



The Vesconte Maggiolo Planisphere of 1531

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The Vesconte Maggiolo Planisphere of 1531

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Introduction

“A jewel of the cartographer’s art”

The 1531 planisphere signed and dated by Vesconte Maggiolo is a remarkable survival: a monumental early sixteenth century portolan chart of the known world, in astonishingly good condition, with rich decoration, vibrant colours, and heightened in lapis lazuli, gold, and silver.

It is the first extant map to show New York Harbour; one of the earliest depictions of Verrazzano’s first voyage, which was the first European exploration of the northeast seaboard of North America, and the first voyage of discovery under French auspices; and a fascinating record of both the negotiations between the two Iberian super powers, and the struggle between the houses of Hapsburg and Valois in the first half of the sixteenth century.

The 1531 chart was apparently unknown until 1983, and undocumented until 1996.

There are 21 extant recorded earlier (pre-1530) manuscript maps showing the relationship between the Old and New Worlds, none of which is in private hands, and only four of which are in the United States.

The motivation behind the map’s production is clearly political. The 1494 line of demarcation determined at the Treaty of Tordesillas is prominent, as are the flags and territories claimed by Portugal, Spain and France. A faint line marks an antimeridian in the East Indies; albeit in a different location from that agreed two years earlier at the Treaty of Zaragoza. The sovereigns of most of the major powers in the early modern world are shown astride their kingdoms, and many important city-states are depicted in bird’s-eye views that reveal their prominent landmarks. The particular allegiance of the mapmaker or his patron are not, however, immediately clear.

In order to understand Maggiolo’s map, it is necessary to consider it with respect to its historical context, its place within the story of Verrazzano and the exploration of the New World, its position as a piece of cartography, and its status as a work of art. With this information, it may be concluded that Maggiolo’s chart presents itself as both an icon of the Age of Discovery, and a proposal for peace between Hapsburg Spain and Valois France.





Historical Context

The Treaty of Tordesillas

“Show me the clause in Adam’s will which gives the king of Spain dominion over half the world”

In the thirty years after Columbus made landfall in Hispaniola, Vasco da Gama had reached India by sea (1498), Cabral had landed in Brazil (1500), the Portuguese had discovered the Spice Islands (1512), Vasco Núñez de Balboa had reached the Pacific (1513), Cortes had conquered Mexico (1521), and the Victoria, albeit without its captain, Ferdinand Magellan, had circumnavigated the world for the first time (1521).

The Treaty of Tordesillas, signed at Tordesillas on 7 June 1494 divided the world beyond Christian Europe between Charles V of Spain and John II of Portugal along a meridian 370 leagues to the west of the Cape Verde Islands. This line of demarcation was about halfway between the Portuguese Cape Verde Islands and the islands recently discovered by Columbus, named in the treaty as Cipangu and Antilia (Cuba and Hispaniola). The division gave to Portugal all the lands to the east (Brazil to India), and to Spain all the lands to the west (from the Caribbean to the Pacific).

However, the Treaty of Tordesillas only specified the line of demarcation in terms of leagues from the Cape Verde Islands. It did not specify the line in degrees, nor did it identify the specific island or the specific length of its unit of measurement: the “league”. It was, therefore, open to more than a little interpretation. What is more, the line of demarcation did not, initially, encircle the earth. Portugal’s discovery of the Spice Islands, or Moluccas, in 1512 caused the Spanish monarchs to try to halt Portuguese expansion further east by arguing that the Treaty of Tordesillas divided the earth into two equal hemispheres. When the survivors of Magellan’s circumnavigation returned having visited the Moluccas in 1521, Spain claimed the islands fell within its western hemisphere. The meridian line of demarcation now required an antimeridian. In 1523, the Treaty of Victoria called for the Badajoz Junta to meet in 1524 in order determine where just such a line might fall, but, due

to the problems associated with trying to determine longitude, the two sides failed to reach an agreement.

The legitimacy of the vast Spanish and Portuguese empires was based not only on the right of conquest, but on a divine right as defined by a series of papal bulls dividing the colonial world – many of which were issued by the Spanish Pope Alexander VI, born Rodrigo Borgia, who received overt Spanish protection. This evident bias irked the other European powers so much that Francis I of France, Charles V’s greatest rival, protested:

“Show me the clause in Adam’s will which gives the king of Spain dominion over half the world.” (Fuentes)

France, who was slow to join in this great age of discovery, had started to feel the pressure from competition in trade, particularly from the Portuguese silk merchants, and Francis I, personally, from Charles V, who, in 1519, had beaten him in the election to become Holy Roman Emperor. It was against this background that the Florentine silk merchants of Lyon approached Francis I with the idea of sending one of their own, Giovanni Verrazzano, to explore the possibility of a Western passage to the East Indies.



Giovanni Verrazzano

“By reason of his merit is esteemed another Amerigo Vespucci; another Ferdinand Magellan and even more”.

Giovanni Verrazzano (1485-1528) was born in Val di Greve, near Florence. He trained as a navigator in Dieppe in 1506. He may have traveled to Newfoundland in 1508 under captain Thomas Aubert on board ‘Le Pensée’ and certainly at some point sailed to the eastern Mediterranean and lived in Egypt. In any event, by 1523 he was judged to be sufficiently experienced to lead the French attempt to find a northwest passage to the East Indies; and one contemporary, writing after his return in 1524, described him as having travelled “almost through all the known world, and thence by reason of his merit is esteemed another Amerigo Vespucci; another Ferdinand Magellan and even more” (Carli).

Most of what is known about Verrazzano’s first voyage comes from a letter, dated 8 July 1524, that he wrote to Francis I from his ship immediately upon his return to Dieppe. Verrazzano’s letter was dispatched from Dieppe to a banker in Rome, but en route at Lyon its contents were evidently available to the merchants with whom the navigator had contracted for the voyage, since a copy of it accompanied a letter from the Florentine merchant Bernardo Carli, resident in Lyons, to his father in Florence, dated 4 August 1524. The Carli letter contains nearly all we know about Verrazzano’s early career and is now in the Strozzi Library, Florence, together with his copy of Verrazzano’s letter, the autograph original of which is now lost. Three further Italian versions of Verrazzano’s letter are extant: one is printed in Ramusio; one was discovered in the Library of Count Giulio de Cèllere, Rome, in 1909, and now resides in the Pierpont Morgan Library; and the fourth is a manuscript that was uncovered in the Vatican Library in 1925.

Piecing together the various components of these copies, it can be established that Verrazano was granted a fleet of four ships, together with a Norman crew. They sailed from Dieppe in the autumn of 1523 with sufficient

supplies for one year. Disaster struck almost immediately as two of the ships were lost in a storm, with the remaining two, ‘La Normanda’ and ‘La Dauphine’, forced to find safe haven in Brittany. After repairs they embarked upon a brief period of piracy along the Spanish coast, before ‘La Normanda’, was sent back to Dieppe with the booty from these exploits and ‘La Dauphine’, a 60-foot craft under Verrazano with 50 shipmates, was left to cross the Atlantic alone.

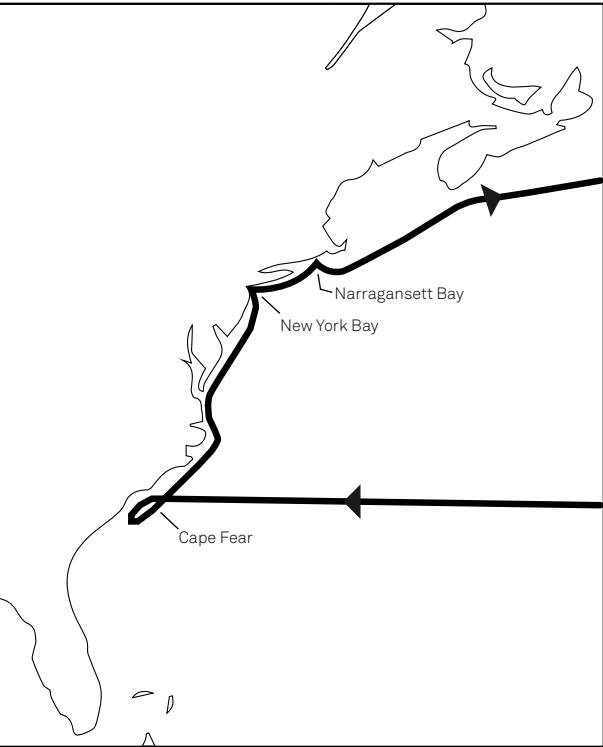
Sailing west from Madeira on 17 January 1524, Verrazzano set a course about 150 miles north of that sailed by Columbus. The letters to Francis I suggest relations between the officers and crew on this voyage were strained. While little is known about the crew from the letters (only Girolamo, Giovanni’s brother and the expedition cartographer, is individually mentioned), they are referred



Giovanni Verrazzano (1485-1528)

to as “la turba marittima”, or the maritime mob. Living conditions in the diminutive ship no doubt accentuated social strains. The crew ate biscuits, oatmeal, and fat; any available meat was heavily salted for preservation during the long ocean crossing, and the nutritional void left by a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables caused scurvy. Insects and rodents competed for food supplies and fostered illnesses. Storms, such as the one they encountered on 24 February 1524, constantly threatened the lives of all aboard ‘La Dauphine’, and forced a change of direction to the north. On 1 March 1524, after a 44 day voyage, ‘La Dauphine’ reached “a new land never before seen by anyone”. The position of this landfall was given as 34 degrees, but was probably close to Cape Fear, at the base of the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Verrazzano initially steered the ship south to seek a protective harbour, but before reaching as far as Charleston Harbour, he turned around to avoid meeting hostile Spanish ships. A small boat sent ashore at Cape Fear encountered Indians (presumably North Carolina Algonquians), whom Verrazano described very favourably. Soon, ‘La Dauphine’ sailed north along the Outer Banks, where the captain sighted Pamlico Sound and mistook it for “el Mare Orientale” - the Pacific Ocean. This isthmus, described by Hakluyt as “a little necke of lande in 40 degrees of latitude,” with the sea on both sides, was, in fact, the line of islands and sandbars off the coast of North Carolina and the “Mare Orientale” - extending to Asia according to Verrazzano - is no more than the broad Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds. Verrazzano’s error was, however, committed to paper (or, more likely, vellum), and the cartographic misconception that would become known as “The Sea of Verrazzano” was born. It would be nearly a century before mapmakers stopped depicting North America as a thin, north-south extension of land with Asia just to the west.

Continuing north, Verrazzano reached what he called “Arcadia” (probably Kitty Hawk, North Carolina), after tall trees reminiscent of the idyllic Arcadia of ancient Greece. Proceeding northward, ‘La Dauphine’ avoided the shallows of the coastline, which effectively prevented Girolamo from mapping the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. Verrazzano, however, eventually



Verrazzano's voyage in 1524.

reached New York harbour, named it “Angouleme” in honour of Francis I, and was the first European mariner to anchor there. Here, he again met and reported enthusiastically on the local indigenous people (a Delaware tribe, also Algonquian-speakers). In letters to Francis I Verrazano attests to the beauty and productivity of the land, in terms of both plants and animals, and valuable minerals which he claimed (in a promotional vein) to have spied in the hillsides.

Sailing further east, Verrazzano and his men then encountered Block Island (“Luisa”) and Narragansett Bay. The local Wampanoag people (New England Algonquians) were also friendly, welcoming them with food and escorting ‘La Dauphine’ to the more sheltered Newport Harbour (“Refugio”). Here, the ship anchored for two weeks, where the crew traded with the Wampanoag while awaiting better weather.

Venturing still farther north, the explorers reached Maine and, in a place not far from the future Popham Colony, encountered the Eastern Abenaki tribe. While fretting that they shot arrows at the crew of ‘La Dauphine’ as they attempted to land, could not communicate with the Europeans, and wore “carnivore pelts”, Verrazzano still has words of praise for the countryside’s beauty. Sailing on, the explorers missed the Bay of Fundy and most of Nova Scotia before reaching “near the land which the Britanni (Britons) found” - Cape Breton. Finding their provisions failing, they set course for France, making Dieppe early in July 1524 “having discovered six hundred leagues and more of new land.”

Verrazzano’s six-month voyage is one of the most important in North American exploration. His letter records the earliest geographical and topographical description of a continuous North Atlantic coast of America derived from a known exploration, and his observation of the Indians is the first ethnological account of America north of Mexico. Though it failed to reveal a passage to China, it enabled Verrazzano to be the first to report that the “New World which above I have described is connected together, not adjoining Asia or Africa”.

No contemporary chart survives of Verrazzano’s first voyage, although there must have been several. Indeed, Richard Hakluyt in his 1584 ‘Discourse concerning western planting’ (a work written to convince Queen Elizabeth I to support the colonization schemes of Walter Raleigh) mentions a “mightie large olde mappe” (the basis of the 1582 Lok map) and an “Olde excellent globe,” both seemingly made by Verrazzano, but now lost.

Carli, in his letter to his father, expresses his hope, in the interests of his fellow Florentine merchants, that the king will entrust the navigator “again, with half a dozen good vessels and that he will return to the voyage,” so that “he may discover some profitable traffic.” Verrazzano shared this hope and, late in 1524, he had another French expedition in readiness for the Indies. The military defeats of France that year, however, left her in no mood for transatlantic enterprises and Francis I was, and was to be for some years, too preoccupied with

coming to terms with his disastrous defeat at the Battle of Pavia, his own imprisonment by the Spanish king, and by his seemingly endless wars in Italy. Verrazzano’s ships and crews were commandeered, and, once free from captivity following the Treaty of Madrid in February 1526, Francis I compensated their promoters for the loss of their investment.

A further voyage, also under royal auspices, was planned in the spring of 1526; it is attested in a contract of that year between Philippe de Chabot, seigneur de Brion (c1492-1543), the Admiral of France, Verrazzano and other speculators to furnish three vessels (two of them the king’s) to make a trading voyage to the Indies for spices. Verrazzano, as chief pilot, was to receive one-sixth of the fruits of the venture after certain expenses had been deducted. Other documents corroborate the planned voyage; one, a deed dated 11 May 1526, signed “Janus Verrazanus”, in Latin, is his only known autograph, and is preserved in the archives at Rouen. The deed appoints his brother Girolamo his heir and attorney during the proposed mission. Another object of the voyage, besides trade, was to search for the elusive passage to Asia south of the region explored by the first voyage. All was apparently ready in 1526, yet the start was unaccountably delayed for nearly two years. It is during this period that Vesconte Maggiolo produced his large portolan of the Americas dated 20 December 1527. Sadly, Allied bombing during the Second World War destroyed the map, which was formerly housed in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. It is now known only from facsimiles.

With Darien as its likely first destination, Verrazzano’s fleet at last set its course in the spring of 1528 for Florida, the Bahamas, and the Lesser Antilles. On an island in the latter group, probably near Guadeloupe, Verrazzano’s habit of anchoring away from the shore became fatal. Giovanni landed with a party to greet the natives, wading the last part while his boat, with his brother, remained at sea. Unfortunately the tribe with whom he wished to trade were cannibalistic Caribs, and Verrazzano was killed, and eaten whilst still fresh and within sight, but not firing range, of his crew. The event is recorded

in Ramusio, in Paolo Giovio’s ‘Elogia’ (published in Florence, 1548, and Basel, 1575), and in a manuscript poem c1550 held in the Museo Civico, Como, by Paolo’s nephew Giulio Giovio (See page 52). It is reported that the unfortunate Girolamo was an eyewitness to his even less fortunate brother’s gruesome demise.

Early cartographic representations of Verrazzano’s first voyage

The earliest known depictions of Verrazzano’s first voyage are as follows:

1. Vesconte Maggiolo. [Planisphere]. 1527.

Portolan chart.

Location: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan (destroyed during the Second World War).
2. Girolamo da Verrazzano. [Planisphere]. 1529.

Portolan chart.

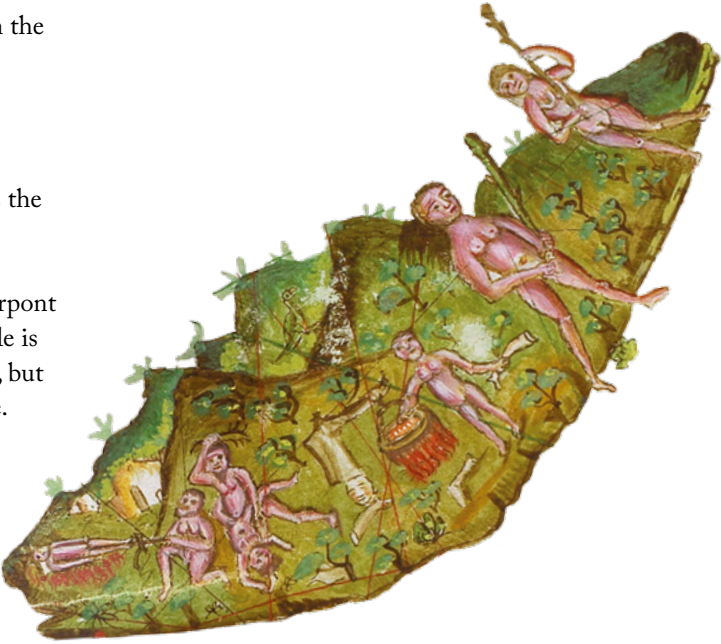
Location: Vatican Library, Rome (formerly in the Museo Borgia of the Propaganda Fide).
3. Robert de Bailly. [Verrazzano globe]. 1530.

Copper globe with “Verrazana” written across the North American seaboard.

Locations: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. A further example is recorded at Museo Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid, but this appears to be a later copy and is defective.
4. Vesconte Maggiolo. [Planisphere]. 1531.

Portolan chart.

The present example.



Portolan Charts

The preferred format for recording new territories during the Age of Discovery seems to have been the monumental ‘planisphere’ or nautical chart of the world, and no argument for papal approval was complete without one. Such maps developed from early sailing charts or portolans, and so, in order to understand the origins of the Maggiolo chart of 1531, and the reasons for its production, some discussion of the development of portolan charts is required.

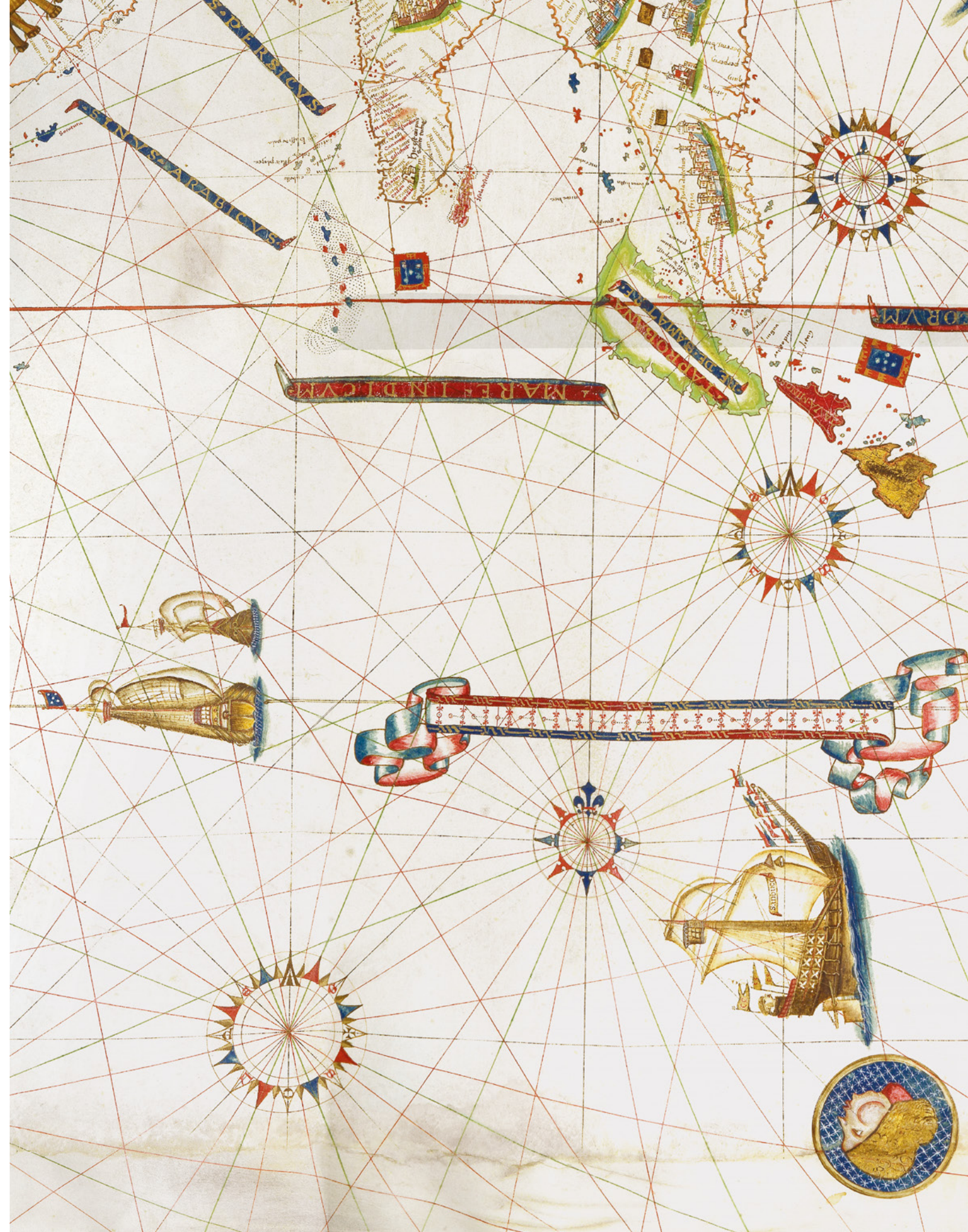
The origin of portolan charts is obscure. Patrick Gautier Dalché has made a convincing case that they existed as early as 1200, although the earliest surviving example is the c1290 Carte Pisane. Normally these charts, which were drawn on animal skins, show the Mediterranean and surrounding regions from Ireland in the west to the Holy Land in the east, and from northern Europe to North Africa. The charts place great emphasis on coastal features, with coastal place names written at right angles to the shoreline, and very little geographical detail in the hinterlands. There is no grid of latitude and longitude, but rather a network of rhumb lines that radiate out towards the cardinal directions from nodes arranged in a circle around the centre of the chart. The navigational function of rhumb lines is not clear, but they were probably intended to help plot courses by indicating compass directions. The main centres of portolan production, in the order in which they came to prominence, were: Venice, Genoa, Palma, Ancona, and, later, Messina and Marseilles.

In addition to undecorated charts that were intended for use aboard ship, which saw hard service and were typically short-lived, cartographers offered their clients maps with various levels of decoration, with the decorative elements added either by the cartographer himself, or by specialized artists working in the cartographer’s workshop. These optional decorations included painted images of cities, flags to indicate political control of cities and regions, compass roses, and images of mountains, rivers, trees, sovereigns, animals and ships. The client could also choose to have texts describing the various regions and peoples added to his charts. These more elaborate, and, hence, more expensive, charts – a heavily decorated chart could be ten times as expensive as a

utilitarian one – were not used for navigation, but were collected and displayed by royalty and nobles.

Around the middle of the fifteenth century cartographers began to experiment with incorporating recent discoveries into another cartographic medium, the ‘Geography’ of Claudius Ptolemy. The Alexandrian scholar Ptolemy wrote the Geography, which organizes space by latitude and longitude, in the second century AD; it was rediscovered by the Byzantine scholar Maximos Planudes in about 1300, and translated into Latin in the early fifteenth century. Some manuscripts of the ‘Geography’ from the middle of the fifteenth century include, in addition to Ptolemaic maps, modern maps that update Ptolemy’s information, and in some case these maps cover regions unknown to Ptolemy, but still use this system of latitude and longitude. In about 1491 a German cartographer working in Florence names Henricus Martellus incorporated recent knowledge regarding southern Africa and eastern Asia into a world map constructed on a Ptolemaic framework. The one surviving example of Martellus’ wall map based on Ptolemy measures 1220 by 2010mm, and is on permanent display at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University (shelfmark Art Store 1980.157). In 1507 the German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller followed Martellus’ model and incorporated even more of the earth’s surface, including the New World, into a Ptolemaic framework, and printed his map on twelve sheets that, when assembled, measure 1280 by 2330mm. This is the famous “Waldseemüller map” – the first map to name America and now in the Library of Congress, Washington.

At the same time, other cartographers were incorporating the new discoveries into ‘amplified’ nautical charts or ‘planispheres’, and in the sixteenth century this format proved popular. There are 23 known manuscript maps showing the relationship between the Old and New Worlds that were made prior to 1530, two of which have been destroyed (see appendix I). Five of these, in particular, informed the production of Maggiolo’s 1531 planisphere:



The Juan de la Cosa map, 1500

The Juan de la Cosa map is “the earliest cartographic record of the voyages of Christopher Columbus and John Cabot and possibly the most important surviving artefact of the Age of Discovery” (Nebenzahl).

In 1500 Juan de la Cosa (c1450-1510), a Spanish navigator and cosmographer who had sailed with Columbus on his first two voyages across the Atlantic constructed this chart, which includes a rather speculative depiction of the New World, stretches south to cover all of Africa, and extends eastward to India, although it does not show the eastern shore of Asia. The map is the first planisphere – a world map in the style of a sailing chart, and is preserved in the Museo Naval, Madrid (MN 257). Interestingly, the map was lost for nearly 350 years until the German naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) found it among the literary treasures of a French entomologist and cartographer in 1832. The map is elaborately hand-painted, and measures 930 by 1830mm. As it depicts much more of the earth’s surface than a traditional nautical chart, the cartographer indicated the Equator and the Tropic of Cancer – that is, some elements of Ptolemy’s system of latitude and longitude – so that the viewer can better appreciate where the lands depicted on the map belong on the globe.

The map is divided into two parts on intentionally different scales: the right side depicts the Old World, and the left the newly discovered lands on the other side of the Atlantic. However, the map gives the impression that the new discoveries are in Asia. The map has many decorative embellishments and carefully drawn compass roses. The Christian message of the map is emphasized in the figure of Saint Christopher (the patron saint of travellers, but also Columbus bringing the good tidings of Christianity to the heathens of the West Indies), and the large image within the compass rose that depicts the Madonna, baby Jesus and angels.

The map also includes information about the coastline of North America, the area of present-day Newfoundland, gathered by the Venetian born John Cabot (c1450-1499) in the service of King Henry VIII of England, as well as information about present-day Guyana, Venezuela and Brazil gathered from Amerigo Vespucci’s (1454-1512) voyage.

The Cantino Planisphere, 1502

In 1502 Alberto Cantino, an agent of Ercole d’Este, Duke of Ferrara, smuggled from Portugal to Italy a manuscript world map that extended from the eastern coasts of the New World to the eastern shore of Asia, and shows more of the southern ocean than Juan de La Cosa’s map. Known as the “pearl of Portuguese cartography”, the map depicts the line established by the Treaty of Tordesillas for the first time. It measures 1050 by 2200mm. Following the portolan tradition, the map includes compass roses, rhumb lines and a scale for determining distances, and offers little in the way of geographical detail about the hinterlands (it omits the Nile in Africa and leaves most of Asia blank). The use of astral navigation for open sailing is attested by the main lines of latitude, showing the Equator, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, and the Arctic Circle for the first time on a map. The name of the cartographer remains unknown for an obvious reason: the information on the chart was obtained illegally.

The Casa da Índia was established in 1500 to oversee the commercial and political interests of the Portuguese king in the oceans of the world. In response, the Spanish monarchs set up the Casa de Contratación in Seville in 1503 to fulfill the policy formulated in the Council of the Indes (El Real y Supremo Consejo de Indias) for all Spanish colonies. The sea charts produced by these agencies helped the kings to promote their political and trade endeavours in their own areas as they competed for world dominance. According to Alison Sandman:



The Juan de la Cosa map, 1500.



The Cantino Planisphere, 1502.

“Cosmographers employed at the Casa were routinely involved in revising the pattern chart, [the ‘padrón real’ - the master chart on which new discoveries were recorded] giving classes to pilots, attending pilots’ licensing exams, to declare the lands they had conquered by showing them on the map”. An inscription on the verso of the Cantino map reads: “this sea chart of the islands recently discovered in the regions of the Indies has been presented to the Duke of Ferrara, Ercole d’Este by Alberto Cantino”. Today the Cantino map is in Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena.

The Caverio Map, 1504

In about 1504, the Genoese cartographer Nicolay de Caverio (dates unknown) created a manuscript world map that is very similar to the Cantino map in size and layout, including a scale of latitude in its left margin, but neither shows the Equator, nor the tropics, nor a scale of longitude. The map is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Cartes et plans, SH archives 1).

The inevitable combination of scales of longitude and latitude in a nautical chart was realized in Martin Waldseemüller’s printed ‘Carta Marina’ of 1516.

The Verrazzano Map, 1529

Whilst Giovanni Verrazzano did not return from this second voyage, his brother did, and, in 1529, Girolamo presented Pope Clement VII, “probably at the instigation of Francis I” (Quinn) with a pen and ink planisphere measuring 1275 by 2550mm. The map survives today in the Vatican Library, Rome. Pope Clement VII, following the creation of the League of Cognac in 1526, was (temporarily) allied with Francis I, along with Venice, Florence, and the Sforza of Milan against Charles V and the Holy Roman Empire. France, in all likelihood, presented Girolamo’s map as part of a claim for papal approval for its sovereignty over Verrazzano’s discoveries in North America. Indeed, the 1529 chart is the first to use the term New France (“Nova Gallia”). The chart was also the earliest to show the name “Norumbega”, spelled “Oranbega”, for the area between what is now New York

and Cape Breton, a word probably derived from one of the Algonquian languages spoken in New England, meaning quiet stretch of water. Verrazzano’s chart did not, however, show New York Harbour and, whilst “Angouleme” appears, it has been transcribed onto the wrong portion of the coast. Indeed, according to Quinn, the 1529 Verrazzano chart was “plainly drawn” but “may have helped to lead Clement VII to inform Francis I in 1533 that the papal bulls sanctifying the Iberian division of the non-European world did not cover lands not then discovered (even if he never formalized it in a bull)”. However, in the same year that Girolamo’s map was presented to the Pope, Clement also received from Charles V one of the finest world maps of the period by Diogo Ribeiro. The splendour of Ribeiro’s world map may account for the fact that whilst Verrazzano’s voyage left its impression in the nomenclature of subsequent maps in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, almost every one of his place-names has now disappeared.

The Diogo Ribeiro World Map, 1529

“[Diogo Ribeiro’s] map is justifiably considered the finest cartographical production of its age”. (Nebenzahl)

Only four maps by Diogo Ribeiro (d.1533) have been preserved. Portuguese by birth, Ribeiro had sailed with Vasco da Gama in his youth, and from 1502 onwards he served as Captain on many vessels. In 1523 he was appointed to the position of ‘Cosmógrafo-Mor’ at the Casa de Contratación.

No example of the ‘padrón real’ has survived but the 1529 world map made by Diogo Ribeiro held by the Vatican is generally thought to be a reduction. The full title of the map reads: “A universal chart containing everything that has been discovered in the world up to now. Diogo Ribeiro made it in the year 1529 in Seville. It is divided into two parts according to the treaty agreed between the Catholic kings of Spain and King John of Portugal at Tordesillas in the year 1494”. Although Diogo Ribeiro’s 850 by 2050mm map was the most precise geographic record of the known world of its day, it was also a political statement intended to demonstrate



The Caverio Map, 1504.



Waldseemüller’s ‘Carta Marina’, 1516.

the right of the Hapsburg dynasty to the disputed Spice Islands in the Indian Ocean. The knowledge of the true size of the Pacific Ocean produced by the first circumnavigation of the world under Ferdinand Magellan was now appearing for the first time on a map. The great circle on the left of the chart depicts the *Circulus Solaris*, which contains a solar declination scale. In the centre of the map is a scale for measuring latitude. The contested Spice Islands, or Moluccas, are marked in the map in two places, but only in the west do we see the flag of the King of Spain. According to the map, the Moluccas belonged to the western part of the world, the one ruled by the King of Spain. The border set out by the Treaty of Tordesillas is represented by two flags drawn at the centre of the bottom of the map – the flag of the King of Portugal facing East, and the flag of the king of Spain facing West.

The North American section is notable for the inscriptions on the map which assign Labrador to the English, and Newfoundland to the Portuguese, while the Spanish “*Tiera de Estevão Gomez*” and “*Tiera de Ayllon*” are clearly described. It is possible, though direct evidence is lacking, that the Ribeiro map was intended to counter the Girolamo Verrazzano map, since no account is taken of the French discoveries. The inscription at the base of the map stresses that the representation is that agreed by the Treaty of Tordesillas, which, though an international treaty, had been later confirmed by a papal bull.

“If these two maps [the Verrazzano and the Ribeiro] are indeed evidence of the Hapsburg-Valois rivalry, then the political importance of the formal, usually decorated, map as a historical document is enhanced” (Quinn).

From 1500 to 1531 most of the important developments in the uncovering of the eastern North American coastline, and the machinations over sovereignty of colonial possessions following the Treaty of Tordesillas can be traced by modern scholars on the painted and usually decorated maps that have been discussed:

“Without them we should be left without invaluable detailed information on a series of discoveries... In at least some cases, too, it was the highly decorated character of the map, chart or atlas [that] led to its survival. As works of art, even if in some cases they escaped from the custody of their first recipients or their heirs they were preserved because of this characteristic”. (Quinn)



The Verrazzano Map, 1529.



The Diogo Ribeiro World Map, 1529.

Vesconte Maggiolo

“Among the Renaissance cartographers, the Genoese Vesconte Maggiolo was one of the most gifted” (Caraci)

Vesconte Maggiolo (c1476–c1551) was one of the best-known Italian map and chart-makers of the first half of the sixteenth century. He is also one of a handful of cartographers whose life is well documented, as several of his maps are signed and dated, including the present example, and there remain a number of both notorial acts and bank records of his activities. Maggiolo’s date of birth, however, is unknown, although it may be assumed that he was born prior to 1476, the year that his father, Giacomo, died. The last map Vesconte Maggiolo signed shows the date 1549. Two years later, one of his sons signed a chart as “son of the late Vesconte”, therefore his death “must have taken place at some point between 1549 and 1551” (Astengo).

Maggiolo’s long life spans one of the most exciting periods of history. When he was born, Portuguese ships were sailing southward along the west coast of Africa, searching for a passage to the riches of Southeast Asia and the Spice Islands. His first clearly dated chart was made in 1511, less than twenty years after Columbus’ first voyage to America. By that time, a new world had made its first appearance on maps. Maggiolo’s first “atlas”, a collection of maps now in the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma is dated 1519, the year Magellan’s squadron sailed on what became the first circumnavigation of the earth. By the time of his death in the middle of the sixteenth century, Spain and Portugal ruled colonial empires across the seas and French and English voyages had begun to lay the foundations of new empires.

The Maggiolos were an old Ligurian family. The earliest recorded member of which is one Ansaldo de Maggiolo, who signed his name on a notorial document in 1191. Vesconte Maggiolo signed all of his maps as “a man of Genoa”. His first known work, the 1504(?) planisphere in the Federician Library at Fano, was produced in his native city. He moved to Naples in 1511 and produced a portolan atlas in the same year that is now preserved in the

John Carter Brown Library in Providence, Rhode Island. In 1518 Maggiolo was invited to return to Genoa as ‘Magister cartarum pro navigando’ (official cartographer to the Genoese Government) by Duke Ottaviano Fregosa, and offered an annual salary on the condition that he work solely for the benefit of the city. On 7 May 1523, the Republic assured him of an annual stipend of one hundred lire for life. He continued as the Republic’s cartographer for the remainder of his life.

In 1524, with the assistance of the famous Genoese admiral Andrea Doria (1466–1560), Francis I regained control of Genoa from the armies of the Holy Roman Emperor and this, presumably, is how Maggiolo came to receive the privileged information concerning Verrazzano’s voyage recorded on both his 1527 map, and the present example. In 1528, the inconstant Doria’s contract expired and he returned to the service of Charles V, taking back his native city for the Holy Roman Empire in the process. As Maggiolo had sworn service to Genoa, he would in turn have served both the French and the Spanish kings, making him the ideal candidate to produce a chart aimed at establishing détente between the seemingly perpetually warring empires.

A 1525 Mediterranean portolan held by the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma was signed by both Vesconte and Giovanni Antonio Maggiolo and, four years later, Maggiolo was granted the right to share his privilege with both of his sons, Giovanni Antonio and Giacomo, although this was only taken up by the latter. In 1527 Maggiolo completed his best known work: the chart of North America formerly held in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. This, until it was destroyed during the Second World War, was the first map to show the voyages of Verrazzano, and the earliest extant map to show the location of what is now New York City.



Maggiolo planisphere in the Biblioteca Federiciana, Fano, 1504.



Maggiolo planisphere in Huntington Library, San Marino, California, purchased in 1923 from the Swiss bookseller, Otto Lange for CHF 30,000, 1516.

The present map is dated 8 November 1531. A few weeks earlier, on 1 September 1531, Maggiolo signed a contract for the sale of a house in Genoa. On 8 May 1533, he bought a house on the Piazza del Molo, facing the breakwaters protecting the harbour, a feature that appears on several of his maps, including this one. He and his descendants lived in the house for well over a century. Its eventual sale is recorded in the books of the Bank of Saint George of Genoa. It is certain, therefore, that at the time given on the world map of 1531, Maggiolo was a resident of Genoa, as indicated by his signature.

On 11 April 1535 Maggiolo signed an agreement with the publisher Laurentius Lomelinus to produce a printed monumental wall map along the lines of the well-known example of Waldseemüller's 'Carta Marina'. Sadly, it would appear that the work was never completed or, if it was, no example has survived.

In 1544, Vesconte Maggiolo's son, Giacomo, was also granted a fixed salary from the Senate of one hundred lire in return for the exclusive use of all of the cartographic skills that he had learned at his father's workshop. Vesconte, however, remained active, and continued to produce sea charts of the Mediterranean until the completion of his last known work; a small sea atlas dated 1549 that is now held in the Biblioteca Comunale in Treviso.

A complete catalogue of Vesconte Maggiolo's works, according to Corradino Astengo's 1996 study, may be found as appendix II.



Maggiolo sea chart formerly in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, destroyed during the Second World War, 1527.

The planisphere

Construction

A blue and red decorative border defines the chart, although the border to the east is either deliberately absent, or missing. Eight circular wind heads surround the chart within the borders, and there are unnumbered longitudinal scale bars on banderoles above the British Isles, in the Indian Ocean, and the interior of South America.

The planisphere is arranged over two circular rhumb line networks, each consisting of 16 nodes. These are unusual in that they are asymmetric to the graduated meridian line running through the Azores: the majority of charts composed of two circular networks, such as the Girolamo Verrazzano chart, arrange the networks symmetrically either side of the meridian.

It is worth noting that the structure of Maggiolo’s 1531 planisphere is markedly different from the mapmaker’s previous work: his charts of 1504 and 1516 (see page 23) were prepared using what might be termed the “Caverio” scheme: a single central circular network supplemented by concentric extensions (see figure opposite). The 1529 Verrazzano map (see page 21) employs what might be termed the “Cantino” scheme: a symmetrical platform of two adjacent intersecting circular rhumb line networks.

The Diogo Ribeiro, by way of contrast, is also constructed around two circular networks but, in order to incorporate the Pacific Ocean, these are separated by an equal spacing at the centre on either side of the line of demarcation agreed at the Treaty of Tordesillas. However, Ribeiro leaves asymmetrical spaces to the extreme east and extreme west of the map in order to incorporate the fact that he duplicates the area of the disputed Spice Islands at either extremity, and, conveniently from a political point of view, this emphasizes the injustice of Portugal’s claim to the territory: there is, after all, too much “space” in the Eastern hemisphere.

The 1531 chart is of an altogether more sophisticated construction. Maggiolo adopts the intersecting networks of Verrazzano, but, despite making no attempt to depict the Pacific Ocean in its entirety, he also embraces the

asymmetry of the Ribeiro. In fact, the true vastness of the Pacific Ocean would, we now know, occupy enough of the earth’s surface to justify an entire rhumb network of its own – a fact that may not have been entirely lost on Maggiolo. There is, however, no sign that Maggiolo intended to draw such a network – there are no nodes to the east of Java. This detail, along with the petering out of the coastlines at the eastern extremity, lends force to the argument that the right hand margin is not “missing” from the map but, rather, is deliberately absent: a cartographic “et cetera”, if you like. If this argument is correct, then the underlying structure of the chart points to its purpose: this chart is about the politics of existing colonial territories, not Pacific exploration. Indeed, the dimensions of the planisphere are similar to those other great charts of the Age of Discovery by La Cosa (1050 by 2200mm); Cantino (1050 by 2200mm); Caverio (1150 by 2250mm); Martellus (1220 by 2010mm); Waldseemüller (1280 by 2330mm); Verrazzano (1275 by 2550); and Ribeiro (850 by 2050): at 935 by 2055mm, without an eastern border, the Maggiolo map fits nicely within the canon of post-Columbian planispheres.



Nodes of the rhumb line network on the “Caverio model”.



Nodes of the rhumb line network on the 1531 planisphere.

Geography

A small hemispherical world map marks the intersection of the rhumb line networks. This inset shows an American continent joined to Asia in the north. It follows very closely the structure used by Girolamo Verrazzano for his 1529 planisphere (see illustration on page 21). Both cartographers seem to be hedging their bets in this regard as neither of their larger planispheres show such a connection, and both, following Giovanni Verrazzano’s own letters, hint at the existence of a fourth continent.

Europe, Asia, and Africa are named on lapis lazuli banderoles but the continent of America is unnamed and is not recognized as separate from Asia. The continental landmasses are unusually populated for a maritime chart, suggesting that the chart was a particularly expensive commission. Maggiolo entertains the viewer with numerous city views, vignettes, characters, flora and fauna, the latter including charming depictions of elephants, lions, camels, unicorns, and, in the approximate position of present-day Vietnam, a dragon.

Many place names in the northern hemisphere are written upside down; implying that the mapmaker envisaged the map being placed on a table and viewed from all sides.

The map is signed and dated:

“Vesconte de maiollo composuy hanc cartan In Ianua. Anno dny.1531. die viii nouembr”.

This appears in vertical script in a banderole at the far left beneath an elaborate compass rose and an image of the Madonna seated on a throne and holding the baby Jesus. The principal lines of latitude – the Equator and Tropics – are marked in red and silver.

The line of demarcation agreed at the Treaty of Tordesillas is marked in red and labeled “Lhinea de lo spartimento de spagna a portogalle”. A parallel, but faint, red line marks the antimeridian in the east, and grants the all-important Moluccas, or Spice Islands, to the Spanish side of the line.



Extra space outside the rhumb line network for the eastern islands.



Faint meridian with a Portuguese ship just to the west, and Spanish possessions just to the east– probably the antimeridian.

North America

The most noticeable feature of the North American section of the map is the large wedge-shaped sea in the interior of the continent, confidently named “Indicum Occidentale” and decorated with a beturbaned East Indian cheerily waving from the poop deck of one of three galleons labeled “navis Indiane”. This cartographic misconception is the famed “Sea of Verrazzano” and the present work is its third appearance on a map, and the first extant in colour – the two earlier appearances being the 1527 map by Maggiolo formerly in the Ambrosiana Archives in Milan, and destroyed by Allied bombing during the Second World War, and the 1529 sketch map by Girolamo Verrazzano, the navigator’s brother, housed in the Vatican Library, Rome.

Curiously, Maggiolo’s 1531 design for North America departs from his previous mapping of the region. On his 1527 map (see page 25), the North American coast is confidently depicted in the form of a narrow elbow commencing in the latitude of Mexico City, and continuing its curve so as to make the country west of the Gulf of Mexico (current-day southern United States) a relatively narrow strip of land (labeled the “little necke of land” by Hakluyt), bordered on the west by Mare Indicum. On the present map the “Sea of Verrazzano” is unaccompanied by any indication of a western coast.

The North American coast seems to trend from east-northeast to west-southwest, instead of the real from north-northeast to south-southwest, because magnetic instead of true bearings were used for laying down meridians. The geography of the northeast coast is exclusively based upon Verrazzano’s first voyage. No mention is made of the voyages of Estêvão Gomes (c1483-1538), who, in 1524, sailed from present-day Nova Scotia down the coast of what is now Maine, nor of Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón (c1475-1526) and the short-lived San Miguel de Gualdape colony, the first European attempt at a settlement in what is now the United States. Both of these voyages are represented on Diogo Ribeiro’s 1529 map on which the northeast coast is labeled “Tiera de Gomez” and “Tiera de Ayllón” as a consequence.

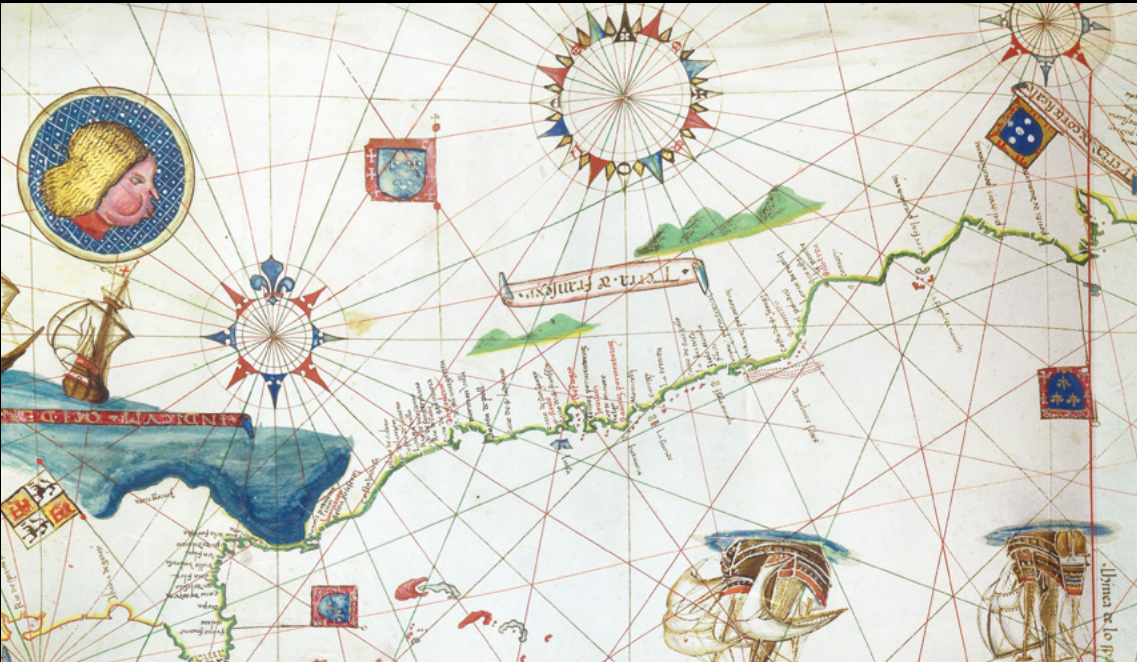
Strikingly, Maggiolo claims the whole of the northeast coast for France with a standard bearing the three golden fleurs-de-lys of France planted at the location of present-day New York and with the name “Terra de Fransexy” on a large title banderole to the interior. The extent of the French claim is further defined as the area between two additional flags: from one positioned on Nova Scotia at what is now Bear Point, south to a second flag at “Finis Francia” in the approximate position of modern-day Jacksonville. This astonishing attempt at a land grab is well thought through – the northern limit lies on the line of demarcation agreed at the Treaty of Tordesillas, thereby not intruding on the Portuguese claims to “Terra Corte Reale” in Nova Scotia, and the southern limit is set to the area of Florida mapped by the Spanish at that time.

“Lavoradore” in the northeast may be either Greenland or Labrador, with an open strait suggestive of the existence of a northwest passage. The discovery by the Corte Reale brothers is marked by a Portuguese flag, to the south of which (on “Fransexy”) is another one showing the three golden lilies of France. Jacques Cartier, the first French explorer to reach the New World, would not explore the St Lawrence River until his first voyage in 1534.

Off the coast of North America claimed by France is the little island “Luisa”, almost certainly present-day “Block Island”, named by Verrazzano, according to his letter, in honour of the mother of Francis I. Interestingly, “Cauo de Saugonny” is the name given to the Point Judith at the mouth of Narragansett Bay. Verrazzano stayed here for two weeks and received a warm welcome from the Wampanoag people. Cartier, on his second voyage in 1536, first described finding the Saguenay River, home of the mythical gold-rich Kingdom of Saguenay, an Iroquoian legend; Maggiolo’s map could, therefore, be the origin of this myth.



Northeast seaboard of North America from the Maggiolo sea chart formerly in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, destroyed during the Second World War, 1527.



Northeast seaboard from the Maggiolo planisphere, 1531.

“Norman Villa” is the name given to one of Jamaica Bay, Great South Bay or Shinnecock Bay on Long Island, presumably a nod to the expedition’s point of embarkation in Dieppe, Normandy. There are several places called “Normanville” in Normandy; the most likely candidates being one near Fécamp and another in the vicinity of Evreux.

Further south on the coast is the bay named “Angoileme” adjacent to “B.S. Margarita”. Francis I was known as Francis of Angouleme before becoming king, and his sister was Marguerite de Navarre. Robert Augustyn and Paul Cohen in their book ‘Manhattan in Maps’ make a convincing argument for the similar region on Maggiolo’s 1527 map, now lost, being the first appearance of New York Harbour on a map:

“The Maggiolo Map was the earliest map to provide a representation of the New York City Area... The configuration of this area... – two bays divided by headlands, with a river emptying into the northernmost of the two – approximates that of the actual harbour”.

Whilst similar in many respects, Maggiolo’s map of 1527, Girolamo Verrazzano’s map of 1529, and the present, 1531 map by Maggiolo, all show this region slightly differently, and it would appear that the mapping of all three was at some remove from Giovanni Verrazzano’s original data. It seems likely that they all perhaps share a common, ancestor now lost. Whatever the explanation, the name “Angoileme” appears at a slightly different position on a flat area of coast on the Girolamo Verrazzano map, making the present example the earliest extant representation of the New York City area. Some of the names that appear in Verrazzano’s letter to Francis I appear in distorted forms: Cedri as “Serui”, Loreнна as “laureno” and S. Polo as “poll” (presumably named after François I de Bourbon, count of St. Pol, duc de Estouteville (1491-1545), French prince and important military commander during the Italian Wars), while others seem to reflect an unsuccessful attempt at decipherment, such as “plasa de Calmy” and “quoachi”.

The name “Longa Villa” appears to the west of “Angoileme”, on either the New Jersey or Delaware coast. This is almost certainly named after François d’Orleans, duc de Longueville (1513-1548). Other names identifiable on the North American coast as “bonivetto” (Delaware Bay), “refugio” (Newport), and “armelline sirtes” (Cape Cod). At the southern end of France’s claim to the coastline, “Diepe” is named as the penultimate location before “Finis Francia”.



Detail of New York area from Maggiolo sea chart, 1527.



Detail of New York area from Verrazzano planisphere, 1529.



Detail of New York area from Maggiolo planisphere, 1531.



Central and South America

The largest city depicted on the map is Tenochtitlan (“Civitas messicho”), which appears as an elaborate plan derived from the image of the city in Cortés’ 1524 “Praelara Ferdinâdi Cortesii de Noua maris Oceani Hyspania narratio...”.

The Yucatan Peninsula appears as an island named “Jucatan”. There is a narrow channel separating South from Central America through present-day Honduras. This strait is labelled “Streito dubitoso” (doubtful strait), suggesting Maggiolo was less than confident of its existence. This inscription matches his 1527 map, and is similar to that used by Pedrarias Dairla on his 1525 map for Charles V, although the latter positions his access to the Mar de Sud some way to the South, as does Franciscus Monachus in his world map of 1526 (see Daniel Crouch Rare Books Catalogue IV item 7).

The east coast of the continent features numerous place names, including “Darien”, “Bahia de Todos Santos” and “Rio de Janeiro”. Rio de la Plata appears as “Rio Jordan”.

The blank area where one might expect to find Peru is labeled ‘terra Incognita’, as Francisco Pizarro González (c1471-1541) would not begin to explore the region until later in the decade. The map also does not show the results of the Cabrillo expeditions, or others, along the Mexico coast on the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of California. This section of the chart is the most puzzling, as Maggiolo’s 1527 chart depicts the same coast stretching in a correct northwest-southeasterly direction.

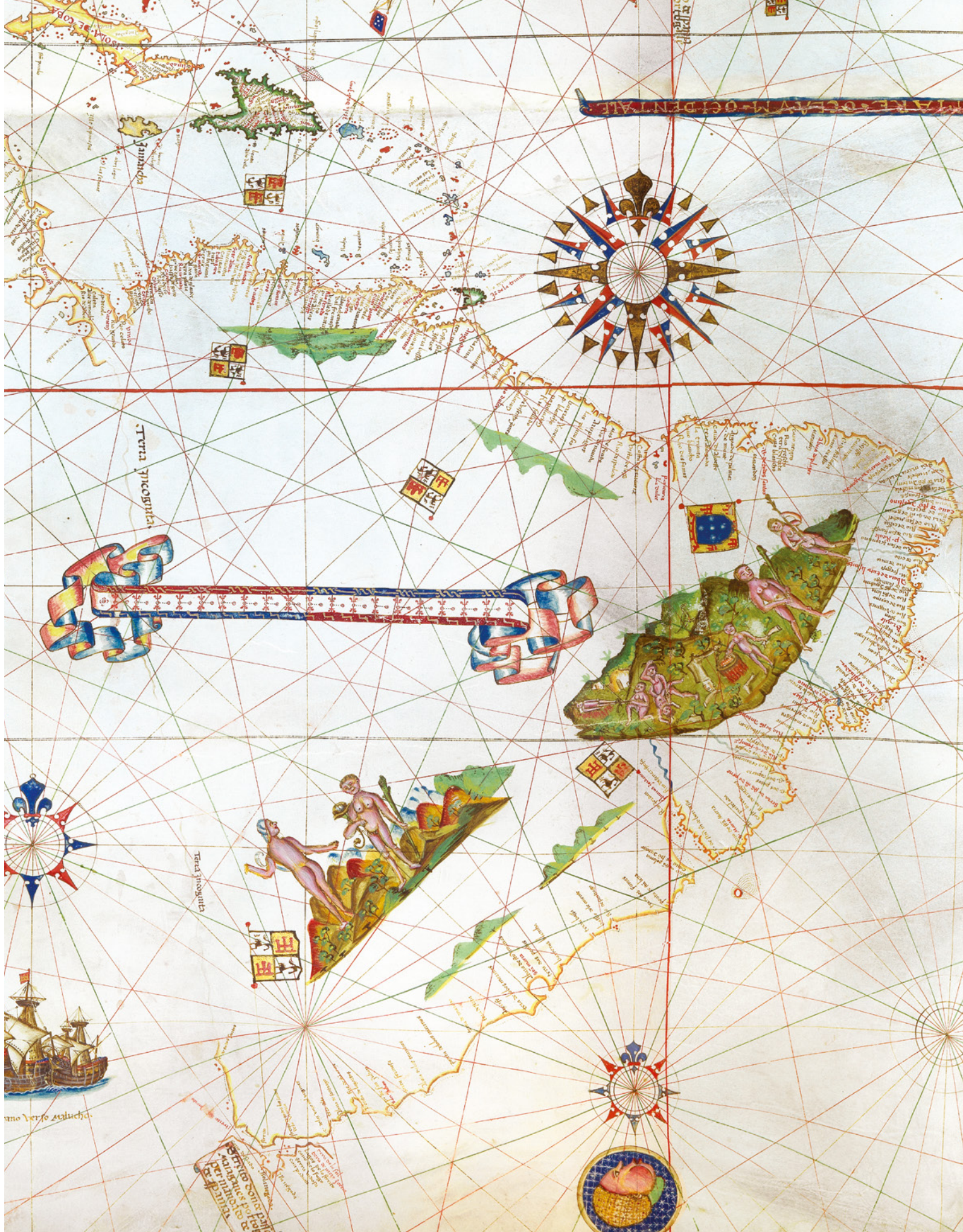
Two large vignettes occupy the interior of the continent. The first is a grizzly depiction of cannibals dispatching, dismembering, and cooking three unfortunate souls – a chilling reminder of Verrazzano’s death in a similar fashion some three years prior to the date of the chart.

The second vignette shows two Patagones, the mythical giants said to inhabit the region. The first mention of these people came from the voyage of Ferdinand Magellan and his crew, who claimed to have seen them while exploring the coastline of South America.

Antonio Pigafetta, one of the expedition’s few survivors and the chronicler of Magellan’s expedition, wrote in his account about their encounter with natives twice the height of a normal person:

“One day we suddenly saw a naked man of giant stature on the shore of the port, dancing, singing, and throwing dust on his head. The captain-general [i.e., Magellan] sent one of our men to the giant so that he might perform the same actions as a sign of peace. Having done that, the man led the giant to an islet where the captain-general and our presence he marvelled greatly, and made signs with one finger raised upward, believing that we had come from the sky. He was so tall that we reached only to his waist, and he was well proportioned...”.

Magellan’s 1519-1522 voyage is acknowledged by the straits that now bear his name with the text “Streito don de passo Maiaganes portohese per mandato de Re de Spania” (The strait through which the Portuguese Magellan passed under the mandate of the King of Spain). In the “Mare de la sur” just off the southwest coast of South America, the ‘Victoria’, the ‘Conception’ and the ‘San Antonio’; are the three remaining ships from Magellan’s original fleet of five to have made the journey to the Pacific marked with the following note: “nave de spania chi vano verso Malucho” (The Spanish ships went this way to the Moluccas).



Europe

Within Europe, the kings of France, Spain, and Russia are depicted but, perhaps surprisingly, neither the King of Portugal nor the Pope. The port cities of Genoa – Maggiolo’s home town – “Venezia” (Venice) and “Spalatro” (Split) are given great prominence, as are “Galipoly” (Gallipoli), “Carcouia” (Krakow), and Riga.

The British Isles appear with a channel separating England from Scotland – a cartographic misconception that appears to have been inherited from the mapmaker Grazioso Benincasa (c1400-1482) who, in turn, according to Campbell, copied it from the 1403 chart by Francesco Beccari (dates unknown).

Scandinavia bursts through the border of the map and “Noruegia” (Norway), “Suetia” (Sweden), “Got” (Gotland) and “Datia” (Denmark) are named.



The King of France (Francis I).



The King of Spain (Charles V).



Grand Prince of Moscow (Vasili III).

Africa

Madeira, the Canaries, and the Azores are depicted and named in the Atlantic Ocean, as are the Cape Verde Islands, Anobon, San Tome and Principe. Curiously, St Helena (discovered in 1502) is not shown. The coasts bear a rich nomenclature, evidently derived from Portuguese sources, including “Cauo Verde” (Cape Verde), “Rio de Ganbia” (Gambia River), “Serraleona” (Sierra Leone), “Rio da Lago” (Lagos), “Consa Gamboa” (Gambon) but also betraying the fact that they have been transcribed by an Italian; “rio de manicoogro” for “rio de manicongo” (Congo River), “Cauo de bona Speransa” for “Capo de bona Speransa” (Cape of Good Hope) – marked with a Portuguese flag.

The source of the Nile is represented by a large vignette of “Monslune” (“Montes Lunae” or “Mountains of the Moon” – the legendary mountain range reported by Ptolemy as discovered by the Greek merchant Diogenes and so named because of their snow-capped peaks), together, somewhat confusingly, with a depiction of the Tree of Knowledge from the Garden of Eden. Zanzibar, colonized by the Portuguese in 1498 is named “Zanzibirine”, and Mombassa is depicted as a walled town and labelled “Madaso”.

“Massa Civitas” (Massawa – an important city for the Arabic slave trade and visited by Venetian merchants) is the most prominent of five cities shown on the west coast of the Red Sea, and the ancient city of “Meroe” is shown as an island in the Nile separated from Cairo (“babilonia”) by 14 lesser cities. The area to the west of Cairo is named “Marmaricalibir e tota aegyptus” (Marmarica). Along the north coast, above an elaborate depiction of the Atlas Mountains, shown under the rule of the “Re de Fez”, are the cities of “Tripolly” (Tripoli), “Tunis”, “Arger” (Algiers), and “Oran”, under Spanish flags, and “Targa” (Tangier) and “Mauritan” (Marrakesh) under Portuguese rule.

In the interior of Africa four kings are shown: King Solomon “Soloano” and Prester John “Prete Ianni”, the legendary Nestorian Christian popular in European chronicles from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, are depicted enthroned in eastern and western dress respectively, whereas, in west Africa, two dark-skinned crowned characters recline outside their canopies and are simply called “Rea ebon”.



Middle East

A sultan (presumably Suleiman I) is seated on his throne on the Levantine coast, alongside the cities of “Alepe” (Aleppo) and Jerusalem. Saint Catherine’s monastery is visible high on a verdant Sinai.

On the Arabian peninsula, Mecca (“La mecha”) is depicted with the Kaaba, the building at the center of Islam’s most sacred mosque, Al-Masjid al-Haram, clearly visible, and, further south, “Adden” (Aden) can be found. Other place names include “Mascati” (Muscat), “Zarar” (Sohar) and “Cauo de Mada” (Musandam Peninsula), “Culfal” (Qatar), and “Bore” (Khobar).

Central Asia

The Silk Road is evident running through central Asia, with its cities “Tefelis” (Tbilisi), “Sanmachi” (Samarkand), “Corassan” (Khorasan), and Aradina, all named, although not necessarily correctly located. Baghdad, as with Cairo, appears as “Babilonia” (with the Zumurrud Khaton, the thirteenth century mosque that stands today, plainly visible). Four canopies stretch across the continent; the first empty, with the others inhabited by the Kings of Persia, Ambala, and “India extra Gangem”.

Along the coasts of the subcontinent can be seen “Cambaia” (Khambhat), “Goaa” (Goa - taken by the Portuguese in 1510), “Calichut” (Kozhikode in Kerala), and “Bengala” (Bengal). The Portuguese flag is planted in the south of the subcontinent, and Sri Lanka is named “Isola de Seilan”.

In the north of Asia, the “Gran Tartar” and the king of China occupy their thrones surrounded by camels, unicorns and a dragon, with the Canton river clearly visible.

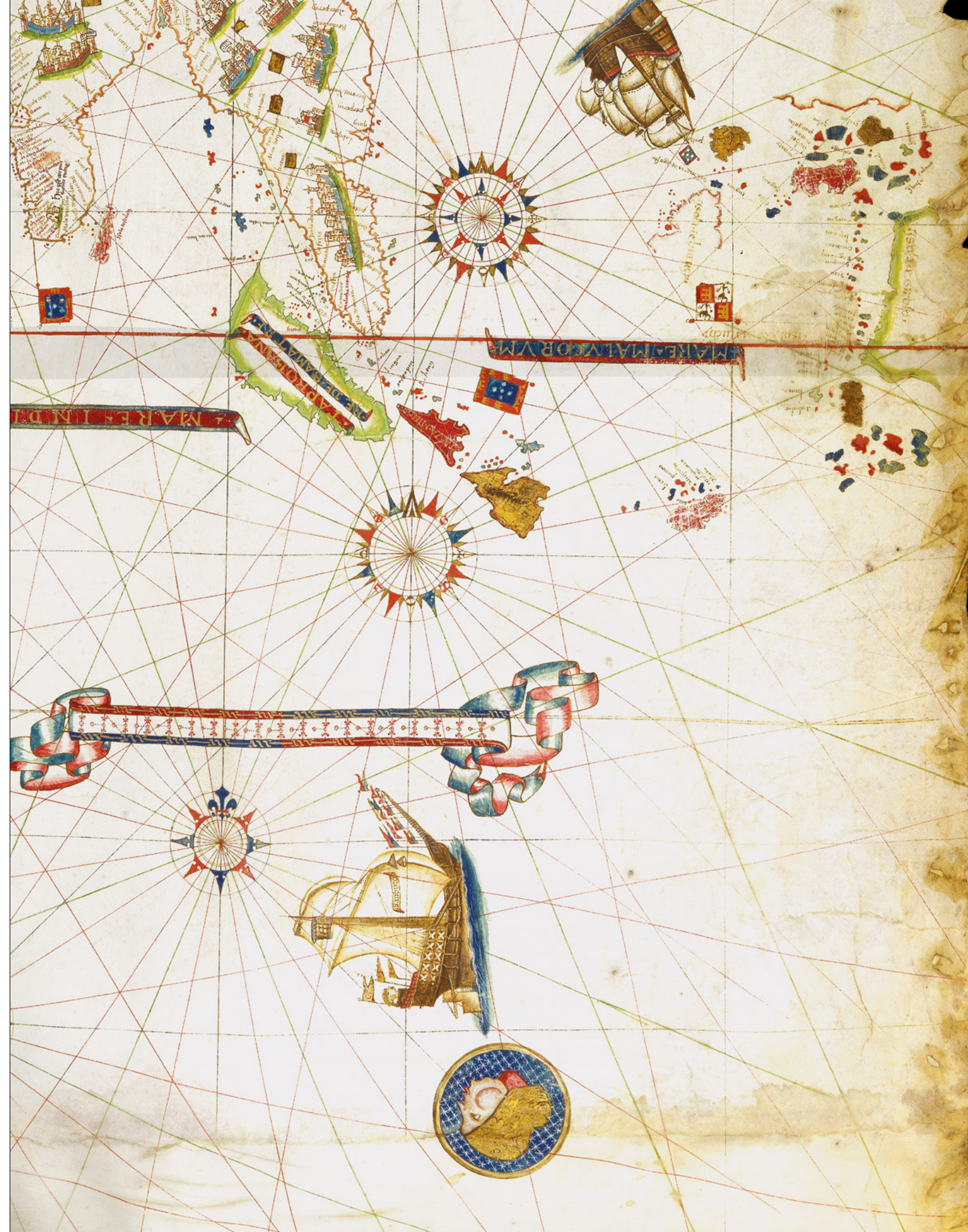


Southeast Asia

At the foot of modern-day Malaysia is a bird's-eye view of "Malacha civitas", or Malacca. "Cinque pura" (Singapore) is shown at the foot of a large Portuguese flag, along with Sumatra ("Taprobana – Re de Samatre") and Java ("Java Minor"). An Arab ship or "Sanbuco", flying the double crescent ensign, sails serenely through the space that ought to be occupied by Australia.

The arrangement of the islands at the far east of the map represents a subversion of geography for political ends. The Spice Islands appear split either side of the line of demarcation, which is patrolled by a Portuguese galleon. The tip of Borneo ("Isola de Borney") is shown in the "Mare Malucorum" on the Portuguese side of the line, together with what appears to be the familiar shapes of Banda and Run, vastly over represented in size, but not importance, with their wealth of mace and nutmeg. To the east of this, and flying the Spanish arms, is a Moluccan archipelago incorporating the island of "Gilolo" (Halmahera), together with Ternate – rich in cloves. Halmahera, however, in reality, lies to the northwest of Banda. This, contrary to the recently concluded Treaty of Zaragoza, presumably served the mapmaker's purpose in that it ensures that the wealth of the region is divided between both the Iberian crowns.

The Philippines, which would not adopt that name until 1565, appear at the extreme east of the chart, just above "Gilolo" and at some remove from their actual location. Numerous islands are named including an island coloured red that appears to bear the word "Sirola" suggesting "Isola de Serola", as the Philippines were then called. Above this is the faint coastline of what is presumably present-day Mindanao. The map has no eastern border, and the coastlines of the islands at the eastern extremity of the map appear to be incomplete. Whilst this may be due to damage, it is tempting to conclude that the mapmaker left this, as yet unexplored, area unfinished on purpose, thereby leaving the precise position of the line of demarcation open to interpretation.



Historical Context II

The Treaties of Zaragoza and Cambrai

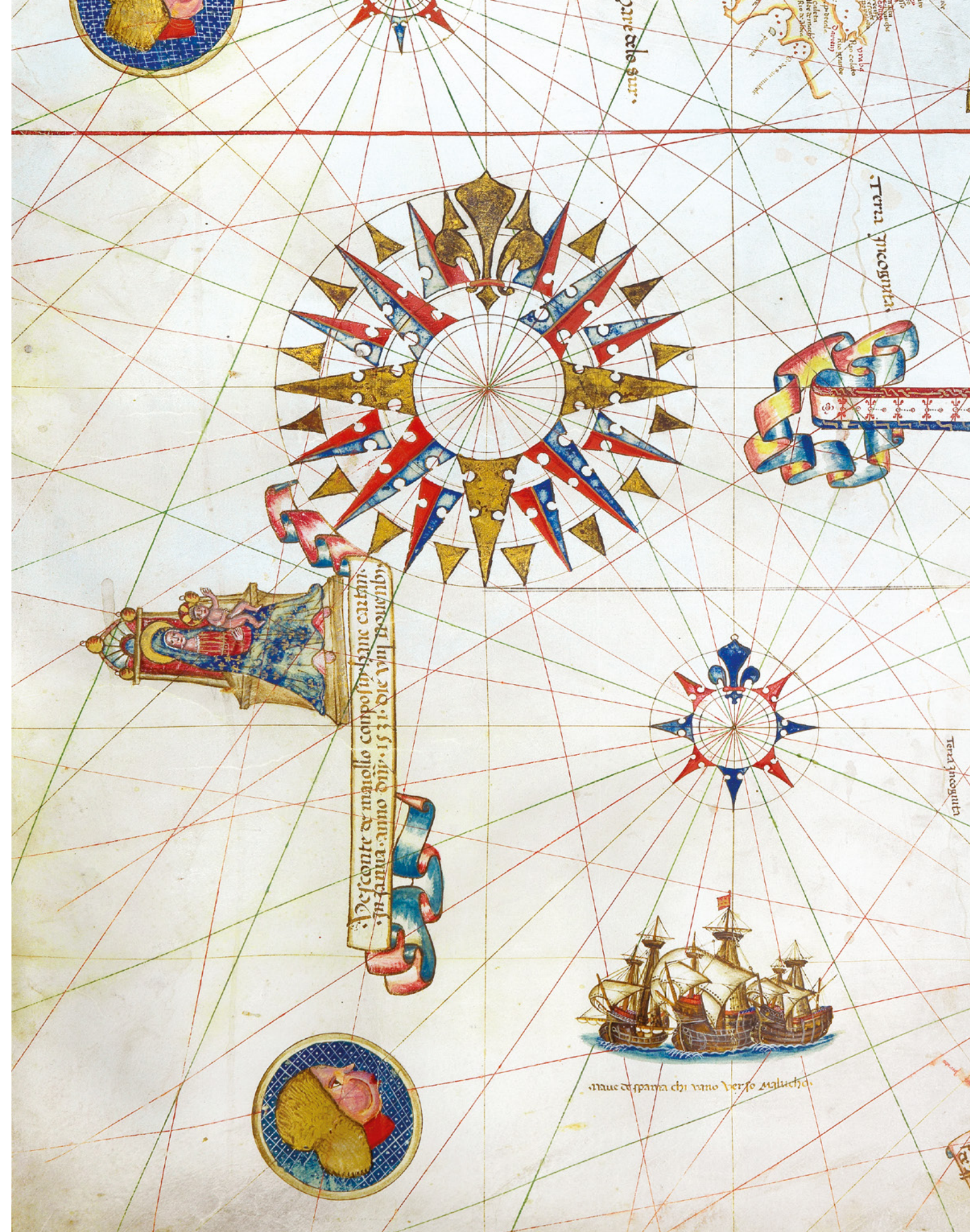
The chart depicts the antimeridian showing the Moluccas or Spice Islands as under the Spanish flag, despite the fact that, following the Treaty of Zaragoza in April 1529, Spain had released its claim to Portugal for the sum of 350,000 ducats.

The chart also shows the line of demarcation agreed at the Treaty of Tordesillas dividing the world between the Iberian crowns, and was produced after the 'Intra Arcana' of May 1529 (the papal bull that conceded to Charles V the power of patronage in the newly discovered lands in the Americas), yet it admits French claims to the whole of the northeastern seaboard of North America, a territory that should, by all accounts, have been the preserve of the Spanish king in 1531.

Maggiolo's planisphere can be said, therefore, to depict the claims of both the rival powers of Spain and France. This is because the chart was produced following the Treaty of Cambrai, or 'Peace of the Ladies' on 3 August 1529; a rare moment of uneasy calm during the Italian Wars (1494-1559) between France under Francis I, and the Holy Roman Empire under Charles V.

The Treaty of Cambrai temporarily confirmed Habsburg hegemony in Italy. After a series of successes, Charles V had defeated the French forces at Pavia in 1525 and forced Francis I to sign the punitive Treaty of Madrid. Fearful of Charles' growing power, England, Venice, and Pope Clement VII, who had been allied with Charles V, then changed sides to form the League of Cognac. In 1528, after Charles's Protestant mercenaries had sacked Rome, France declared war and invaded Milan and Naples. The defection of the Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria and his fleet to Spain, however, made

victory impossible, and both sides were exhausted and short of funds. The subsequent treaty is called the 'Peace of the Ladies' because it was negotiated by Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis, who had acted as regent during his absences, and Margaret of Austria, aunt of Charles and regent of the Netherlands. Francis renounced his claims in Italy and his rights as overlord in Flanders and Artois. In exchange, Charles agreed not to advance his claims to Burgundy at that time but instead accepted money as ransom for the two French princes he held. Francis I abandoned his allies and received the possessions of Charles de Bourbon and the prince of Orange.



Conclusion

Maggiolo’s planisphere of 1531 can be said to depict a world that never was, and, for over quarter of a century either side of the year of its production, it would have been difficult to see the circumstances in which such a chart would ever be produced, as the three colonial powers whose arms appear disputed each other’s claims across the globe. No Hapsburg patron would ever countenance the illustration of Valois presence in its American empire; and neither a French nor a Portuguese sponsor would have an interest in a map that ceded the Moluccas to Spain. However, in February 1531, the Protestant territories of the Holy Roman Empire formed an defense alliance to defend themselves against any attempt to enforce the recess of the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, which gave the Protestant territories a deadline by which to return to Catholic practices. The so-called “League of Schmalkalden”, named after the German town of the same name, posed a genuine Protestant threat to the authority of not just the Holy Roman Empire, but the Catholic powers in France and Portugal as well. There was, therefore, a brief period following the establishment of the League when an enterprising statesman might – just might – suggest that the Catholic dynasties of Hapsburg and Valois unite against a common foe. Sadly there is no record as to the origin of the planisphere, or as to whether Maggiolo was engaged by either France or the Holy Roman Empire. It is, however, tempting to conclude that the chart represents a proposal, never enacted, for a détente between France and Spain - two of the three great Catholic super powers of the age - in response to the Protestant threat from the north. A détente, perhaps, that would permit France her claims to the lands discovered by Verrazzano on the northeastern seaboard of North America in exchange for her assistance in establishing a Spanish hold over the Moluccas.

The prospect of peace evaporated, however, four years to the day after the map’s completion as the Italian Wars resumed with the death of Francesco Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan. Francis I couldn’t resist the opportunity to try to retake Asti, Genoa, and Milan and launched the first of three further unsuccessful invasions of Italy under Philippe de Chabot, seigneur de Brion – the very same Admiral who had contracted Verrazzano a decade earlier. France finally abandoned her efforts to take Italy in 1559 with the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis.

Provenance

Private Collection, UK.

The map is not mentioned in Pietro Amat di S. Filippo’s 1875 survey ‘Studi bibliografici e biografici sulla storia della geografia in Italia’, nor in its second edition in 1882, nor in Giuseppe Caraci’s 1958 list of five atlases and 14 charts by Maggiolo.

The map is first mentioned in literature by Corradino Astengo in his 1996 essay ‘Der genuesische Kartograph Vesconte Maggiolo and sein Werk’, and subsequently in Richard Pflederer’s 2009 ‘Census of Portolan Charts and Atlases’.



Condition

MAGGIOLO, Vesconte. *[Planisphere]*.

Genoa, 1531.

Pen and ink with lapis lazuli, heightened in silver and gold on six sheets of vellum, joined, signed and dated November 8, 1531.

Dimensions: 935 by 2055mm.

The chart is a remarkable survival and is in astonishingly good condition. On the whole the map is clean and bright, with strong, vibrant colours, and little sign of wear or soiling. There is some very minor cockling as one would expect with an animal skin of this age. The map is trimmed at the right margin with what appears to be the total loss of the decorative border, and, possibly, some image, although this may have deliberate on the part of the mapmaker as the coastlines at this extremity of the map are ill-defined and fade to blank. There is also a small area of staining along the right-hand edge. There are small nicks and tears to margins, including small areas of paint flaking from the borders, some with small areas of early infilling with replacement vellum, small 20mm diameter hole at upper right. Minor area of damp stain at upper left with very light cracking of vellum.

The practice of using several pieces of parchment to make a large map is characteristic of the time. Two of the well-known world maps of Diogo Ribeiro (1527) are pieced together in the same manner. The map is the largest known work by the mapmaker, although Maggiolo seems to have favoured a large format for his work: his 1516 world map measures 1001 by 1520mm, and his 1527 world map measured 609 by 1803mm.

Authenticity

The chart has been examined in some detail and can confidently be attributed to be a manuscript portolan planisphere by the Genoese Master Chartmaker Vesconte Maggiolo completed in 1531.

Images of the chart have been seen by Professor Corradino Astengo of the Istituto di Geografia, Università di Genova, author of ‘Der genuesische Kartograph Vesconte Maggiolo and sein Werk’, 1996; Chet Van Duzer, Former Kislak Fellow for the Study of the History and Cultures of the Early Americas, Library of Congress, and author of, amongst many other works: ‘Seeing the World Anew: The Radical Vision of Martin Waldseemüller’s 1507 & 1516 World Maps’, 2012; and ‘The World for a King: Pierre Desceliers’ World Map of 1550’, 2015; and Richard Pflederer, author of a definitive and comprehensive census of all known surviving portolan charts and atlases. All three agree with the assessment above.

Professor George Kish (1914-1989), former William Herbert Hobbs Professor of Geography at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, made an extensive study of the map in 1983, and, in an unpublished signed note, made the following comments:

“The map made by Maggiolo that comes closest to the date of the present work is his, now lost, world map dated 1527. It has been reproduced in facsimiles published by Konrad Kretschmer in 1892, and Fite and Freeman in ‘Delineating American History’, published in 1925.”

The signature of the 1527 world map appears below and to the right of an image of the Madonna seated on a throne, holding the infant Jesus, and reads:

“Vesconte de Maiollo composuy hanc cartan In Ianua. Anno dny. 1527. Die XX decembris”

The signature of the present map appears below and to the left of a slightly more elaborate throne than that of the 1527 map and reads:

“Vesconte de maiollo composuy hanc cartan In Ianua. Anno dny.1531. die viii nouembr”.

The numbers of the date on the 1531 map are clear, whereas the number “2” on the 1527 map is blurred. Otherwise, differences between the signatures on the two maps are very minor, and can be ascribed to the chartmaker’s desire not to repeat earlier designs in toto.

The scales on the 1531 map appear, from the first glance, to be completely different from those on his earlier works. But a careful comparison with a map dated 1525 [no. 161 of the Amat di S. Filippo catalogue of 1875 and number 11 of Corradino Astengo’s list], signed by Giovanni and Vesconte Majolo (sic), now in the Biblioteca Palatina of Parma, bears out the authenticity of the 1531 map: scales on the 1525 and 1531 maps were found to be identical, even though both scales were substantially different from those by Maggiolo on other maps.

Maggiolo’s wind roses have long been considered his hallmark. Heinrich Winter considered them to be typical of the style employed by Italian cartographers during the first half of the sixteenth century. Comparison of the wind rose located east of Malacca on the 1531 map with one on the North Sea, on a Maggiolo map dated 1513, now in the Harvard College Library [item 5 on Corradino Astengo’s list], and with the wind rose located in the Pacific on the 1527 map [item 12], in Milan before its destruction, shows that the design of all three is virtually identical, even to the letters used to designate the principal winds. This is also true of the large wind roses on the 1531 map, located in the Pacific, in the Atlantic east of the Caribbean, and south of the tip of Africa.

Vesconte Maggiolo, and another leading Italian mapmaker of the sixteenth century, Battista Agnese, used a circular insert, placed in North Africa, to demonstrate the spatial relationship of the Old to the New World. Maggiolo

used this device in three of his maps, and there are only minor discrepancies between those and the one on the 1531 planisphere, once more underlining the authenticity of the latter.

There remain, to be sure, certain elements of the 1531 Maggiolo manuscript world map that indicate the need for detailed study, including certain discrepancies in nomenclature, and what might be termed a “regressive tendency” of the cartographer when he indicates much of the west coast of South America by a barely visible line, labeling it TERRA INCOGNITA, having four years earlier shown that same coast stretching in a correct, northwest-southeasterly direction. But set against what appear to be reliable indications of the map’s provenance, the strong support given to its authenticity by identical features of the importance of signature, scale, and wind roses, the weight of evidence points definitively to this being that rare item, a manuscript map of the world, drawn in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century, magnificent in its art, displaying elaborate images of cities large and small, superb and accurate drawings of ships of the time, in a word, a jewel of the cartographer’s art”.

Rarity

Early sixteenth century portolan maps rarely come to the market. The last large format manuscript planisphere to be offered for sale, also by Vesconte Maggiolo, was the planisphere sold by the Swiss bookseller, Otto Lange, in 1923 for CHF 30,000. The map, signed and dated Naples, 7 May 1516 is now in the collection of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

As previously discussed, there are 21 extant recorded earlier (pre-1530) manuscript maps showing the relationship between the Old and New Worlds, none of which is in private hands, and only four of which are in the United States. For a listing, see Appendix I.

Appendix I

Census of pre-1530 Manuscript Maps Showing the Relationship Between the Old and New Worlds.
The History of Cartography, vol.3, part 1, edited by David Woodward, p.759.

	Mapmaker	Date	Location
1	Juan de la Cosa	1500	Museo Naval, Madrid (inv. 257)
2	Cantino	1502	Biblioteca Estense e Universitaria, Modena (C.G.A.2)
3	King Hamy	1502?	Huntington Library, San Marino (HM 45)
4	Vesconte Maggiolo	1504	Biblioteca Comunale Federiciana, Fano
5	Pedro Reinel (Kunstmann I)	c1504	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich (Cod. Icon 132)
6	Nicolò de Caverio	1505	BNF (Cartes et Plans, S.H. Archives no. 1)
7	Pesaro	c1505-8	Biblioteca e Musei Oliveriani, Pesaro
8	Kunstmann II	1506	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich (Cod. Icon 133)
9	Kunstmann III	c1506	Lost; survives in a redrawing from c1843, BNF (Rés. Ge B 1120)
10	Vesconte Maggiolo	1511	John Carter Brown Library at Brown University, Providence
11	Piri Re'is world map	c1513	Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Istanbul (R. 1633 mük)
12	Vesconte Maggiolo	1516	Huntington Library, San Marino (HM 427)
13	World map in the Miller Atlas, attributed to Lopo Homen, Pedro Reinel, Jorge Reinel	c1519	BNF (Rés. Ge AA 640)
14	Jorge Reinel (Kunstmann IV)	c1519	Lost; survives in a redrawing from ca. 1843, BNF (Rés. Ge AA 564)
15	Vesconte Maggiolo (Kunstmann V)	c1519	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich (Cod. Icon 135, fols. 1v-2r)
16	Turin	c1523	Biblioteca Reale, Turin (Coll. O.XVI.1)
17	Castiglione, attributed to Diogo Ribeiro	1525	Biblioteca Estense e Universitaria, Modena (C.G.A.12)
18	Salviati	c1525	Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence (Med. Palat. 249)
19	Giovanni Vespucci	1526	Hispanic Society of America, New York (MS. K. 42)
20	Diogo Ribeiro	1527	Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar (Kt 020-57S)
21	Diogo Ribeiro	1529	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Borgiano III)
22	Diogo Ribeiro	1529	Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar (Kt 020-58S)
23	Giovanni da Verrazzano	1529	Vatican Museums, Vatican City (Borgiano I)

Appendix II

Census of known works by Vesconte Maggiolo

	Date	Format	Location
1	1504 (?)	Sea chart	Biblioteca Federiciana, Fano
2	1511	Atlas of nine maps (eight sea charts and a planisphere)	John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island
3	1512	Atlas of four sea charts	Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
4	1512	Sea chart	Hispanic Society of America, New York
5	1513	Sea chart	Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts
6	1515	Sea chart	Nederlands Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam
7	1516	Nautical planisphere	Huntington Library, San Marino, California
8	1519	Atlas of seven sea charts	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
9	1520	Sea chart	British Library, London
10	1524	Sea chart	Formerly in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, destroyed during the Second World War
11	1525	Sea chart, made in collaboration with his son Giovanni Antonio	Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
12	1527	Sea chart	Formerly in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, destroyed during the Second World War.
13	1528	Sea chart, auctioned at Sotheby's on 24 June 1993 in London	Currently on display in the David M. Stewart Museum, Montreal.
14	1531	Nautical planisphere	[Private collection, the present example]
15	1535	Sea chart	Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid
16	1535	Sea chart	Archivio di Stato, Turin
17	1535	Sea chart	Biblioteca Oliveriana, Pesaro
18	1537	Sea chart	Musée de la Marine, Paris
19	1546	Sea chart	Maritime Museum, Greenwich
20	1547	Sea chart	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
21	1548	Sea chart	Maritime Museum, Greenwich
22	1548	Atlas of fifteen sea charts	Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze
23	1549 (?)	Sea chart, sold in the Beusant-Lefèvre sale on 29 November 1990 in Paris	Private collection, Paris
24	1549	Atlas of four maps (three sea charts and a planisphere)	Bibliotheca Comunale di Treviso

Giulio Giovio’s ‘Historia [c.1550].
Manuscript poem now at the Museo Civico, Como.

[...]
Il Verezan non fu sì fortunato,
Che navigò quei Mar, et Firentino
Nacque et dal re di Franza fu mandato.
Costui scoperse in quell longo camino
Molti paesi et da lui fu trovato
Il loco che si vede star vicino
Agguada che per terra ferma mira
La parte dove tramontana spira.

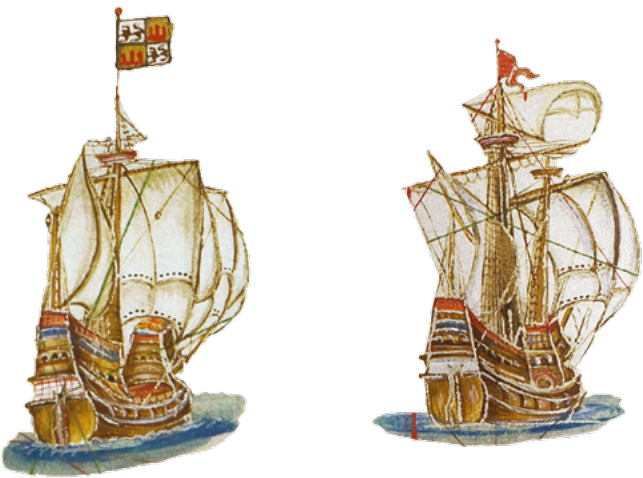
Da lui la Florida fu il loco detto
Che da tre parte il Mar circonda et bagna
Grande è quanto Sicilia e ‘l suo prospetto
E’ molto ameno et tien larga campagna,
Et perchè a primavera sta soggetto
Fu Florida chiamato et s’accompagna
Per esser sempre di verdura pieno
Al loco di Ciprigna tanto ameno.

Molte isolette stan al loco apresso
Tra’ quali c’è Cabaco et Bahama.
Al miser Verezan non fu concesso
Il viver longo che sua vita grama
Hebbe in quel mar perchè il meschino opresso
Da gente fu ch’ogn’hora mangiar brama
L’huom forestier et questi son chiamati
Canibali crudel et scelerati.

Il Verezan voltar fece il suo legno
Et navigando verso il Mezzogiorno
Andar nel Dariene fe’ disegno
Ch’è loco in terra ferma molto adorno
Mentre naviga et cerca col suo ingegno
Scoprir più lochi, sei dei suoi smontorno
Con lui insieme a un’isola deserta
Che d’alte piante si vedea coperta.

Da gente cruda fur a un tratto presi
Ch’a l’improvviso gli saltorno adosso.
Occisi fur e per terra distesi
Fatti in più pezzi sin al minimo osso
Da quelli fur mangiato. E in quei paesi
Gli fu il fratel del Verezan che rosso
Vede il terren del sangue del fratello
Nè puote in barca stando aggiutar quello.

Costui il tutto vide e in Roma poi
Venuto essendo un giorno lacrimando
Racontò questo fatto acerbo a noi.
Tal che costui nove terre cercando
Hebbe il fin tristo. Nè aguagliar a voi
Si può il Pizarro che per mare andando
Vide l’ombre de Dio che nel Mar sede
Dove per fronte Panamà si vede.
[...]



Translation

[...]
Verrazzano, who sailed those seas, was not as fortunate; born
a Florentine, he was sent out there by the king of France. On
his voyages he discovered many places and he was the one to
find that there was dry land north of Aguada.¹

He named this region Florida; surrounded by sea on
three sides, it is as big as Sicily and the landscape is rather
beautiful, the countryside vast, and it is always spring,
hence the name Florida. Since it is always very green, it
resembles the beautiful Cyprus.²

There are many small islands close-by; among them are
Cabaco and Bahama. The poor Verrazzano was not allowed
to live long, as his unfortunate life ended in that sea, taken
by people who always crave to eat the stranger. These people
are called Cannibals, and they are cruel and evil.³

Verrazzano ordered to turn his ship and sailing towards
the south, he planned to go towards Darien, which is
a very rich region of dry land. Whilst he sailed and
looked ingeniously for new places, he alighted with
six of his men on a desert island, which could be seen
as covered by tall vegetation.⁴

Suddenly they were taken by savages who jumped on
them all at once. They killed them and laid them onto the
ground, chopped them until the smallest bone and ate
them. Verrazzano’s brother was with him on this journey
and he saw the ground red of his brother’s blood, but
could not help him as he was aboard the ship.

He saw everything and later, when he came to Rome
one day, he told us, in tears, of this bitter event; about
the sad ending of he who went to look for new places.
[...]

Reproduced in Bacchiani, Alessandro, I Fratelli
Verrazzano e l’eccidio di una spedizione italo-
francese in America (1528)’, Bollettino della Società
Geografica Italiana, s. 4, II (1925), pp. 395-399.

¹Aguada Bay, on Florida’s southern tip, close to the Capo Sable peninsula. Giovio means: Verrazzano found that there was mainland on the region north of Aguada.
²*Florida*: Giovio’s ideas are rather confused. Florida was not named by V., but by the Spanish Ponce de Leon; it is not as big as Sicily, but six times bigger; and although as beautiful as Cyprus, it was given the name Florida because Ponce landed on Palm Sunday, in Spanish *pasqua florida*, Blooming Sunday, (20 March 1513).
³*Cabaco and Bahama*: Habacoa, Habacea, today Abaco Island, English colony, and Bahama, an other English island on the South East of Florida, thus belonging to the Archipelago of Bahamas or Lucayans, *Cannibals, cruel and evil*: at the time there was a very famous description by Vespucci on these people called Caniba, Caribi or Caraibi, that is, ‘the vigorous’, the only sailor natives who came from South America and who were rapidly destroyed by the conquerors. “The Cannibals – writes Vespucci – live on human flesh ... Though they do not eat each other, but they navigate on certain boats called canoes and they go to find their prey from islands where a generation of enemies live ... they do not eat women either, unless they keep them as slaves ...” (Seville, 18 July 1500). From the Small Antilles, or Islands of the Caribe, wrote doctor Chanca, the doctor of Columbus’ second voyage “that they are inhabited by people who eat human flesh”. In this case we should mainly consider the description Paolo Giovio has given in his eulogy of Columbus (Elogia, pp. 171-174).
⁴*Darien*: the region comprising Panama’s isthmus and part of Colombia; today Darien.

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