

previous cartographers had represented beside the River Nile. In doing so, according to Fernández García, the cartographer was inspired by a parrot that he may have seen in the court of Barcelona; this parrot belonged to Leonor of Sicily (1349–1375), and the author imagines that members of the court enjoyed talking with it.

Despite this interesting suggestion, one important question remains unanswered: why were parrots represented by the Nile in these charts? Fernández García justifies their presence as exotic merchandise (chapter 27), but there may be another explanation. Perhaps a work such as the original of the Catalan Bestiary B (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 87), which specifically locates the parrot in Cairo and Babylon, was the source (see S. Panunzio, *Bestiarius* (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1964), 2:107). It is also worth recalling that on the charts the Nile originates in the Terrestrial Paradise. Thus, it is possible that these birds were considered paradisiacal—at least this would explain the presence of a parrot in the Tree of Paradise in the Kunstmann II map (c.1502–1506; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. icon. 133).

Fernández García consulted many medieval documents and all the necessary maps for the subject, and he draws attention to some interesting works often forgotten, such as the anonymous chart (first half of the fourteenth century) preserved in the Dar Al Kutub (National Library and Archives of Egypt) in Cairo, illustrated in Y. Kamal, *Monumenta cartographica Africae et Aegypti* (Cairo, 1926–1951), 4: fasc. II, fols. 1205v–1206r. One misses, though, some secondary bibliographical works important for the aspects he discusses, such as Y. K. Fall, *L'Afrique à la naissance de la cartographie moderne* (Paris, Karthala, 1982); and G. Llombart i Moragues et al., *El món i els dies: l'atles català, 1375* (Barcelona, Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005). The bibliographical references are not always accurately cited in the notes.

Unfortunately, the text is marred by many errors, both typographical and factual, which are distracting for the reader. As an example, the author locates the Catalan Atlas in the Department of 'Cartes et Plans' at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, instead of in 'Manuscrits'. However, despite the flaws, everybody interested in the iconography of medieval maps should consult this book. Fernández García has taken a step forward in the deciphering of an image, but there is still much work to do.

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*La carta de Gabriel de Vallseca de 1439: Estudi i edició.* By Ramon J. Pujades i Bataller. Barcelona: Lumenartis, 2009. ISBN 978-84-612-3682-4. Pp. 357, illus. Euros €129.00 (critical study); euros €958.00 (critical study + facsimile) (cloth).

Ramon J. Pujades i Bataller's study of the 1439 nautical chart of Gabriel de Vallseca accompanies the second facsimile reproduction of this map. A previous facsimile was made to accompany J. Gómez Imaz, *Monografía de una carta hidrográfica del Mallorquín Gabriel de Valseca (1439)* (Madrid, R. Alvarez, 1892). However, the 1892 reproduction and critical study of the chart are far surpassed in quality by the Lumenartis edition. This map by Vallseca is one of the earliest richly illuminated charts and the oldest preserved in Spain of the great number made in Mallorca in the late Middle Ages. (According to the author, Vallseca's atelier alone could have produced up to 2,000 charts.)

The book is written in Catalan and translated into Spanish and English, which allows access by a broader

audience. It would have been helpful, however, if other texts such as the documents quoted in Latin had also been translated. The book is made up of four chapters. The first, 'Medieval Maps: From Monastery Treasures to Navigation Tools', seems to be intended as a general introduction to medieval maps, but it is too short to fulfil this purpose and adds nothing to the book. The main introductory material is in chapter 2, 'Portolan Charts: The First Realist [sic] Maps of the Western World', where the author deals with interesting material such as the ownership and utility of these maps. Chapter 3 discusses Vallseca's 'Immediate Precedents: The Other Majorcan Cartographers of the First Half of the Fifteenth Century' and is helpful in contextualizing and understanding the work of this cartographer. The last chapter, 'Gabriel de Vallseca: Life and Works of a Fifteenth-Century Majorcan Cartographer of Jewish Origin', is devoted to the cartographer's life, atelier and works.

The book includes transcriptions and identifications of the toponyms of the 1439 chart, transcriptions and translations of the legends of the map, and a fold-out chart comparing them with the legends on its fourteenth- and fifteenth-century predecessors and also on Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze Portolano 16, which the author ascribes to Vallseca's atelier and dates c.1439. Pujades i Bataller's rigour in offering an explanation of the criteria he followed in the transcription of the toponyms and legends is admirable. One legend that certainly deserves, but does not receive, a detailed discussion is that on the back of the chart, which says that Amerigo Vespucci bought it.

Many of the arguments of this book have already been made by the author in previous publications, especially in *L'Atlas Català* (Barcelona, Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005), and in *Les cartes portolanes* (Barcelona, Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, 2007). Pujades i Bataller succeeds in this book in demonstrating the importance and merit of Vallseca's cartographic atelier, which was long eclipsed by the historiography devoted to that of Cresques Abraham. Moreover, by framing this subject in the context of late medieval nautical cartography, both Mallorcan and Italian, the author does a similar favour to other cartographers who are basically unknown, such as Rafael Soler. Pujades i Bataller's thorough analysis of documentary sources has resulted in an impressive reconstruction of Vallseca's life, from which we learn important data, such as the fact that he died after 1471.

The author's assessments regarding Vallseca's cartographical activity are also significant. Pujades i Bataller concludes that Vallseca was eclectic, since various elements in his works are taken from earlier and contemporary map-makers, and interested in using the latest geographical information: for example, his chart of 1439 is the first to include the Azores. Although the author addresses the iconography of this chart and compares certain elements (such as cities) with those in related maps, one would expect a more thorough discussion of the matter from a monographic study of Vallseca's 1439 chart.

The book is richly illustrated with all the images in colour. One misses, however, reproductions of some of the maps mentioned frequently in the text, such as those by Angelino Dulceti, 1339 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Rés. Ge B 696), Guillem Soler, c.1380 (BnF, Rés. Ge B 1131), Cresques Abraham's Catalan Atlas, 1375 (BnF, MS Espagnol 30), and Macià de Viladesters, 1413 (BnF, Rés. Ge AA 566).

Pujades i Bataller's book on Vallseca's 1439 chart is an essential reference work for those interested in fourteenth-

and fifteenth-century cartography, and the full-size (75 × 112 cm) facsimile reproduction of the map that it accompanies is also extremely appealing. The facsimile edition, numbered and limited to 950 exemplars, should be acquired by all those libraries and institutions that collect material relevant to the history of cartography and medieval art. This facsimile and its critical study will not only allow scholars easier access to the chart (it is currently in the Museu Marítim de Barcelona, on loan from the Biblioteca de Catalunya), but they will also contribute to the original's preservation. In fact, the history of this chart teaches us a lesson in this regard: as George Sand recounts in *Un hiver à Majorque*, in 1838 an ink well spilled onto the chart and caused a stain and slight deterioration of the pigments and gold leaf in the area of the Azores and Canary Islands.

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*King Henry's Map of the British Isles: BL Cotton MS Augustus I i 9.* Commentary by Peter Barber. London: The Folio Society, 2009. Pp. 158, illus., facsimile map. STG £95 (cloth).

King Henry's map of the British Isles—King Henry was Henry VIII, who reigned from 1509 to 1547—is often called the Cottonian map of the British Isles. It is a map of which too little has been known, and this package displays and thoroughly investigates it. The display is magnificent. The map is reproduced as a facsimile, on a paper that has all the visual and tactile qualities of the original parchment. The colours are exact, the lines and wording are as clear as on the original. Even the back of the map is a facsimile, a lovely touch: its pressmark appears there written in the black ink and Victorian hand familiar to any regular reader of manuscripts in the British Library. The purchaser might well suppose that he owned Cotton MS Augustus I.i.9 itself, purloined from the Library by a theft more outrageous than its likely appropriation by Sir Robert Cotton from the papers of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, in 1612. This acquisition was 'less shocking than it seems to modern eyes' as Peter Barber kindly—and rightly—points out in the book that accompanies the facsimile.

The book is an important contribution to our knowledge not just of this map but of early-modern cartography in general, in England and beyond. From the start we are shown that the map carried a strong political message in its colouring and in the arched, imperial crown at the top of the cartouche that refers to both England and Scotland: both were parts of the English king's empire. Scotland and Ireland are both coloured yellow; just as Ireland was under English rule (and a part of it really was), so was Scotland (a complete fiction). Wales is not distinguished from England—both are left uncoloured—since it was in Henry's reign that England incorporated Wales fully into its laws and its government. The part of northern France that appears is also uncoloured, possibly as a gesture to the English king's claim to be king of France as well, a claim to which the Folio Society has lent its symbolic support by supplying the map in a bright blue box sprinkled with gold fleurs-de-lis.

It was with a set purpose that the map flattered King Henry's pretensions. In skilful and compelling argument, based in the first instance on the map's minor place-names, Barber dates the map 1536–1537 and identifies its unnamed author as Maurice Griffith, a Dominican friar whose family came from north Wales. In 1535 he became vicar-general to the bishop of Rochester, paving his way to further emoluments. One that he badly wanted was the

rectory of St Magnus Martyr in London, a rich parish in the gift of the abbot of Westminster; a letter of April 1537 asked Thomas Cromwell for his support, and Barber suggests that the map was produced as a new year's gift to seek the even stronger support of the king. Ultimately Griffith himself became bishop of Rochester and died in 1558.

The map was actually produced by perhaps three London craftsmen, but it will have been Griffith who drafted it, and who determined its shape and content. It is a remarkable production, crowded with place-names, set within outlines less inaccurate than any known predecessor. However this was achieved, it was not through survey and measurement; scale is inconsistent and data can have been amassed only from itineraries and earlier maps of Britain and Ireland. Barber clearly brings out its relationship with the Gough map, the subject of recent work that he discusses perhaps a little uncritically: it is, for instance, inconceivable that local maps could have been supplied for the creation of the Gough map in the late thirteenth century without leaving any trace of such an extraordinary operation in contemporary chronicles, let alone in surviving administrative records.

The book is beautifully produced. The many illustrations are all finely reproduced in colour. At the end is a complete list of the map's 633 place-names, giving their modern form and showing whether or not they also occur on the Gough map and the later maps of the British Isles by George Lily (1546) and Gerard Mercator (1562). It is perhaps a pity that the map could not have been reproduced *in parvo* in the book—it is not always practicable to consult the full-size reproduction while reading—and we may reasonably regret the lack of an index. But this in no way diminishes the achievement of this outstanding union of fine printing and fine historical scholarship.

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*Covens & Mortier: A Map Publishing House in Amsterdam 1685–1866.* By Marco van Egmond. Utrecht Studies in the History of Cartography 8. Houten: HES & De Graaf, 2009. ISBN 978-90-6194-220-7. Pp. 600, illus., CD-ROM. Euros €175.00 (cloth).

Only one Amsterdam map publisher survived longer than Covens & Mortier, and that only for a few years more. Van Keulen lasted from 1678 to 1885, but was of much less importance. The benefits of examining a firm over a long period are substantial. Trends can be surveyed, changing contexts of manufacture and trade can be analysed, and there can be a real sense of how capital investment succeeds—or not. Marco van Egmond has produced a book that will be essential reading for many years: not just on the Amsterdam map trade, but also on map publishing more generally, far beyond the Low Countries.

*Covens & Mortier* began as a thesis in the University of Utrecht, where Van Egmond is now curator of the map collection in the Faculty of Geosciences. His opening chapter is much concerned with some recent more theoretical work on the importance of maps and on the structures of book history. In these matters, clear traces of the thesis from which this book grew are evident, and it would have been better to have set aside these inevitably perfunctory preliminaries. Van Egmond is at his best when he can address the maps, and especially the map trade.

After these preliminaries, though, Van Egmond gets into his stride, with chapters on background aspects of more than three centuries of activity: the family, the firm's stock and publishing policies, the assembling of copy, production and