalem, in conformity with the popular belief, is placed in the center of the earth represented by a great Gothic castle. Reflecting some insight to recent knowledge, the Indian Ocean is not closed but connected by a channel with the ocean. The island *Taperbana* [Sri Lanka] is inscribed *the place of pepper*, and an unnamed island off the Arabian coast (perhaps Ormuz or Socotra) has the legend *Here pepper is sold*. Such details point to an interest in the spice trade before the Conti-Bracciolini report.

In the later Middle Ages, explanations of the map painter's intentions are sometimes found on the map itself, as in the case of this map. Walsperger explains, for example, his particular system of distinguishing between Christian and Islamic cities: "*The earth is indeed*



Paradise represented as a great Gothic castle



white, the seas of a green color, the rivers blue, the mountains variegated [brown and/or green], likewise the red spots are cities of the Christians, the black ones in truth are the cities of the infidels on land and sea".

Ptolemy was an important name to the German school, but it seems as though his work was not very well understood. An inscription on all the maps reads, "Ptolemy placed the inhabited world as 180° from north to south." Of course, Ptolemy did no such thing. His maps showed the world only as far as 16° south of the equator, and he opined that the rest was probably uninhabited or uninhabitable. The 180° on his maps was the measure of longitude from the Fortunate Islands to the east coast of China. The *Walsperger* map comes with a statement of purpose, announcing that it has been "made geometrically from the cosmography of Ptolemy proportionally according to longitude and latitude and the divisions of the climates." Yet latitude and longitude do not appear on the map. Konrad Kretschmer, who discovered the *Walsperger* map back in the 1890's, said with disgust, "Not a single line of the map is from Ptolemy!" This is not quite fair, as random features from Ptolemy appear, such as the *Aurea Kersonesus* [Golden Chersonese] in the Far East, an enclosed Caspian Sea - though a Caspian gulf is also retained - and the stone tower that marks the border with India. On the other hand, Heinrich Winter blames the pernicious influence of Ptolemy for the maps' abandonment of the accurate geographic forms of the contemporary sea charts. *A scale for calculating distances is found at the bottom of the Walsperger map [it is more decorative than trustworthy].*

**LOCATION:** Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome, Pal. Lat. 1362b

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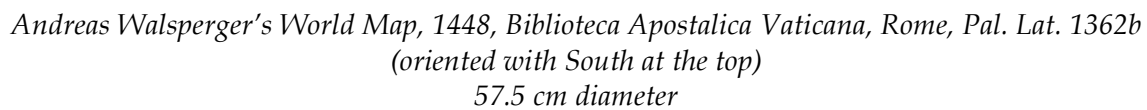
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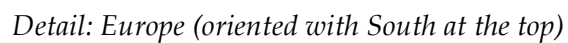
\*\*see also monograph #247, *Nova Cosmographia* for additional discussion of the *Walsperger mappamundi*\*\*





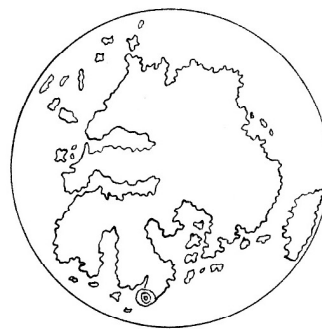








Petrus Vesconte, c. 1321



Albertin de Virga, c. 1414



Andrea Bianco, 1436



Borgian, first half XV century



Andreas Walsperger, 1448



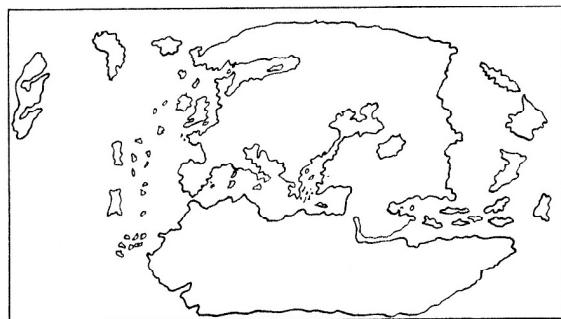
Catalan-Este,  
c. 1450



Giovanni Leardo, 1452-3



Genoese, 1457



Vinland Map, mid XV century (?)



Fra Mauro, 1457-9