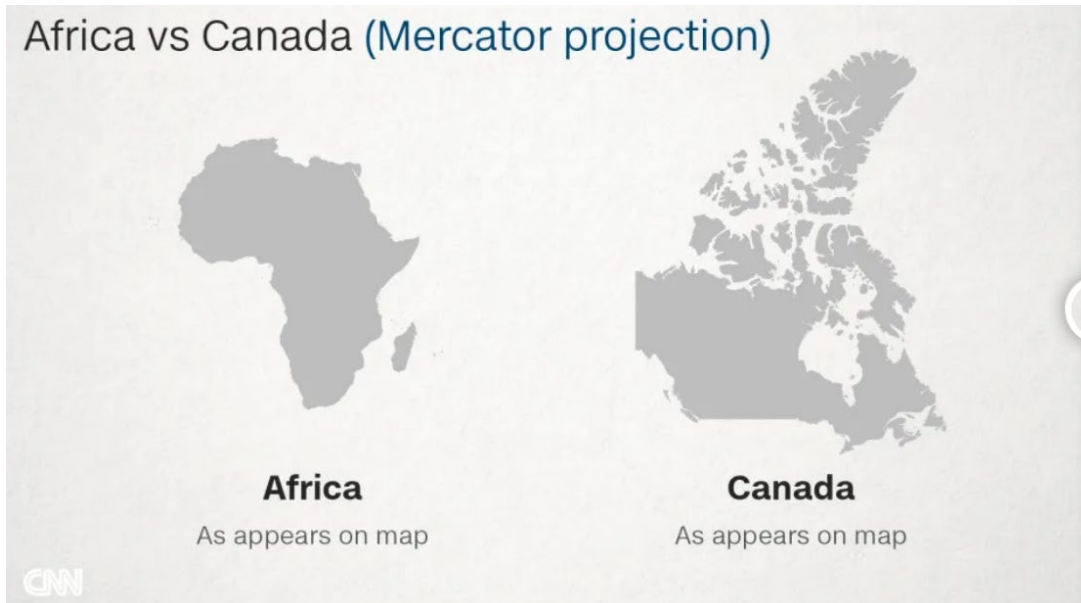


The Idea of Europe and the World in Maps

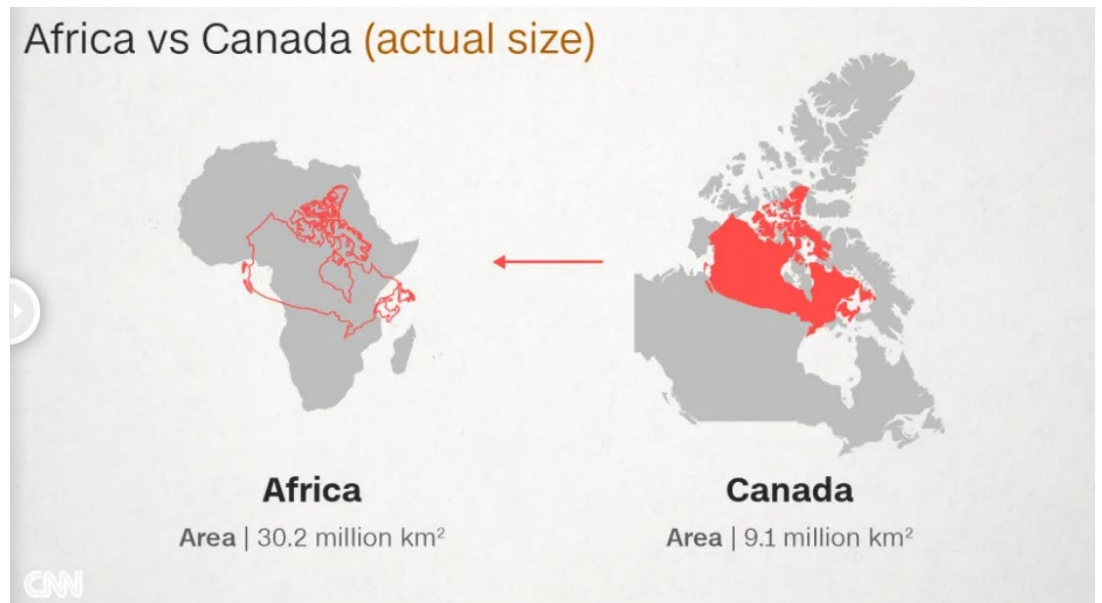


From 1570, a world map by Abraham Ortelius. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Africa vs Canada (Mercator projection)



Africa vs Canada (actual size)



Sophie Morlin-Yron <https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/18/africa/real-size-of-africa/index.html>

Imagining Europe

Europe and European Civilisation as Seen from its Margins and by the Rest of the World, in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Michael WINTLE (ed.)



P.I.E. Peter Lang

Michael Wintle: “Renaissance Maps and the Construction of the Idea of Europe”

- Michael Wintle:
 - Professor of Modern European History
 - Chair of European History, University of Amsterdam, 2002-2019.
 - Professor of European History.
 - Areas of research interest include European identity, Eurocentricism and the visual representation of Europe.
 - Author or editor of several books in his field, including *Imagining Europe and* (2008), *The Image of Europe* (2009) and *Eurocentrism: History, Identity, White Man's Burden* (2021).

Michael Wintle: “ Renaissance Maps and the Construction of the Idea of Europe”

- Thesis:

- “mapping assisted in the formation of a European selfconsciousness or identity, especially during the Renaissance” (p. 139).

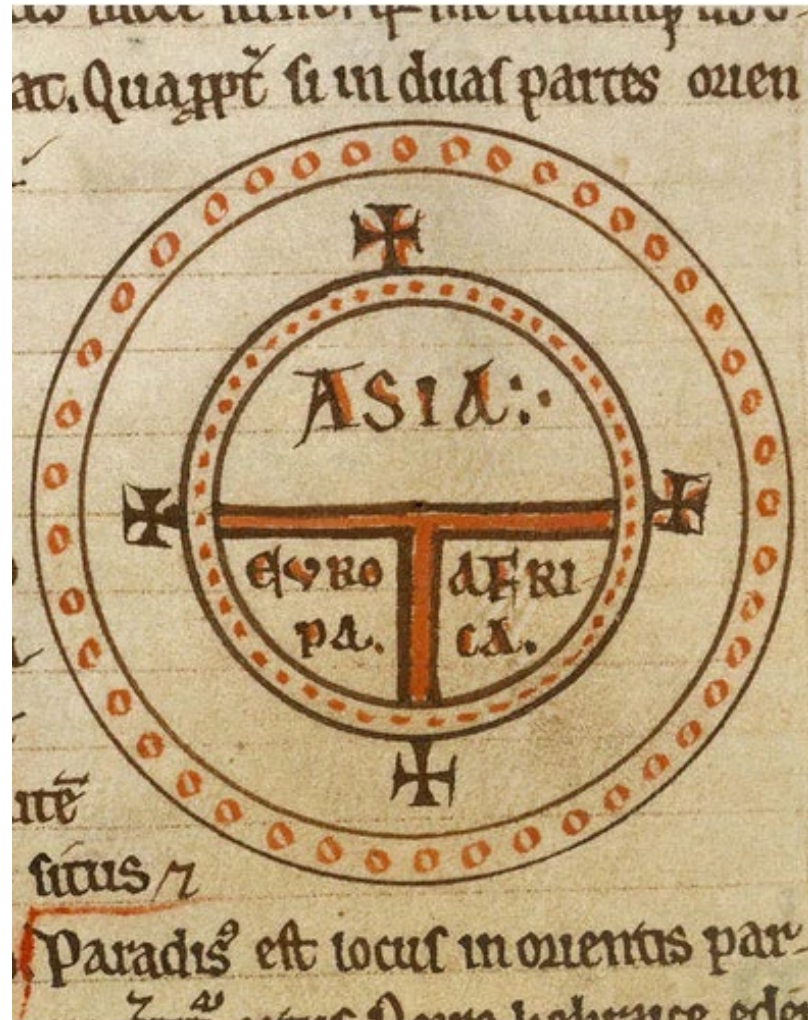
- Evidence:

- Evolution of the depiction of Europe in maps from periods before the 15th Century to the Renaissance period.
- Impact of technology- Mercator projection- on cartography.
- Iconography associated with Europe and other continents.

- Conclusion:

- In the visual arts, and in geographical artwork especially, ‘the triumph of Europe over the rest of the world’ became manifest and was to continue to the Enlightenment. The complexity of these multi-layered graphic images should not be underestimated. However, their intense visual power gave them more influence than almost any other form of propaganda. (pp. 160-161)

Europe in the “known” World in the Middle Ages



- An Example of the T-O map of the medieval world described by Wintle.
 - World made up of three continents
 - “T” (represents the boundaries between the three continents.
 - “O” represents the disc-like form of the whole world surrounded by water.
 - Such conceptualizations of the world were inspired by Christian beliefs
 - They reflect the symmetrical order of what was considered a divine creation of the Judeo-Christian God.
 - Continents divided between the sons of Noah (Asia-Shem; Europe- Japheth; Africa-Ham)

Europe in the “known” World in the Early 16th Century



- The Salviati Planisphere (1525/1527)
 - An example of the way in which navigation and advancements in technology lead to more accurate maps.
 - The Salviati Planisphere is attributed to Nuño García de Torenó.
 - It is known as “Salviati” planisphere because it was given as a gift by King Carlos V (1500-1558) to Giovanni Salviati, a cardinal who had officiated his marriage.
 - Europe appears much smaller and insignificant in relation to Africa, Asia and America.
 - This “Euro-reduction” as Wintle calls could be attributed to the Renaissance-era corrections based on knowledge from antiquity (Ptolemy’s *Geography*)

Europe in the “known” World in the Early 16th Century



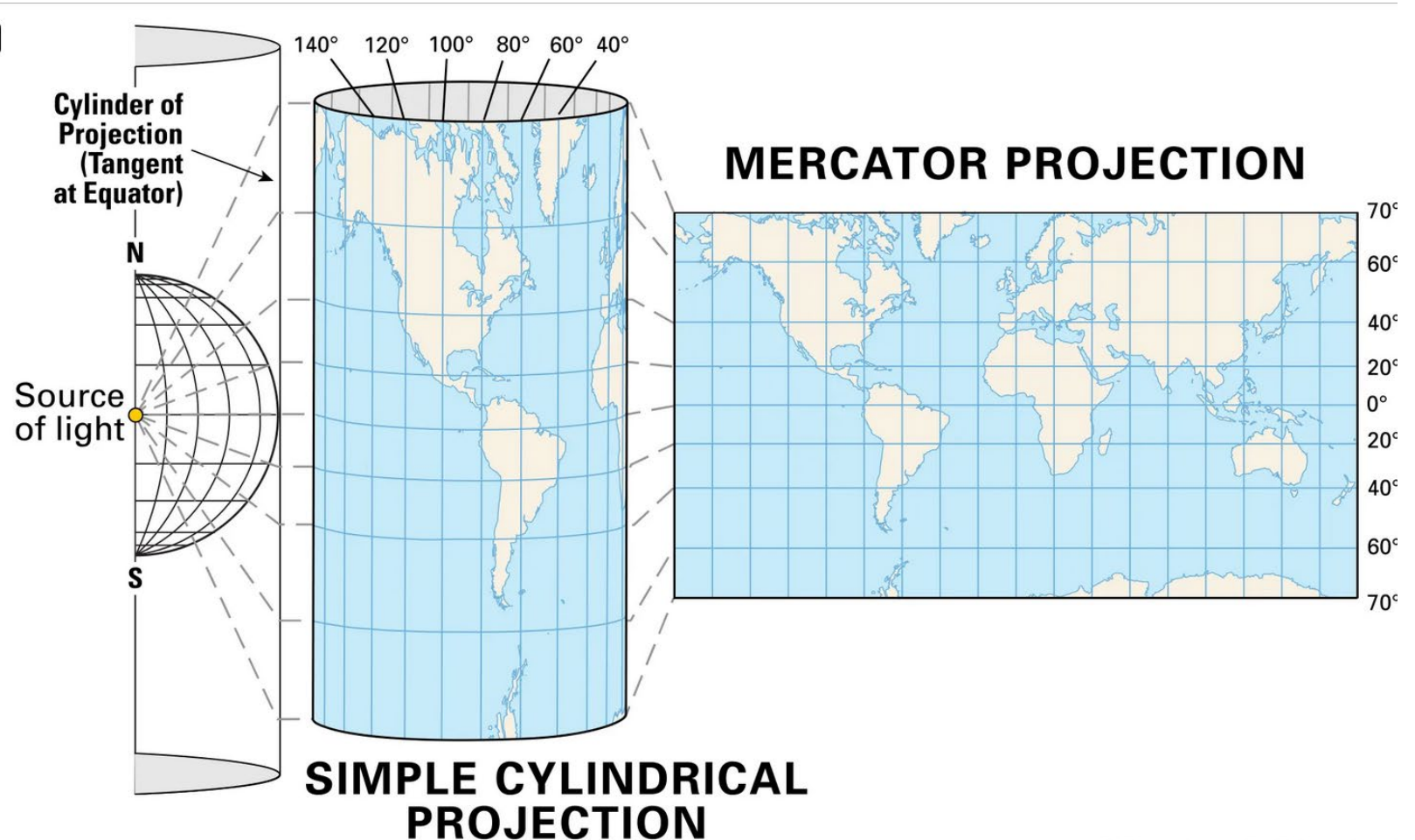
- Although in the Salviati Planisphere Europe appears small and almost insignificant relative to the continents, the map still reflects notions of European proprietorship, as mentioned by Winkle.
- Take closer look at the Salviati Planisphere to identify any hints at assertions proprietorship in the map.
 - Coat of arms of the Salviati family emblazoned on the map.
 - Two sailing ships, one in the Pacific (bearing the coat of arms of Carlos V) and the other in the Indian Ocean.
 - Both ships bear the Spanish flag
 - Take note of the Latin text surrounding the two ships: “hic ratis e quinque est totumque circuit orbem” translates to “here the ship of five sails circles the whole world.”
 - The two ships may symbolize the Magellan expedition around the world from Sanlucar de Barrameda, Spain(1519-1522).
 - The map appears to reflect the expansionist ambitions of Carlos V.



Europe in the “known” World from the Mid 16th Century: The Mercator Projection and Its Unintended Consequences.

- **Mercator Projection:**

- Introduced by Gerardus Mercator (Flanders –now Belgium-1512-1594) in 1569
- Created by the projection of the Earth’s surface onto a cylinder and then flattening it out.
- It was originally intended to facilitate sea navigation, as it allowed sailors to plot straight lines.
- However, it visually distorted the size of the areas of landmass further away from the equator.
- It made Europe appear larger in proportion to say Africa.
- Subsequent maps have relied on the Mercator projection and it has contributed to perpetuating a bias of European and Western dominance.



Europe
and the
“Known”
World
from the
16th
Century



By Willem Blaeu
(Netherlands, 1771-
1638)

Europe and the
World:
Personification of
Continents



*Indignatula decorata EUROPA corona,
Orbem quo sedet et solus regno superbo.*

*Cum numero populi, haud posset superare vires,
Dirigit REX vulgo sibi subditi indigena ferro.*

Europe and the World: Personification of Continents



- Title page of *Theatre of the Lands of the World* by Abraham Ortelius (Antwerp, 1527-1598).
- The work is considered to be the first modern atlas.
- Discussion:
 - Take a look at this title page and discuss with your peers how it reflects Wintle's assertions on the personification of the continents in Renaissance cartographic imagery.
 - What other symbolism can you identify in this image?
 - According to Wintle, imagery, such as personification, was perhaps even more effective at communicating European claims of power and superiority, than other methods. Why would that be?