The Silos, a.k.a. London, Spanish-Arabic Beatus.

This Beatus *mappa mundi*, referred to as either the *Silos, London,* or *Spanish-Arabic* map of 1109 A.D., measures 32 x 43 cm (12.6 x 16.9 in) and is probably the best preserved of all the Beatus group. It was produced at the monastery of San Sebastian (later named Santo Domingo) del Silos (Burgos) and currently resides in the British Library in London. Despite the organic and coherent nature of the *mappae mundi* found in the Beatus codices, attributes to which Beatus researchers Gonzalo Menendez-Pidal and Carlos Cid Priego refer, a detailed comparison highlights numerous similarities among and differences between these maps. Because of these, the cartographic corpus of the Beatus can be subdivided into families or groups which, in turn, coincide with the groupings within which the Beatus codices have been organized, based on the artistic analysis of the manuscripts: *Family I*, the oldest, pertaining to the editions of Beatus himself of 776 (*Family Ia*) and of 784 (*Family Ib*), and *Families IIab*, derived from the posthumous edition of ca. 940. The names we use to refer to the *mappae mundi*, as well as the manuscripts to which they belong, are related to their place of origin, to the addressees of the codices, or to the place in which they are currently preserved. As a reference, this map falls into Peter Klein's "Third Recension" and Wilhelm Neuss' *Family IIa* stemma which consists of the following maps:

- *Mappa mundi* of *Escalada* (10th century) #*207.2.*
- *Mappa mundi* of *Valcavado* (970) #*207.4.*
- *Mappa mundi* of *Urgel* (last quarter of the 10th century) #*207.8.* Note this map has no polychromy, neither does the rest of the quire in which it is found.
- *Codex of El Escorial* (ca. 1000). It does not include the *mappa mundi*, and instead there appears the illustration of the *Earthly Paradise*. Although other scholars have concluded, based on studies of the text and illustrations, that the Beatus of El Escorial belongs to *Family I,* this image is closer to the *Earthly Paradise* of the *mappae mundi* of *Family IIa*, and is therefore included here.
- *Mappa mundi* of *Fernando I & Sancha* (1047) #*207.11.*
- *Mappa mundi* of *Silos* (1091-1109) #*207.16.*

Sandra Sáenz-López Pérez has identified the following common features of this Family of Beatus *mappa mundi*:

- The toponyms are practically identical. Gonzalo Menendez-Pidal was aware of the confusion between Rome and Marseilles as being an inherent trait of these maps. They include all the toponyms relating to the apostolic geography.
- The captions which refer to the *Phoenix Bird*, to Arabia, to Ethiopia, to the fourth part of the world and to *Gothia* are the same in each.
- The elements of physical geography are the same and are represented in a similar manner. The following traits in particular define this group:
    - The Red Sea separates off the fourth part of the world, linking the west to the east.
    - As regards hydrography, the River Nile follows a single route towards the west of Africa; the River Danube, also with a single route, flows into the encircling ocean. The same occurs with the *River Tanais*; and *Gothia*, as a result, is represented as an island.
    - As regards the mountains and mountain chains, there are depictions of the *Rhyphean Mountains* within *Gothia*; also of the *mons Aquilo; mons Sauceranus; mons Ceraunius,* the Caucasus Mountains; the Lebanon Mountains (in duplicate); the Taurus Mountains; the *Pillars of Hercules*;

the Pyrenees (except in the *Escalada* map); the French Alps; and others not identified by name, such as the four mountain chains in Europe, perpendicular to the Mediterranean sea and parallel to each other; the mountains of Egypt; and the mountains to the west of India.

  - The islands have a rectangular form and are shown not only in the encircling ocean but also in the Mediterranean Sea. The oceanic islands are as follows, starting with the east, and going clockwise: *Chryse* and *Argyre* (in the map of *Fernando I & Sancha* divided into two); an unidentified island in the far south west (except in the *Fernando I & Sancha* version, where it does not appear); *Scaria insula;* the Fortunate Isles; Ireland; Great Britain; *Thanatos*; and *Thule*. Those of the Mediterranean Sea, from west to east: Gades; Menorca; Mallorca; Corsica; Crete (except in *Silos* and *Fernando I & Sancha*); Sicily; Samos; and Tarsus.
  - The desert and sandy zones coincide in all these maps and are located in the northeastern and southwestern extremes of the world.

- The *Earthly Paradise* is illustrated with the image of the original sin.
- The only city represented is Jerusalem.
- The encircling ocean appears decorated with fish, which are also present in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea in the map of *Silos*; in the case of the *Escalada* and *Valcavado* maps the ocean also portrays ships.
- The myth of the Phoenix Bird – *Hic abe Fenix* [Here [is found] the Phoenix Bird] to the west of India.

Tending toward the rectangular form, the *Silos mappa mundi* shows signs of copying from the *Escalada* and *Valcavado mappae mundi* Beatus derivatives. As can be seen, it is very stylized and generalized in its geometric representations of landmasses, islands and rivers. Actual or realistic contours are not even attempted, nor intended; islands appear as merely rather uniform sized rectangles, fourteen of which are identified (seven in the encircling ocean and seven in the Mediterranean Sea), only one is left blank. The six identified islands in the encircling ocean include: *Crise et Argire Insula, Scaria Insula, Furtunarum Insula, Scocia Insula, Britania Insula, Tantutos Insula* and *Tile Insula*. While the circumfluent ocean is decorated with fish, no boats appear on the *Silos* derivative. In the Mediterranean Sea the following islands are identified: *Gaddis, Minori, Maiorca, Corsice, S[icili]a, Samino* and *Tarsis*.

Only one castellated city is depicted, apparently representing Jerusalem. This city is represented like the letter "M". It is flanked by two side-towers topped at their highest point by a horizontal overhanging structure and which terminate in around shape. In the center of the façade there is an access opening and above this is arranged a structure in the form of a "V". There is a flecked decoration like that of the border around the *Earthly Paradise*; even a flower is placed above the door and a triangular structure emerges as a crowning in the center of the door.

Next to this structure is the *Early Paradise* displaying the framed picture of Adam and Eve using leaves to cover their groin area, indicating that the "original sin" has already been committed as is explained in *Genesis*. Adjacent to them is the red-fruited *Tree of Knowledge* and the coiled serpent to the right of Eve and the *Tree of Life* to the left of Adam. The serpent speaks into Eve's ear; Adam and Eve appear in a frontal position; Eve's breasts are reduced to circles, they are both lacking shoulders, and their heads are virtually set on their arms, and they have parallel lines drawn to create the impression of shading and volume on their bodies, their hands are drawn towards the genital area

which they cover with a leaf, the serpent has its body covered in scales, *Paradise* is bounded by a rectangular frame with a geometric decoration inside of which there are fringes and abstract floral decorations in the corners.

The *Earthly Paradise* is also isolated and access to it was impossible, and hence it was named *hortus conclusus* [enclosed garden]. Except in the Beatus *mappa mundi* of *Saint-Sever (#207.13)*, which resorts to an orographic solution, the maps of the Beatus codices solve the depiction of the barrier to *Paradise* by means of a surrounding frame-like railing, which in turn is the mechanism by which it acquires a square, rectangular or semicircular shape. We are seeing, then, a stylized depiction of its enclosure. The colors used are variegated: red, yellow and orange, except in the *mappae mundi* of *Urgell* and *Lorvão*, where there is no polychromy. Some maps depicting Jerusalem show a certain color link between it and *Paradise*, especially the links between the two illustrations that are accentuated in the case of *Silos*, because the frame around *Paradise* is decorated with ornamental features in the style of fringes that are identical to those shown in the gateway of Jerusalem at both sides of the lateral towers.

Many place names can be found throughout the map, although no political boundaries are drawn to indicate where one area leaves off and another one begins.

The depiction of vegetation is prevalent on the *Silos mappa mundi*, both on and interior to the mountains and even on the lone architectural building.

Two rectangular islands (bottom left) are named for Britain and Scotland. The *Antipodes* or *Southern Land*, shown on the far right, is explained by only a single sentence. The Alps and other mountain ranges are difficult to distinguish from the Persian, Arabian and other Gulfs or inlets, due to the cartographer's use of rather confusing symbols for bodies of water and mountains. The *Pillars of Hercules* are shown in western Africa (not on the Iberian peninsula and northwest Africa) and titled *Dvo Alpes contrari sibi* [two mountains confronting each other].

The Red Sea is colored red, the oceans and seas are blue, and the stylized mountains are in a variety of colors. The *Silos mappa mundi* displays fish in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, as well as throughout the encircling ocean, but no boats or monsters.

All the *mappae mundi* of *Family IIa*, as well as those of *Milan, Saint-Sever* and *Lorvão* of *Family I*, conceive of Ethiopia as a land where precious stones, cinnamon and balsam abound, but one finds lurking natural dangers in this region, specifically serpents and the inhabitants, horrible monstrous beings with different faces. Although the maps of the Beatus codices only allude in writing to these dangers, the depiction of the serpents in the Ethiopian region is relatively common in mediaeval cartography. These maps of the Beatus codices repeat the textual information on Ethiopia in an almost identical form, with some orthographic differences: *Eziopia ubi suntgentes diuerso uultu et monstruosa specie orribilis pretesa est usque ad fines Egiptiftrarum quoque et serpentium, referta est multitudo ibi gemme preciose, cinnamum et balsamum* [In Ethiopia there are fearsome people with their different faces and monstrous appearance. It extends to the frontier of Egypt. It is full of a quantity of wild beasts and serpents. Here there are precious stones, cinnamon and balsam].

Location: British Library, Add. MS. 11695, fols. 39v-40, London

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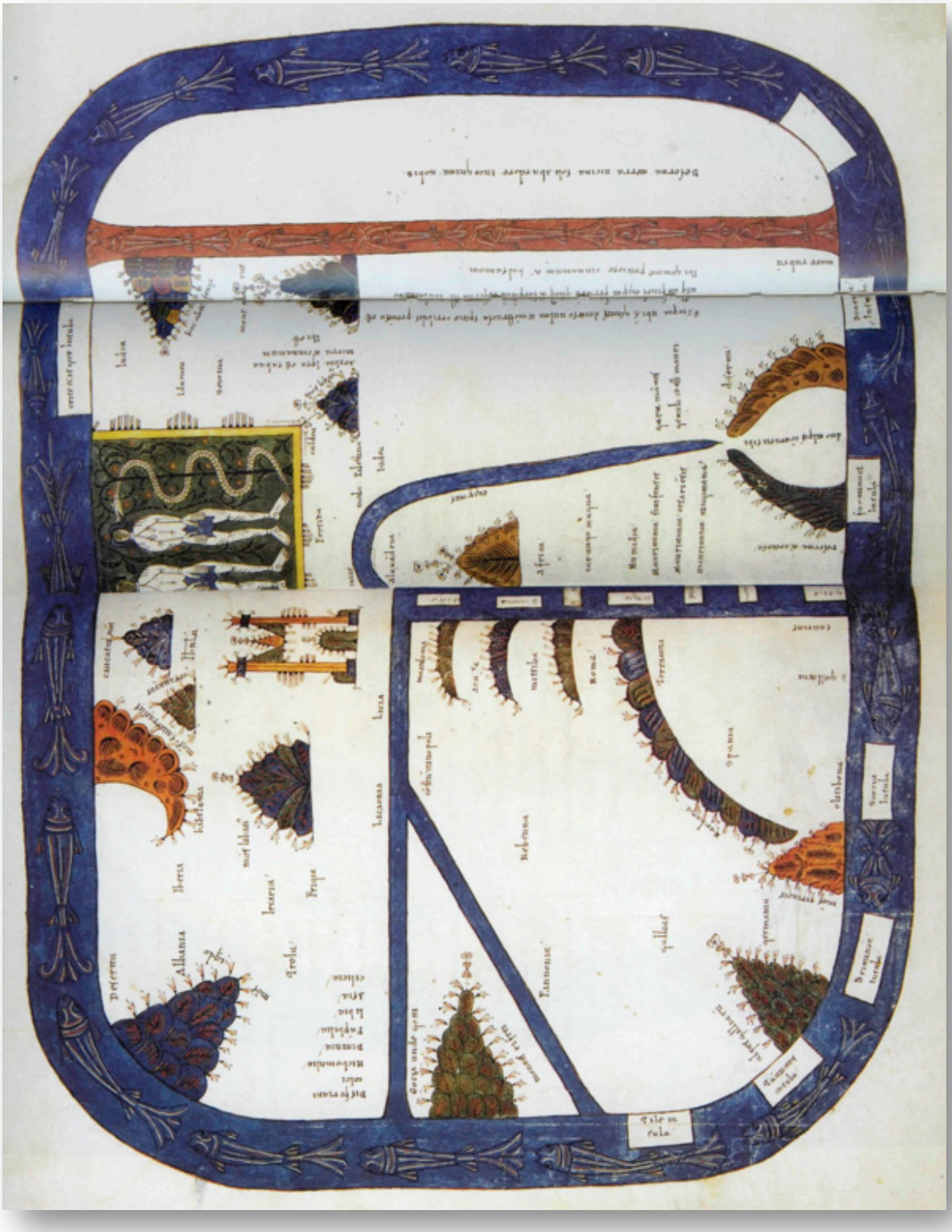
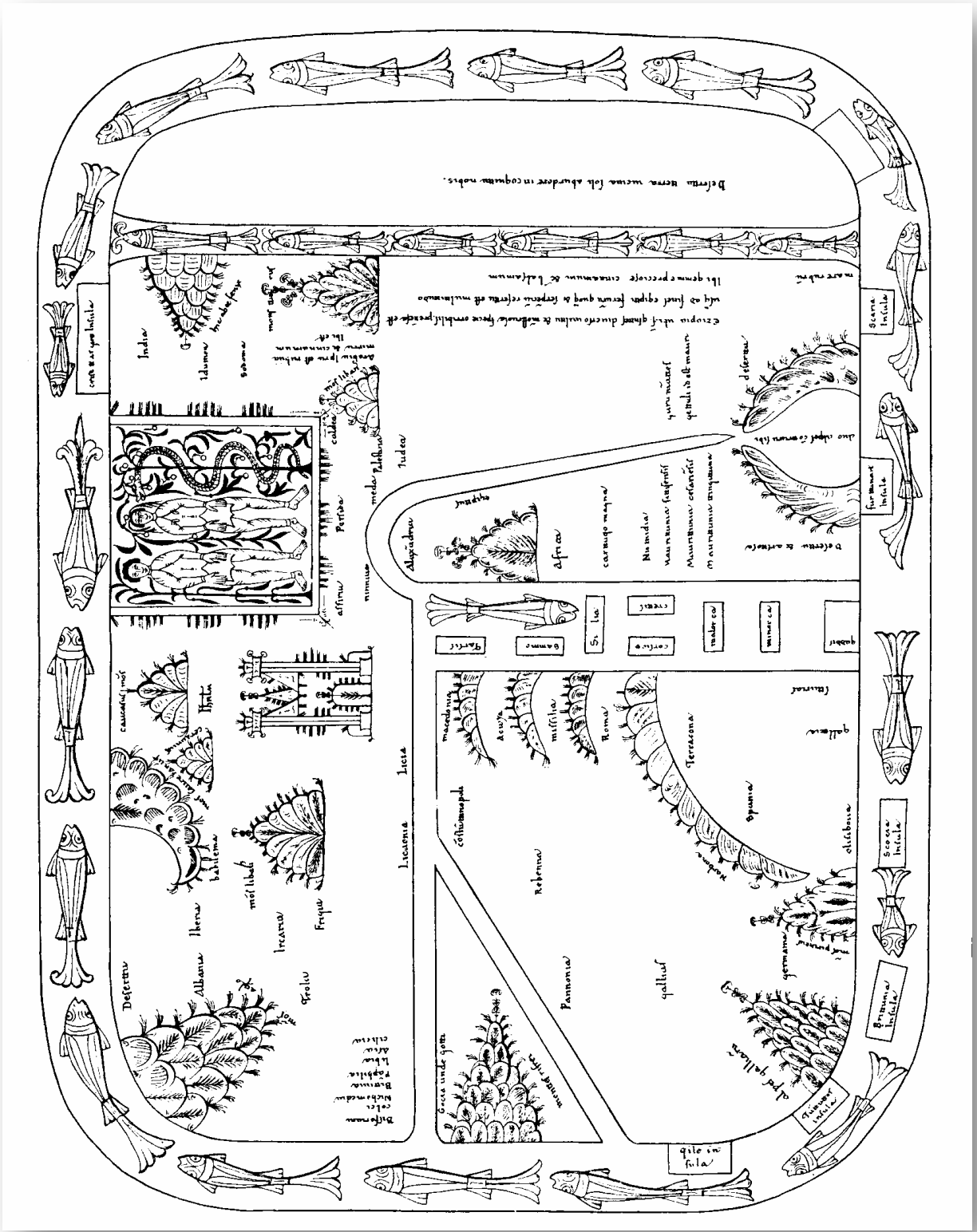
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