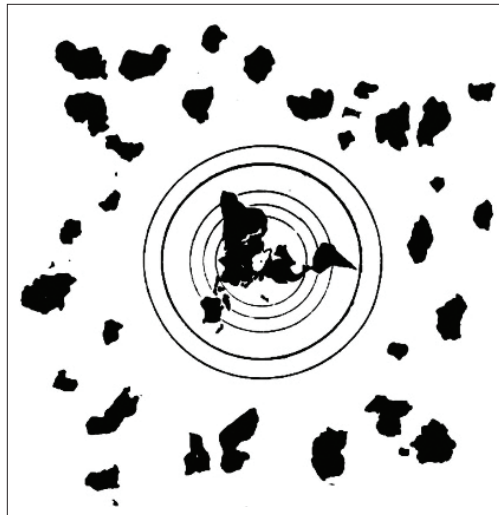


Dr Kobayashi's dream



In January 1907, an apparently ancient Tibetan map of the world featured in *The Hawaiian Gazette*. It was put forward by Dr Kobayashi, a Japanese surgeon, whose brother discovered the map in nearby mountains. This poem is a response to that map (Figure 1) and its advocates:



Source: 'Was this world map made ten centuries ago?', *The Hawaiian Gazette* (Honolulu [Oahu, Hawaii]), 11 Jan. 1907, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress, p. 2, viewed n.d., from <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025121/1907-01-11/ed-1/seq-2/>

FIGURE 1: World map

Dr Kobayashi's brother had lost his human heart on a mountain top
one night contemplating the vast and empty sky.
He spent the rest of his days mapping the heavens in search of it.
But without his human heart, his eyes were clear at last
and in the skies, he saw the world as it were – strewn about.
He cast his eyes to the mud and brine of birth and
like groaning desert dunes, the world spat itself out
sucked itself back in, and breathed with oceanic grace.

Is this the whole of the world then, a foamy soap spatter?
drifting on a wave, coming together as it inhales,
scattering apart as it exhales only to speed back together.
Isn't that what the Buddha meant?
'All composite things are perishable'.

That blitzed up sketch of the world is one half
of the sky, one half of the world, bound ceaselessly.
That shattered, leopard spot world, just above the exosphere
is one half true and one half Kobayashi's dream.


Reference

'Was this world map made ten centuries ago?', *The Hawaiian Gazette* (Honolulu [Oahu, Hawaii]), 11 January 1907, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Lib. of Congress, p. 2, viewed from <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025121/1907-01-11/ed-1/seq-2/>

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