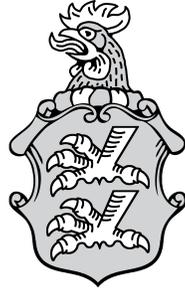


A Map of the Barony of Forgotten Sea and Environs
PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Calontir Tri-Levels 2017
NOVICE ENTRY

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ABSTRACT

This is a map in the style of late sixteenth through early seventeenth century cartographers from western Europe such as Sebastian Münster, Gerardus Mercator, Fernão Vaz Dourado, John Speed, John Norden, and those mapmakers commissioned by Abraham Ortelius. As a result of my research, I argue that the similar artistic conventions seen in the layouts, embellishments, typography, and geometric Mannerist ornamentation found in maps of this period represent a historical unity and continuity. This is why I am confident including cartographers who are slightly Out of Period as a reference. The work as entered represents the initial step in the printmaking process: the creation of the map itself with ink before the intaglio printing process began. The use of red ink, however, is a deliberate stylistic deviation to improve the aesthetics of the piece and pay homage to Münster and Dourado's careful use of red in their own compositions.

Introduction & Objective

The sixteenth century began a great and colorful period of cartography across Europe that, in turn, was both influenced by and influenced itself the Age of Discovery that was spreading across the globe as well as the rapidly expanding print culture across Europe.

My goal with this project was to gain a greater understanding of the work of the seminal cartographers of this era with a specific focus on the design, layout, and compositional elements of the maps themselves as opposed to a focus on the production of the map itself through period tools and scribal diligence.

Rather than map a current, mundane location or replicate the locations from an existing historic piece, I chose to layer the current SCA groups and relevant locations from the Kansas City, MO metropolitan area on top of an accurate (sourced from USGS maps and Google Maps) topographic map of the region. Plainly, this was a decision made purely to pique the interest of other members of the Society who may not have much exposure to cartography.

Historic Authenticity & References

This map represents a composite style that incorporates cartographic and artistic elements from several different artists, but remains reasonably authentic to the 1580s-1590s in either England, France, or the Low Countries. This is in keeping with my goal of better understanding a broad swath of cartographers versus slavishly replicating the style of a single artist or, even more strictly, a single reference map.

The strongest characteristics of the map that date it to the 1580s-1590s are its ornamentation, use of vernacular language, and style of map features (e.g. towns, woodlands).

The complex border ornamentation and inset collection of local heraldic arms are particularly characteristic of English mapmakers such as Speed and Norden, whose works are

best known at the end of the sixteenth and into seventeenth centuries, while the majority or exclusive use of local vernacular is also seen in English maps as well as Low Countries-originating maps (such as those by Mercator). Earlier maps (and many continuing into this era) were composed wholly in Latin, and others – such as this map – interspersed Latin into an otherwise vernacularly labelled map. This is seen on the entry in the directional labels (Septentrio, Oriens, Merides, and Occiens), the cartographer’s inscription (“ex contibus geographicus Hugo Harlonii, faciebat 1582”), and the abbreviation of “Flu.” as shorthand for the Latin *flumen* for rivers.

Both of these elements were introduced in the 1580s and continued into the seventeenth century. It is the last element that helps date the map to the 1580s-1590s: the map features themselves, namely the iconography for the towns and woodlands. These details are characteristic of an art direction more commonly seen in the mid through the end of the sixteenth century and most popularly by Münster. By late in the century, the detail given town and city icons is generally more minimal (and in the case of John Speed, eventually replaced by what we would recognize as more modern dot and circle-based iconography) and wooded areas are represented by cohesive forests, rather than single trees – even ones clumped together.

Map Composition

The artistic and information-conveying features on the map are all directly sourced from historic examples or are informed, deliberate derivations from those examples. Due to the large scale of the map (roughly seventy-five miles wide) and the extreme low density of settlements compared to maps of European regions, some design decisions had to be made. Scale certain features up to fill in white space or leave the map sparse? Both approaches are seen, historically. The scaled-up features are representative of maps of European areas (albeit rare), while the sparse maps are of unexplored regions such as the New World and Africa. I have chosen the

former approach given the Kansas City area as the settled, geographic center of Calontir. This has the additional benefit of making all the composited map elements better feel like a seamless whole, rather than a mismatched collection of separate elements.

CITY AND TOWN ICONS—These have been scaled up significantly from what is seen in most period maps for the reasons already given. Their design, also previously alluded to, is largely influenced by Münster’s work – particularly in regards to the red roofs and details, although later cartographers also continued to use the illustrated miniature to locate and identify towns and cities.

RUINS ICON AND LABEL—The representation of the “ruins” of Dun Ard (in memory of the group and as tribute to local members from Ft. Leavenworth who remain active) is an artistic inference. John Speed was one of the first cartographers to go beyond towns, hills, and trees for his iconography to call out other human-important sites. Ruins were on the list of one of the map keys, but by that point Speed was using the aforementioned dot-and-circle icon system, which this map lacks. As a historically plausible compromise, I used Speed’s inclusion of ruins as a period example of the suitability of this type of content to be labelled and then made a design judgement about how that would be represented with the Münster-inspired town and city icons.

LILIES WAR ICON AND LABEL—On the other hand, the inclusion of battlefields has no historic precedent that I have found. Its inclusion is entirely a nod to the site and event’s importance to the kingdom. It is a deviation from the historical pattern I was willing to make.

HILLS AND TREES—These features are a fairly generic example that would not look out of place at all in most maps from the early to late sixteenth century. There appears to be as many subtly different ways to draw and hash highlands and woodlands as there are cartographic illustrators, and so I’ve continued that trend with my own take on hills and trees.

RIVERS AND LAKES—The large, multi-line rivers are distinctive feature of Mercator's work, although in later engravings, the linework is often so thick as to make the rivers, especially smaller ones, appear as one thick black line. I've tried to find a middle ground.

REGIONAL BORDER LINES—Another specifically Mercator-inspired reference. He used dotted lines to indicate the borders of regional elements such as counties, lordships, and dukedoms as well as sub-regional units such as the three regional *drosten's* offices that composed the larger Lordship of Overijssel (or Trans-Isulana). Separating out baronial lands from neighboring shires (and even cantons) seemed an appropriate use here.

ORNATE MAP BORDER AND HERALDIC INSET—Both features were used heavily by John Speed starting in the 1590s. The heraldic inset, in particular, is innovative. Speed placed the arms of local nobility and/or towns into specific ornamental insets on his maps as compared to placing individual arms on top of map features in proximity to relevant locations. This separation created the opportunity for an additional, attractive piece of art on the map.

MANNERIST ORNAMENTATION—The scroll-intensive art style of the cartouches is tied to the Mannerist art movement popular in Northern Europe in the mid-sixteenth century through the early seventeenth century. Its geometric shapes are easy to identify and help date the map, but also are a clear differentiation between the later Baroque stylings that impacted print media, including maps, in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. John Speed, John Norden, George Braun, and Ortelius' cartographers frequently used this style as ornamentation on their maps, and the complex shading required was represented by hashing when engravers translated the work from paper to copper sheets.

Complexity & Scope

This project's complexity surfaced in two specific ways: the complexity of making layout decisions and the complexity of the historically authentic designs themselves.

LAYOUT DECISIONS—Laying out the mapped area onto the paper and accounting for layout complexities represented a fair challenge to solve. This can be seen particularly in how the “Aston Tor” label is split by the Little Blue River. Given that while some elements were penciled in to begin with, much of the work was detailed out extemporaneously, which meant I had to think several steps ahead about the placement of art elements and lettering (the latter of which was clearly a struggle).

COMPLEX ART STYLE—The Mannerist ornamentation and complex borders used in this period represented a need for greater artistic skill and attention to detail as compared to maps from earlier in the sixteenth century, which often lacked ornate borders and has less ostentatious ornamentation. However, for the map to accurately reflect the design mores of this period, both the complex border and ornamentation were necessary. This significantly increased the research and production time on this project.

Methods & Materials

As stated previously, my goal for this project was not the production effort itself as an exercise in improving or showcasing any scribal or calligraphically skill, but rather to use the exercise of manually creating a paper map with ink and my physical hands (as compared to previous maps I have created digitally) to better understand the effort needed to accurately and attractively lay out a map with late sixteenth century design cues and elements. In addition, I don't have a background as a scribe or in calligraphy and thus lack any experience working with quills & ink or even modern calligraphic or cartridge pens.

As such, the materials used were blatantly modern. The paper chosen was a hot press watercolor paper; it was used for its rigidity and the pattern resemblance to historic laid paper.

Until the papermaking Fourdrinier machine was invented in the early 19th century, paper was made by hand by a team of workers. The paper's base foundation was linen or other plant fibers pulled into scraps, then soaked for hours until it became pulp. A mesh-backed frame the size of the intended sheet of paper was then submerged into the large vat of pulp and slowly pulled up, letting the pulp settle on the mesh and the water run through. The new sheet of paper was later pressed to remove the excess water and then hung to dry, but it is the impression of the mesh that makes traditionally made paper from this period distinctive. The textures of pressed watercolor papers are a close enough substitute to pass for the purposes of this project.

Archival quality Micron pens were used at 0.08 and 0.005 sizes in both black and red. Maps drawn with etching or engraving in mind would have been uni-color, while the use of red seen in some of Muester's maps is either a watercolor layer added to prints, rather than the original, or is a separate step and a print itself (the map having been through the press twice with two separate etchings: one for the black ink, and one for the red). It is the latter method I aimed to emulate with my use of two colors of pen work, although the use of watercolors would prove to be an interesting future cartographic project.

The production process began with the gathering of a large sample quantity of period maps from assorted cartographers as reference aids and then tracking down accurate source maps for the Kansas City area. Sketching of initial, high-level layouts to account for the primary map elements of the map's river system and settlements, the cartouche, and the heraldic inset then began. This initial sketching phase involved a lot of mockups to best understand which layouts worked best with the available area of the paper: the Kansas City area had to have enough room to fit icons and text labels while not crowding other elements of the map and at the

same time account for enough visual balance between the map itself and the ornamental elements such as the heraldic inset and cartouche. It was during this process that early attempts to fit in the Shire of Lost Moor (St. Joseph, MO) were abandoned on account of the above two reasons: it's resulted in a cramped core Kansas City.

With the layout formalized, a grid system was penciled onto the sketch and then to the watercolor paper. The border lines were then drawn in to box in the working area, and the map itself was penciled in referencing the grid systems. The rivers were then inked, which allowed for the placement of settlements and labels. From there, the trees, hills, and dotted borders followed, with the ornamental elements of the heraldic inset, cartouches, and border coming last.

Conclusion

The overall work is a faithful representation of cartographic trends and design cues from the “golden age of cartography” in the sixteenth century and seventeenth centuries, particularly the 1580s and 1590s. In my future cartographic projects, better care will be taken to improve the lettering and typography. More time will be given to sketch and improve on my ornamentation, even though on the whole it is passable.

Taking the time to research maps from a plethora of mapmakers, identify the various design elements and iconography used, and then reproducing a composite representation of a non-European, ahistorical location such as Kansas City forced me to understand how all the pieces that come together as a larger, gestalt map work effectively together. Spacing and overall layout is critical. Not planning for all design elements from the beginning would result in a less attractive map as those elements would have to be accommodated for around and between previously-drawn parts of the map. But when properly thought through and applied, the end result is beautiful and effectively communicates the relationship of locations it depicts.

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APPENDIX—SELECTED REFERENCE MAPS



Fig. 1: Sebastian Munster, Greece and the Hellespont

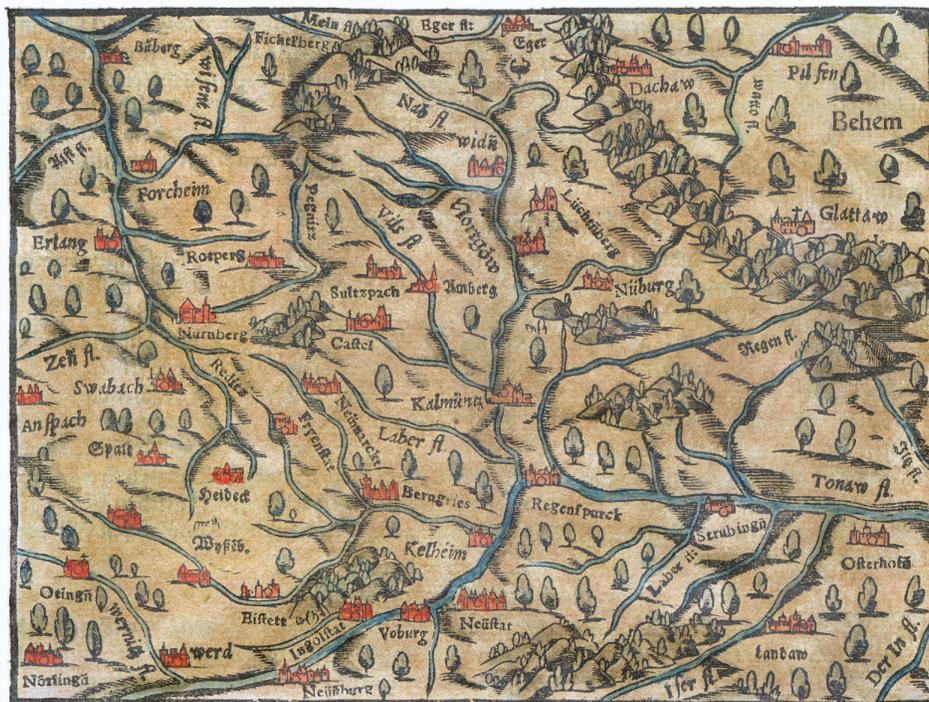


Fig. 2: Sebastian Munster, Nordgau, Bavaria



Fig. 3: Sebastian Munster, Rome

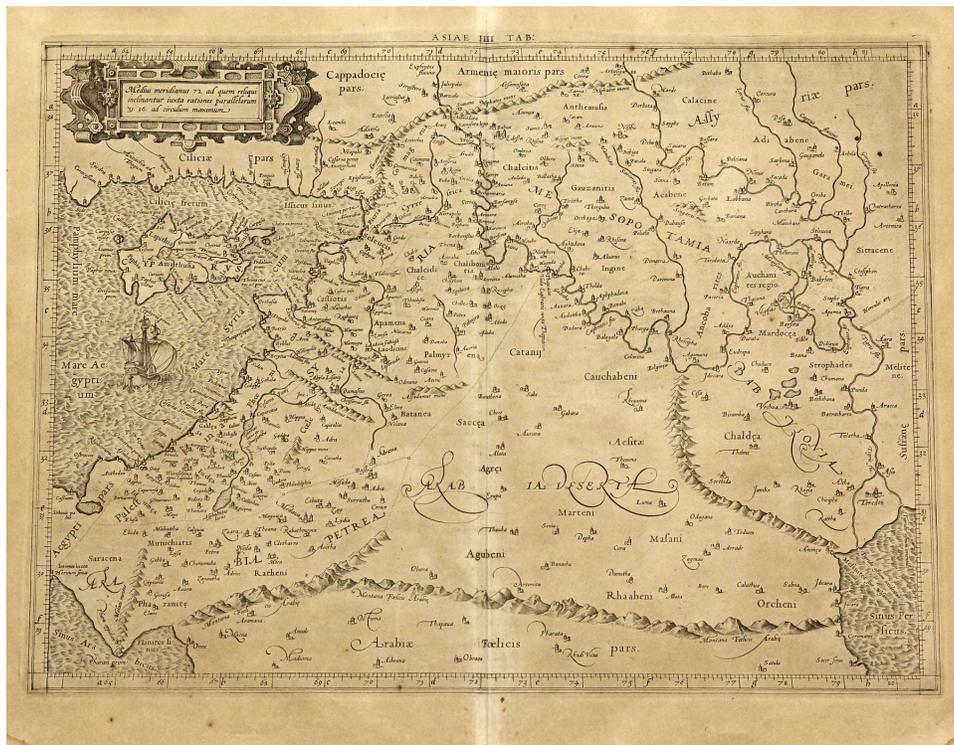


Fig. 4: Gerardus Mercator, the Holy Land & the Middle East

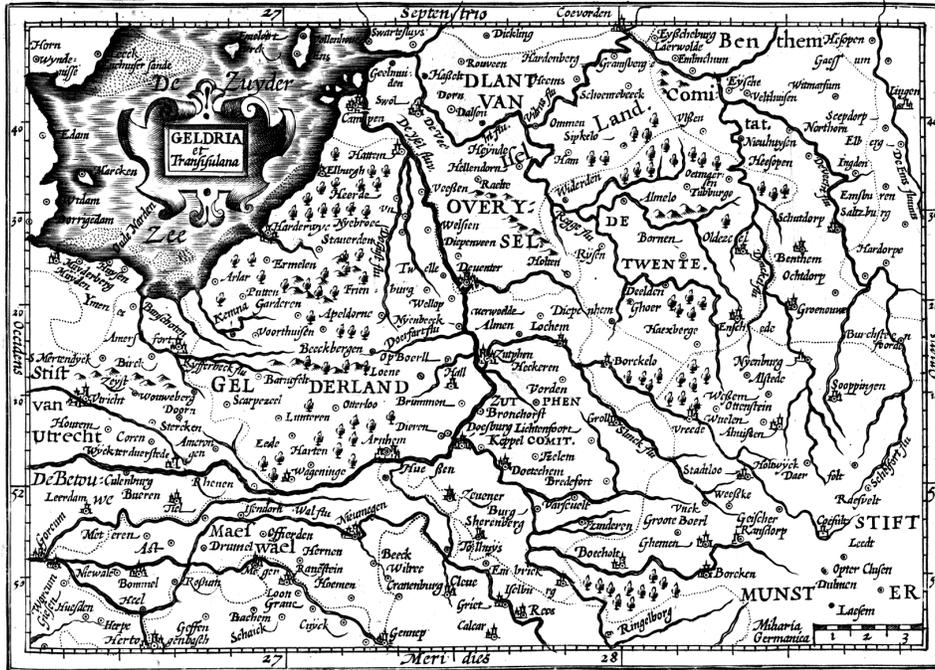


Fig. 5: Gerardus Mercator, Geulders, the Low Countries



Fig. 6: John Speed, Northamptonshire



Fig. 7: John Speed, Suffolk

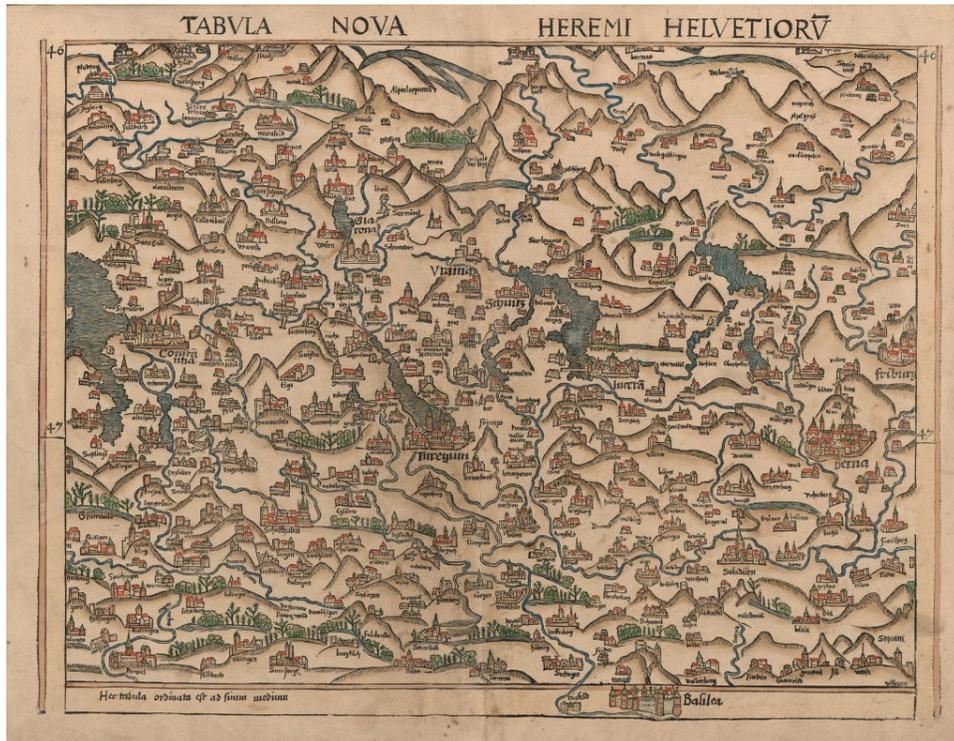


Fig. 8: Martin Waldseemüller, Switzerland