
Chet Van Duzer

Martin Waldseemüller's 'Carta marina' of 1516

Study and Transcription of the Long Legends

 Springer Open



Fig. 1.11 Detail of the rhinoceros in West Africa on Waldseemüller's *Carta marina* (sheet 6). Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Nach Christus gepurt. 1513. Jar. 2di. i. May. Hat man dem großmehctigen König von Portugal Emanuel gen Lyabona pracht auß India/ ein sollich lebendig Thier. Das nennen sie Rhinocerus. Das ist hie mit aller seiner gest alt Absonderke. Es hat ein farb wie ein gespueckete Schildkrot. Vnd ist vs dicken Schalen vberlegt fast fess. Vnd ist in der groß aloder Schfande Aber nyderrechter von paynen/ vnd fast wehafftig. Es hat ein scharff starck Horn vorn auff der nase/ Das begynde es albeg zu wegen wo es bey staynen ist. Das drossig Thier ist des Schf fang todt feynde. Der Schfande furcht es fast vbel/ dann wo es In antumde/ so laufft In das Thier mit dem kopff zwischen dyc foidern payn vnd reyst dar Schfande vnder am pauch auff vñ erwürgt In/ des mag er sich nit erweyn. Dann das Thier ist also gewapent/ das In der Schfande nichts kan thun. Sie sagen auch das der Rhynocerus Schnell/ Staydig vnd Listig sey.

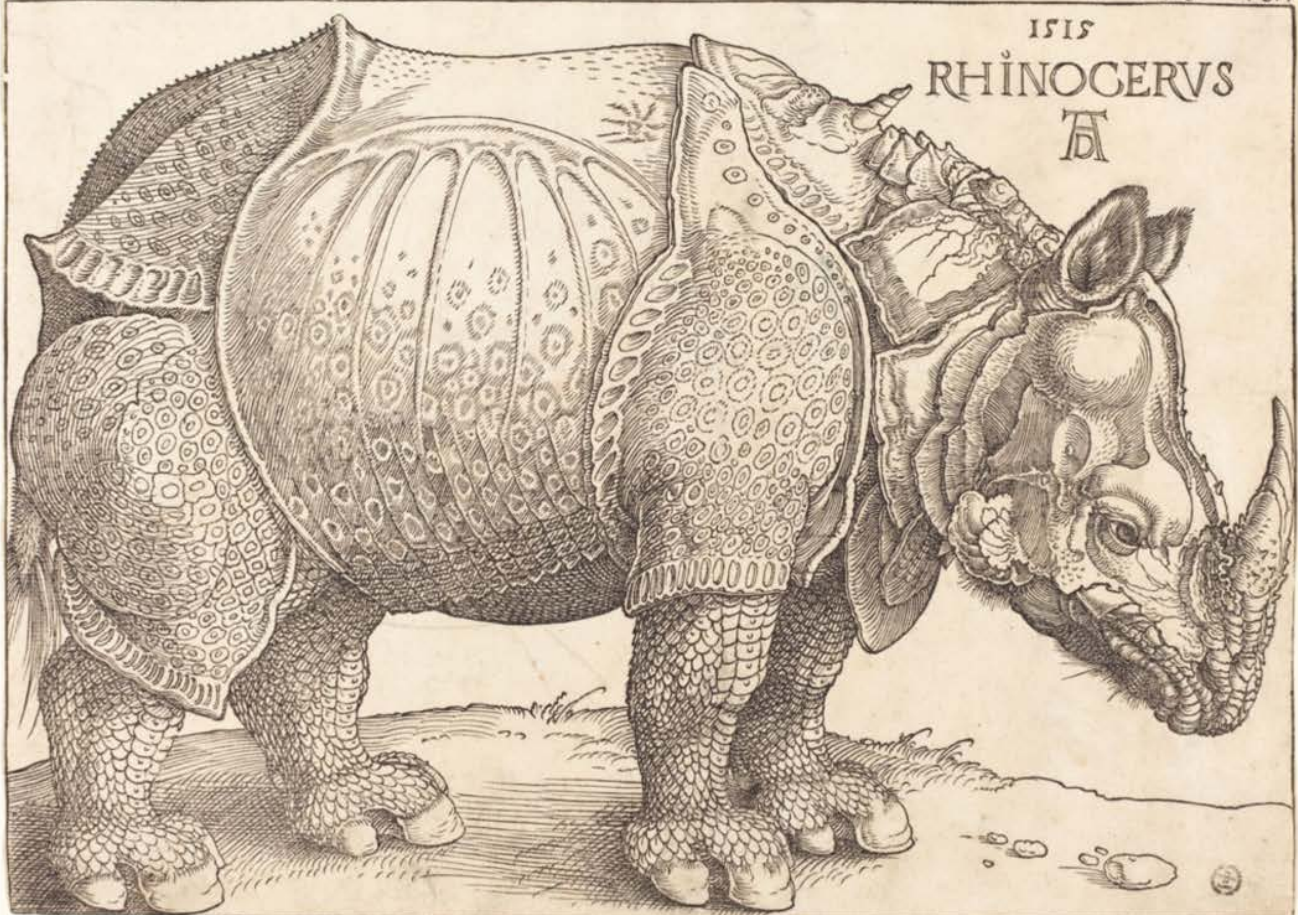


Fig. 1.12 Albrecht Dürer's print of the rhinoceros, 1515. Washington DC, National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection 1964.8.697. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Fig. 1.13 Hans Burgkmair's print of the rhinoceros, 1515. Vienna, Grafische Sammlung Albertina, Inv. DG1934/123. Courtesy of the Albertina Museum, Vienna



In West Africa (sheet 6), Waldseemüller shows a small image of a rhinoceros (Fig. 1.11), and this is another instance where he was using the most recent iconographical sources available. In 1514 Sultan Muzafar II of Gujarat had presented a rhinoceros to Afonso de Albuquerque, the governor of Portuguese India. Albuquerque sent the rhinoceros to King Manuel of Portugal,¹¹⁷ and Albrecht Dürer made an influential print depicting the animal in 1515 (Fig. 1.12).¹¹⁸ Waldseemüller used as his model not Dürer's print, however, but a different one, also made in 1515, by Hans Burgkmair, that survives in only one copy (Fig. 1.13).¹¹⁹ The images of the rhinoceroses are similar in the two artists' prints, but there are differences, and those differences indicate that Waldseemüller used Burgkmair's print: in particular, Dürer shows hard plating and a small ancillary horn on the crest of the creature's neck where Burgkmair places hair—and it is hair that we see in Waldseemüller's image. It has been suggested that Dürer might have been involved in the engraving of the *Carta marina*,¹²⁰ but given that Waldseemüller used Burgkmair's image of the rhinoceros rather than Dürer's, this seems unlikely.

In northeastern Asia, specifically in northern India at the bottom of sheet 4, is an image of *sati* or *suttee*, the Hindu practice whereby a widow burned herself to death on the funeral pyre of her husband. This custom very much surprised Western visitors to India, and there are legends on the subject on earlier maps, for example the metal Borgia *mappamundi* from the first half of the fifteenth century,¹²¹ and Andreas Walsperger's *mappamundi* of 1448.¹²² The image on the *Carta*

¹¹⁷On the history of this rhinoceros see A. Fontoura da Costa, *Les déambulations du rhinocéros de Modofar, roi de Cambaye, de 1514 à 1516* (Lisbon: Division de Publications et Bibliothèque, Agence Générale des Colonies, 1937); and Silvio A. Bedini, "The Ill-Fated Rhinoceros," in *The Pope's Elephant* (Nashville: J. S. Sanders & Company, 1998), pp. 111–136.

¹¹⁸On Dürer's print of the rhinoceros see F. J. Cole, "The History of Albrecht Dürer's Rhinoceros in Zoological Literature," in A. E. Underwood, ed., *Science, Medicine, and History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 337–356; Donald Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, vol. 2, bk. 1, *A Century of Wonder: The Visual Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 158–172; and T. H. Clarke, "The First Lisbon or 'Dürer' Rhinoceros of 1515," in his *The Rhinoceros from Dürer to Stubbs, 1515–1799* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1986), pp. 16–27.

¹¹⁹The surviving copy of Burgkmair's print is in Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Inv. DG1934/123. For discussion of it see Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe* (see note 118), vol. 2, bk. 1, p. 164 and plate 120; Clarke, "The First Lisbon or 'Dürer' Rhinoceros" (see note 118), pp. 24–25; and Jim Monson, "The Source for the Rhinoceros," *Print Quarterly* 21.1 (2004), pp. 50–53.

¹²⁰For the suggestion that Dürer was involved in the production of the *Carta marina* see Joseph Fischer and Franz Ritter von Wieser, *Die älteste Karte mit dem Namen Amerika* (see note 9), p. 19; and Johnson, *Carta marina* (see note 21), p. 27.

¹²¹The Borgia *mappamundi* is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borgia XVI, and is described and reproduced in Destombes, *Mappemondes* (see note 29), pp. 239–241 and plate 29. For the legend about *sati* see A. E. Nordenskiöld, "Om ett aftryck från XV:de seklet af den i metall graverade världskarta, som förvarats i kardinal Stephan Borgias museum i Velletri, Med 1 facsimile," *Ymer* 11 (1891), pp. 83–92, at 90; the map is reproduced between 130 and 131.

¹²²Walsperger's map is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Pal. Lat. 1362 B. For the legend about *sati* see Konrad Kretschmer, "Eine neue mittelalterliche Weltkarte der vatikanischen Bibliothek," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde* 26 (1891), pp. 371–406, esp. 398. The article is reprinted in *Acta Cartographica* 6 (1969), pp. 237–272.

2.6 Sheet 6. Western Africa (Plate 2.6)

This sheet of the map is unusual: it is printed on a piece of paper that is smaller than the other eleven and has a different watermark, and also none of the corrections from the list of errata on sheet 9 have been entered on sheet 6, as they have been on the other sheets. Moreover, this sheet was merely laid into the *Schöner Sammelband*, rather than bound into it. The situation is made more interesting by the fact that Schöner made a manuscript copy of this sheet (see below on sheet 6A), which had been bound into the *Sammelband*. Schöner seems to have made this manuscript copy as part of a preliminary study for making his 1520 manuscript globe,¹⁸⁸ which draws on Waldseemüller's *Carta marina*, and also perhaps to replace the missing sheet of the map. The sequence of events was perhaps as follows. Schöner obtained a copy of the *Carta marina*, but sheet 6 was missing or damaged. He made a manuscript copy of that sheet, either from the damaged sheet in his possession, or from another copy to which he had access. Subsequently, another printed copy of the sheet was obtained and added to the *Sammelband*.

6.1

CANARIE INSVLE X (QUE AB ANTIQVIS FORTUNATE DICEBANTVR QVARUM VII SVNT HABITATE SCILICET LANSOROTA FORTENENtura Grancanarina Teneriffa Gimera & ferra quarum quatuor a cristianis habitate scilicet lansarota Teneriffa Gimera et ferra que sunt sub dicione regis castilie oppida et ciui[tates] non habent sed pagos reliquam a saracenis po

The ten Canary Islands, which the ancients called the Fortunate Islands, of which seven are inhabited, namely Lanzarote, Forteventura, Grand Canary, Tenerife, La Gomera, and El Hierro, of which four are inhabited by Christians, namely Lanzarote, Tenerife, La Gomera and El Hierro, which are under the dominion of the King of Castile. They have neither towns nor cities, just villages. The rest by the Saracens....

There is no passage about the Canary Islands in the *Libretto*, but this legend comes from Chap. 7 of the *Paesi*, the *Itinerarium Portugallensium*, or *Newe unbekante landte*, the German translation of the *Paesi* of 1508—from part of the description of Cadamosto's voyage.¹⁸⁹ The names of the islands are a mess in the *Itinerarium*, and there is some temptation therefore to think that Waldseemüller must have used the Italian or German versions of the text, but certainly he knew the names of the islands well enough from other sources that he could have seen beyond the strange spellings in the *Itinerarium*, if indeed he was using that book. Waldseemüller follows one of these texts in saying that seven of the islands are inhabited, but only lists six, leaving out La Palma, and he also makes a mistake in indicating which of the islands are inhabited by Christians: the Italian, Latin, and German versions of the text all include Forteventura on this list, but Waldseemüller lists Tenerife in its place. Incidentally there is a surprisingly long discussion of the Canary Islands in Fries' *Uslegung*, Chap. 60 bis.¹⁹⁰

6.2

A septentrionali parte fluminis de Senega habitant gentes (qui vocantur Asenegi) de primo regno anterioris [for *interioris*] Ethiopie sunt fusci coloris fallaces et loquaces portantes penniculum in facie ad tegendum nares et os que pudenda esse volunt. vivunt sine lege et rege temporali nec oppida pagos vel ciuitates habent sed degunt in desertis hinc inde vagantes et tuguria sua de loco in locum transfferentes [*sic*] iste fluuius de senega diuidit nigros Ethiopes (que zilofi dicuntur) a fulcis [for *fuscis*] scilicet senagis etiam segregat terram fertilem a sterili predicti deserti scinditur in mulos riuulos facitque regnum Seneg (eolm [for *olim*] Experias dictum) cuius gentes pecunie vsum non habent sed rem pro alia venundant. habent regem proprium non tamen ciuitates sed pagos. mulieres crasse et magnis vberibus laudantur. nude vulgus incedit.

On the northern side of the Senegal River live people called the Asenegi of the first realm of Interior Ethiopia. They are dusky in color, deceitful, and talkative, wearing a little cloth on their faces to cover their nose and mouth, which they consider shameful to behold. They live without law or temporal king, and have no towns, villages, or cities, but live in the desert, wandering here and there, moving their huts from place to place. The Senegal River divides the black Ethiopians, who are called Zilofi, from the dusky people [i.e. the Asenegi], and it also divides the fertile land from the aforementioned barren desert. The river is divided into many streams and creates the kingdom of Seneg

¹⁸⁸On Schöner's hand-painted globe of 1520 see note 224 in Chap. 1 above.

¹⁸⁹For an English translation see Gerald R. Crone, ed. and trans., *The Voyages of Cadamosto and Other Documents on Western Africa in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century* (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1937), p. 11.

¹⁹⁰The passage on the Canary Islands is translated into modern German by Petzilka, *Die Karten des Laurent Fries* (see note 202 in Chap. 1 above), pp. 141–142.

6.11

in hoc regno fiunt magne mercationes cum sale quod a Tagaza portatur nauigio usque ciuitatem Melli deinde baiulatur et ab hominibus portatur ad terras equinoctiales ubi tantus est ardor solis quod animalia vivere non possunt. victualia huius regionis sunt dactili (quarum magna est copia) et hor[d]eum milium et lac camelorum bibunt.

In this kingdom there is much commerce in salt, which is carried by ship from Taghaza to the city of Melli, from which it is borne and carried by men to the equatorial regions where the heat of the sun is so great that animals cannot live. The food stuffs of this region are dates (of which there is a great abundance), barley, millet, and they drink the milk of camels.

Taghaza, in what is now northern Mali, has salt mines that important through the end of the sixteenth century. This legend summaries the description of the salt trade given by Cadamosto, and related in Chap. 11 of the *Paesi* and *Itinerarium*. It is located just to the east of an image of the King of Melli and Guinea, and just southeast of the legend is the city of Cothia, which is mentioned by Cadamosto in Chap. 12 of the *Paesi* and *Itinerarium* (Crone p. 25) as a destination of part of the gold that is traded in Melli under the name Cochia, is now called Gao (in Mali). The part about the foods that the people eat comes from Chap. 9 of the *Paesi* or *Itinerarium*. Johann Schöner repeats much of this legend on his manuscript globe of 1520.

6.12

Hic reperuntur Rinocerontes Tigrides et elephantes albi

Here are found rhinoceroses, tigers, and white elephants.

This legend is one of the few on the *Carta marina* that comes from Ptolemy, and also one of the few that Waldseemüller repeats from his 1507 map. In Book 4, Chap. 9 of the *Geography*, Ptolemy says that *...regio magna ethyopum est in qua elephantibus albi sunt and rinocerontes and tigrides*,¹⁹⁶ and a closely related legend appears on the fourth map of Africa in the 1482 Ulm Ptolemy. This legend is clearly the source of Waldseemüller's legend. On the 1507 map this legend is further to the south than this iteration of it on the *Carta marina*, but there is also another iteration of it further southeast on the *Carta marina*, on sheet 7 (see Legend 7.4 below)—close to its original location on the 1507 map.

6.13

Hic monopedes sive scipodes

Here there are one-footed men or *sciapods*.

I have not been able to determine the source of this legend. It is logical that *sciapods*, who lie on their backs and use their oversized foot to shade themselves from the bright sun,¹⁹⁷ should be near the equator, and they are located in Ethiopia by Isidore, *Etymologiae* 11.3.23, and there are two *sciapods* in southern Africa on Martin Behaim's globe of 1492.¹⁹⁸ But I do not know of any evidence that Waldseemüller saw Behaim's globe.

6.14

Hic est multa habundantia aur[i]

Here there is great abundance of gold.

This legend is just above the toponym REGNVM MELLI, and thus the reference is no doubt to the gold used in Melli in the salt trade described by Cadamosto, and related in the *Paesi* and *Itinerarium*, Chap. 11.

6.15

Rinoceron seu Monoceron [*sic*] animal

The animal rhinoceros or monoceros.

The image of the rhinoceros above the legend was discussed in the introduction (see pp. 26–27), where it was shown to be based on Burgkmair's 1515 print of the rhino rather than on Dürer's of the same year. Waldseemüller no doubt placed the

¹⁹⁶I quote from the 1482 Ulm edition of Ptolemy; the passage in the 1513 Ptolemy is very similar: *...regio magna Aethiopia est: in qua Elephantibus albi omnino gignuntur, & Rhinocerotibus & Tigridibus.*

¹⁹⁷There is a good discussion of the history of the *sciapods* in Claude Lecouteux, "Herzog Ernst, les monstres dits 'sciapodes' et le problème des sources," *Études Germaniques* 34.1 (1979), pp. 1–21.

¹⁹⁸For a study and facsimile of Behaim's globe see E. G. Ravenstein, *Martin Behaim, his Life and his Globe* (London: G. Philip & Son, Ltd., 1908).