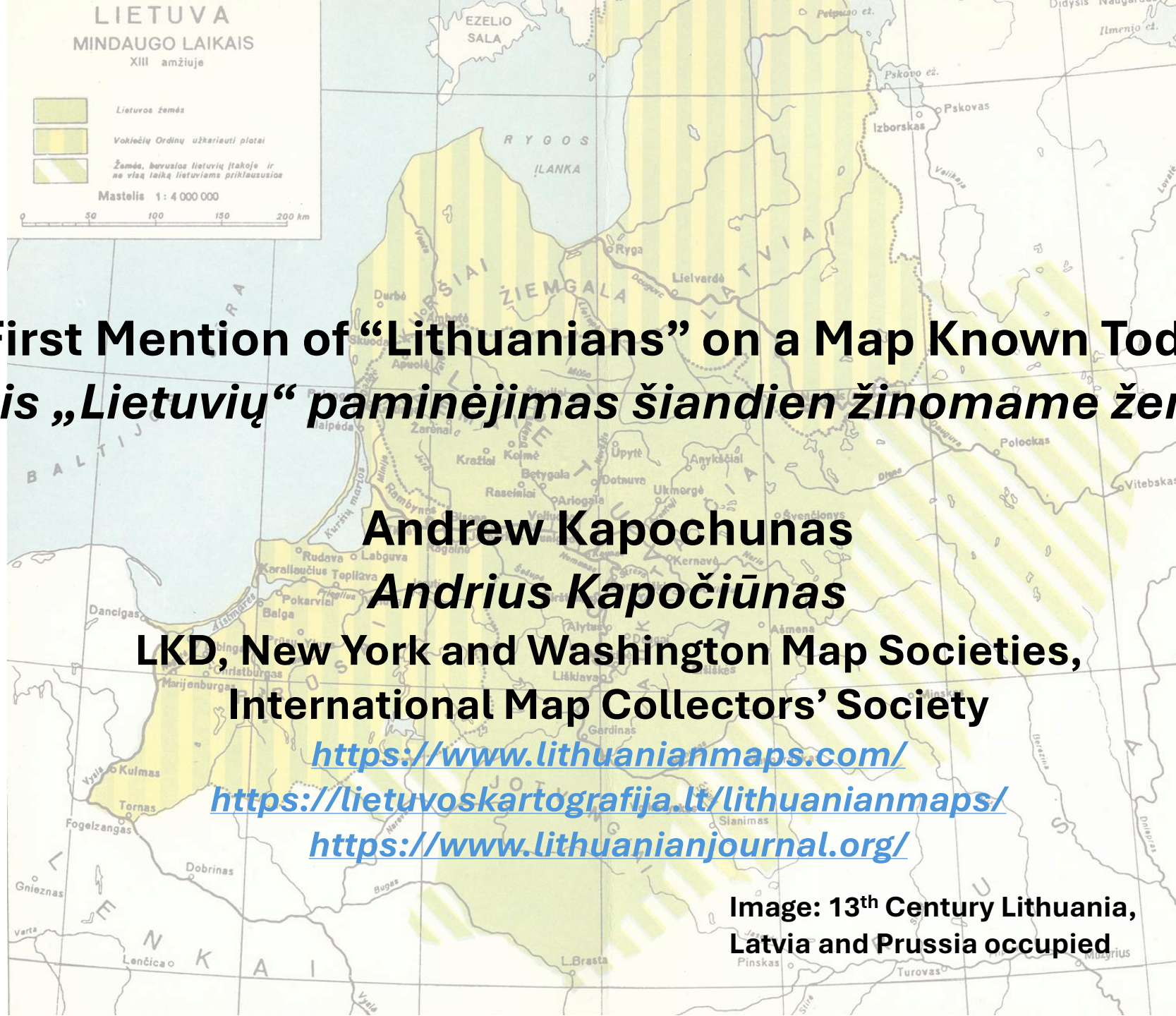




First Mention of “Lithuanians” on a Map Known Today

Pirmasis „Lietuvių“ paminėjimas šiandien žinomame žemėlapyje

Andrew Kapochunas

Andrius Kapočiūnas

LKD, New York and Washington Map Societies,

International Map Collectors' Society

<https://www.lithuanianmaps.com/>

<https://lietuvoskartografija.lt/lithuanianmaps/>

<https://www.lithuanianjournal.org/>

**Image: 13th Century Lithuania,
Latvia and Prussia occupied**



NACIONALINĖ ŽEMĖS TARNYBA PRIE APLINKOS MINISTERIJOS

Pradžia >

[March 2024 exhibition]

Istorinės kartografijos paroda LIETUVA EUROPOJE



Minint Lietuvos stojimo į ES 20-metį

Tarptautinės Žemės dienos proga

Nacionalinė žemės tarnyba

pristato parodą

LIETUVA EUROPOJE

2024-03-22



Pirmasis Lietuvos paminėjimas žemėlapiuose

LETOINI PAGANI

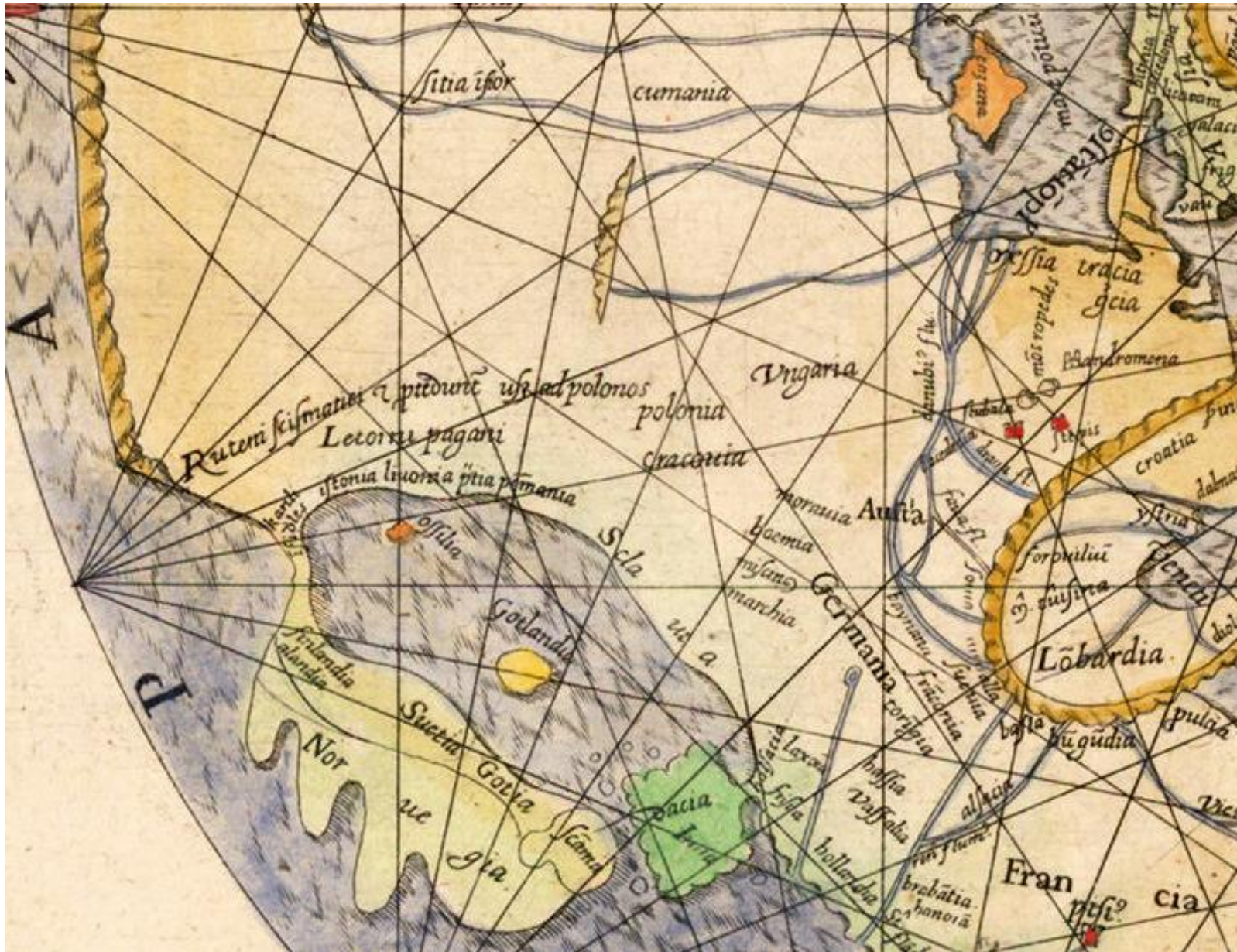
1311 m. Pietro Visconte pasaulio žemėlapis



c. 1311 Pietro Vesconte's first *mappa mundi* (map of the world) reproduced in print for the first time in 1611 by Johann Bongars.

The detail image -- boxed in red on the image of the full map -- shows the Baltic Sea with North on the left, and the label "**Letoini pagani**," which the Ministry translated as "Lithuanian pagans."

<https://exhibits.stanford.edu/ruderman/catalog/br930wz6088>



I believe, instead, that **“Letoini pagani”** refers to Lettish/Latvian pagans. Why Letts and not Lithuanians?

Not just because the labels just below [West] say **“estonia”** and **“livonia.”**

The Livonian Crusade of 1198-1290 had just ended, while the Lithuanian Crusade of 1283-1422 was just beginning.

A timeline will help clarify.

Historical Context:

Istorinis kontekstas:

c. 7th century: Latvian language begins to diverge from Lithuanian

1009: The phrase “...*in confinio Rusciæ et Lituæ a paganis...*” appears in the annals of Quedlinburg Abbey

1198-1290: Livonian Crusade to convert Baltic and Finnic pagans

1211: Bishop Albert of Riga divides his lands, first mention of “...*terra, quae Lettia dicitur...*”

1231: Danish Census Book (*Liber Census Daniæ*) mentions “***Littonia***” paying tribute to the Danes

c. 1236: Grand Duchy of Lithuania established

1236: Pope declares a Lithuanian Crusade after Livonian Brothers of the Sword lose to pagans

1251-53: Mindaugas baptized and then crowned (*first and last*) “King of Lithuania”

1263: Mindaugas assassinated, Grand Duchy re-established as pagan for over 120 years

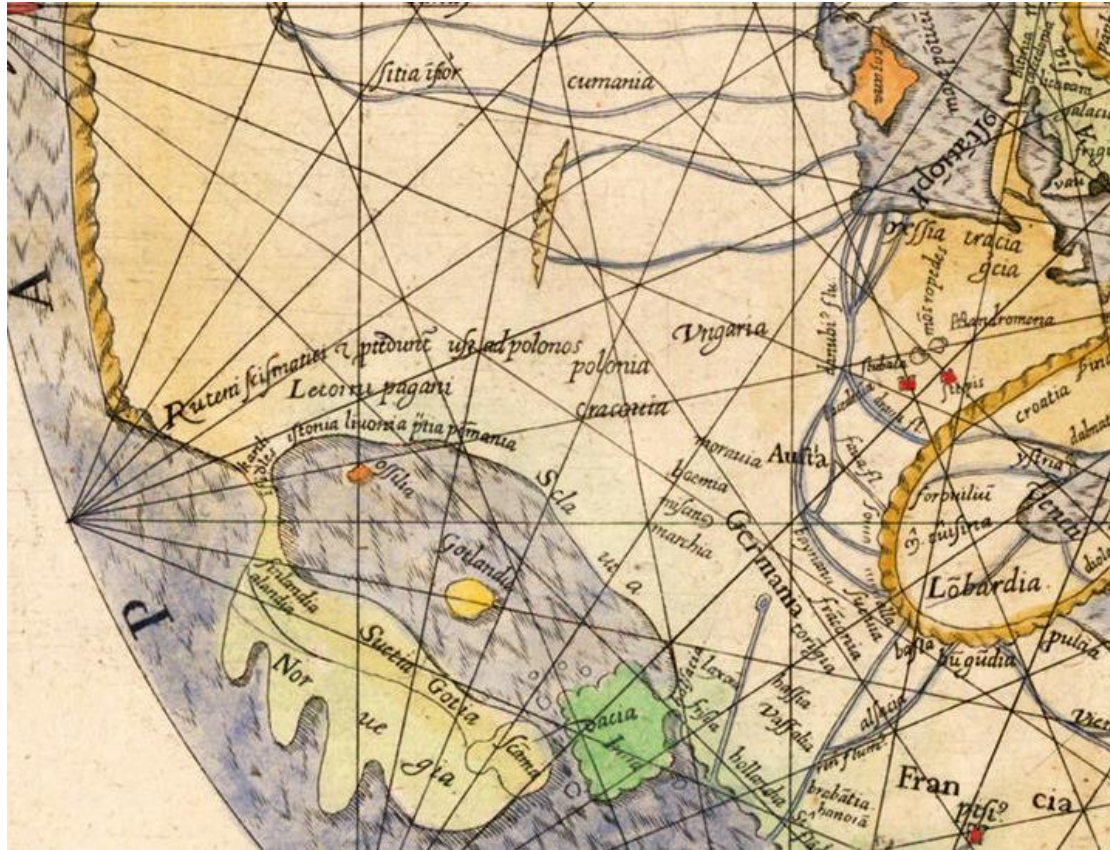
1283: Lithuanian Crusade led by Teutonic Knights begins (*does not end until 1422*)

c. 1311: Bongars publishes, in 1611, Pietro Vesconte’s first *mappa mundi* (circular world map)

1321: Sanudo publishes second Vesconte *mappa mundi*

1325: Dulcert/Dalorte creates his first Portolan (*vellum – calfskin – sailing chart*)

1375: Cresques Abraham and his son create The Catalan Atlas

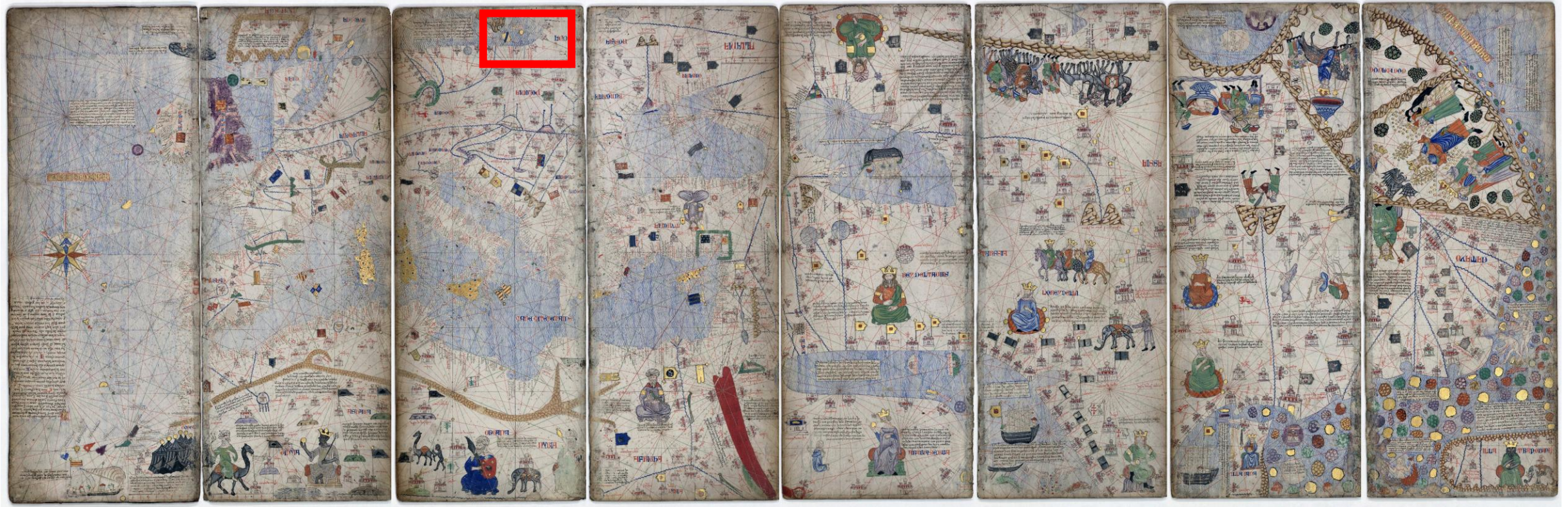


1311 Vesconte *Mappa Mundi* (Detail) first published **1611**

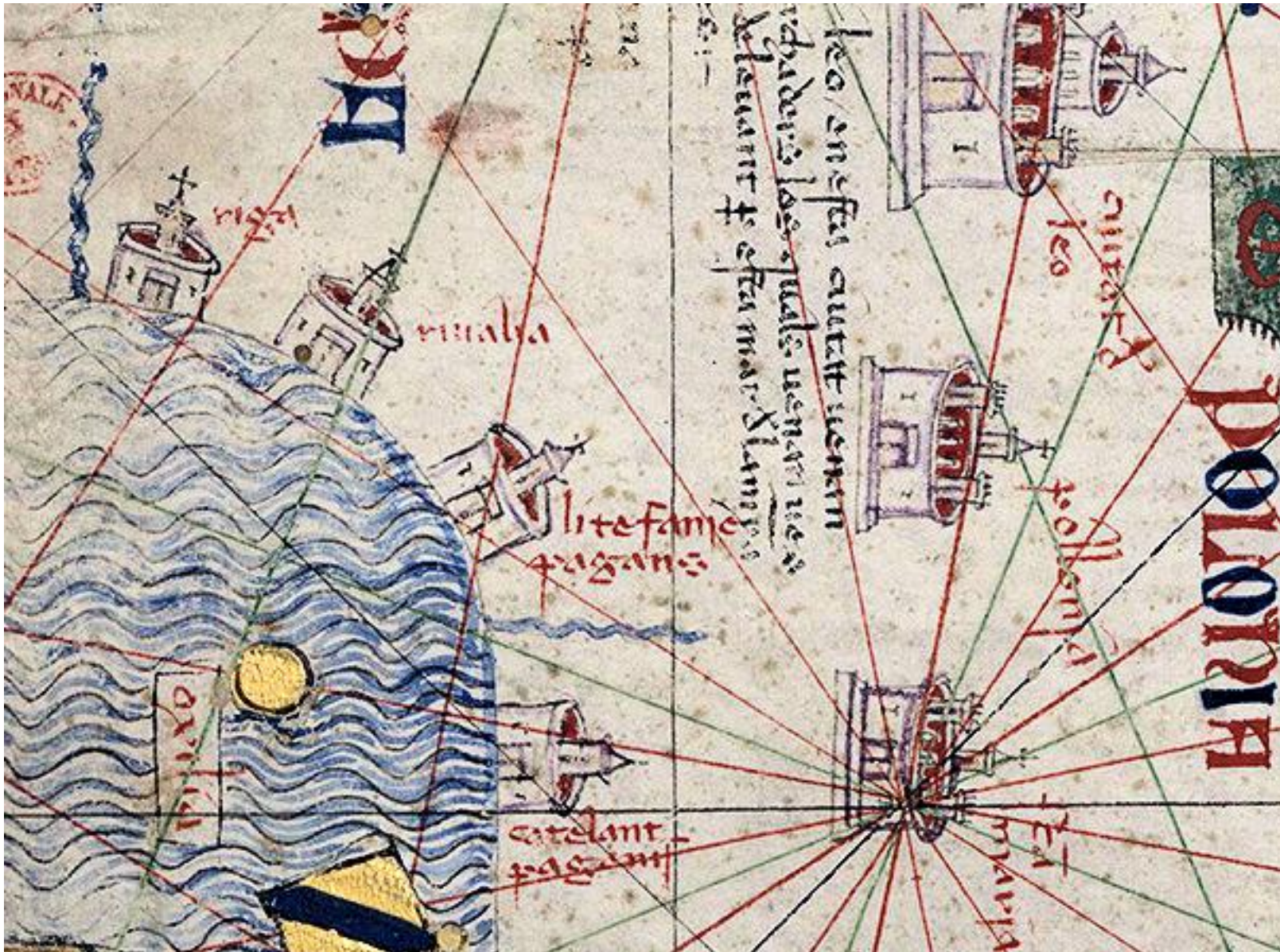


1321 Vesconte *Mappa Mundi* (Detail)

On the right, the **1321** Second *mappa mundi* created by Vesconte, as published by Sanudo with manuscript labels reflective of early 14th century practice, rather than the 17th century labels added to Vesconte's 1311 map. **“Lecorini pagani”** as it no doubt would have looked in 1311, along with **“livonia”** and **“estonia.”** [British Library, Additional MS. 27376*, ff. 187v-188.](#)

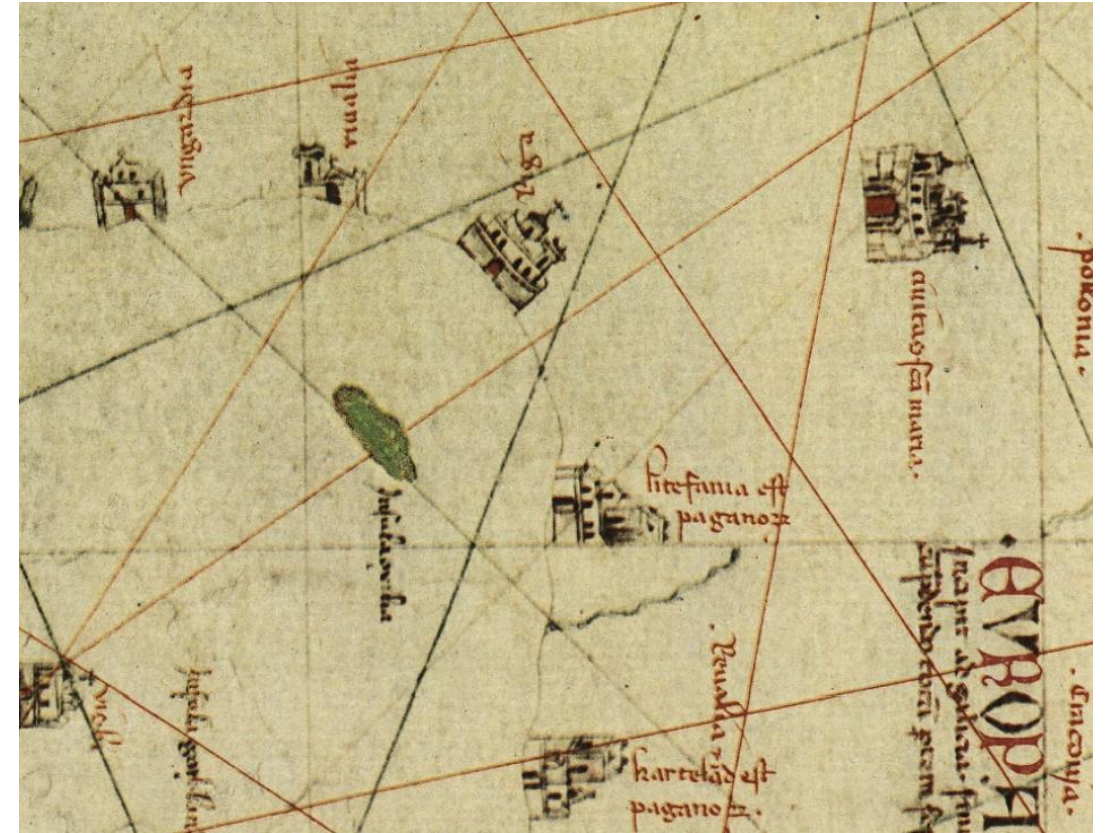
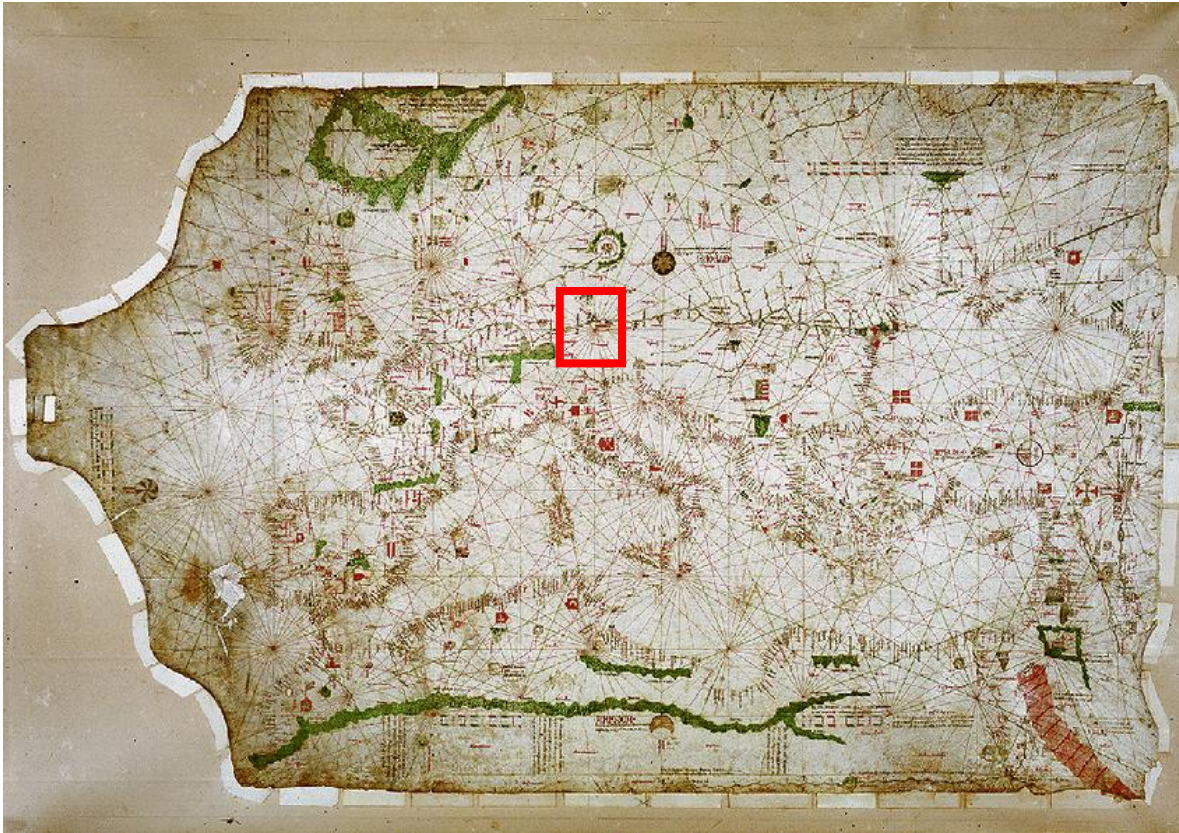


This is Abraham Cresques and his son Jehuda's **1375** "Catalan Atlas" (*Catalan*: "Atles català") created in multiple panels that were later attached to wood, drawn from the Atlantic Ocean to China, with North at the top of each panel. Boxed in **red** on the third panel from the left is an area in which a 2001 paper by Stasys Vytautas Kazakevičius and Birutė Ruzgienė, both then at the Institute of Geodesy, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, says the label "***Litefanie Paganis***," that is, pagan Lithuania," is actually the first mention of Lithuanians on a map. From the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, via: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan_Atlas#/media/File:1375_Atlas_Catalan_Abraham_Cresques.jpg



This detail image of the **1375** Catalan Atlas has North on the left, to make it easier to see and read the label ***“Lituanie Paganis,”*** which I, at the time of the March 2024 Ministry exhibition, agreed with S. Kazakevičius and B. Ruzgienė that this label, with the Nemunas below, and a label for Riga above was the correct first mention of Lithuanians on a map known today.

I now believe I was wrong.



Not displayed in the Ministry's March 2024 exhibition – a map of which the curators were perhaps unaware -- is this **1325** Portolan (*nautical*) chart by Angelino Dulcert/Dalorte, with North at the top, from the collection of Prince Orsini of Florence. The image was published in 1929 by the Royal Geographic Society. The area boxed in **red has** the label ***"Litefania est paganos"*** with the river Nemunas beneath it, and a label for Riga to the north. *My thanks to Arv Jarasius, a US subscriber to my LithuanianJournal.org, for bringing it to my attention.*

