Burgkmair’s *Peoples of Africa and India* (1508) and the Origins of Ethnography in Print

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A broadsheet printed in the town of Augsburg in southern Germany in 1505 (Fig. 1) represents the initial public offering of New World Indians to a European audience.¹ The feather-skirted barbarians featured here stand in for a tribe of Brazilian Tupinamba Indians that Amerigo Vespucci saw for the first time in the New World. This feisty group of wild men and women illustrates passages from his letter *Mundus novus*, summarized in the text beneath the image, that describe the Indians’ communality, their penchant for free love, and their culinary preference for human flesh:

No one has anything of his own, but all things are common. And the men take women who please them, regardless of whether it is their mother, sister, or friend. In this matter they make no distinction. They also fight with each other. They also eat one another and they hang and smoke the flesh of those killed. They live to be 150. And have no government.²

The sweeping nature of the caption’s spurious claims is matched by the broad brush used to illustrate them. While the broadsheet’s anonymous artist portrays these Tupinamba fantastically, in Europe, these elements solidified into a conventional visual motif: the image of an Indian in a feather crown and matching skirt, an “exotic” who quickly became the prototype from which subsequent stereotypes of Indians were drawn.³ The illustrations of newly encountered peoples accompanying the earliest printed reports by Christopher Columbus and Vespucci (which appeared between 1493 and 1505) did not reflect real cultural difference between the Europeans and indigenous peoples but relied instead on recycled imagery that dwelt on their perceived warlike and cannibalistic tendencies. Utruly bands of crude, cartoonish, and bloodthirsty wild men in feathered skirts quickly calcified into the standard iconography for rendering newly discovered peoples, regardless of where they were found.

Contrast this with another account of foreign peoples recently charted by Europeans, Hans Burgkmair’s *Peoples of Africa and India* (Fig. 2), also printed in Augsburg, a short three years later. Whereas Burgkmair’s subjects are the natives of coastal Africa and India, the leap from prints of Amerindians to ones of Africans and Asians is not as counterintuitive as it may appear. To begin with, the distinction between the Americas and Asia is anachronistic for the period. Furthermore, stereotyped images of the inhabitants of both the Americas and Asia often conflated them. Artists’ proclivity to costume all newly discovered peoples in the feather crown and hustle of the Brazilian Tupinamba, a phenomenon the anthropologist William Sturtevant dubbed the *tupinambisation* of the world, contributed to the confusion.⁴ Burgkmair’s images of native peoples mark an extraordinarily early departure from stereotypes. These peoples are presented in recognizable family units; their bodies are proportionately constructed and are modeled to rotate in space using an artistic vocabulary developed in the Italian Renaissance.

Unlike earlier images of newly discovered indigenes, Burgkmair’s monumental printed representation of the inhabitants of coastal Africa and the Malabar Coast of India is a precocious study in human diversity.⁵ This woodcut series is based on *Die Merfart und erfahrung nüwer Schiffung und Wege zu vien unerkantten Inseln und Königsreichen* (The Voyage and Discoveries of New Paths to Many Unknown Islands and Kingdoms) by the Tirolese merchant Balthasar Springer, a report that records his travels in 1505 and 1506 with the mission led by Francisco Almeida that established the first Portuguese viceroyalty in India.⁶

Burgkmair translated Springer’s written report into a visual account of the places and peoples encountered by the merchant, producing a multiblock woodcut, which, when set together, measures approximately seven and a half feet long. The frieze follows the journey in a series of consecutive frames showing the peoples of Guinea, the region around the Cape of Good Hope, the eastern seaboard of Africa, an assembly of assorted indigenes from India, and lastly, a procession on India’s Malabar Coast. This document’s emphasis on the world’s peoples suggests the intervention of the local humanist Konrad Peutinger, who formed the link between the merchant and the artist.

In its orderly presentation of peoples, the frieze detaches African and Indian inhabitants from their representational history in *exotica*, where they were entirely divorced from empirical observation.⁷ In earlier depictions, the inhabitants of these regions and others heretofore unknown to Western Europe inherited their exotic status from both local and classical traditions.⁸ Before Ferdinand Magellan’s circumnavigation in 1522, confusion was widespread about which Indians were to be found where; visual generalizations and verbal misunderstandings compounded the problem. Additionally, the tendency in the early modern period to call many exotic things *Calecuish*, an adjective misapplied to all but the products of the western coast of India, also frustrated clear distinctions.⁹ Remarkably, in light of these misleading confusions and this rampant pictorial nomadism, with his images of natives of Africa and India, Hans Burgkmair neither played into iconographic presets nor invented new stereotypes.

To explain the rupture that Burgkmair’s images mark in the history of representation, scholars have characterized the frieze as among the earliest recordings of unfamiliar peoples based on empirical evidence. A primary reason that these images differ from earlier ones that also described newly discovered peoples is that Burgkmair worked them up from visual models, probably sketches made by an artistically in-
clined travel companion and brought back by Springer. But a precedent in sketches alone does not fully explain this change. Burgkmair’s woodcuts, more precisely, signal a turn to representational accuracy and the idea that the visual experience of Springer’s encounters could be reproduced.

The artistic criteria for empiricism in the early modern period can be found in contemporary printed genres, such as travel accounts, maps, and physiognomies, that made similar claims to documentation and give clues as to how their authority could be visually reproduced. Burgkmair’s frieze adheres formally to the two genres from which it descends most directly, travel accounts and maps. Locating the coordinates of travel was the de facto task of each of these genres, and both were instrumental in tracking and recording some of the important novelties their authors came across. In their attempts to report experience, the travel account and the map provided both textual and visual precedents for the frieze, which is a hybrid of both.

Whereas “ethnography,” as a method of investigation characterized by comparison, classification, and historical lineage, would not be applied to images or texts for centuries to come, Burgkmair’s frieze invites a prescient use of that term. The frieze calls into being a basic set of analytic categories that ethnography would take as its methodological foundation, including a quasi-scientific observation of nature, as well as the organizational rigor that attends it. By categorizing information, Burgkmair transformed the narrative of a merchant whose task never was to render an account of peoples seen en route into a maplike chart of the region. In doing so, he also took care to distinguish one group from another by virtue of their variance in geography, appearance, and customs, and gives a relativistic rendering of these peoples with respect to their European counterparts.

Burgkmair’s interest in empirical research and documentation was precipitated by humanist colleagues like Konrad Peutinger, who also collected data, artifacts, written accounts, and physical evidence from both antiquity and the remote corners of the ever expanding world. Both artist and humanist sat at the crossroads of empirical investigation, and their discoveries functioned symbiotically. Burgkmair’s frieze collected information in a unique format that announces and organizes novelty. The confluence of epistemological and artistic currents that converged in Augsburg art making in this period equipped the print to take on the analysis of other cultures in an ethnographic fashion.

On the side of representation, Burgkmair pushed the boundaries of printmaking into the realm of verisimilitude, advanced naturalism in the form of the chiaroscuro woodcut, monitored the rediscovery of the antique, developed formulas for proportion, and made refinements in portraiture—technical evolutions that better render the empirically observed world. In the earliest stages of Burgkmair’s development, some of these were still conventional—indeed, Burgkmair’s primary contribution rests in deploying these conventions in more meaningful matrices. Importing ideals and techniques of portraiture from antique coins, Burgkmair inscribed authenticity into the concept of likeness. Using familiar iconographic models, he relativized his subjects to the European viewer by bringing them into line with recognizable narratives and European pictorial traditions. He familiarized Africans and Indians by endowing them with recognizably human proportions, taking them out of the conventional categories of the exotic. Burgkmair represented difference by first establishing the kinship of these peoples with Western European traditions, making them commensurate. All of these similitudes constitute an early foray into the creation of analytic categories that could take stock of cultural difference in an organized fashion, the premise on which the foundation of modern ethnography is built.
The Frieze and Travel Accounts

Printed for the first time in 1508, two years after the journey it describes, Burgkmair’s frieze still enjoyed the popularity of late-breaking news. It recorded the 1505–6 voyage of Tirolese merchant Balthasar Springer to India in the path of sea-lanes newly plowed by Vasco da Gama, who, less than a decade before, had circumnavigated Africa and brought India into the commercial purview of Europe. The series of woodcuts depicts groups of natives Springer came across on his expedition around the coast of Africa to the East Indies. The frieze, made at the behest of the Weiser family, who cosponsored Springer’s journey, presumably entered the collection of this powerful Augsburg merchant family shortly after it was printed. In the Weiser edition, the text of Springer’s report forms a caption running along the top of the prints. The first four prints retain the original text; the following print supplies room for accompanying text, but no copy with the text has survived.

The frieze is a curious monument in itself, and it marks a significant formal departure from earlier travel accounts. The format of the multiblock print, a woodcut pulled from eight different blocks assembled into a frieze seven and a half feet long, presents almost as strange an object to a modern viewer of Renaissance art as the information it contains must have seemed to the original viewer. Hans Burgkmair set the series of woodcuts into a frieze format that now exists largely in pieces reconstructed from mostly posthumous printings. The edition discussed here, a set of eight impressions, follows the reconstruction of the frieze currently in the Weiser family foundation’s collection, supplemented by several impressions in print collections in Coburg and Berlin. The history of the frieze is obscured by the fact that no complete edition of the set of prints has survived from the original printing. Some of the posthumous impressions that survive come from Burgkmair’s original blocks but in unorthodox arrangements.

One scholar has recently questioned whether the extant impressions include all that were originally part of the set. A later reprinting of a block that reverses the order of the figure groups has complicated the provenance of one of the images, Natives with a Herd of Animals (Fig. 5). The contemporary reconstruction of the frieze is a consensus derived from a number of spin-offs in many different media.

Burgkmair divided the frieze into several sections that correspond to sites of Springer’s encounters. A child jauntily balancing on one leg opens the scene carrying the inscription in gennea (Guinea, Ivory Coast, Fig. 3). Arching against the capital A of “Gennea,” an adult male brandishes a spear, his classical body torqued in studied contrapposto, arresting the attention of a seated female holding an infant balanced on her thigh. The following frame, labeled in alloa, features two adults, an infant, and a child from the Cape region (Algoa Bay, southeast Africa). Both adults, a mother nursing and a father turned toward a male child, are seated on a hillock. This couple wears animal pelts as mantles; the woman’s body is draped in a network of dried animal intestines used to support a nursing infant. They wear large flat sandals on their feet, and each is equipped with a walking stick. The next impression, in araria (Fig. 4), shows natives from the east coast of Africa, in the area of Mozambique and Mombassa. A female and male adult, wearing woven textiles and head coverings, turn toward a child between them. The next scene, gros india, depicts adult inhabitants of the Malabar Coast of India, all clad in cloth waist coverings. A standing female holds a fruit in one hand and supports a parrot on the other wrist; a child runs toward her, uttering the text “mama he.”

After these four groups comes an impression depicting a group of Indian natives with a herd of animals (Fig. 5), possibly in the setting of a market, along with native flora and fauna. The terminal woodcuts (Figs. 6, 7), pulled from three linked blocks, depicts the procession of the king of
Cochin. The first five scenes belong together as a set; overlapping elements of the blocks themselves substantiate this sequence. The ensuing scenes of the peoples of India and the train of the king of Cochin are also united by a continuous underscoring baseline.

The merchant account that generated this frieze must be considered in the tradition of travel narratives, as well as other European reports of discovery from the 1490s to the 1510s. In their first-person recordings studded with anecdote and hyperbole, Sir John Mandeville, Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, and Springer shared a common thread of adventurous travel; they tracked the movement of an eyewitness from one place to the next. They each produced raw data that were widely and variously consumed, not only by humanists but also by other adventurers. Both Marco Polo and Mandeville have been cited as sources for Columbus's route and as field guides for the wonders that he saw in the New World. Burgkmair reflects these concerns; accordingly, his illustrations mark a radical departure from those that accompanied the reports of Columbus or Vespucci.

More important, Burgkmair's illustrations introduce another novelty to this genre: the visualization of empirical data. Previous travel accounts that had based their rhetorical claims on the authority of the eyewitness had rarely furnished images that would appear to support those assertions. The depictions of monstrous beings that accompanied the earliest travel accounts never matched the findings of empirical investigation.

The great travel accounts of Marco Polo and John Mandeville (early and late fourteenth century, respectively) owed their popularity to the authors' adventurous spirit and gift for hyperbole. The reliability of some of Marco Polo's reports are compromised by the number of his tales that remain unconfirmed, and John Mandeville, if there was such a man, is rumored never to have left his study. Thus, the very travel that travel literature might assume as a prerequisite to its recounting was semiobsolete in the medieval period. Printers traded as much on their authors' personalities to sell copies as on news of their discoveries. The sine qua non of good travel writing was a good editor. Marco Polo dictated his recollections to a scribe fluent in literary conventions. Mandeville was primarily an editor of others' written accounts, which he appropriated liberally, but he advertised
himself as the text’s author, standard practice in medieval writing.23

To humanists who maintained and amended the books of antiquity, whose erudition included specialized knowledge about literary conventions, fell the job of fielding reports by such merchants and sailors as Columbus, Vespucci, Nicolò de’ Conti, Bartolomeu Dias, and Vasco da Gama and squaring their travel accounts with ancient literary forms.24 As they revised the texts of classical authors, humanists began to question the “facts” that did not match empirical experience. The incorporation of new facts introduced contradictions into the wisdom of antiquity, and the exposure of new corners of the earth about which the ancients had remained silent delivered a fatal blow.25 Although the dismantling of the authority of classical antiquity happened in fits and starts, Anthony Grafton has demonstrated that a good bit of the chipping away was done by humanists engaged with geographic literature.26 Humanists came upon geographic infelicities when amending and improving Ptolemy’s Geographia and took seriously the observations of travelers like Springer who claimed to have seen things firsthand.27

The symbiosis of traveler and humanist opened the door for the kind of cross-fertilization between cosmography, travel accounts, and maps that made Burgkmair’s frieze possible. Merchant accounts and route books, called rutters (from the Portuguese roteiro), circulated alongside the vernacular editions of the letters that Columbus and Vespucci sent to their patrons. Rutters were purely pragmatic accounts that outlined the logistics of reaching a destination and that championed the economic reasons for going, usually for trade and the quest for spices.28 The pamphlet Den rechten weeg ausz zu faren von Lizbona gen Kallakuth (Fig. 8), published in Nuremberg in about 1506 by a merchant who had returned from India, fell somewhere between a travel report and a rutter.29 The pamphlet’s title promises to reveal “mile by mile, the proper path from Lisbon to Calicut”; the text recounts ports along the way and raw materials to exploit and, above all, guarantees relative ease in gathering them. It is an anonymous and impersonal report without an overriding interest in geography or foreign peoples; it neither casts the inhabitants of these regions as monsters nor actively engages the trope of the exotic in trying to describe them.

If we consider the curious illustration that serves as its frontispiece—showing the location of India below the horizon and perpendicular to western Europe—we observe the use of this right triangle as shorthand for a very schematic nautical marker for the galleon at sea. As the purpose of the pamphlet was to galvanize interest in the Germans’ participation in the India trade, it seems an effort was made to locate India in a deceptively proximate relation to Europe.
Sometime before it went to press, this humble merchant report developed humanist ambitions: it acquired a Ptolemy map, which it lodges within its pages. When mediated by humanists, merchant accounts could work symbiotically with cosmographic knowledge. The pamphlet itself was a layman's accounting of the facts of the trip, but the Ptolemy map set the local journey into a worldview. It was likely a local humanist editor with knowledge of ancient geography who supplied this more universal and cosmographic framework to the otherwise practical account. Vernacular pamphlets like these did not effortlessly make the cut into humanist collections, the shelves of which were groaning with the weight of Greek and Latin authors. The library of the town secretary of Augsburg, the humanist Konrad Peutinger, was among the first to give credibility to vernacular works, most important, authors like Vespucci and Vasco da Gama, whose redrawn contours of the world otherwise only gradually gave them some measure of authority. Probably sharing shelf space with these accounts was Springer's Merfart, the report on which Hans Burgkmair's frieze is based.

Springer's report came to both Peutinger and Burgkmair's attention through Peutinger's relatives and Springer's patron, the Welser family. These Augsburg patricians, merchant-bankers under whose auspices Springer sailed, provided the request for such a report. Springer shores up his connection to the Welser in the text on the frieze's first block: "I, Balthasar Springer, from Vils, sent by the Weiser of Augsburg, have had knowledge by sailing and experience, and the Indian-sim-wild man as a deceptively reductive contrapositive of the European."
and gave it myself to be printed, such as it is here.”33 In addition, Springer leans on the time-honored credibility granted the eyewitness.

Springer’s *Merfart* combined the statistical information of the rutter with the occasional wide-eyed incredulousness of travel accounts. His brief report details all the major landfalls, the crew’s bravado, and the novelties they met with. As a sailor, he took notice of geography and topography, but he refrained from the swashbuckling tone of some high-seas adventures and adopted instead a sober narrative style.34

Springer’s *Merfart* reported a merchant’s observations and discoveries.35 Submitted to his Weber patrons as a handwritten copy probably as early as 1508, Springer’s whole-text version appeared in print as a pamphlet in 1509 with crude woodcuts by Wolf Traut. In this unabridged version, Springer’s text jumps effortlessly from the crew’s tribulations to their often hostile encounters with the local populations. Passages in the pamphlet also betray the unrelenting nature of Springer’s mercantile eye, as he reconciles the marvelous variety of new things discovered to a gold standard. His tendency to reduce novelty to its monetary value produces some colorful *Mischwesen*: his first sighting of a dolphin describes a fish the size of a “pig worth about four gulden” attached to a bird’s beak.36

Springer’s casual observations of peoples are slipped in amid other commentary of mercantile concern, such as the region’s profusion of fatty cattle and the production of goods like cheese, sugar, and gold. A typical passage reveals that the indigenous people frequently reminded him of no more than wild animals:

In this kingdom and island, we saw both sexes of marvelous people living together without shame. While some cover only their genitals, others go about stark naked, and all are black like the Moors. Here begins the truly dark interior. Dwellings here resemble the structures that our poor villagers place over their ovens. Here, the natives carry their huts with them and set them up wherever it is convenient.37

When Springer’s text was abridged for the purposes of captioning the woodcut, Burgkmair sifted through the anecdotal surfeit, retaining only the ethnographic information. In the frieze, the text cited above is reduced to: “The so-called land of the Moors is 1400 miles wide; there the inhabitants go naked and wear golden rings around their arms and feet”38 (Fig. 2, see text block). The frieze’s text blocks paraphrase relevant and abridged sections of Springer’s original account to direct the reader’s attention to the images. Inserted here as captions, they distill only the passages that pertain to the habits of these foreign peoples.

Burgkmair’s collaboration with Peutinger redirected the frieze’s emphasis to one of peoples. With a humanist’s penchant for organization and taxonomic recording, Peutinger probably helped select the passages destined for the woodcuts, favoring customs over the report’s monetary and mercantile concentration. Accordingly, Burgkmair’s illustrations applied organizational rigor to the random assortment of information from Springer’s text, dividing the continuum into distinct geographic regions announced by titles that identify each grouping as peoples discovered there. By placing the natives into equal-sized and legible sections, Burgkmair fashioned an anthropological chart of these regions. He assigned each group of natives to a compartment containing a familial unit established by two adults and one or more offspring.

In this graphic format, Burgkmair transformed Springer’s account into another kind of document entirely, one that reins in the peripatetic randomness of text and whose illustrations assert an eyewitness alert to ethnographic differences among peoples. The new legibility of the peoples of Africa and India arose as a confluence of data secured through...
Germans in India and Indians in Germany

Konrad Peutinger, the Augsburg civic secretary, provided the physical as well as the intellectual link that connected the merchant Springer to Hans Burgkmair. In humanist libraries like that maintained by Peutinger, who amassed the largest book collection north of the Alps, merchant accounts of amateur eyewitnesses to foreign peoples such as Springer’s first rubbed spines with the canon established by the ancients Pliny and Herodotus. Thus were the observations of the merchant’s roving eye added to humanist data. Peutinger’s library was the intellectual laboratory in which Burgkmair’s Africans and Indians were discovered, and it was most likely Peutinger who brokered Burgkmair’s involvement in the project.

Through his contacts in Lisbon, Peutinger was uniquely privy to the latest news on the India front. Valentin Fernandes, a notary, translator, and book printer active in Lisbon, represented the Welser interests at the Portuguese court of Don Manuel as the Germans’ trade agent. As official broker between the Portuguese crown and the German merchants, Fernandes was instrumental in securing trade privileges for the Welser, as well as the participation of agents like Springer in the Almeida mission. Peutinger, representing the legal and political interests of the Welser in Augsburg, was Fernandes’s contact in Germany. This relationship served as the crucial conduit for the flow of mercantile information into learned circles. Perhaps the most notable bridge Fernandes spanned to print culture was his transmission of the sketch that Albrecht Dürer used as a study for his 1515 print of a rhinoceros. This sketch, perhaps through Peutinger, also found its way to Burgkmair for his own woodcut of that animal.

Peutinger’s library preserves a little-known clue as to how Burgkmair might have obtained a firsthand view of Malabar Indians presented in the woodcut frieze. The humanist’s library housed a collection of manuscripts relating to the contemporary exploration of India that constituted the most precise documentation of the Germans’ trade activity, as well as reports of recent peregrinations to India. Peutinger kept painstaking track of the German presence in India and also had the only extant record of the presence of Indians in early-sixteenth-century mission. A note written in Peutinger’s own hand in his copy of Ptolemy’s Cosmographia announces the purchase of Indian natives by Peutinger’s father-in-law Anton Welser, as well as by Ambrosius Höchstetter and Konrad Vöhlin, members of other Augsburg patrician families. Burgkmair almost certainly saw these Indian natives, reported by Peutinger to be alive and well and living in Swabia, and used them as models for his frieze.

Peutinger offered Burgkmair more than just an opportunity to study living specimens. He furnished the humanist framework in which they were to be understood—not as monsters or exotics but as a contribution to a new chapter in cosmographic knowledge. It is of no small significance that Peutinger noted these Indian newcomers to Augsburg in his copy of Ptolemy; to Peutinger the arrival of Indians in Germany betokened a geographic anomaly and, possibly, an amendment. As the Cosmographia had been designed to accommodate future discoveries, it seemed fitting that the revisions to the Ptolemaic world picture that these new peoples implied be noted there. In Peutinger’s library, new facts came into meaningful contact with the substrate of antiquity.

Peutinger’s broad enthusiasm for India reveals itself in a survey of his records on the topic; these range from anecdotal to notarial and humanistic. In his informal collection of conversations regarding the India trade in the fall of 1504, the Sermones convivales, Peutinger optimistically anticipated the participation of the Augsburg merchants and humanists in the India trade. The Sermones demonstrate the very early proprietary interest Augsburgers had in India, as well as great expectations for the return on their investment. Hopes ran high during the 1506–7 mission in which Springer participated as agent for the Welser. Peutinger hoped for more than just commercial returns, however. He eagerly awaited firsthand accounts of the geographic and anthropological discoveries from Fernandes.

In addition to these accounts of Portuguese maritime activity, Peutinger meticulously collected and cataloged vernacular reports pertaining specifically to the India trade. Peutinger assembled fragments of letters concerning Welser company business in the India trade into a codex, as well as handwritten reports of the “discovery” of India from 1501 to 1505, including the accounts of Vespucci, da Gama, Pedro
The Indian arrivals to Augsburg stand in relief against the backdrop of the world picture of antiquity, living, breathing examples of the carefully tallied vernacular facts by which the moderns would amend the wisdom of the ancients. Pliny once reported Indians to be races without nostrils who breathed only with great difficulty; by contrast, the reported Indians easily registered a pulse in Swabia.

Mapping Peoples and Customs
Collecting practices such as Peutinger’s brought travel and ethnography into the realm of cosmography, pairing the particularity of the first two with the universality of the latter. Peutinger’s inscription of the citation regarding Indians in Germany within the pages of his copy of Ptolemy could not have happened in the absence of an epistemic shift that made this the logical place to deposit such ephemeral information. The Indian arrivals to Augsburg stand in relief against the backdrop of the world picture of antiquity, living, breathing examples of the carefully tallied vernacular facts by which the moderns would amend the wisdom of the ancients. Pliny once reported Indians to be races without nostrils who breathed only with great difficulty; by contrast, the reported Indians easily registered a pulse in Swabia.

The novelty of the frieze’s representations of Indians, however, resides not simply in the likelihood that Burgkmair saw these natives noted in Peutinger’s Ptolemy. Illustrated accompaniment was part of printed travel accounts from their earliest editions, but never before had illustrations claimed to reproduce seen peoples after life; instead, they merely recycled age-old myths of monsters and cannibals. Although Springer sailed to the opposite hemisphere, Burgkmair’s illustrated account of his voyage must also be considered in the context of contemporary iconography of travel to the Americas. This iconography is relevant for two reasons: first, because the modern distinction between the two Indies is largely anachronistic for the period, and second, because Columbus’s and Vespucci’s letters formed the printed milieu in which Springer’s report would have circulated, and their illustrations would have provided viable iconographic precedents and models for it.

The use of uncredited recyclings was endemic to the early print trade and determined iconographic ready-mades used to illustrate New World natives. The tradition of the wild man guided the earliest German frontispieces of the printed voyages of discovery. The wild man was an easily accessible primitive with a long history of embodying life on the margins of civilization and, as such, was an obvious iconographic surrogate for the illustration of newly discovered beings of dubious civility. Publishers active in other parts of Europe also used other recycled iconography for travel accounts of the New World. The frontispiece of an Italian edition of a Columbus letter printed in Florence in 1493, which accompanied Giuliano Dati’s ottava rima, a rhymed retelling of Columbus’s journey in a form employed for chivalrous epics (Fig. 9), shows peoples with featureless faces and bodies for whom nudity is the distinguishing mark of otherness. Even when the newly encountered Caribs secured a compositionally more central position, nudity remained the mark of their difference. In the 1509 Strasbourg edition of Vespucci’s Mundus novus, the contrast of the natives’ nudity is heightened by their juxtaposition to overdressed Europeans, whose features are hidden by hats and back views. These were typical ways of asserting the alterity of the natives without explicitly defining it.

A crucial development in the depictions of New World inhabitants emerges around the same time in the same ambience as Burgkmair’s frieze. The anonymous artist of the Vespucci broadsheet from the press of Johann Froschauer in Augsburg in 1505 found visual parallels for Vespucci’s descriptive detail of the natives’ appearance, for which recycled stereotypes no longer sufficed (Fig. 1). The Augsburg broadsheet is the only woodcut predating Burgkmair’s frieze that displays curiosity about the appearance and customs of
the depicted inhabitants, who have been identified as Brazilian Tupinambas. These natives follow the prescriptions of Vespucci’s text: they congregate, interact socially, and appear in characteristic feather ornamentation and body piercing—particularities and details that document claims announced in the caption. To this novelty, Burgkmair added the documentary strategies employed by contemporary navigation charts, finding in maps a sensible model because he was similarly concerned to reveal the coordinates of travel while simultaneously portraying inhabitants of these lands.

The representation of travel always taxed compositional conventions when it tried to render two places at once. Most illustrations that accompany the Columbus and Vespucci reports collapse the moment of departure and arrival into a single scene so that Europe and the New World occupy opposite ends of the image, giving pride of place to a vast empty sea between them. The strange symbol on the frontispiece of the aforementioned merchant pamphlet Den rechten weg (Fig. 8) reverses this formula. A triangular notional map of Europe and India, it argues for the continuity of the world—an India relative to Europe.

Broad schematic formulations work in tension with the kind of minor compositional unities and naturalisms that Burgkmair endows in the individual groupings. The peoples depicted in the first part of the frieze (Figs. 3, 4) stand as fixed groups of family units, distilled into a series of linear comparisons that do not strive for overall compositional unity. Invoking painting’s compositional and narrative unities only in local sections of the frieze, Burgkmair’s composition primarily invites comparison to other genres, like sculptural friezes and maps.

Considered as a whole, the schematic nature of the frieze’s composition mirrors techniques used in mapmaking, the other print genre that also presented information in a formulaic manner. Maps had a similar mandate to spatialize, organize, and schematize quantifiable material; travel accounts, given their symbiotic relation with maps, borrowed similar conventions. By placing inhabitants in parcelled and contiguous spatial coordinates, Burgkmair called on maps to certify his frieze as a space for the documentation of geographic knowledge. Like the cartographer, Burgkmair structured the empirical experience of an eyewitness traveler into data. Because the twin concerns of geographic orientation and topographic description also lie at the heart of Burgkmair’s frieze, contemporary cartographic renderings of the world stand as compelling formal precedents from which to begin to untangle its visual complexities and structural anomalies.

Burgkmair’s frieze shares compositional traits with early sea charts, or portolans. Whereas humanists settled down with Ptolemy maps in speculative contemplation, mariners made and used portolans as practical aids. Portolans can be considered visual counterparts to merchant reports, as they were composed by first-person eyewitnesses and based on empirical experience. Although constructed according to systems of conventions, to those who mastered their abstract functionality, portolans were extremely useful and highly accurate.

Portolans constituted the most precise cartographic depictions of Africa, Asia, and the New World in the early modern period. These sea charts, despite their conventional nature, make claims of internal coherence that vouch for their accuracy. Originally produced by Mediterranean sailors, who made local measurements to chart the shapes of harbors, portolans took very specific account of coastlines and harbors, on whose visibility all premodern navigational methods depended. The usefulness of the portolan depended on the reliability of the shapes of its coastlines, whose contours are visually emphasized. Rhumb lines charted distances and directions of given voyages and knit landmasses together. In their absence of an absolute directionality, an orienting grid, and an omniscient point of view, portolans abstractly schematized the world.

The coastline is the feature that orients and "magnetizes" the portolan and fixes the line as a means of representation. Edward Casey argues for the bivalent nature of this line, one that forms both literal and discursive boundaries. The line marks the real and literal border of the land, as well as the site of the imaginary schematized sign of this termination—a line around which the pictorial and landscape features congregate. Burgkmair’s baseline similarly knits together sections of the merchant’s map.

Burgkmair’s frieze adopts analogous configurations of space, synthesizes a group of spatial coordinates, and draws characteristic topographic features at the coastline. Here organized on a linear grid, it makes geographic sense of Springer’s chaotically narrated journey by compartmentalizing it regionally. As in maps, sections are marked off with topographic features. Trees, used illusionistically in local instances, also function schematically within the frieze as a compositional whole—part of the visual formula to mark divisions and distances. Burgkmair thus melded groupings that might well delineate moments of experienced reality with pictorial elements meant to function schematically. These “pictographs” work in tandem with the blocks of text, which dwindle into ever briefer captions in later editions of Burgkmair’s frieze. The headlining toponym in GENNEA mimics the discursive space of mappaemundi that simultaneously accommodate titular logographs as well as pictographs. The very low horizons of the shallowly sketched backdrops of the frieze suggest a two-dimensional surface onto which the regional toponyms IN GENNEA, IN ALLAGO, IN ARABIA, GROS INDIA, and the KUNIG ZU GUTZIN (Cochin) are inscribed. The frieze shifts between two-dimensional cartographic projection and three-dimensional Albertian projection, like the contemporary sea charts.

By segmenting and parceling peoples into groups without regard for narrative coherence, the frieze also borrows maps’ organizational strategies. The regions of Africa and India are divided into sections not unlike the original accordionstyle mounting of portolan sea charts and the atlases that were made from the Ptolemaic model. Clearly demarcated segments orient the viewer, present information in a successively ordered fashion, and inscribe the direction of travel. Maritime portolans were more or less linear, meant to be viewed one section at a time, and for ease of use at sea were probably mounted on firm and hinged supports that could collapse like an accordion.

From a formal standpoint, Burgkmair’s frieze functions in a similar way. Burgkmair certainly would have been exposed
Hans Pleydenwurff and Michael Wolgemut, Map of the World, in Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493, handcolored woodcut, image 15 × 19⅞ in. (38 × 49 cm). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Rar. 287, fols. XIIv, XlIIr (artwork in the public domain)

to Peutinger’s map collection, which contained some examples in unusual formats. A surviving copy of a late antique Roman road map, the Tabula Peutingeriana, laid out the world linearly like a scroll and indicates that the linear scale of late antique mapping was as much a convention as spherical projection.61 The fact that the Tabula was in Peutinger’s collection by early 1508 raises intriguing possibilities for its potential ancestry as a formal model for Burgkmair’s frieze. It is also tempting to suppose that the reference to an “indianische Mappa” included in an inventory of Peutinger’s print collection may have designated Burgkmair’s frieze.62 After all, maps were among the few other contemporary multiblock prints; they were similarly pulled from several blocks and usually required arranging and mounting for the sake of coherence.63 The fact that another sixteenth-century collector mounted Burgkmair’s frieze in precisely this scroll-like, or rótulo, manner, strengthens the case that Burgkmair’s frieze could very well have been considered a map.64 Among the quantifiable information that maps presented, and on which Burgkmair expanded, was the location of “races.” In maps from antiquity to the early modern period, geographic space was often construed as a function of the bodies that resided in it. Exotics and prodigies historically made their homes on maps, sometimes in the midst of vast continents where they were said to roam. The headless Acephali inhabited the East, and the Sciapods of the Torrid Zone shaded themselves with their umbrellalike feet to escape the subequatorial heat. At other times, the monstrous races stood as solitary sentinels on the rim of the known world. A new strategy emerged in the strip format border of the map in the Nuremberg Chronicle of 1493 (Fig. 10), which organized the Marvels of the East into a neat taxonomy of species located in a detached frame. Valerie Traub has argued that the cartographer’s act of drawing lines around regionally distinct social groups was a de facto means of signifying racial difference.65 In these marginal frames, the marvels, disorganized for generations, have been neatly organized into flattened compartments that keep them discrete, their physical anomalies providing the grounds for their separation. These divisions tag them as metonymic representatives of their races.

Broadsheets announcing news of discoveries also shared compositional qualities with contemporary maps. A Vespucci broadsheet produced in Leipzig in 1505 similarly depicts landmasses as dramatized sites of discovery (Fig. 11). Although the Indians depicted on it have been given conventional traits, such as bearing, dress, and characteristic props, there are no particularities to suggest that they are the product of observation from life. Like figures on a map, they eternally stand guard. In the repetition of defining characteristics in each exemplum, like the front line of an infantry formation, they invite metonymic classification by their European guests.

Burgkmair’s frieze offers a discursive space for the portrayal of “race.” His natives do not function as marginalized or metonymic heralds for an exotic populace. Burgkmair’s peoples are observed particulars placed into systematic categories. The illustrations transform the accidents of Springer’s report into a series of encounters with particular groups of peoples. The frieze is a map of the journey in which distance and difference are conceived geographically and by custom.

**Customized Races**

The early modern construction of race distinguished people geographically from each other, seeing them as distinct in terms of culture, habit, and customs.66 Burgkmair expresses customary difference by elaborating dress and habit on repeating family units. Whereas Springer’s accompanying text...
generically describes the inhabitants of western Africa as a group of dark-skinned nomadic dwellers, Burgkmair maps these particulars onto units of nuclear families. Burgkmair repeats this convention for each of the distinct groups Springer met throughout his journey, thus giving his frieze a prescient ethnographic aspect.

For the Khoisanid peoples of Algoa Bay on the southeastern tip of Africa (Fig. 2),67 Burgkmair maps customs and dress on a heterosexual unit (that is, an adult man and woman). He shows them in their customary dress, marking gender distinctions; the adults are clad in mantles of skin and fur, the woman shown with her head veiled in sheepskin, and the male with a fur loincloth.68 Burgkmair elaborates other regional practices, such as the custom of binding young boys’ genitals and adorning their hair with pitch and precious stones.69 Burgkmair extrapolated other customs not mentioned in the text from artifacts that returned with merchants like Springer and may have circulated in Augsburg, but he imported only those customs that could be disposed on the armature of a nuclear family.70

Burgkmair’s focus on native peoples was generated from outside the text. Whether he engineered this emphasis himself, was gently guided by a humanist hand, or was inspired to do so by the types of artifacts at his disposal is difficult to say. Springer’s text indulges in tales of plunder and activities that exact commercial gain and dominion over the land’s peoples. We can see this even in the abridged versions that caption the frieze; each site along the coast of modern-day Mozambique, Tanzania, and Kenya (“In Arabia”) serves merely as a coordinate of plunder and destruction:

As we entered Arabia we saw people dressed as they are pictured here and this is the territory whence came one of the three kings / this is where they bind the horns and ears of the oxen in Arabian gold / . . . . one mile from Sofala is a city by the name of Quiloa which we took and killed many of the people and then plundered the city . . . / Seventy miles from Quiloa is the city of Mombassa which we burned and where we murdered many and brilliantly plundered. (Fig. 3, text block)71

For this section, Burgkmair unexpectedly concentrated on a precise description of the dress of these Islamic east Africans. Picking through Springer’s unremitting and ruthlessly cavalier references to murder, destruction, and commercial gain, Burgkmair tried to make sense of the journey’s encounters with peoples. Whereas Springer relied on legendary and biblical lineages (“whence came one of the three kings”), Burgkmair sensitively rendered and precisely classified these peoples’ habits. Springer’s account of India, the voyage’s commercial destination, details commodities to be found there.72 By contrast, Burgkmair specifies peoples and habitat, depicting native fruits and birds and integrating the local flora into the comparative pictorial pattern he had already established.

By “customizing” these races, Burgkmair established coherence in their depiction. The images begin to replace the text as a site for organizational cues in later reprints of this woodcut series that circulated without the accompanying text.73 Within discrete spatial compartments that correspond to geographic sites, Burgkmair recorded the dress and customs of inhabitants assigned to these regions. Although his visualization of regions as sites of customary practice was inspired by mapping impulses, interestingly, it is Burgkmair who helps to refine a program followed by later maps.

The frieze is the first image to chart the appearance, types, and customs of the natives of coastal Africa and India; it is an ethnographic map, a collection of facts that relies on carto-
graphic organization to authorize it. Maps functioned as bearers of quantifiable data, charts in which features and boundaries were explored primarily in relation to like types. Employing this same logic, Burgkmair used both text and image to square off relations between geographically distinct entities. Locations in Africa and India, for example, are cordoned off by trees that signal the distance, both physical and conceptual, between them.

Burgkmair’s strip format became a graphic formula handily employed in delineating peoples and a standard used for future representations of peoples where ethnographic distinction is implied. For example, the woodcut frieze *The Goths and Their Cruelty* in Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmographia* introduces a section on peoples and customs (Fig. 12); it employs the syntax of the “ethnographic frieze” even after spatial divisions disappeared. This image shows various pairings of peoples meant, in this context, to portray Goths. With its display of the various races Springer described placed in commensurable, calculable, and repetitious groupings, Burgkmair’s method is driven by contemporary forms of inquiry, which connected phenomena separated by space and time by means of similitude.

These groupings of anatomically modeled bodies, depicted with characteristic customs and set within the unique comparative format of the frieze, establish the pictorial conditions for ethnography. In documenting a range of peoples in this manner, Burgkmair created a comparative primer, a tool that, on the macroscopic level (considered in its entirety), weighs and considers information schematically. On the microscopic level (within the individual scenes), however, particularities invite its use as a field guide. By constructing a modular format that invites comparison of the peoples he presents, Burgkmair invented a visual forum for the exploration of sympathies and similitude among groups of peoples—“customized races,” or a visual expression of the types of comparisons on which ethnography relies.

Burgkmair based at least some of his illustrations on visual studies made by others; the crude woodcuts made by Wolf Traut for Springer’s pamphlet version of 1509 suggest a common model. These studies probably differed greatly from one another; nonetheless, in the frieze, Burgkmair shaped whatever irregularities he came across into standard groupings. He supplemented these source sketches with close observation of artifacts and details distilled from Springer’s text for the sake of regularity. Burgkmair’s frieze reconciles each group to a comparative horizon, advertising all of them as ethnographic comparanda.

Considered together, these two sheets of the four groups use comparative methods to establish difference, but a difference rooted in a program of resemblances. Modern ethnography depends on the articulation of difference through formal conceptual structures and takes for granted the underlying kinship among subjects and these structures. As the kinship of European and non-European peoples was not assumed in the sixteenth century, it would be folly to look for a systematic study of racial or cultural difference. But since Burgkmair’s illustrations methodologically anticipate ethnography, it is necessary to view his contributions in light of a historicized scientific method.

In the early modern period, the type of reasoning that would eventually underlie the later development of a science like ethnography was driven by the recognition of similarities rather than acknowledgments of difference. Taking the world’s peoples as his subject, Burgkmair acknowledged the fact of human variation and understood that a method of systematic comparison was needed to parse it. This variation was expressed according to period structures of similitude. Methods for acquiring knowledge in the sixteenth century, according to Michel Foucault, were guided by principles of analogy. Investigators searched for resemblances by uncovering hidden equivalences. Resemblances were established by weighing the unfamiliar with the familiar, subjecting seemingly unrelated items to a series of evaluations for different types of likeness, such as convenien
ta, the physical adjacencies of things in the world, or aemulatio, a more conceptual connection without proximity that permits the comparison of things operating at a distance.

Foucault’s epistemology has been fruitfully brought to bear on New World discoveries by the anthropologist Peter Mason, who, extending Foucault’s similitudes to include empirical investigation, argues that it was precisely these correspondences that permitted the methodological consideration of peoples far-flung over space, and even over time. To this, I would add that Burgkmair anticipated comparisons that would later underwrite comparative ethnography by using the doctrine of resemblances in order to show difference. Burgkmair’s frieze encourages anthropological cross-referencing. In a frieze format of a monumental scale that had no precedent in northern European art making, Burgkmair established a schema for the visual conditions of systematic comparison. Burgkmair’s “ethnography” resides in the frieze as a forum for the study of anatomical similarities and differences, as well as the cultural sympathies of diverse peoples.

The frieze imposes a linear and modular arrangement on the structure of empirical experience. This linearity also holds in check the binary system of opposition seen in models that define the Other as an antipodal inversion of the self and interpret the New World as the world turned upside down. Its modular form militates against a positioned viewer. Directing the viewer to consider phenomena side by side, the frieze encourages comparison versus pure opposition; it permits...
cross-referencing. This ultimately promotes a study of the
diversity of peoples as a function of their similarity rather
than of analogically construed differences.81

The use of organizing principles, such as nuclear family
units and the trees that divide each group, reinforces these
peoples’ significance as comparanda. The familial groupings
are part of the construction of legibility that allows us to read
these natives as commensurable, a familiar group through
which differences and similarities can be read.82 As Traub has
shown in similarly configured groupings in the margins of
later maps, “there is nothing self-evident about representing
the world’s peoples as mature adults and in terms that explicitly situate them... as ‘man and wife.’ ”83 Nothing in Springer’s text prescribes or even suggests such groupings; the artist
has imposed them from outside the text. The imposition of
this “fictive kinship” reveals how easily some of these conven-
tions could absorb the exotic.84

Burgkmair’s frieze may indeed form the missing link be-
tween individually contained monsters in the Nuremberg
Chronicle’s marginal strips and later maps that use heterosex-
ual pairings in order to describe a region’s peoples—for
example, the 1630 map of Africa made by Willem Janszoon
Blaeu (Fig. 13). Bernhard Klein maintains that this shift in
the categorization of cartographic marginalia drove the Eu-
rocentric projection of the natural social order as one of hetero
cultural pairing (Fig. 14).85 Kinship is one of the con-
ventions Burgkmair adopted to define habit, an overarching
category that synthesizes “costume and custom, manners and
morals.”86 Habit included traits like outward appearance,
comportment, character, and disposition—characteristics
emphasized by the division of peoples into familiar kinship
and civil groupings.

Harnessing elements of the strange New World to familiar
iconographic models such as recognizable kinship units, as
well as formal comparisons of “types” and “customs,” Burgk-
mair structured powerful models of similitude for the cul-
tures these natives represent. In this highly controlled uni-
verse, Burgkmair began the organization of the cultural space
of what once had been the chaotic living quarters of the
Other.

Types and Customs
Another method of relativizing the space of the Other was to
place him into familiar compositional and iconographic par-
adigms. The scene that forms the coda to this woodcut series,
the procession of the king of Cochin (Fig. 6), invokes deco-
rative models such as the sculptural frieze. The format of
Roman triumphal imagery has often been cited as the closest
ancestor to Burgkmair’s frieze, via contemporary Italian en-
gravings of imperial imagery, and as the likely source from
which Burgkmair’s multiblock woodcut actually adopted its
moniker “frieze.”87

Exposed to this format through his Italian influences and
a trip to northern Italy in 1507, during which he visited
Venice and possibly Florence and Milan, Burgkmair may have
found a precedent for the king of Cochin in printed editions
of Andrea Mantegna’s designs for the Triumph of Caesar, a set
of canvases then in the Ducal Palace in Mantua.88 A series of
twelve woodcuts inspired by Mantegna’s engraved Triumph of
Caesar was printed in Venice between 1503 and 1504 (Fig.
15), with designs drawn by the Venetian illuminator
Benedetto Bordon and cut by Jacob of Strasbourg, a block
cutter from Alsace who settled in Venice.89

What recommends Bordon’s woodcuts as a precedent for
Burgkmair’s frieze is primarily formal ancestry. The impres-
sions of Bordon’s multiblock Triumph of Caesar, when set end
to end, form a unified visual field almost fifteen feet in
length. The procession is conceived in linear format and
shallow relief like a sculptural frieze, with block capitals and text. Bordon’s *Triumph of Caesar* relies on highly conventional forms and is universally noted for its crude linearity when compared with engravings made directly from Mantegna’s series. While Bordon rendered the procession and architecture in the antique style, he did not develop a corresponding sophistication for the figures; his characters are marked by flattened, static poses and stereotypical visages. Bordon’s version has been noted as the only easily accessible model of a classical triumph in the period for artists north of the Alps, and it was probably the iteration with which Burgkmair would have been familiar.

By choosing this familiar iconography of triumphal processions, Burgkmair incorporated previously unknown peoples into a syntax that the Western viewer would understand. Where the Italian precedents feature a victorious Caesar along with a train of loyalists, booty, and captives, Burgkmair’s procession maps a similar event onto Malabar Indians. He uses this familiar iconography to explore persons with unique physiognomic features and distinct roles. Four trumpeters, cheeks filled with air, noisily open Burgkmair’s procession at right. Several spearmen ahead of them attempt to maintain an official pace for the procession; one of them encourages a recalcitrant elephant while another tries to offer his assistance to the straining mahout. Four seemingly unflappable litter bearers continue the march forward. The archers and shield bearers in the rear guard tussle with their weaponry. Only the proud camel at the head of the line seems to keep step with the dignity of a triumphal procession. A percussionist arrests his drumming midstride and turns back to face a half-naked man on a palanquin who gestures toward him. From the inscription we are to understand that this jumble represents an outing of the king of Cochin, a potentate on the Malabar Coast of India. Although Burgkmair borrows some recognizable iconography from triumphal processions, the *King of Cochin* does not depict a conventional triumph at all; Burgkmair’s specificity subverts it.

For, after all, Burgkmair’s Indians are not a band of first-century Romans but a host of newly discovered peoples. In contrast to Caesar, this king is not preceded by bombast or cartloads of booty. Native species take the place of booty: a feral dog trots alongside the elephant, a macaque on a leash...
BURGKMAIR'S PEOPLES OF AFRICA AND INDIA (1508)

accompanies the march forward. What this procession lacks in discipline, it makes up for in specificity. In addition to Springer's description, Burgkmair must have borrowed from other visual or textual sources, evident in the carefully depicted weapons and hairstyles used by the Nair, a Hindu caste in Kerala.

In Burgkmair's rendition of this episode, particularity reveals itself in the variety of tasks he assigned the participants. The artist ould himself in the delineation of tasks, extrapolated only partly from the text. The very aimlessness of the activity betrays the artist's intention to show precisely the profusion of it. The division of labor seems to celebrate variety for its own sake, giving us a broad slice of life as ebullient as it is turbulent. An entire repertoire of roles is on display here—a troupe of musicians, litter bearers for the king on the palanquin, a mahout to drive the elephant, and an attendant whose job it is to protect the king from the sun with a shade. These characters also exhibit a range of emotions: some half-dressed natives abandon themselves to music making while others let their unpredictable tempers flare, permitting accidents to give rise to skirmishes.

In the segment of the frieze devoted to natives of India with a herd of animals (Fig. 5), narrative threads knit together an array of individuals of both genders and a range of ages. The leftmost figure group, which includes a man grabbing the breast of the woman, suggests iconography of prelapsarian Adam and Eve. We know Burgkmair to have borrowed standard iconography for the purposes of setting his characters into familiar narrative contexts, such as the Rest on the Flight into Egypt for "In Allago," or the Garden of Eden here. But as he imported these motifs, he created new contexts. This market scene features the fauna of Africa and India; in the thicket a monkey sits in a tree, while cows look around and fat-tailed sheep (a breed found in Africa, the Middle East, and northern India) graze. He contextualized these peoples within the particularity and range of their habits, as diverse and specific as those of Europeans.

Burgkmair's natives of Africa and India are no longer monsters in the margins, winking at us remotely, daring us to believe in them. Nor are these wild men or a race of savages, wielding the drumsticks of half-eaten body parts. The accumulation of detail and the focus on this particular group of humans, especially evident in the attention to physiognomy, betrays an engagement with human subjects that Burgkmair would have had the privilege to observe—in the case of Indians, locally, and in the case of Africans, in Venice. Burgkmair's frieze reflects the most diverse view of African and Indian natives that a European artist had produced to date: a panoply of activities, a profusion of peoples, and perspectives into their humanity.

Elements of Style

The comparisons structured by the frieze's composition indicate that Burgkmair's purpose was to record and organize information, but the style in which he fashioned these natives announces another documentary claim, one that sought its legitimacy in the reproduction of life derived from empirical observation of nature. The degree of observation Burgkmair brought to African and Indian indigenes entails a new practice for the representation of the "exotic races." As we have already seen in the case of travel reports, the print market did not demand that exotics be closely observed at all.

What accounts for the new standard of observation to which Burgkmair holds himself? On the one hand, original sketches made by an artist companion of Springer's from firsthand observation could answer for the specificity of customs and draperies. Local collectors were already amassing artifacts from Africa and India, and Burgkmair surely had occasion to view them. Burgkmair also had opportunity to observe the Indians mentioned in Peutinger's marginal note, as these human subjects circulated in his own milieu.

But to assert the claim of empiricism runs the risk of suggesting an un inspected equivalence between Burgkmair's illustrations and what he saw. What we call naturalism refers not to a one-to-one correspondence between depiction and reality but to a set of pictorial conventions designed to situate the viewer in a space that mimics reality. The Renaissance idea of the "world seen through a window" signifies a stylistic consensus on advantages gained through a study of perspective and scale, in addition to proportion and physiognomy.

In order to accommodate empirical observation, there had to be visual formulas into which it could be translated. The frieze exhibits the sum of technical refinements that transcribed empirically observed phenomena in the Renaissance: proportion, portraiture, and physiognomy. Burgkmair's contribution to verisimilitude also includes the inscription of a draftsman's hand into the print process. To assert that nature could be reproduced was a novel claim for the medium of print to sustain in about 1508, and a rarer one still for non-European subjects. The period of Burgkmair's activity in Augsburg is concurrent with a growing sophistication in composition and design, the result of an emergent group of block cutters who could successfully execute the designer's intentions.

Independent woodcuts did not develop in tandem with book illustration, which they predated, nor did they closely monitor their progress. The 1509 illustrated pamphlet version of Springer's journey printed after Burgkmair's frieze appeared provides an excellent case study of the relation between independent woodcuts and book illustrations. Although probably based on source material identical to that used for Burgkmair's frieze, the illustrations, attributed to Wolf Traut, are universally considered crude and inferior. Traut's man from Algoa wears a long groin covering and awkwardly clutches a loose mantle of indeterminate fabric (Fig. 16). Many of Traut's artistic gestures lack Burgkmair's specificity; for example, where Burgkmair depicted the custom of binding young boys' genitals with intestines, Traut pictured the boy wearing simply a pair of small briefs. Following textual prescriptions or sketches, or both, Traut outfitted the adult with a walking stick and broad pancake-like sandals and showed his hair and beard to be knotted up with small stones. However, since no study of classical anatomy or proportions underlies this figure, these artifacts drape him as on a mannequin. This reminds us that what we see as stylistic refinement in printmaking did not constitute the kind of progress by which book illustration measured itself.

The draftsmanship Burgkmair brought to his early woodcut designs was guided by pictorial impulses that came from his training as a painter. Burgkmair's exercises in painterly
modeling led to revolutionary advances in printmaking and contributed to naturalism in his printed oeuvre. His experiments with tones and tinted paper resulted in the *chiaroscuro* woodcut that simulated the quality of a finished drawing. These crossover experiments freed Burgkmair's hand and catapulted the woodcut into a more refined artistic category.

Stylistic experiments with proportion also contributed to the development of naturalism. Critics have called Springer's account dispassionate because he avoided the exaggerations that characterized subsequent European obsession with the Khoisanid tribes of the Cape region, later known as Hottentots. Marking Springer's "dispassion" is the blind eye the merchant turned toward anatomical anomalies like the steatopygous swelling of the buttocks and the prematurely wrinkled skin that later travelers were to exaggerate and exploit. The "dispassion" of Springer's text, runs the suggestion, permitted a more scientific report. I maintain that we owe the report's dispassion, rather, to Burgkmair's attention to detail and proportion. These stylistic choices kept his images from entering the realm of exaggeration.

Systematization of proportion and perspective can in large part be ascribed to what gave Renaissance naturalism its characteristic "style." A trip to Italy between 1506 and 1507 brought Burgkmair into orbit with these innovations, as well as with antiquarian excavation and the revival of classical tradition. It was this and his likely familiarity with the experiments in proportion and anatomy made by contemporary German artists, notably Dürer, that led Burgkmair to reconcile forms to their proportional relations.

Dürer's influence on Burgkmair is palpable in a later variation on the inhabitants of Algoa, in which the two adults seated in the frieze version instead stand (Fig. 17). This woodcut demonstrates Burgkmair's acquaintance with classical heritage transmitted through Dürer's 1504 engraving the *Fall of Man* (Fig. 18). Dürer was an ardent student of the human body and, since his earliest studies from about 1500, the systematic translation of its anatomy into artistic vocabulary. Perfecting these technical skills allowed artists to better forge naturalistic impressions of figures in motion and to rationalize the conditions under which organic movement and adjustments for the beholder were made. Burgkmair's own interest in anatomy was awakened by prints like Dürer's and by his own knowledge of northern Italian techniques.
In this version of *In Allago*, Burgkmair carefully articulated the anatomy and musculature of the figures, adjusting limbs to locate bodies in rational space. The foreshortening involved in rendering the acrobatic balance of this child, as well as the Guinean child who opens the frieze, reveals a virtuoso exploration of movement for its own sake that goes beyond the demands of contrapposto weight shifts. It is precisely the complex modifications required by such a figure in motion that calls out for a proportional formula to render it. Applying these sculptural and artistic techniques, first to a graphic medium, and then extending them to exotic peoples constitutes a great forward stride in relativizing these peoples with respect to their European counterparts.

Adapting the ideal proportions of Dürer’s prelapsarian couple to his model, Burgkmair used the body of the Algoan native to highlight the particularity of that culture’s customs. These upright poses provide a better view of the sartorial details suggested by the frieze version, such as the prominent wildcat or foxtail girdles and the coils of animal intestines wound around torsos, as well as such accessories as the clay pots and the wooden staffs. By establishing an affinity with the European body through the type of resemblance offered by a study in proportion, Burgkmair could then explore the body as a site for specifying custom, portraiture, and physiognomy.

Burgkmair’s early experiments with portraiture also anticipate the specificity with which he would later render ethnographic portraits. In the frieze, Burgkmair’s formulas for torsion and proportion met the empirical practice of copying artifacts and incorporating sketches made from life. These empiricisms coincided with experimental forays Burgkmair had already made in bringing portraiture, one of the first genres to be born of closely observed nature, into the embrace of the graphic medium. The close observation critical to portraiture was a prerequisite for the ethnographic study of peoples.

Portraiture took its impetus from both the cult of personality central to northern European humanists and the antiquarianism that was their sport. Among the first print projects in the north to demonstrate that the medium of woodblock printing could support the weight of portraiture was Peutinger’s *Imperatorum Augustorum et tyrannorum quorumdam Romani imperii gestorum annotatio*. Known in German as the *Kaiserbuch*, Peutinger’s anticipated chronicle of emperors from Caesar to Maximilian was never published. Nonetheless, before 1505 Burgkmair produced twenty-odd surviving portraits, the *vera effigies*, or true images, of the Caesars (Fig. 19). Consistent with the humanist interest in authenticity, Peutinger’s accompanying text vitae of the Caesars were the product of original research from primary sources, including documentary, epigraphic, and numismatic specimens.

Burgkmair’s portraits reflect the new empirical nature of antiquarian research, and the *Kaiserbuch* would have marked the first illustrated humanistic vitae produced in Germany. Burgkmair’s portraits, made from coins, represent strides in concern for specificity over the “character portraits” featured in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, which, just a decade earlier, had liberally and haphazardly recycled a group of about a dozen
portraits to stand in for a vast succession of popes, emperors, and biblical characters numbering in the hundreds. The exercise of copying numismatic portraits put Burgkmair into contact with the material remains of antiquity as well as acquainting him with humanist antiquarianism. These humanists’ location of authenticity in the minting of a coin is evident in the fact that their own portrait medals often carried inscriptions, like vera effigies, designating them as objects that could carry mimetic weight.

Artists in Renaissance humanist circles co-opted the mimetic guarantee believed to be ensured by coins to produce portraits in the form of medals and used numismatic conventions to testify to their authenticity. The idea that authenticity was guaranteed by these medal portraits was reinforced by Burgkmair’s artistic method; for the Kaiserbuch portraits, he was inclined to copy and kept artistic invention to a minimum. Even in profile, Burgkmair’s heads carry features of individuals, giving definition to noses, foreheads, necks, eyes, and, to some degree, hairstyles. Some chins are strong, others weakly droop or bulge; mouths and noses are subject to the same unflattering scrutiny characteristic of Roman portraiture of the Republican period. These aesthetic infelicitities help us remember that the coin’s primary function was not aesthetic but documentary.

Burgkmair’s consultation of Peutinger’s coin collection for the Kaiserbuch portrait heads provides an enlightening example of how humanists’ antiquarian interests put the material remains of the ancient world at the disposal of artists, along with a new understanding of what it meant to consult them. Access to these artifacts shaped the revival of classicism by Renaissance artists, but as important as the evolution of new stylistic techniques was the admission of such material evidence into the artistic canon.

The desire of contemporary art patrons for recognition was both the cause and effect of portraits launched into print. Maximilian I was one of the first easily recognizable emperors, owing as much to his distinct profile as to the popularity of his circulating image in Theuerdank and the Weisskunig, the elaborate narrative woodcut projects that featured him. From the ranks of artists and humanists engaged in his printed projects, as well as by the frequent exercise of his veto power over images, we know that Maximilian made a career out of tending to his portrait.
We suspect that Maximilian also had a hand in Burgkmair’s alteration of a woodcut originally made by Dürer in order to portray the emperor more accurately. By 1504 Burgkmair had in his possession the woodcut block that Dürer had originally carved for a dedication frontispiece to the 1502 printing of Konrad Celtis’s Quatuor libri amorum (Fig. 20). Leaving most of the composition unmolested, Burgkmair surgically removed the portrait heads of Celtis and Maximilian from the block itself and replaced them with new designs of his own (Figs. 21, 22), which display greater sensitivity than Dürer’s. Burgkmair recut Dürer’s stylized heads to bring them closer into line with reality, eliminating the curls from Celtis’s head and refining facial characteristics of both subjects. The unequivocal superiority of Burgkmair’s version is echoed by Tilman Falk’s judgment that only in Burgkmair’s version do the heads distinguish themselves from the coiled ornament. Larry Silver concurs that Burgkmair transformed Dürer’s rather generic faces into portrait likenesses. Burgkmair brought painterly qualities to these faces with lines that are more functional, dynamic, economical and that lend his figures greater organic unity. Projects such as these in the years directly preceding his work on the frieze were critical to Burgkmair’s maturity as a portraitist.

Burgkmair’s depictions of African natives in the frieze, as well as in a few watercolor studies, depart radically from conventions that had previously articulated race; these studies approach portraiture. Perhaps this specificity resulted from encounters with Africans in Venice, a place where Burgkmair acquired general knowledge of African physiognomy and habit. In more canonical contemporary depictions of Africans, such as the black Magus in Adoration scenes, racial distinctions were noted by physiognomic particularities, but they were generally not founded on observation. Morphological distinctions in complexions can be found in the Moor’s head emblazoned on medieval European heraldry. This conventional heraldic “Moor” carried generalized Negroid features that had passed down for centuries without change (Fig. 23). These faces were morphologically distinct, yet still stereotypical. For his frieze portraits, Burgkmair studied specific, and in some cases individual physiognomies. As we can see, the natives of Guinea are not simply stereotypical heraldic heads attached to otherwise classically conceived bodies. In the frieze, Burgkmair weds physiognomy to ethnography—he evokes the particular within the general—and in so doing, he gives a prescient view of organized human diversity.

Burgkmair’s engagement with physiognomic particularity reflected a concern shared by experimental sciences like physiognomy. Contemporary printed physiognomies processed data collected from the physical world and circulated those data as usable information. Physiognomies depended on close scrutiny of facial features and capitalized on the recognition of the variance in physical traits of individuals. Bartholomaeus Coles boasted that his extremely popular physiognomy, Book of Complexions, had outdone those of his predecessors by the sheer abundance of individual cases he observed. This claim to observational prodigiousness was not a hollow one in experimental science. The practice of physiognomy relied on a pursuit of particularities and, as
Cocles would have us believe, a systematic observation of phenomena. Curiously, certain editions of Cocles's *Book of Complexions* advertise the text as a practical aid to predicting the character of a slave from the sum of his physiognomic parts. According to the author, merchants engaged in the slave trade used it for this purpose. Burgkmair surely would have found a more nuanced application for a book like this, possibly as a resource that encouraged the systematic observation of faces. Artists might have recognized the physiognomist's quest for particularity as a kindred one.

The similar nature of the artist's and the physiognomist's mandate to observe may help explain the curious appearance of Burgkmair's self-portrait on the frontispiece of an edition of *Book of Complexions* printed by Hans Schönsperger the Younger in Augsburg in 1515 (Fig. 24). The woodcut roundel carries initials that identify the profile as Burgkmair's and is inscribed "Hanc Propriam Pinxerat Eff(i)giem": "He depicted this particular (or his own) likeness." Perhaps the editor who chose this image recognized in it a program compatible with contemporary physiognomies: an engagement with like-nesses beyond the general, as well as beyond the ideal.

The printed physiognomy was a genre that probably did much to spur the move toward verisimilitude of portrait features in print. Particularity under investigation in experimental sciences like physiognomy required the scrutiny of direct observation and data collection. In this respect, the printed physiognomy shared many of the same demands of portraiture, which likewise required observation and careful recording. Portraiture insisted on specificity for which dependence on conventional models no longer sufficed; in the process, it provided a fleet-footed impetus in moving art in a proto-scientific direction.

**Notes**

This essay forms part of a manuscript in preparation on ethnography and print culture in early modern Germany, begun as a chapter of a dissertation advised by Linda Seidel, Rebecca Zorach, and Tom Cummins. For their guidance and continued interest in this project, I offer my sincere thanks. The warm and energetic community at the Newberry Library of which I was privileged to be a part from 2003 to 2005 provided me with an environment in which I owe substantial debts to the enthusiasm and insight of my colleagues there, as well as to James Akerman, Ray Clemens, Hans-Jörg Klaus, Helmut Zäh, Anthony Grafton, Christine Johnson, Georg Frichtenau, Tatiana Flores, Elisa Mandell, my colleagues at Florida State University, and Paul van der Mark. I am grateful to the Newberry Library and Annette Kade Foundation Fellowship for research support and to Roswitha Leicht and Rita Leute for assistance with permissions. I also thank The Art Bulletin's anonymous readers and Lory Frankel for their astute suggestions.

All translations, unless otherwise noted, are mine.

1. Amerigo Vespucci, *Dise Figur ansagt uns das Volk und Insel die gefunden ist durch den christlichen Kunig zu Portugal* (Augsburg: Froschauer, 1500) in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Res. 4 Anthr. 8 (artwork in the public domain).


3. Stephanie Leitch is assistant professor of northern European art at Florida State University. She is completing the manuscript *Mapping Ethnography in Early Modern Germany*, which examines visual ruptures produced in print technology in a climate shaped by German humanism and inflected strongly by mercantile interests in new worlds [Department of Art History, Florida State University, 220 Fine Arts Building, Tallahassee, Fla. 32306, sleitch@fsu.edu].


5. The frieze in its original state was presented in an exhibition on Hans Schönsperger, 1515, woodcut, sheet 514 × 716 in. (14 cm × 19 cm). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Res. 4 Anthr. 8 (artwork in the public domain).
Burgkmair’s graphic work at the Städtische Kunstsammlung in Augsburg in 1973, following the arrangement proposed in F. W. H. Hollstein, German Engravings, Eights and Woodcuts 1400–1700 (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1954); see also Hausberger and Biedermann, Hans Burgkmair 1473–1531: Das Graphische Werk (Augsburg: Städtische Kunstsammlungen, 1975), cat. nos. 23–26. The first three prints are hand-colored; they are preserved in the Frei- herrn von Weberschen Familienstiftung, the collection of the Webers family in Neuenhof. Impressions of the procession of the king of Cochin can be found in the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin, Graphische Sammlung, Munich, Albertina, Vienna, and Kunstsammlung der Veste Coburg, in addition to a copy housed in the graphic collection in Augsburg, inv. no. G 12123. I have viewed the impressions in Neunhof, Berlin, and Coburg, in addition to those in the graphic collections in Augsburg and Munich. For the copperplate engravings, see Hollstein, German Engravings, Eights and Woodcuts, vol. 5, nos. 731–36. See also Giulia Bartrum, German Renaissance Prints (London: Trustees of the British Museum by the British Museum Press, 1998), 151–83 and Mark P. McDonald, “Burgkmair’s Woodcut Frizee of the Natives of Africa and India,” Print Quarterly 20, no. 3 (2003): 227–44.


7. An exotic denotes an entity that exists primarily in the popular imagination, divorced from empirical experience and derived from a series of formulas that use the self as a point of departure, reminding us that “representations of the other are never unprefaced and should be treated at the level of discourse.” Peter Mason, “Classical Ethnography and Its Influence on the European Perception of the Peoples of the New World,” in The Classical Tradition and the Americas, ed. Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 139 n. 11; see also idem, Infections: Representations of the Exotic, 11f.

8. In German-speaking regions, the wild man was routinely called into service to represent peoples discovered by Christopher Columbus and American artifacts. See Susi Gollin, “The Wild Man, and the Indian in Early Sixteenth-Century Book Illustration,” in Feest, Indians and Europe. Alternatively, the classical tradition of the Marvels of the East provided a ready and diverse taxonomy of monsters from whose repertoire the inhabitants of Africa and Asia were regularly drawn. See Rudolf Wittkower, “Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 5 (1942): 159–97.


11. Ethnography, in the sense of prolonged empirical and comparative study, is perhaps never applied confidently to any visual medium outside of drawing. According to his reconstruction of Burgkmair’s prints after an entry in an inventory of Ferdinand Columbus’s print collection, the Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1579): A Renaissance Collection in Seville (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 148. Columbus’s familiarity with Mandeville is attributed to a group of English merchants in Seville who brought the latter’s work to the Beate Borowka-Clausberg, Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land 1483-4 (Utrecht: Nederlands Historisch Instituut te Utrecht, 1961), 101; see also idem, Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic, 11f.


13. See Bartrum, German Renaissance Prints, 132.


15. The original blocks, probably of pear wood, survive as part of the Der- schau collection of the Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, an early-nineteenth-century collection of woodblocks. For these blocks, see McDonald, “Burgkmair,” 227; for a newly-inventoried block, see idem, Print Quarterly 21, no. 2 (2004): 159–60.

16. See McDonald, “Burgkmair’s Woodcut Frizee,” 227; and see his much-needed study of the inventory of Ferdinand Columbus’s print collection, The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1579): A Renaissance Collection in Seville (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 148. According to his reconstruction of Burgkmair’s prints after an entry in an inventory of Ferdinand Columbus’s print collection, McDonald argues that the frieze as we know it today is missing five sections. He speculates that these missing impressions would have elaborated on the “customs,” or activity and behavior, of each depicted race, in the manner in which the people of “Gros India” (Fig. 3) are followed by the woodcut frieze is called the “short report.” See Bartrum, German Renaissance Prints, 151–33.

17. These include a pirated version printed in Nuremberg by Georg Glockendon in 1511, a bas-relief in a chapel in Saint-Jacques, Dieppe, a boxwood relief now in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart, several tapestries, and other drawings. See Jean Michel Massing, “Hans Burgkmair’s Depiction of Native Africans,” Rev 27 (Spring 1986): 39–57. Perhaps one of the reasons for its many incarnations was the novel format, which lent itself to the chopped-up re-interpretations and permitted shaving and repetition at no great det- riment to the composition.

18. The copy in the Neunhof collection is missing the right half, an image of indigenes known from copies.

19. For Columbus’s use of medieval travel accounts as a gauge for his modernity, see Wolfgang Neuber, Forme Welt im europäischen Horizont: Zur Topik der deutschen Reiseberichte der Frühen Neuzeit (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1991), 35; for the role of John Mandeville in Columbus’s search for a route to the Indies, see Beate Borowka-Clausberg, Balbhasar Sprungers und der frühneuzeitliche Reisebericht (Munich: Iudicium, 1999), 148. Columbus’s familiarity with Mandeville is attributed to a group of English merchants in Seville who brought the latter’s work to the Iberian Peninsula. See Mason, “Classical Ethnography,” 141.

20. One notable exception, Bernhard von Breydenbach’s Peregrinationis in terram sanctam (1486), was furnished with illustrations that try to re-produce his experience. Breydenbach took along the illustrator Er- hard Rucwitz for the purpose of recording accounts of his travels: prospects, sites, and peoples he saw along the way. For Breydenbach, see his Die Reise ins Heilige Land: Ein Reisebericht aus dem Jahre 1483, ed. Elisabeth Geck (Wiesbaden: G. Pressler, 1961); Hugh William Davies, Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land 1483–4 (Utrecht: Haenksters, Dekker en Gumbert, 1968); and David Landau and Peter Parshall, The Renaissance Print 1470–1550 (New Haven: Yale Uni- versity Press, 1994), 34–35.


25. Ibid., 48–68.
29. Den rechten weg aus zu faren von Liszbona gen Kallakuth (Nuremberg: Little, Brown, 1905). 29. Vespuci's letters were brought to press by his Tuscan editors. For Vespuci's letters and the essential difference between the marketing of Columbus's letters and his own, which were printed sixty times in the period between 1503 and 1529—a sum that resembled a pig worth about four gulden ... its beak resembles that of the rhinoceros, see Parkin, From Lisbon to Calicut, 4.

30. This frontispiece tries to develop pictorially and in three dimensions what had earlier been expressed in terms of pure geometry in the published editions of Vespuci's account of his third voyage, a triangle whose legs are labeled "hier und wir," or "we are here," and "hier sind sie," or "they are here," with commentary detailing the direction in which the respective heads should point. With his diagram, Vespuci indicated the location of his landfall on his third voyage (a coordinate hovering around 52° S latitude, which Vespuci called San Julian) by crudely plotting its distance from Lisbon, about 60° N. The resulting triangle resembled a lateral difference of 90 degrees, with a 5-degree displacement in longitude. The frontispiece illustration is based on Vespuci's diagram; it preserves his orthogonal triangle model and the text is in keeping with the language of his letter. I am grateful to both Robert Karrow and Neil Swerdlow for their assistance in interpreting this image.

31. A Ptolemy map on the verso of the first sheet indicates the location of both Nuremberg and Calicut. See Parker, From Lisbon to Calicut, 4.

32. Burgkmair honed his own artistic skills in the patronage of the Welser family, under whose auspices Springer and sailed to and whom Peutinger was related through his marriage to Margarete Welser in 1498. See Künast and Zäh, Die autographen Kataloge Peutingers, no. 1 (March 2004): 50–53. Monson suggests that both Dürer and Burgkmair (who made a more "accurate" rhinoceros in 1515, now in the Albertina, Vienna, absent the armorlike plates and dorsal horn) saw a sketch similar to the one recently discovered in a Chigi manuscript in the Vatican. For a general discussion of the rhinoceros, see Pamela Smith and Paula Findlen, "Commerce and the Representation of Nature in Art and Science," in Smith and Findlen, Merchants and Meanels, 1–8.

33. For Peutinger's relationship with the Welser and Vöhlin families over other German merchants are outlined in a contract dated February 13, 1505. See Heinz Lüscher, "Briefe an die Printers," in Die Welser: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe (New York: Routledge, 2002).

34. Springer, Der Mirfort, fol. 1: "It was the size of a man in length, but resembled a pig worth about four gulden ... its beak resembles that of a bird's, but wider with many sharp teeth in it. Such a fish is said to feed on sharks."

35. Ibid., fol. 2: "Auch in diesem Königreich und auf den Inseln sahen wir merkwürdigwerterweise Menschen beiderlei Geschlechts ohne Scham unternieder wie die wilden Tiere: Manche bedeckten nur die Scham, andere gänzlich nackt herum, und alle waren Schwarz wie die Mohren, wie wir sie nennen."


37. Ibid., fol. 2: "Auch in diesem Königreich und auf den Inseln sahen wir merkwürdigwerterweise Menschen beiderlei Geschlechts ohne Scham unternieder wie die wilden Tiere: Manche bedeckten nur die Scham, andere gänzlich nackt herum, und alle waren Schwarz wie die Mohren, wie wir sie nennen."

52. Not only do the verse and the typeface link Dari’s edition to this popular literary form, but also the frontispiece may have found its inspiration in contemporary Florentine cassetone paintings that depicted scenes from Trojan epics. See Hugh Honour, The New Golden Legend (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), 7.

53. The larger scale of broadsheet illustration discouraged direct recycling from blocks used to illustrate the frontispieces of quarto editions of travel reports. Additionally, blockcuts were nearly done, and the larger format encouraged elaboration.


55. The sumptuously decorated Cantino planisphere of 1502, for example, reflects the world redrawn as a result of Portuguese exploration from 1484 to 1522, including the voyages of Diogo Cão, Barlaam de Dias, the Corte Reis, Vasco da Gama, and Pedro Ávarez Cabral—in addition to showing Portuguese economic involvement on the African subcontinent. By 1502 this territory was fairly familiar to the Portuguese: Africa’s north and west coasts had been the site of Portuguese exploration since the fall of Ceuta in 1415, after which several bases were set up on the Gold and Ivory Coasts. Traders established themselves here to traffic in ivory, slaves, and gold. In addition, Henry the Navigator sponsored expeditions to find a direct maritime route east, and the search was on in earnest by the mid-1400s. See Geoffrey Vic. 2845.

56. Before astronomical navigation, navigators relied on dead reckoning, a method that estimated the ship’s position according to compass bearings. They depended on a close and cautious observation of the coastline. See Edward Casey, Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 189.

57. Ibid., 189.

58. Such as the pirated version printed by Georg Glöckendon in 1511. See inv. no. 16, 33 in the collection in Veste Coburgo.

59. Interestingly, the spatial organization of Burgkmair’s frieze anticipates later ethnographic museum practice in which specimens and artifacts are displayed in shallow planar dioramas behind glass.

60. The first portolan atlases were set on successive pages and often pasted on wood or thick cardboard that would have protected them from saltwater damage. See Harley and Woodward, History of Cartography, 43–46.

61. The original map (no longer extant) probably dated to the third century CE, and Peutinger’s map (21 feet by 1 foot), probably made in the eleventh century by a monk in the region of Colmar, surfaced in the Rhine region in about 1436. In the summer of 1507, it was first published in the 1509 pamphlet version of Springer’s report, “abkunterfeit.” While the Khoi were first sighted in 1480 and described by Portu-


64. See McDonald, “Burgkmair’s Woodcut Frieze,” 230, and idem, Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus, 169.


67. Springer’s description of the costumes and dresses of the Khoisan tribes of the Cape region includes distinctions between the sexes, and the text directs the reader to find the details “as illustrated below,” or, per the 1590 pamphlet version of Springer’s report, “abkunterfeit.” While the Khoi were first sighted in 1480 and described by Portu-

68. In inclement weather, Khoisan women and men wore a sheepskin mantle (kana) with the wool turned inward; women often wore hoods of the same. See Ezio Bassani and Letizia Tedeschii, The Image of the Hotentot in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Journal of the History of Collections 2, no. 2 (1990): 173. An illustration of 1542 shows the range of iconographic variations to which these mantles were subject; indistinct dark figures borrow the mantle from Hercules iconography; see Helen Wallis, ed., The Maps and Texts of the Book of Liebgrafiken of Jean Boat in Henry VIII (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1981), 45–47 (see fol. 15v–16r).

69. This detail comes from the longer text version of Springer’s report, to which Burgkmair would have been privy.

70. For example, their staffs and broad leather sandals are characteristic ac-

71. See text over “Gros India”: “Alda findt man / Ingber / Pfeffer / köstlich körn gibt gantz weyß als semmelmel” (There one can find / pepper, clove, cinnamon, and all manner of spices and precious stones which can be bought for very little. Peculiar fruits can be bought for very little. Peculiar fruits can be found here, tasty figs the length of seven thumbs and three wide. While the Khoi were first sighted in 1480 and described by Portu-

72. See McDonald, “Burgkmair’s Woodcut Frieze,” 234. The version pirated by Georg Glöckendon in Nuremberg in 1511 radically reduces the text.
74. Mason, "Classical Ethnography," 156.

75. Mason, "Classical Ethnography," 156.

76. McDonald, "Burgkmair’s Woodcut Friezes," 230.

77. This epistemology defines the nature of comparisons that structure scientific thinking and the processing of new discoveries in a system that included hermeneutics of varying degrees of rationality. Michel Foucault, _The Order of Things_ (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 32.

78. Ibid., 17–25.


80. Like a map, the frieze has integrity from multiple points of view. Borrowing Svetlana Alpers’s claim for Dutch maps and descriptive landscapes, this frieze is also an "additive work that cannot be taken in from a single viewing point." Alpers, _The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 122.

81. This contrasts with the way in which "classical ethnography" functioned in the Autumn Model. Mason, "Classical Ethnography," 145–48, indicates that names given to monsters like Blemye and Cyclops point directly to alterity.

82. Burgkmair alluded to familiar biblical iconography in order to con- stitute groups as a series of nautical facades. The composition of the group marked "In Allagco" sets the Rest on the Flight into Egypt. With "In Arabia," the adults who flank the child allude to the iconog- raphy of Adam and Eve.

83. Traub, "Mapping the Global Body," 50. See also Klein, "Randfiguren," for the connection between literature and geography more generally.


85. Klein, "Randfiguren." 205–7. Klein sees these decorative borders not as merely marginal but rather as an important component of pack- aged geographical information and a merging of three separate genres: costume books, city atlases, and nautical or continental maps.


87. See Landau and Parshall, _The Renaissance Print_, 178. Burgkmair’s use of multiple block prints to create a woodcut frieze was an innovation in the north, and if it has any precedent at all, Landau and Parshall find sources south of the Alps, in particular, Jacob of Strassburg’s _Triumph of Caesar_, published in 1504 in Venice.


89. The most complete edition, once bound in a folding, accordionlike format known as a _pleister_ , is preserved in Basel’s Kupferstichkabinett. See B. Ackema and B. L. Brown, _Renaissance Venues and the North: Cross-currents in the Time of Bellini, Durer, and Titian_ (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), 252.

90. For the influence of Mantegna’s _Triumph of Caesar_ on sixteenth-cen- tury followers, see Andrea Mantegna, _The Triumph of Caesar by Andrea Mantegna_ (London: Harvey Miller, 1979), esp. 97–102.

91. See Alpers and Brown, _Renaissance Venues and the North_, 252.

92. See Mansing, "Hans Burgkmair’s Depiction of Native Africans," 46 and n. 27; and idem, "The Triumph of Caesar."

93. Curiously, enslaved "exotics," typically the mainstay of triumphal processions, are conspicuously absent in Bordone’s version.

94. It was precisely these signifiers of local prestige, such as the palanquin, that the Portuguese would later outlaw in their evangelizing missions in Goa. See Joseph Thakkerd as quoted in Ines G. Espa- nean, _Companions: India_, in _A Companion to the Reformation World_, ed. Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 357.

95. For example, shells, hides, clubs, and parrots were mentioned by Peu- ting in a letter to Sebastian Brant; see König, _Konrad Peutinger’s Brief- ner und die Zivilisierten: Grundzüge einer Geistes- und Kulturgeschichte der europäisch-überseeischen Begegnung_ (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1976), 26; and Borowka-Clauss, _Balthasar Springers_, 123.

96. For a good account of the nascent printing trade in Augsburg, see Landau and Parshall, _The Renaissance Print_, 35–54. See also Hans-Jörg Künast, "Germat zu Buch und Buchhandel in Augsburg inzwischen 1468 und 1553 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1997); and Norbert Ott, "Früh Augsburger Buchillustration," in _Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagseugen von den Anfang bis zur Gegenwart_, ed. Helmut Gier and Johannes Janato (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997). In the case of Burgkmair’s frieze, we can identify the work of the Formschneider Cornelis Liefrinck by initials on the block’s verso. Falk, _Hans Burgkmair_, Studies, 21.


98. These woodcuts are formed by a multiblock process in which a line or key block is printed with one or more tone blocks that add color or highlight. This technique was developed in conjunction with the block cutter just des Neuger, and it expanded on experiments in color printing initiated by the printer Erhard Rastold. See Landau and Par- shall, _The Renaissance Print_, 180–84.

99. Falk, _Hans Burgkmair_, Studies, 21. Falk positions this type of develop- ment in opposition to the innovation in craft practice represented by Albrecht Dürer, who unified both practices in the mind of one artist to produce a characteristic “style.” Naturalism in print re- sulted from an organic grafting of design and execution, a conflu- ence of a painter’s invention and a craftsman’s technical ability to reproduce it.

100. This obsession with the Khoi is tracked in Walter Hirschberg, ed., _Sverstasas _, (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlaganstalt, 1962), an important anthology of texts, maps, and illustrations of early modern Africa, in which "half of the thirty-two authors included . . . deal more or less extensively with this numerically inconsiderable people," according to Basansi and Tedeschi, "The Image of the Hottentot," 173.

101. Urs Bitterli contends that the next generation of artists drastically en- larged the breasts and buttocks in the Khoi females, fueling the stéréotype of these natives as hideous in appearance. See Bitterli, _Die Wilden und die Zivilisierten: Grundzüge einer Geistes- und Kulturgeschichte der europäisch-überseeischen Begegnung_, (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1976), 26; and Borowka-Clauss, _Balthasar Springers_, 123.

102. Tilman Falk dates this woodcut in the British Museum (inv. no. 1856-61410) to after 1596; no other members of a set have been identified. See Hauberger and Biedermann, _Hans Burgkmair 1473–1531: Das Gra- phische Werk_, cat. no. 27; and Falk, _Hans Burgkmair_, Studies, 106 n. 419.

103. Burgkmair would have been familiar with the works of Dürer in Peu- ting’s collection; Peutinger’s inventory of 1597 reflects an almost complete collection of the printed works of contemporary Augsburg artists, as well as those of Dürer, including his later work on propor- tion and perspective. See Künast, "Die Grafiksammlung des Augs- burger Stadtscrhebers Konrad Peutinger," 15; and Künast and Zäh, _Die autographen Kataloge Peutingers_, no. 84. See also Basansi and Te-deschi, "The Image of the Hottentot," 164.

104. These were found in an edition of Svetlana Alpers’s in Peutinger’s library. According to Peutinger’s preparatory notes in his "Nachlass" (BSB, Munich, Clm 4009), over one hundred portraits were made for the project, which, although largely complete by 1505, never made it to press. See Falk, _Hans Burgkmair_, Studies, 46. Falk posits that Burg- kmair continued work on this monumental project throughout the first two decades of the sixteenth century. See Hauberger and Biedermann, _Hans Burgkmair 1473–1531: Das Grafische Werk_, 76–77; Künast and Zäh, _Die autographen Kataloge Peutingers_, no. 86; and Campbell Dodgson, "Die Cäsarenköpfe, eine unbekannte Folge von Holz- schnitten Hans Burgkmair’s d. Ä.," in _Beitriige zur Geschichte der deutsch- schen Kunst_, vol. 2, Augsburger Stadtscrhebers Konrad Peutinger, 15; and Künast and Zäh, _Die autographen Kataloge Peutingers_, no. 84. See also Basansi and Tede- schi, "The Image of the Hottentot," 164.

105. For humanist medals, see Stephen Scher, _Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance_ (London: Thames and Hudson in association with the Frick Collection, 1994).

106. For humanitarian medals, see Stephen Scher, _Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance_ (London: Thames and Hudson in association with the Frick Collection, 1994).


110. Celtis’s altered look seems closer to his appearance in other contemporaneous portraits; his cap seems to reflect the reality of his premature baldness. See Dörnhöffer, “Über Dürer und Burgkmair,” 128.

111. Falk, *Hans Burgkmair, Studien*, 20. Portraits would become one of Burgkmair’s specialties. The woodcut portraits of Pope Julius II in 1511, as well as those of Augustan patrons Jakob Fugger and Hans Pasinggartner made the same year, represent a new pictorial genre that used the medium of woodcut to express subjects usually reserved for medallion production and painting. See Larry Silver, “The Face Is Familiar: German Renaissance Portrait Multiples in Prints and Medals,” *Word and Image* 19, nos. 1–2 (2003): 10.

112. Silver, “The Face Is Familiar,” 10, also suggests that this change was made at the express command of Maximilian I. See R. T. Rask, *Erhard Rotoldt, Master Printer* (Francistown, N.H.: Typographia Fratris, 1982), 40–48. See Hausberger and Biedermann, *Hans Burgkmair 1473–1531: Das Graphische Werk*, cat. no. 6. We can trace Burgkmair’s physiognomic improvements in another group of surrogates cuttings he made for the head of Saint Pelagius in the *Breviarium Sancti Stephani* of the archbishopric of Freising, near Munich. The head of Saint Maurinus when it was reprinted in the frontispiece to Ratdolt’s *Kaiserbuch* project, during which time he made numerous portrait roundels. The idea that scholars date Burgkmair’s work by the particularity of his visage says a great deal about our expectations of him as a portraitist. As Anthony Grafton (e-mail to author, fall 2003) thinks otherwise, *Thornlichte, History of Magic, 55–57*, claims that its use of unabashedly medieval sources did not represent a conflict of interest for humanists, who were only too happy to consult these authors in the field of physiognomy and chiromancy. Perhaps we can take seriously Coles’s claim that even humanists wanted to become physiognomists.


114. Silver, “The Face Is Familiar,” 10, also suggests that this change was made at the express command of Maximilian I. See Bartolomaeus Coles, *In disent biechlein wirt erfunden von Complexion der menschen* (Augsburg: Hans Schönggerper, 1513), BSB, Munich, Res. 4 Anh. 7c: “Und wie wol dis Kunst in unsern landen unbrauchlich und seltsam ist doch in andern landen in hohen eeren und werd gehalten / unnd sonderlich in der haydenschafft und in der Türcky / Als ich von denen die solliches selber erfaren.”

115. The emblem of the black Moor was popular among humanists and served as a means of identification and self-expression among humanists. The source was translated in print, see Wood, “Early Archaeology and the Book Trade.”

116. Silver, “The Face Is Familiar,” 10, also suggests that this change was made at the express command of Maximilian I. See Bartolomaeus Coles, *In disent biechlein wirt erfunden von Complexion der menschen* (Augsburg: Hans Schönggerper, 1513), BSB, Munich, Res. 4 Anh. 7c: “Und wie wol dis Kunst in unsern landen unbrauchlich und seltsam ist doch in andern landen in hohen eeren und werd gehalten / unnd sonderlich in der haydenschafft und in der Türcky / Als ich von denen die solliches selber erfaren.”

117. Even if we doubt the scientific rigor that such books enjoyed in the late medieval and Renaissance humanist community, the sheer popularity of this book in the first two decades of the sixteenth century certainly argues for its general vigor. While Tilman Falk, *Hans Burgkmair, Studien*, 52 and n. 310, maintains that humanists in Maximilian’s circle about 1514 probably found the “scientific” content of this volume on physiognomy and palmistry specious, Anthony Grafton (e-mail to author, fall 2003) thinks otherwise. *Thornlichte, History of Magic, 55–57*, claims that the use of unabashedly medieval sources did not represent a conflict of interest for humanists, who were only too happy to consult these authors in the field of physiognomy and chiromancy. Perhaps we can take seriously Coles’s claim that even humanists wanted to become physiognomists.

118. Hans Schönggerper printed several editions of this volume between the years 1510 and 1517. It is the 1515 edition, published in Augsburg, that concerns us here.

119. “A.B.C.” probably stands for Augustan Burgkmair Cvis. The 1515 publication date of this volume provides only a terminus ante quem for the woodcut. Tilman Falk, *Hans Burgkmair, Studien*, 52, proposes a date between 1500 and 1506, a date more in line with Burgkmair’s actual appearance known from, as well as our knowledge of and artistic production of, this book. It is also supposed that Burgkmair’s portrait for the woodcut roundel versions of Christ’s profile fashioned from medals exhibited a more developed physiognomy, which proliferated in humanist circles in Augsburg and Nuremberg in about 1500, purported to relay an eyewitness account of the true physical appearance of Christ that images made from it sought to replicate. See Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 116–17; and Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction*, 155–64.