

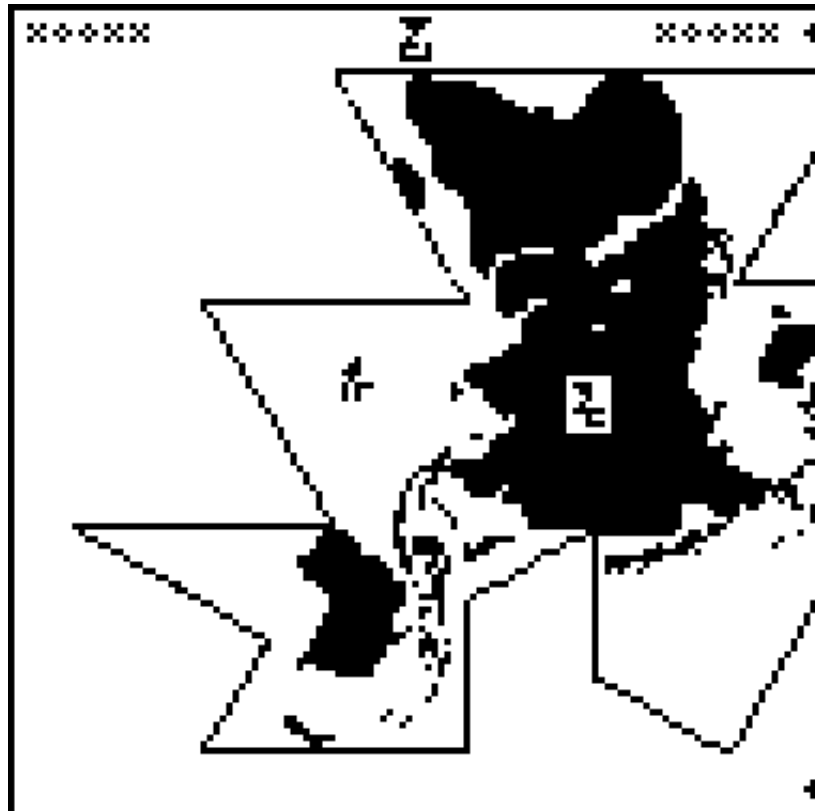
The Universe of Discourse

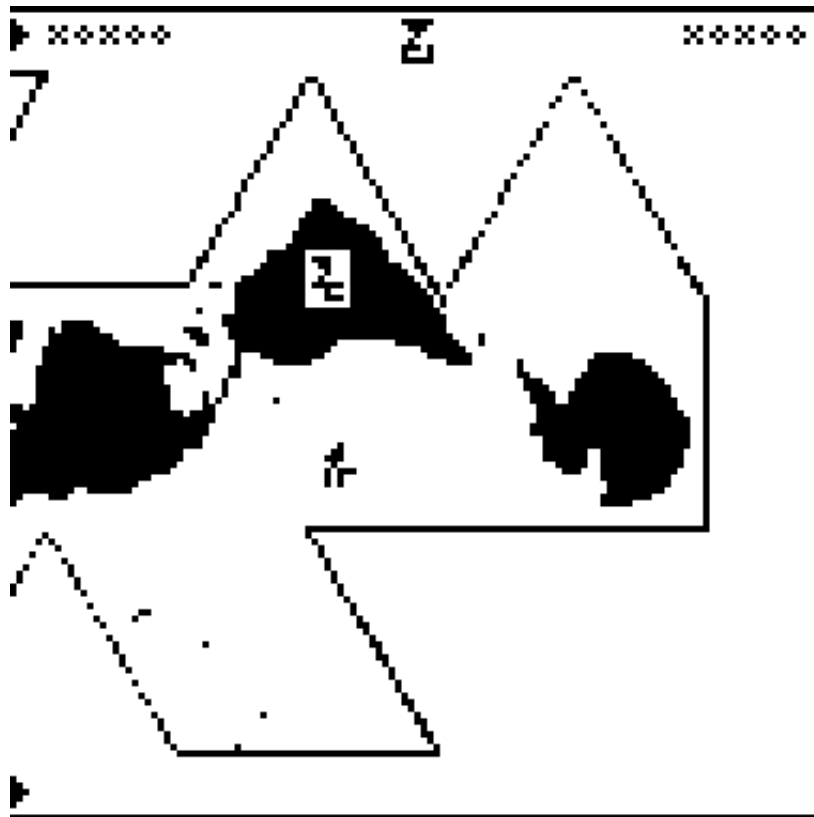
Sat, 28 Nov 2015

A message to the aliens, part 19/23 (map of the Earth)

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These are pages 19–20 of the [Cosmic Call](#) message. An explanation follows.





These two pages are a map of the surface of the Earth. Every other page in the document is surrounded by a one-pixel-wide frame, to separate the page from its neighbors, but the two pages that comprise the map are missing part of their borders to show that the two pages are part of a whole. Assembled correctly, the two pages are surrounded by a single border. The matching sides of the map pages have diamond-shaped registration marks to show how to align the two pages.

The map projection used here is R. Buckminster Fuller's [Dymaxion projection](#), in which the spherical surface of the Earth is first projected onto a regular icosahedron, which is then unfolded into a flat net. This offers a good compromise between directional distortion and size distortion. Each twentieth of the map is distorted only enough to turn it into a triangle, and the interruptions between the triangles can be arranged to occur at uninteresting parts of the map.

Both pages are labeled with the glyph  for "Earth". On each page, the land parts of the map are labeled with  and the water parts with , as on [page 14](#), since the recipients wouldn't otherwise be able to tell which was which.

The [next article](#) will discuss page 21, shown at right. (Click to enlarge.) Try to figure it out before then.



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