

Mapmaker's Vision, Beholder's Eyes: The Art of Maps

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Gallery Guide

*Mapmaker's Vision, Beholder's Eyes:
The Art of Maps*



The Exhibition

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Gallery Guide Editor and Exhibition Curator

Katherine R. Goodwin

*Dedicated to David Woodward, 1942-2004,
Friend, Cartographic Scholar, and Teacher to us all.*

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Preface

The artistry and beauty of maps is the theme of the fourth Biennial Virginia Garrett Lectures on the History of Cartography, entitled "Mapmaker's Vision, Beholder's Eyes: The Art of Maps." Speakers Dennis Reinhartz (University of Texas at Arlington), Patricia Gilmartin (University of South Carolina), Denis Cosgrove (UCLA), Lucia Nuti (University of Pisa), and David Buisseret (University of Texas at Arlington) will explore the many ways in which maps reflect the connection between cartography and art. This not only includes those maps that are depicted in works of art from Renaissance paintings to modern post cards, but also the way artists actually create works of art that are, in effect, maps. These lectures build on an enduring theme, for throughout history, there has been a close relationship between maps and art. The lectures will also illustrate the strong connection between the science of mapmaking and the creative and artistic expression that mapmakers bring to their work.

The exhibition, "Mapmaker's Vision, Beholder's Eyes: The Art of Maps," was created in conjunction with the Fourth Biennial Virginia Garrett Lectures in the History of Cartography. The exhibition highlights the holdings of the Virginia Garrett Cartographic History Library and focuses on six themes of art and cartography. The themes include Color, Line and Fine Engraving, Form and Shape, Lettering, Symbols and Decorations, Design and Style. In addition the exhibition includes a section titled "Art and Maps: A Beholder's Selection," which exhibits a number of maps that encompass two or more attributes pertaining to the themes of art and cartography.

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Mapmaker's Vision, Beholder's Eyes: The Art of Maps

Introduction

What is a beautiful map? The complex answer to this deceptively simple question concerns the aesthetics and artistry of maps and addresses an essential, intriguing, and even more complex aspect of the history of cartography. It permeates every other aspect of the field and is often of telling consequence to the maker, user, scholar, student, collector, dealer, and other beholders of maps alike.

The eminent historian of cartography Leo Bagrow said simply that “maps are works of art,” and in the same thought further related that artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein, and others “often cooperated in map production and not only executed plates, but also used their skills in coloring the prints.”¹ Prominent art historians such as Rudolf Arnheim have pointed out that, like paintings, maps are “dynamic expressions” of colors, shapes, lines, lettering, decoration, style, and design and that mapmakers have regularly followed in the footsteps of artists or even have worked hand in hand with them in the use of graphic techniques (e.g. line hatchings) to help get their messages across.² Maps of course also have long been used as decorative objects or as decorations on other objects whose primary functions are not cartographic (i.e. “cartofacts”).

Cartographic aesthetic feeling is linked to perception, beauty, and taste. However, is beauty a property of the map or a value imbedded in it or its user-viewer or merely a descriptive? To voice that a map is beautiful is to admit to a subjective and even personal aesthetic or emotional response to it that apparently runs contrary to its scientific organizing principles. But does it? Perhaps not, for maps have long been recognized as the interdisciplinary components of the complex communication system of cartography.

Aesthetics is more than the “science of the beautiful” and too embraces the perfection of kind. A beautiful map therefore is also one that delivers its content effectively first in its own time and then over time. The form and content of the map as well as the skill and sensibilities of the cartographer are all germane to the map and its beauty and are intimate parts of the aesthetic experience of a map. As David Woodward has said in his introduction to *Art and Cartography*, cartography “is art not in the superficial ornamental sense, but because of the efficiency, clarity, and style with which it communicates the subject.”³ Thus, the cartographic aesthetic encounter is thoroughly involved with the map’s presentation of information.

This major exhibit, which accompanies the Fourth Biennial Virginia Garrett Lectures on the History of Cartography at The University of Texas at Arlington, seeks to help the viewer better understand the elaborate artistry of cartography. The maps are organized according to particular artistic elements—color, line and fine engraving, lettering, form and shape, decoration and symbol, and style and design—to enhance the viewer’s experience and enjoyment. Understandably, individual viewers will appreciate some of the maps over others, but that is in the end what the artistry of maps is all about. Behold the beautiful maps!

Dennis Reinhartz
5 August 2004

¹Leo Bagrow, *History of Cartography*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, Inc., 1985 [1944, 1964], 21.

²Rudolf Arnheim, *The Perception of Maps*, *The American Cartographer* 3-1 (1976), 6-10.

³David Woodward (ed.), *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 4.



Septentrio America by Jodocus Hondius. Published in Amsterdam by G. Mercator & Jodocus Hondius, 1620.

Color is one of the most dominant elements used in mapmaking and is an important artistic interpretation in producing maps as art. Prior to the advent of chromolithography in the mid-nineteenth century, all maps were printed in a black and white format with any color being added after production by a colorist. However, color added to a map may, or may not, enhance or support the information conveyed by the map.

The selected maps were produced by some of the more prominent mapmakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as their more commercial nineteenth century counterparts. They demonstrate several aspects of color as an element of artistic presentation. For example, color can be added to enhance the information on the map, it can be added for artistic reasons, or it can be added simply for financial gain.

Scientia Terrarum et Coelorum by Samuel Dunn and published in London by Robert Sayer in 1772 is an example of how color can enhance the information on a map. Dunn was a headmaster in an English boy's school, and he created the map as a teaching instrument. The map is packed with graphic and textural information dealing with the geography of the world, the structure of the heavens, the sun and the moon, the dynamics of the earth and the science and technology of latitude and longitude among other astrological issues. The color aids the reader in identifying and using the various objects for study. It also is obvious that the London publisher of the map, Robert Sayer, benefited from the color on the map in his sales figures.

Cartobibliography

Dunn, Samuel. *Scientia Terrarum et Coelorum: or, the Heavens and Earth Astronomically and Geographically Delineated and Displayed*. London: Robert Sayer, 1772.

Teâtre de la Guerre en Amerique telle qu'elle est à present possédée par les Espagnols, Anglois, François, et Hollandois &c. Amsterdam: Covens & Mortier, 1703.

Millo, Antonio. *Der Weltatlas des Antonio Millo von 1586*. Süssen: Ed. Deuschle ; Weinheim: VCH, c1988.

12 Inch Library Globe. Chicago: Replogle Globes Inc., n.d.

Globe. Chicago: Replogle Globes, Inc., n.d.

The maps, *Septentrio America*, and *Fossa Eugeniiana*, both address color as an embellishment and probably an added inducement for the purchaser. The maps were produced by members of the Hondius family, master mapmakers. Both maps appear to have had color added in recent times, although the color on *America* appears to have been added many decades ago. In both cases color has been added to enhance the beauty of the map—and its sale price. However, the artistic value of color on *Fossa Eugeniiana* serves to focus the viewer's attention on the canal dug by the Spanish, who were occupying the Netherlands at the time. Color added at the time of printing was usually at the request of the buyer for an additional fee. Color added later, sometimes centuries later, also is an inducement for the buyer as is the case today.

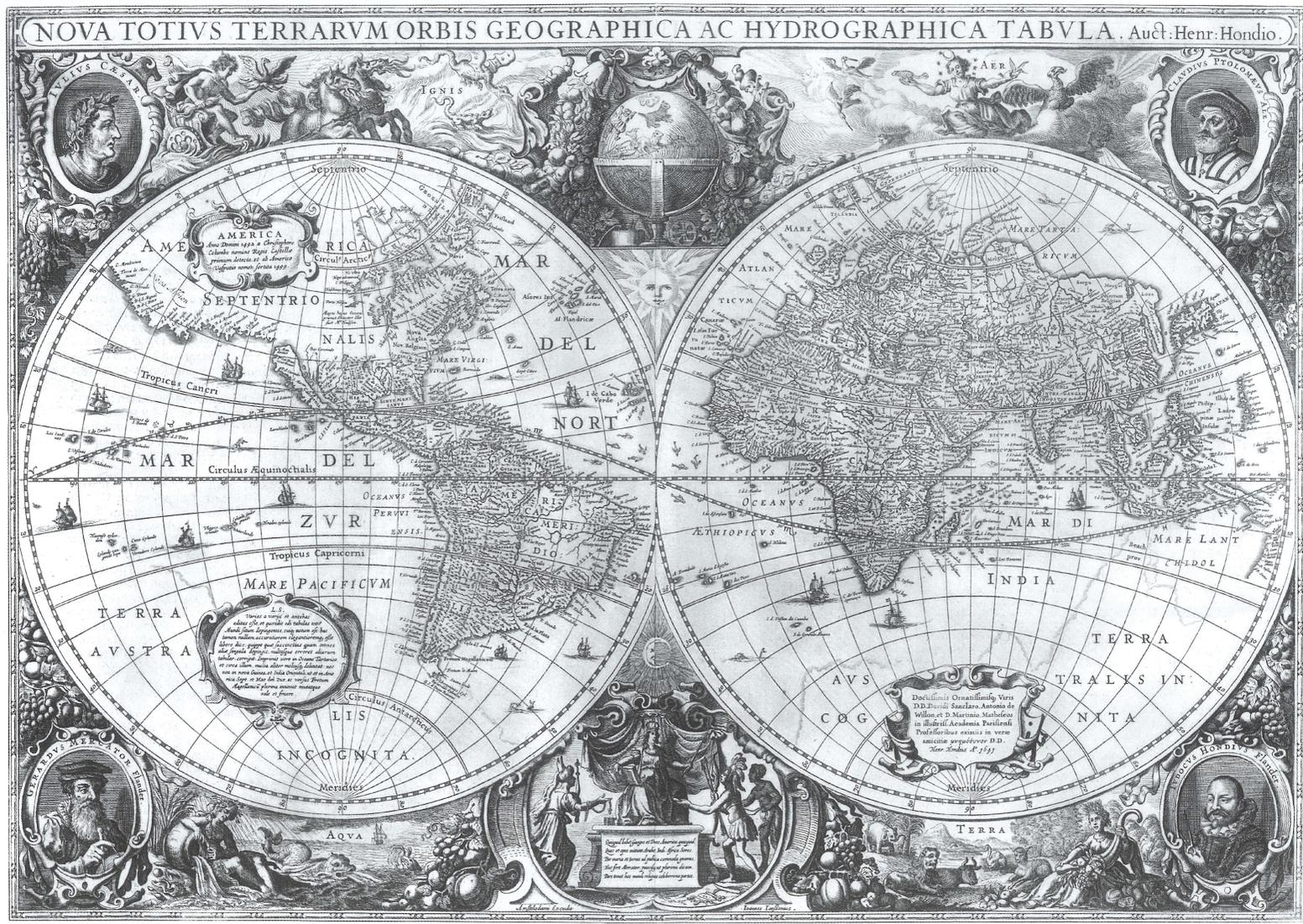
On a smaller scale, the Emanuel Bowen map, *An Accurate Map of the West Indies*, published in London by E. Cave in 1750, and S. Augustus Mitchell's 1870 *Map of Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies* demonstrate the appeal of color as an inducement for purchase. The two maps focused on similar geography but were published 120 years apart. The Bowen map, originally included in a student publication, *Geography Reformed: or a New System of General Geography*, by E. Cave, was not hand colored at the time of publication. Bowen's student map was transformed by the color into a nice collector's map when it was removed from the text and colored at a later time. Mitchell's 1870 map, originally published in a commercial atlas, benefits from color as well. By the late nineteenth century, the American map and atlas publishing industry was quite competitive, and colored maps had a wider appeal.

Bowen, Emanuel. *An Accurate Map of the West Indies. Exhibiting not only all the Islands Posses'd by the English, French, Spaniards & Dutch, but also all the Towns and Settlements on the continent of America Adjacent thereto*. London: for E. Cave, ca.1750.

Williams, W. *Map of Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies*. Philadelphia: S. Augustus Mitchell, Jr., 1870.

Hondius, Jodocus. *Septentrio America*. Amsterdam: [G. Mercator & Jodocus Hondius, 1620].

Hondius, Hendrick. *Fossa Eugeniiana quae a Rheno ad Mosam duci coepta est, Anno clo loc xxvii ductu Comitiss Henrici vanden Berge*. Amsterdam: Henrici Hondius, 1627.



Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica ac Hydrographica Tabula by Henri Hondius. Published in Amsterdam by Jan Jansson, 1641.

Line and Fine Engraving

Line work or engraving is the resulting thin mark, or cut, etched into wood or metal that contains the ink in the design of a map. The quality and character of the line is subject to the skill and knowledge of the engraver. The quality of the line work and engraving is essential to both the information depicted on the map and to the artist in producing maps as works of art.

Mapmakers Sebastian Munster, Henricus Hondius, John Senex, the lithographers of McClure, MacDonald, and MacGregor and the copyist A. Pomnielzky, all have produced engravings that reflect quality and character of line that results in maps that are works of art.

Munster, the foremost German geographer of his day, produced fine line work with woodcuts such as *Typus Orbis Universalis*, ca.1550. In this relief process, an image is drawn in reverse directly on a flat surface of a woodblock. Then the portions of the block not carrying the image are cut away, leaving a raised surface with the image. Munster's work is an excellent example of the woodcut process.

By 1641 when Hondius, the younger son of Jodocus Hondius, the elder, had learned his skill in the family business, the intaglio process had been developed that produced images far superior aesthetically to the wood cuts. In this method the image was incised in reverse into the smooth hard surface of a copper plate. The plate was then inked, wiped clean, which left ink only in the crevices of the incised image. The plate, with a dampened piece of paper, was then run through a roller press at high pressure and the ink was transferred to the paper. Hondius'

skill is evident in his map, *Nova Totius Terrarum*, with its elaborate vignettes and portraits surrounding the two hemispheric globes.

Lithography could also result in fine line work as seen in *Southampton from the Ordnance Survey*, which is an excellent depiction of that English town. The graphic details of the landscape are clear and concise with fields, savannahs, roadways, and various communities. The depictions of the River Itchen winding down to the sea shore along with various ponds and lakes are remarkable in their clarity. The Ordnance Surveys, a government agency of the United Kingdom, originated in 1791 with a mission to survey at large scale, the vulnerable southern coasts of the county. They have made their reputation on fine mapping at a one inch scale.

Lastly, some manuscript maps can also exhibit fine line work with pen and ink. While not produced as a printed product normally associated with fine engraving, manuscript maps, nevertheless, can exhibit fine line work. Such is the case of the copyist A. Pomnielzky. His manuscript map, "Carte Routière de Vera-Cruz a Mexico," depicting events during the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848, is a fine example of pen and ink workmanship. The line work designating overland routes, the line shading along the Gulf Coast, and the hauches on the Sierra Nevada Mountains between Mexico City and Puebla are all examples of fine line work that rivals the workmanship of the engraver's art.

Cartobibliography

Munster, Sebastian. *Typus Orbis Universalis*. Amsterdam: S. Munster, ca. 1550.

Hondius, Henri. *Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica ac Hydrographica Tabula*. Amsterdam: Jan Jansson, 1641.

Senex, John, Charles Price and John Maxwell. *North America Corrected from the Observations Communicated to the Royal Society at London and the Royal Academy at Paris*. London: J. Senex, 1710.

Great Britain. Ordnance Survey. *Southampton from the Ordnance Survey with the Improvements to the Present Time*. London, Manchester, Liverpool: Maclure, MacDonald & MacGregor, [ca.1880].

Berlault. "Carte Routière de Vera-Cruz a Mexico" A. Pomnielzky, March 1853.

Form and Shape

Form and Shape refer to the configuration of elements in a map that give it a distinctive appearance. An artist will use form and shape as design elements in the composition of the map.

Maps selected for this section date from 1720 to 1811 and include three notable cartographers. The earliest map is by Herman Moll, the distinguished English cartographer noted for his enlightenment style and unique lettering. Moll also produced fine works demonstrating his ability in form and shape as is evident in his *A New Map of the North Parts of America, 1720*. His placement, or layout, of the known North American continent from the Great Lakes to the Yucatan peninsula, and from New Found Land to Lower California, along with two inset maps, a vignette, and a cartouche, display a balanced form in the pleasing presentation.

Bellin's *Carte des Variations de la Boussole, 1765*, fulfills the criteria for "distinctive appearance." The lines denoting the wind variation drawn between the hemispheres and below the Indian continent form a most unusual presentation. In addition,

the map includes numerous old fashion wind heads and an elaborate title cartouche. It is especially noteworthy as the map was produced by a government agency, the *Dépot de la Marine*. Government agencies are not usually noted for artistic qualities of their maps. The cartographer, Jacques Nicolas Bellin, the elder (1703-1772), was the first chief hydrographic engineer of the *Dépôt des Cartes, Plans et Journaux du Ministère de la Marine*, and published charts, maps, and atlases extensively on the hydrography of the world.

The third map in the selection, von Humboldt's *Carte du Mexique, 1811*, produced by Jean Baptist Poirson, uses italic lettering and placement of the lower half of North America to display his abilities in form and shape. Baron Friedrich Heinrich Alexander von Humboldt, the Prussian natural scientists, astronomer, explorer and geographer, made major contributions to science in the fields of geomagnetism, geology, meteorology and astronomical observations. His maps were produced by systematic, scientific inquiry. Form and shape can probably be credited to Poirson.

Cartobibliography

Moll, Herman. *A New Map of the North Parts of America claimed by France under ye Names of Louisiana, Mississipi, Canada, and New France with ye Adjoining Territories of England and Spain*. London: H. Moll, [1720].

Poirson, Jean Baptist. *Carte du Mexique et Pays Limitrophes situés au Nord et à l'est Dressée d'après la grande carte de la Nouvelle Espagne de Mr. A. de Humboldt et d'autres matériaux*. Paris :S. Schoell, 1811.

Bellin, Jacques Nicholas. *Carte des Variations de la Boussole et des vents Généraux que l'on Trouve dans les Mers les Plus Frequentées: Dressée au Dépot des Cartes de la Marine pour le Service des Vaisseaux Français*. Paris: *Dépot de la Marine*, 1765.

PLANISFERO DEL MONDO NUOVO, DESCRITTO DAL P. CORONELLI, COSMOGRAFO PUBBLICO



Planisfero del Mondo Nuovo by Vincenzo Coronelli. Published in Venice by V. Coronelli, 1695.

Lettering

Letter characters are employed to represent speech sounds by inscribing, printing, or engraving on a map. They are essential to the information exhibited by the map, but also can be decorative as well as informative. From the earliest times, cartographers focused on making the clearest, most concise lettering they could. From 1482 to about 1560, the “gothic hand” was the most common script used, especially on wood blocks. The “cursive chancery hand” form of handwriting developed around the 1470s that combined speed and beauty causing a change in the lettering of maps. Roman capitals were adopted shortly thereafter and used in combination with other scripts. There were, of course, variations used by engravers who had the liberty to fashion letters, and it was these early map-engravers who exploited the artistic possibilities of lettering.

The work of two masters in the art of cartography, Herman Moll and Vincenzo Coronelli, are featured in the section for Lettering. The earlier piece, Coronelli's *Planisfero del Mondo Nuovo*, 1695, uses lettering and numbers to instruct and enhance

the scientific aspects of the map. The numbers and letters surrounding the globe and inscribed in italics also form a strong decorative aspect to the work. Lettering in the italics format was the most common and distinctive form of lettering up until the last decades of the seventeenth century. The Franciscan friar and Venetian map and globe maker became Cosmographer to the Republic of Venice in 1685, and produced an enormous body of works.

Herman Moll's map, *A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain on ye Continent of North America*, 1715, displays the famous “Beavers of Canada” vignette. The map includes four insets and an elaborate dedication cartouche. Moll was noted for his fine lettering as well as fine engraving. His written descriptions, scattered over the maps, made them main references for not only the geography depicted but also for other knowledge about distant places and happenings.

Cartobibliography

Moll, Herman. *A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain on ye Continent of North America: Containing Newfoundland, New Scotland, New England, New York, New Jersey, Pensilvania, Maryland, Virginia and Carolina according to the Newest and Most Exact Observations*. London: Thomas Bowles and Sons, 1715.

Coronelli, Vincenzo. *Planisfero del Mondo Nuovo*. Venice: V. Coronelli, 1695.



Carte Tres Curieuse de la Mer du Sud, Contenant des Remarques, Nouvelles et Tres Utiles non Seulement sur les Ports el Iles de Cette Mer, Mais aussy sur les Principaux Pays de l'Amerique tant Septentrionale que Meridionale, Avec les Noms & la Route des Voyageurs par qui la decouverte en a été faite by Abraham Chaterlain. Published in Amsterdam, 1719.

Symbols and Decorations

Symbols and decoration are thought to be synonymous with art, however, they are two different elements that can be combined to represent information. Symbols can imply additional information, support the essential information, or detract from it. Decoration is embellishment. Symbols are not essential to the message conveyed by the map, nor are they essential to the map as art, however, decoration is perceived as art within the map. The map cartouche is usually the first decorative element to catch the “eye of the beholder.” The cartouche, or panel bearing the title and other facts about the map and surrounded by an ornamental frame, was invented by the Italians. The first ones were rectangular frames with a strap work design imitating the ends of interwoven lengths of leather with edges curling forward around the title.

The maps selected for this section are the works of sixteenth and seventeenth century mapmakers who are noted for the use of symbols and decorations. Ortelius and Homann used symbols found in the work of artists of their time, while Chaterlain took decoration to the maximum.

Maris Pacifici, 1589, by Abraham Ortelius is an example of both the cartography and the art of the sixteenth century. Ortelius' distinctive strap work cartouche is taken from a later derivation of the Italian's designs found in the pattern books of Renaissance sculptors, wood carvers, stone masons, and plaster workers. Also borrowed from other artists is the sailing ship complete with national flag, angels on the bow and sailors on board, guns along the side with one belching smoke. Sailing ships of the period were a popular subject for artists and one that was easily applicable to the maps. The time period was one of continued exploration,

and the ship conveyed this information along with the *portolan-like* presentation of the place names along the coasts of the continents.

Likewise Homann's *Plantiglobii Terrestris*, 1707 uses symbols and decorations to convey additional information on his map. He depicts the Western and Eastern hemispheres in two globes on a background with much artistic embellishment. Above and below the globes are two additional spheres depicting the southern and northern celestial views. The background in the top half is replete with angels and wind heads, cherubs, and clouds along with the sun and the moon, all taken from typical art of the period and used here as decoration. The bottom half of the sheet uses symbolism to elaborate on the descriptive text demonstrating the differences between the Old World civilization and the New World's lack of refinements.

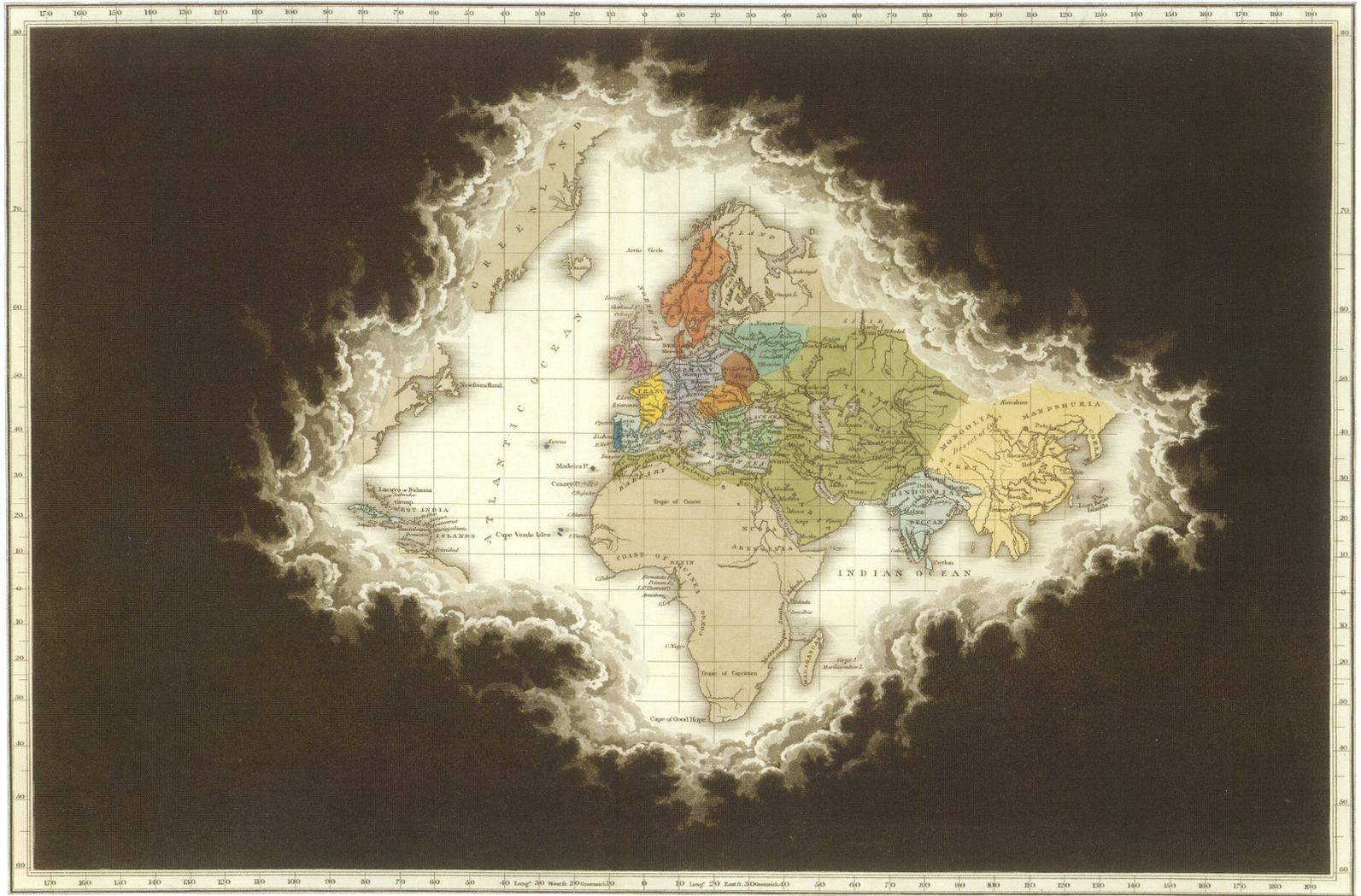
Perhaps the most dramatic use of decoration is seen in Abraham Chaterlain's embellishment of *Carte Tres Curieuse de la Mer du Sud*, 1719. Published originally in Chaterlain's *Atlas Historique*, the two sheets of North and South America include more than fifty-four insets depicting portraits of explorers, illustrations of indigenous peoples, wildlife, flora, historical notes, and ecclesiastical plot ownership in Havana and Veracruz. In addition, the engraver has added multiple sailing ships of various designs along the designated routes of explorers and trade routes. The many illustrations obviously add to the information conveyed by the geography of the map, but many see the map as an extreme example, as the geography is almost obscured.

Cartobibliography

Chaterlain, Abraham. *Carte Tres Curieuse de la Mer du Sud, Contenant des Remarques Nouvelles et Tres Utiles non Seulement sur les Ports et Isles de Cette Mer: Mais aussy sur les principaux Pays de l'Amerique tant Septentrionale que Meridionale, Avec les Noms & la Route des Voyageurs par qui la decouverte en a été faite*. Amsterdam, 1719.

Ortelius, Abraham. *Maris Pacifici, cum Regionibus circumiacentibus, insulisque in eodem passim sparsis, novissima descriptio*. Amsterdam: A. Ortelius, 1589.

Homann, John Baptist. *Planiglobii Terrestris cum Utroque Hemisphaerio Caelesti Generalis Exhibitio, quam ex Novissimis Probatissimisque Gallorum & Batavorum, Tabulis Concinnatam, Multisq; Phaenomenis Illustratam Luci Publicae*. Nürnberg, 1707.



A.D. 1498. *The Discovery of America by Sidney Hall*. Published in London by Seeley & Burnside, 1830.

Style and Design

Style is an element of design and is the manner of expression, execution, construction, or design of a map. Design is the plan to arrange by artistic or skillful manner the elements of a map to create a complete and artistic product or presentation. Design is essential to map-making and to the artist. Style is subject to the skill and character of the artist.

The maps selected for this section represent only a tiny fraction of the available materials in the Virginia Garrett Cartographic History Library that meet the criteria. The three maps, one each from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, display unique presentations of style and design.

The nineteenth century selection, A.D. 1498. *The Discovery of America*, engraved by Sidney Hall and published in London by Seeley & Burnside, 1830, is a striking presentation. The map, shown through boiling black clouds lined in white, is a depiction of the Eastern Hemisphere from the northern tip of Norway southward to the Cape of Good Hope at the southern-most tip of Africa; and eastward to include Mandshuria [sic] and Corea [sic]. Shown peeking from the western boundary of the clouds is the Atlantic side of Greenland and the tip of New Foundland. The image, produced in 1830, seeks to dramatize the founding of the New World and the impact that event had on the future of the other half of the world. Hall's design made an impact on the viewer of the importance of the event.

Less dramatic, but beautifully presented, is Thomas Jeffrey's, *The Western Coast of Louisiana and the Coast of New Leon*, 1794. Published in London by Laurie & Whittle, the map is striking for its artistic styling. The three major elements in this map are a bit unusual. First is the layout of the land areas in the northwestern portion of the sheet. The land is then juxta-positioned against the southwestern corner and its rhumb lines. Layered on top of the rhumb lines is a small line of sailing ships and the notation, "Ancient Track of the Flotta." Together they make an uncommon statement. Color further enhances the map with the dark outlines of the land mass shaded back to pastels inland. The choice of coloring is pleasing and makes a statement about the political differences between Louisiana and Leon.

The third map, *Pascaerte van Westindien*, 1681, by Johannes van Keulen, is very different from the other two maps in yet another non-standard design. The map depicts the Eastern seaboard from Long Island around to the Gulf of Mexico, Yucatan, the northern coast of Central America and the northern coastline of South America, and encompasses the West Indies. Only river, bays, points and settlements along the coasts are noted giving the map the appearance of a "portolan" chart. The chart appearance is reinforced by the overlay of rhumb lines and a decorative compass rose and cartouche. Gold leaf or paint accents the cartouche and compass rose.

Cartobibliography

Hall, Sidney. A.D. 1498. *The Discovery of America*. London: Seeley & Burnside, 1830.
Van Keulen, Johannes. *Pascaerte van Westindien begrypende in zich de vaste kusten en eylanden : alles op syn waere lengte en breete op wassende graden gelegd*. Amsterdam: J. v. Keulen, ca.1681.

Jeffrey, Thomas. *The Western Coast of Louisiana and the Coast of New Leon*. London: Laurie & Whittle, 1794.



Amérique Septentrionale by Victor Levasseur. Published in Paris by A. Combelle, ca.1847.

Art and Maps: A Beholder's Section

Map or Picture?

Levasseur was noted for the unusual map designs that were published in his *Atlas Universel Illustré*. The viewer may ask whether this is an illustration featuring a map or a map surrounded by a unique continent-wide image. However it is viewed, the map in the center is of the North American continent and is surrounded by an illustration depicting animals and scenes symbolic of North America. The illustration, or map, includes a population chart and explanation of the drawings. The piece was engraved by Laguillermie and illustrated by Raimond Bonheur, who became a noted painter.

Picture or Map?

When is a map a painting or a painting a map? A prime example is *Vetus Mexico* by John Ogilby and published in London by the mapmaker in 1671. Beautifully colored, the image is a type of bird's-eye-view depicting Mexico City complete with a legend of points of interest. The map-painting depicts the city surrounded by a lake with a countryside populated with Europeans and Native peoples, oxen, horses, soldiers, carts. An art museum would display the item as a seventeenth century engraving with hand coloring, while a map library, such as the Virginia Garrett Cartographic History Library, catalogs the image as a seventeenth century map.

Cartobibliography

Ogilby, John. *Vetus Mexico*. London: J. Ogilby, 1671.

Levasseur, Victor. *Amérique Septentrionale*. Published in Paris by A. Combelle, ca. 1847.



Perviae Avriferæ Regionis Typvs, La Florida, and Gvas Tecan Reg. By Abraham Ortelius. Published in Amsterdam by C. Plantinum, 1584.

Color Comparisons

Color, form and shape, among other elements, define the two works of Abraham Ortelius. The first, *Americae Sive Novi Orbis, Nova Descriptio* display full color and the trademark strap work cartouche. The 1574 edition with the distinctive “potatoe” shaped South America and the typical sixteenth century sailing ships should make this map a collector’s choice. However, the color is a modern addition and, unfortunately, poorly done. The poor workmanship is most evident in the cartouche.

Another map, or rather three maps on one sheet, Ortelius’ *Pervviae Avriferae Regionis Typvs, La Florida, and Gvas Tecan Reg.* is a beautiful example of contemporary color laid on in all three maps. In addition, the italics script also is a fine example of typical sixteenth century lettering. The distinctive strap work cartouche is evident in all three maps as well.

Cartobibliography

Ortelius, Abraham. *Americae Sive Novi Orbis, Nova Descriptio*. Amsterdam: A. Ortelius, 1574.

Ortelius, Abraham. *Pervviae Avriferae Regionis Typvs, La Florida, and Gvas Tecan Reg.* Amsterdam: C. Plantinum, 1584.

Coronelli, Vincenzo. *America Settentionale Colle Nuove Scoperte sin all’ Anno 1688*. Venice: V. Coronelli, 1695.

A Perfect Map?

What constitutes a perfect map? Is it one that fulfills its function? One that exhibits fine line engraving, excellent form and shape, style and design? One that can be easily labeled beautiful as well as functional? One nomination for the perfect map is this 1695 map of North America produced by the Franciscan monk, Father Vincenzo Maria Coronelli. The map printed in two sheets was produced by the mapmaker at the behest of the French King, Louis XIV, to demonstrate the then recent explorations and claims of the French. The seur de la Salle explored the French territory of northern North America and sailed down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico and claimed all the lands that drained that massive waterway for France, including the land that became Texas.

The map is illustrated with small drawings, mountains, villages, Indian settlements, dugout canoes, and natives engaged in hunting and fishing activities. The map includes an elaborate title cartouche incorporating Renaissance designs of cherubs and angels. It also depicts California as an island and displays excellent script lettering combined with the Roman capitals typical of the period. The placement, or layout, of the land masses with associated lakes, rivers, surrounded by the Gulf and seas attests to the artistic side of the mapmaker as well. The only element missing is color, but many would argue that color is a modern embellishment and therefore is not part of the artistic deployment of the map as a whole. There are many who would agree that this is a perfect map as it fulfills its function.

(See map on next page.)

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